



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

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DATE: April 25, 2017
TO: Comprehensive Planning Committee
FROM: Lucy Thompson, Principal City Planner
SUBJECT: Central Station Block Design Guidelines – Review of Public Testimony

BACKGROUND

The Central Station Block is bounded by Cedar, Minnesota, 5th and 4th streets in downtown Saint Paul. It is the location of Central Station, one of the three busiest LRT stations along the Green Line. In 2006, the environmental review process for the Green Line determined that the Saint Paul Urban Renewal Historic District in the heart of downtown is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Central Station Block sits at the center of the Urban Renewal Historic District.

Building Central Station and putting the LRT tracks at a diagonal through the block required the demolition of the First Federal Savings and Loan Building at 360 Cedar Street, a contributing building within the Urban Renewal Historic District. Demolition of the building was found to constitute an “adverse effect” on the District, requiring mitigation before the LRT project could proceed. The mitigation agreed to by all parties involved in the project was preparation of redevelopment design guidelines for the Central Station Block. The design guidelines will guide future development so that it is compatible with the defining features of the Urban Renewal Historic District, as well as those of adjacent, early 20th century buildings also determined eligible for the National Register, such as the St. Paul Athletic Club, First National Bank Building and Minnesota Building.

CENTRAL STATION BLOCK DESIGN GUIDELINES

The design guidelines are recommended for adoption as an amendment to the *Downtown Station Area Plan* (2010). They provide more detail on redevelopment of the block so that it responds to its location in the Urban Renewal Historic District as well as its proximity to significant buildings of the early 20th century. These historic influences impact the massing, form, height and materials of new development; they do not speak to land use. Permitted and conditional land uses are still regulated by zoning.

Other minor revisions will be made to the body of the *Downtown Station Area Plan* to refer to the Appendix (Table of Contents, Section 3.1 and Section 4.4) so that the guidelines have the same legal status as the rest of the document (i.e. part of the Comprehensive Plan).

The Central Station Block design guidelines consist of:

- Historic context – a brief description of the historic influences on the block, including both early-20th-century and mid-century modern periods in architecture and urbanism
- Design framework and design principles – 11 design principles that set general parameters for new building and site design on the block

- Design guidelines for new development – guidelines to direct site planning, architectural character, building design, massing and form, exterior building materials, public space activation and structured parking.
- Infill development scenarios – application of the guidelines in four possible development scenarios
- Circulation – how private development and public spaces should provide for pedestrian, bike and transit use
- Open space – how public open space should be provided on the block and incorporated into other activities on the block (transit and private development)
- Public art – how public art should be used to add vibrancy to new development.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION COMMENT

The Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission adopted a resolution on April 13, 2017 supporting adoption of the Central Station Block Design Guidelines as an amendment to the *Downtown Station Area Plan*. The resolution is attached.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on April 21, 2017. One person spoke at the hearing, and expressed interest in seeing a transit building on the triangle parcel north of the Saint Paul Athletic Club building. This building would contain security, restrooms and other transit-related services. This comment does not require any changes to the draft document.

In addition, the CapitolRiver Council (District 17) Board unanimously passed a motion on April 19, 2017 to support approval of the Central Station Block Design Guidelines.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that no changes be made to the draft document, and that the Comprehensive Planning Committee forward it to the Planning Commission with a recommendation to send the Central Station Block Design Guidelines to the City Council for adoption as an amendment to the *Downtown Station Area Plan*.

Attachments:

1. Central Station Block Design Guidelines
2. Heritage Preservation Commission resolution – April 13, 2017

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION

FILE NUMBER Central Station Block Design Guidelines - File #17-CSBDGs

DATE April 13, 2017

WHEREAS, Section 73.04 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code states the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) shall “serve as an advisory body to the mayor and city council on municipal heritage preservation matters... [and] shall review and comment on studies which relate to the...architectural heritage of the city...”; and

WHEREAS, the Central Station Block is bounded by Cedar, Minnesota, Fourth, and Fifth Streets in downtown Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, the Central Station Block Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines) were developed and prepared by Winter and Company for the City of Saint Paul as mitigation for the loss of the First Federal Savings and Loan Building, at 360 Cedar Street, which was demolished in order to construct the Green Line and Central Station on the block; and

WHEREAS, there are several historic resources that have been locally designated as Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Sites by the Saint Paul City Council and listed on or determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in close proximity to the Central Station Block; and

WHEREAS, the Central Station Block is located in the center of the Urban Renewal Historic District which was determine eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, there are potential historic resources that have been identified though survey and inventory work as possessing historic and/or architectural significance in close proximity to the Central Station Block; and

WHEREAS, the HPC reviewed and commented on the Design Guidelines on March 23, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the Design Guidelines provide detail on redevelopment of the block so that it responds to its location in the Urban Renewal Historic District as well as its proximity to significant buildings of the early 20th century. These historic influences impact the massing, form, height and materials of new development; and

WHEREAS, the Design Guidelines are recommended for adoption as an amendment to the Downtown Station Area Plan (2010);

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Design Review Committee of the Heritage Preservation Commission supports the adoption of the Central Station Block Design Guidelines as an amendment to the Downtown Station Area Plan (2010).

MOVED BY Commissioner Riehle

SECONDED BY Commissioner Peroutka

IN FAVOR 6

AGAINST 0

ABSTAINED 0

