



November 24, 2020

Mr. George Gause
Heritage Preservation Supervisor City of Saint Paul
Heritage Preservation Commission
25 West Fourth Street, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55105-1089
George.gause@stpaul.gov

Re: Opposition to Demolition Permit Application filed by the University of St. Thomas concerning North Dormitory (Loras Hall), 2260 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN.

Dear Mr. Gause and the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission:

The Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA) is dedicated to the preservation of the historic, residential, and the urban park character of Saint Paul's historic Summit Avenue. The SARPA board of directors on November 2, 2020 approved the following statement in **Opposition to the Demolition permit application filed by the University of St. Thomas for the North Dormitory (Loras Hall) at 2260 Summit Ave., St Paul.**

SARPA opposes the demolition permit requested by the University of St. Thomas for the North Dormitory/Loras Hall at 2260 Summit Ave., St. Paul.

The reasons for SARPA's opposition are as follows.

1. The **North Dormitory/Loras Hall was identified as a "contributing structure"** in the West Summit Avenue Historical District with the period of significance identified as 1885 to 1938. The North Dormitory/Loras Hall was completed in 1895. The noted architects in this district included Cass Gilbert, the architect and designer of the North Dormitory/ Loras Hall. According to [the application](#) for the West Summit Avenue National Register of Historic Places, "*In cooperation with Bishop Ireland, James J. Hill gave money to erect the first six buildings on the Seminary campus. Three of these structures still survive: North Residence (Loras Hall), South Residence (Cretin Hall), and the Gymnasium (Heating Plant) — all designed by Cass Gilbert.*" https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/93000332_text Two Cass Gilbert designed buildings form the bookends of St. Paul's historic Summit Avenue with the Minnesota State Capitol building on the east end of Summit and the North Dormitory/Loras Hall on the west end of Summit Avenue. As a "contributing structure", the North Dormitory/Loras Hall should not be demolished because of its historical significance.

2. **There are other options for placement of the proposed University of St. Thomas Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) building that are possible without demolition or re-location of the North Dormitory/Loras Hall building.** The University of St. Thomas (UST) staff and faculty are to be commended for their fundraising and initial planning for the proposed STEAM building proposed for the site adjacent to the North Dormitory/ Loras Hall and for their outreach to community organizations with information about the project. SARPA supports the University of St. Thomas efforts to build a STEAM complex for the increasing number of engineering students. An additional Health building is also being proposed by the University of St. Thomas for the south campus in future years. An alternate design exists from the UST staff for placement of the proposed STEAM complex and a new Health building without demolishing or moving the North Dormitory/Loras Hall. While not preferred by UST, there may be options to integrate a portion of the North Dormitory/Loras Hall in the planned complex or leave it free standing.

For the above reasons, SARPA opposes the demolition permit as requested by the University of St. Thomas and urges the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission to not grant a demolition permit for the North Dormitory/Loras Hall at 2260 Summit Ave., St Paul.

Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association

By its Interim President /s/ Wendy Caucutt

and its Board Members /ss/ Katherine Cairns, Thomas Darling, Francis Luikart, J. Gray Quale, Harry Walsh, and Carolyn Will



UNION PARK DISTRICT COUNCIL

1821 University Avenue, Suite 308, Saint Paul, MN 55104
651.645.6887 | info@unionparkdc.org | www.unionparkdc.org
An Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Employer

November 19, 2020

Heritage Preservation Commission
City of St. Paul
25 West 4th Street
City Hall Annex, Suite 1400
St. Paul, MN 55102

To the members of the Heritage Preservation Commission,

District 13, Union Park District Council, supports the University of St. Thomas plans to demolish Loras Hall in order to build their proposed STEAM building on the University's South Campus. This plan passed with Committee support at the Union Park District Council's Land Use and Economic Development meeting on November 16th based on two presentations at the Committee's August and November meeting.

The Union Park District Council supports the University's plans to demolish Loras Hall in order to build their proposed STEAM [Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math] Complex on the University's South Campus. Although the building was designed by Cass Gilbert, the decision to support demolishing it is due in part to the lack of viability of integrating Loras Hall into the proposed building. There are several reasons for this. First, an estimated \$10 million would be needed in basic upgrades to make Loras Hall usable space. Also, after its last renovation, much of the plumbing was removed in order to retrofit the building into office space which would require rebuilding this aspect of the building. Also, the main supports of the structure run down the center corridor of the building, which make it difficult to reconfigure the interior configuration into anything other than the current structure.

In supporting the University of St. Thomas' demolition of Loras Hall, we recognize the difficulty in integrating the building into the University's proposed STEAM building and also support the University's plans to build the STEAM building project that is intended not only as an academic resource for its students, but is also intended as an amenity for the university's broader community. This aligns with the Board's interest in the supporting projects within its borders that serve the greater community.

Sincerely,

Henry Parker, President
Board of Directors
Union Park District Council

November 27, 2020

Mr. George Gause
Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
City of Saint Paul
VIA EMAIL

Mr. Gause:

On November 12th, the Board of Directors of the Macalester Groveland Community Council (“MGCC”) held a public eMeeting via Zoom, at which it considered a resolution from its standing Housing and Land Use Committee regarding the application for a demolition permit for Loras Hall, located on the University of St. Thomas Campus. Representatives of the applicant, The University of St. Thomas, appeared to speak to the application and to answer questions.

Prior to the meeting, MGCC did not receive any letters in opposition or in support of the application. Furthermore, 1 community member attended the eMeeting to speak in opposition of the application.

After speaking with the applicant, considering neighborhood feedback, consulting the Macalester Groveland Long Range plan, and assessing the merits of the application, the Board of Directors passed the following resolution by a final vote of 14-1:

**** “The Board of Directors of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council supports the University of St Thomas's plan to remove Loras Hall so that the new STEAM Building can be built on the site.” ****

Important to the discussion, were the following considerations:

Loras Hall does not contribute to the sustainability and resiliency goals in the City of Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The consideration that other buildings designed by Cass Gilbert have greater historic significance and a more impactful design.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Alexa Golemo
Executive Director
Macalester-Groveland Community Council

cc (via email): Amy McDonough, University of St. Thomas
Mark Vangsgard, University of St. Thomas
Amy Gage, University of St. Thomas
Ward 4 Office, City of Saint Paul

Dear George and Members of the Heritage Preservation Commission,


I want to thank members of the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) for considering the application from the University St. Thomas to remove Loras Hall in order to build a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) complex.

As founding dean of the Morrison Family College of Health at St. Thomas, I am very familiar with the tremendous opportunity this complex represents for the greater St. Paul community. By growing the new Morrison Family College of Health and establishing a new School of Nursing, St. Thomas is responding to a shortage of health providers and leaders required to promote healthy families and communities. We are building a college where students will learn to provide whole-person care to address the physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of individuals, while also discovering ways to advance systems change to eliminate health disparities. This complex will allow us to provide the best possible educational experience to our students.

As a board member of the Minnesota Historical Society, I understand the need to appreciate and understand our past.

I hope you will appreciate the balance between appreciating the past and serving its educational mission that the University of St. Thomas is striving to bring about the changes needed to serve and meet deep community needs.

Best regards,



Maykao Y. Hang, D.P.A.

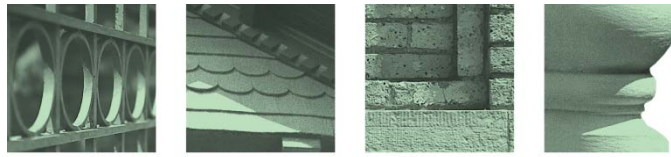
Vice President, Strategic Initiatives and Founding Dean

Morrison Family College of Health [Give Now](#)

maykao.hang@stthomas.edu

Mail TMH 201 | p 651.962.4727

University of St. Thomas | MN stthomas.edu



HISTORIC SAINT PAUL

November 30, 2020

Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
25 West Fourth Street, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55105-1089

Re: Demolition Permit Application filed by the University of St. Thomas for North Dormitory (Loras Hall), 2260 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN Saint Paul

Dear Members of the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission;

Historic Saint Paul supports denial of the application for demolition of North Dormitory/ Loras Hall per information and recommendations outlined in the staff report for your 11/30/2020 public hearing.

Unfortunately, despite urging of the commission during its pre-application review on 10/5/2020, development options that would preserve North Dormitory/ Loras Hall and incorporate it into the continued evolution of the University of Saint Thomas campus have not been seriously considered.

The Commission's charge is to review and evaluate the application for demolition of the North Dormitory/ Loras Hall utilizing criteria contained in Chapter 73 of Saint Paul's Legislative Code. We concur with key staff findings that support the recommended denial of the application, including the following:


- North Dormitory/ Loras Hall possesses significant architectural and historic merit,
- Its demolition would have a negative impact on surrounding buildings, and
- Alternatives to demolition have not been adequately explored.

Historic Saint Paul works to preserve and promote the cultural heritage, character, and vitality of Saint Paul neighborhoods. We are keenly aware of the importance of preserving and investing into buildings that reflect the architectural and cultural history of Saint Paul.

Saint Paul is a richer, more complex and interesting city thanks to the work of the Heritage Preservation Commission combined with efforts of local residents, historians, and community leaders who have worked together to identify and protect historic resources that hold and tell our important stories – at times in the face of strong opposition and pressure.

North Dormitory/ Loras Hall embodies essential elements of the Saint Paul story, and we support Heritage Preservation Commission efforts to protect and preserve it.

Sincerely,



Carol Carey
Executive Director