

# CITY OF SAINT PAUL

## HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**FILE NAME:** 504 Selby Avenue  
**INVENTORY NUMBER:** RA-SPC-3249  
**APPLICANT:** Richard Laffin  
**DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING:** September 21, 2020  
**HPC SITE/DISTRICT:** Hill Heritage Preservation District  
**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** 1858-1930  
**CATEGORY:** Contributing **WARD:** 4 **DISTRICT COUNCIL:** 13  
**ZONING:** RM2 **CLASSIFICATION:** Storefront  
**STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT:** George Gause

### A. SITE DESCRIPTION:

Built in 1904, this structure is a three-story Colonial Revival style masonry structure with brick exterior walls and flat roof hidden behind a low parapet. The symmetrical main facade features two-story bay windows on both ends with a central two-story open archway revealing an interior light well. Below the central archway is a classical pedimented entry supported by Romanesque columns. Both the string course and cornice feature a continuous dentiled profile, and fenestration consists of one-over-one double-hung windows throughout. Storefront was altered when the building was renovated for condominiums in the early 1970's.

### B. PROPOSED CHANGES:

The storefront alteration that was installed in the 1970's has begun to fail. Reopening and restoring the storefronts has been discussed, but not pursued. When the building was converted to condominiums kitchens were installed where the storefront would normally be located. The condominium homeowner's association have voted to go forward with the submitted plan.

### C. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

#### **The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:**

Guideline	Meets Guideline?	Staff Comments
(9) <i>Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.</i>	Yes  No	The project would not affect historic material.  The design would not return the original storefront back to the structure and as such not compatible with the district.
(10) <i>Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.</i>	Yes	The proposed work would be confined to the existing non original storefront area and would not disturb any other building feature.

**Sec. 74.65 New Construction**

Guideline	Meets Guideline?	Comments
<i>(a) General Principles: The basic principle for new construction in the Historic Hill District is to maintain the district's scale and quality of design. The Historic Hill District is architecturally diverse within an overall pattern of harmony and continuity. These guidelines for new construction focus on general rather than specific design elements in order to encourage architectural innovation and quality design while maintaining the harmony and continuity of the district. New construction should be compatible with the size, scale, massing, height, rhythm, setback, color, material, building elements, site design, and character of surrounding structures and the area.</i>	Yes	The design does move the storefront area design closer to the original than the current design and will improve the pattern of harmony and continuity.
<i>(d) (2) The materials and details of new construction should relate to the materials and details of existing nearby buildings.</i>	Yes	Materials will correspond with what is found in the district.

**D. STAFF COMMENTS:**

The current storefront of the structure is divided and very horizontal, with a fence like structure across the lower half of the building façade which covers a projecting area from the lower level condominiums. The current projection on the building contains raised planters which have failed, leak and are no longer planted. The current treatment has very little call-back to a traditional storefront. In early discussions with the architect and contractor, staff urged restoration to the original storefront. The building, as currently configured, makes reinstallation of the storefront difficult. The lower level condominiums project 18" out from the storefront façade wall. First floor condominiums have kitchens constructed where the storefront would be, so any installed glass at this area would have a view of the back of appliances and counters.

The submitted design moves the area closer to what would have been in this location, without completely renovating the basement and first floor units. It is not ideal but does improve on what is there currently.

**E. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the draft resolution, staff recommends approval of the application.

**F. SUGGESTED MOTION:**

I move to approve the application for renovation of the first-floor storefront at 504 Selby Avenue as per the findings of fact and condition in the draft resolution, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.



**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
*Melvin Carter, Mayor*

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Heritage Preservation Commissioners  
FROM: George Gause, Heritage Preservation Supervisor  
RE: September 21, 2020 HPC meeting – Bias & Exclusion Roundtable Action Items

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### BACKGROUND

As a follow-up from our HPC roundtable held on August 24, 2020, there were seven action items for the commission to consider:

1. Find ways to focus on community preservation
2. Create heritage preservation equity goals (*with assistance of a consultant?*)
3. Educate the public, City staff and elected officials
4. Have a future listening session dedicated to the topics of bias and exclusion
5. Consider what a 'only' cultural district would entail
6. Explore funding sources-partner with other St. Paul resources (*potential issues*)
7. Keep working on illustrated guidelines

These are just some of the items that were discussed but are in no way the only action items.

During the roundtable meeting, over 50 people were listening in. Staff have heard from several folks that they would like to address the HPC regarding this topic. Staff propose having a listening session in October to gather public comment on two questions:

*What should the HPC be working on to create equitable lasting change?*  
*Are there specific policies or regulations that should be altered because of equity?*

We will take a few minutes at the September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting to discuss the roundtable and further actions with the focus on the 2021 HP Workplan.

## **CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

### **HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION**

**ADDRESS:** 504 Selby

**DATE:** September 21, 2020

**Memorializing the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission's September 21, 2020 decision approving the reconstruction of the existing non-original storefront.**

1. On April 2, 1991, the most recent expansion of the Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District was established under Ordinance No. 17815, § 3(II), reflecting today's boundaries. The City of Saint Paul shall protect the architectural character of heritage preservation sites through review and authorization or denial of applications for city permits for exterior work within designated heritage preservation sites §73.04.(4).
2. There will not be any removal or alteration of historic material.
3. The work to the structure is constructed in such a manner that if it could be removed in the future and the form and integrity of the original structure would be unimpaired.
4. The application for the proposed work at the listed address will not adversely affect the Program for the Preservation and architectural control of the Heritage Preservation District (Leg. Code §73.06 (e)) so long as the conditions are met.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** the Heritage Preservation Commission approves the renovation of the first-floor storefront at 504 Selby Avenue, subject to the following conditions:

1. Any metal, including flashing, valleys or drip edge, shall have a dark finish not glossy/shiny or a material that will achieve a dark patina within 24 months.
2. PVC boards shall be a smooth face material void of any simulated wood grain pattern or rough, unfinished appearance.
3. Approval is written in conjunction with and referencing submitted application and approved plans. Conditions of this approval MAY supersede any contradictory notes or schedules found on project description or drawings. This approval is VOID if the approved description or plans are altered from the submitted application.
4. Work to be accomplished in accordance with submitted application and plans. Any deviation from is to be submitted to staff prior to construction.
5. All measurements and relationships of existing conditions and new construction shall be field checked for accuracy with submitted plans at the responsibility of the applicant. Inaccuracies or differences should be reported to LPC staff prior to commencement.
6. Work to be accomplished in accordance with all applicable zoning regulations and building codes, or Board of Zoning Appeals decision. This approval does not constitute or recommend a hardship for purposes of zoning review.
7. Further permits and approvals may be required. This approval signifies review and issuance based on the Heritage Preservation regulations and guidelines. No other city, state, or federal review and approval should be assumed or implied by this approval.

**MOVED BY:**

**SECONDED BY:**

**IN FAVOR**

**AGAINST**

**ABSTAIN**

Decisions of the Heritage Preservation Commission are final, subject to appeal to the City Council within 14 days by anyone affected by the decision. This resolution does not obviate the need for meeting applicable building and zoning code requirements and does not constitute approval for tax credits.



Proposed North Elevation and Plan View

**Question: What is the purpose of the heavy horizontal piece that runs across the front? Can it be reduced into the storefront area more?**

The accompanying section detail indicates the relative planes of the various parts of millwork.

The proposed design steps out twice by about 20" from the existing vertical plane of the windows to the stone base below. The upper step is represented by the horizontal trim band you mention. It is really nothing more than a flashed sloped surface from the back plane with a cap and apron at the intermediate plane. You can see from the elevation and detail that the millwork is to be located at the midline of the columns so that the front halves of the columns are fully expressed from the top to bottom. The columns are only 6 3/4" in diameter, which we feel is overly slender, the size one might expect in Italianate architecture. We would like to buttress them visually so that they don't look quite so spindly. To your point, the trim band is set well back from the existing principal millwork band above.

As you know, the first floor of the building has bands of upper, middle, and lower windows. The middle-height windows have typical head heights (inside), but they appear curiously low because of the upper windows, and they float visually. We think that the head trim you indicate with an arrow moors them and gives them just enough prominence, so they don't look like a mistake. The proposed trim is a greatly-scaled-down version of the cornice trim above.



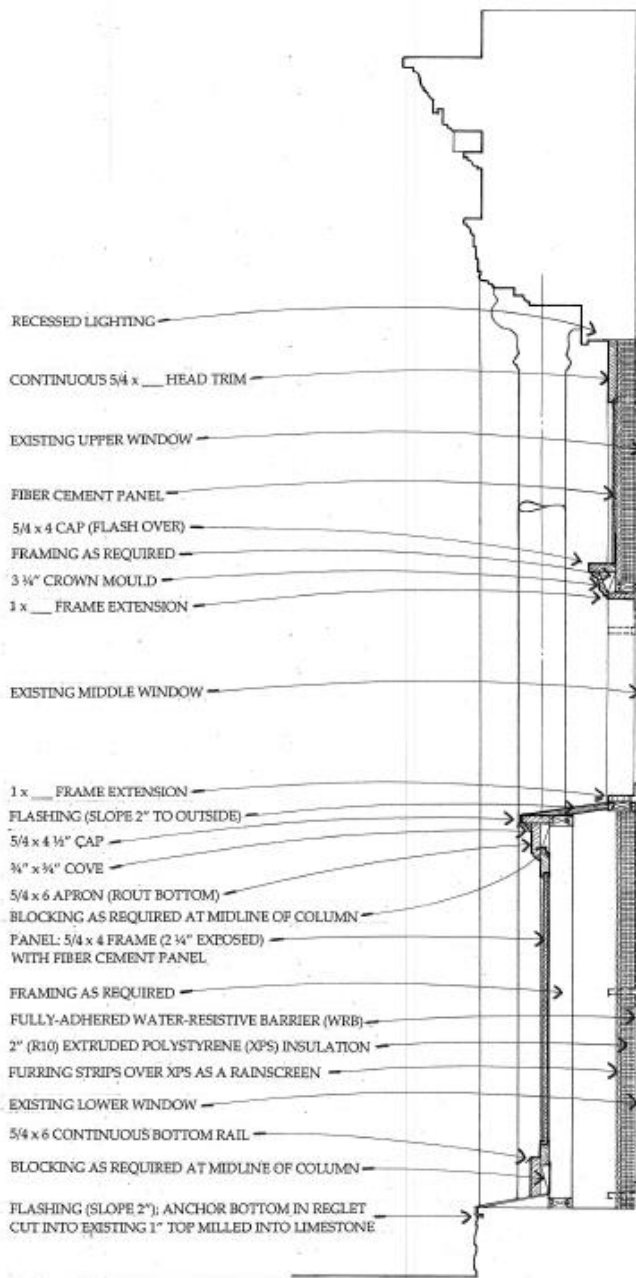
Proposed East Elevation



- EXISTING WINDOWS REMAIN
- REMOVE WINDOW BRICKMOLD
- REMOVE BOARD AND BATTEN (2x2s AT 3 1/2" ON CENTER)
- REMOVE HORIZONTAL SCREEN (2x4 AND 1x4) AND FRAMING
- REMOVE ABANDONED PLANTERS
- INSPECT EXISTING STONE CURB

Existing East Elevation

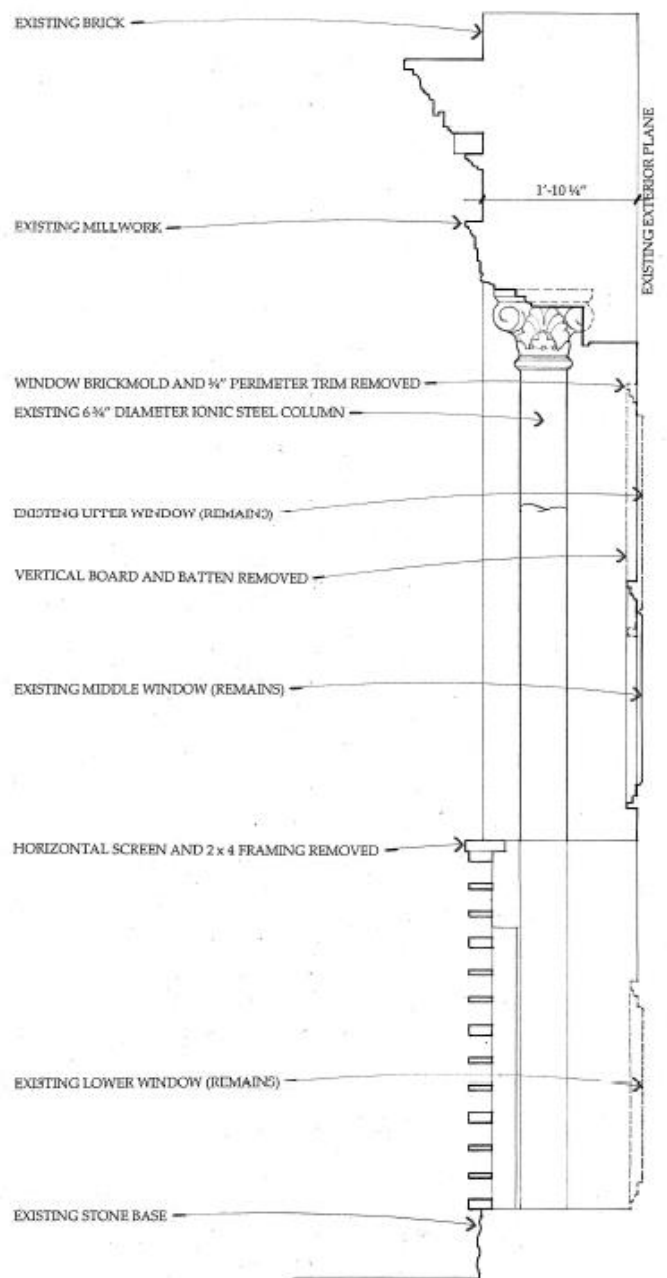




EXPOSED MILLWORK TO BE CEDAR AND CELLULAR PVC;  
ALL EXPOSED WOOD, PVC, AND FIBER CEMENT PANELING  
TO BE PRIMED AND PAINTED; COLOR TO BE SELECTED

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#### TYPICAL SECTION DETAIL



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#### EXISTING SECTION DETAIL





Existing North Elevation