



CITY OF SAINT PAUL  
Melvin Carter, Mayor

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Heritage Preservation Commissioners  
FROM: Christine Boulware, Historic Preservation Specialist  
RE: January 11, 2021 HPC meeting – CLG comment on nomination of the St. Paul Casket Company at 1222 University Avenue, Saint Paul, Ramsey county to the National Register of Historic Places.

## BACKGROUND

The St. Paul Casket Company, located at 1222 University Avenue in Saint Paul, Minnesota, may be considered by the State Historic Preservation Review Board for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on February 16, 2021. Because the City of St. Paul has been granted Certified Local Government (CLG) Status under the provisions of 36 CFR 61.5 and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office's "*Procedures for Applying for and Maintaining Certified Local Government Status*," the nomination is being sent to the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) for review.

## STAFF COMMENTS

The St. Paul Casket Company, at 1222 University Avenue in Saint Paul, Minnesota, is four-story, concrete and stucco, commercial building located on the south side of University Avenue between Griggs and Syndicate Streets. It was designed in a commercial style with "modern gothic" detail by the Saint Paul architecture firm of Allen H. Stem and constructed in 1922-1923. Its piers are modeled as buttresses and the prominent central tower houses a water tank for the fire-suppression system. The property retains integrity of design, materials, feeling, and location; the integrity of setting has changed given years of new construction along the major commercial corridor it is located on. While the manufacturing function of the building has changed since the period of significance (1923-1951), it retains its warehouse and related office function although it has diminished integrity of association. The interior of the building maintains good integrity, as there have been few alterations within the building.

The St. Paul Casket Company is locally significant as the home of the most important casket manufacturer in St. Paul and one of the most important in Minnesota for almost 30 years. The nomination identifies the property as eligible under NRHP **Criterion A in the area of industry** for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, as the company used its modern factory building to meet the needs of the expanding funeral industry. The property is also eligible under **Criterion C in the areas of architecture and engineering** as a property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, as it is a notable example of a 1920s industrial building designed by the architecture firm of Allen H. Stem with associate architect Roy H. Haslund; the multi-story vertical urban factory with its prominent tower embodies the type and method of construction. The related historic contexts are "Urban Centers, 1870-1940" and "Transportation Corridors: 1857-1950." The building's period of significance begins with the building going into operation 1923 and ends in 1951, when the St. Paul Casket Company ceased business at the property.

**SUGGESTED MOTION**

I move that the HPC support the National Register designation the St. Paul Casket Company, located at 1222 University Avenue as per presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff memo.