

**Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting  
April 16, 2013, Room 317 City Hall**

**Date of Z&P Meeting: May 21, 2013**

**ITEM SUMMARY**

- Description**      Item #1, BZH #27687  
2320 Colfax Avenue South  
Anders Christensen submitted an application for an Appeal of the Planning Director's Determination that 2320 Colfax Avenue South did not meet the Heritage Preservation Regulations' definition of a historic resource.
- Action**            Notwithstanding staff recommendation, the Heritage Preservation Commission **approved** the appeal of the Planning Director's determination which stated that 2320 Colfax Avenue South did not meet the Heritage Preservation Regulations' definition of a historic resource on the contention that the property exemplified the work of a master builder and architect, Theron Potter Healy.
- Roll Call Vote**    **Aye:**    Faucher, Haecker, Hunter Weir, Lackovic, Lindberg, R. Mack, Stade, Tableporter  
**Nay:**    Larsen, L. Mack  
**Motion Passed**

**TRANSCRIPTION**

**Chair Larsen:** We'll begin with our one public hearing item, 2320 Colfax Avenue South. Just for everyone's edification, this is an appeal of the Planning Director's determination that 2320 Colfax Avenue South did not meet the Heritage Preservation Regulations for definition of a historic resource. So the applicant had made a demolition request and that was approved and that decision was appealed by the applicant here who is appealing the decision of staff. So our decision this evening is to either agree with staff recommendation, to deny the appeal and allow the demolition to move forward, or to agree with the applicant and grant the appeal which then would direct the owner of the property, which allows them to then potentially apply for a demolition of an historic resource. So we basically will be saying we think this might be an historic resource, at which point that would go back to the applicant, the owner of the property, and they can decide what they want to do. So this is not any kind of landmark, designation, or interim protection hearing, this is just to decide the appeal, yay or nay.

**Lindberg:** I have a clarification question, if we decide this is a possible potential resource, then do we direct staff to prepare ...

**Chair Larsen:** No, because then it goes back to the applicant, to the owner, to decide what they want to do then. Because they can choose to, they have options at that point. The owner has options, because this is not the owner that made the appeal.

**Lindberg:** I see.

**Chair Larsen:** Alright. So with that it looks like there is a bunch of people her to speak, which is great. We're going to limit the discussion to two minutes per person to speak during the public hearing.

**Staff Smoley:** Mr. Chair, members of the commission, my name is John Smoley. I'm here to brief you on an appeal of the Planning Director's determination that 2320 Colfax Avenue South did not meet the Heritage Preservation regulation's definition of a historic resource. Section 599.110 of the regulations defines a historic resource as a property that is believed to have historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological, or engineering significance. You have to meet at least one of seven designation criteria. The appellant contends that the subject property, 2320 Colfax Avenue South, built by Theron Healy Potter in 1893, meets the definition of a historic resource. He states:

"Theron Healy is an iconic builder, the most important and prolific vernacular master architect of the golden age of Minneapolis architecture (1885-1919). The Orth House, 2320 Colfax Avenue South, is Healy's turning-point house in his transition from designing and building the romantic Queen Annes of the Healy Block and the North Wedge, to the more classically inspired designs on the 2400 block of Bryant Avenue South and his houses on Lowry Hill."

Such significance is evaluated using designation criterion #6, the property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects. Theron Potter Healy is an acknowledged master builder. As you all know we have a historic district dedicated to the Queen Annes that he built, the highest concentration of Queen Anne architecture in Minneapolis and the highest concentration of his work as a master builder. The residence at 2320 Colfax Avenue South doesn't exemplify his work, however. This is a two-part stamp here. It has to be a master and it exemplifies his work. So while we acknowledge he is a master, staff really feels that this subject property doesn't exemplify his work for two reasons: changes that have taken place over time and better remaining examples of his work.

The subject property has been altered extensively over time. You can see here on your screens an image of the house as it appears today, and then we have an image of the house taken around 1900. The house has been converted into a rooming house, it has been divided up twice actually, once in 1962 and again in 1982. Currently the building is a fifteen room boarding house. The building has sustained three fires over the years, the porch on the front, you will notice, has changed considerably in its character. The fine spindles that you see there have now become masonry and the porch is no longer open, it is closed. The rear porch itself has been expanded into an addition, it is no longer an open porch, and the impressive three story barn that once stood on site has been lost. There have been a lot of decorative details that have been lost on the property over time. The installation of new siding, wider siding than was there historically has lost, taken away, some of the details. Now you see corner boards where there were previously none. You see a frieze that has been reduced in width. You see windows that have been removed, essentially the porthole window here and windows that have been added such as a band of them here on the corner side. The Palladium window and the recessed pointed arch has been lost. Some of the decorative detailing on the gable has been lost and decorative finials and weathervane and things like that are gone. The bones of the home are there but again, due to these alterations staff really feels this is not, this doesn't really exemplify Healy as a master builder.

Beyond alterations to the property, better remaining examples of Healy's work really challenge the assertion that this property exemplifies his work. Beyond the Healy Block Historic District which actually boasts Healy's residence, we have a number of other potential historic resources built by Healy. In the 2008 reconnaissance survey of this neighborhood and several other neighborhoods nearby, evaluators didn't deem this property worthy of an intensive level survey. But they did identify a historic district immediately south of the subject property. This outline here is the residence at 2324 Colfax Avenue, you can see by this crosshatched area that the Lowry Hill East Residential Potential Historic District, significant for its concentration of 20<sup>th</sup> Century residences, really surrounds the property on two sides and it would have been very easy to incorporate this property into that historic district. But the evaluators did not. These are evaluators that the city hired using local, federal, and state funds through the Certified Local Government program. As you know, the city has, for over a decade now, undertaken a series of reconnaissance surveys to take a closer look at every portion of our community and try to identify areas that are worthy of further study and areas that are buildings that we can let go of. And staff uses these determinations, these studies, as we go about trying to determine what to bring to you as a historic resource or a demolition of historic resource, and what to approve administratively. This district itself actually includes three other Healy properties which are considered contributors. And the district itself has a remarkable level of integrity. The evaluators

identified 50 contributing resources and only 3 non-contributing resources. Staff believes that this property itself, with its alterations over time, it is understandable why this property wasn't included in that historic district.

The appellant himself has conducted extensive research into Healy built homes. He has identified over 140 examples of Healy homes in Minneapolis, the majority of which are still standing. Thirty of those homes were built in the Wedge neighborhood itself, 27 are still standing today, I should say as of the survey that he updated last year. These reconnaissance surveys that we've done over time have resulted in the recommendation of 45 potential historic districts, 30 other areas, and hundreds of other individual landmarks worthy of intensive level surveys or designation studies. It has identified a long list of worthy resources, which staff is currently in the process of prioritizing at this point. So I would encourage you to consider that those efforts there, the investment we've made over time to try and create tools for ourselves at a staff level to help us make good determinations, wise uses of your time and of staff time as we go about determining which properties are really worthy of designation.

Having said that, I can say that there are many people who do disagree with me. Staff has received 49 letters commenting on the property. Those are before you on the dais. Forty-eight of them are in support of the appellant, they are in support of the effort to preserve the property. They believe that the property does meet the definition of a historic resource. Additionally Councilmember Tuthill's office has received 153 emails which staff just found out about just prior to the start of this meeting. Those are not before you on the dais this evening, some of those may be emails that staff received as well, but those will be entered into the public record following this hearing.

In terms of the staff recommendation, staff determined and we recommend that you consider this to be, to not meet the definition of a historic resource, to deny the appeal of the Planning Director's determination that 2320 Colfax Avenue South did not meet the Heritage Preservation Regulations' definition of a historic resource. You will note that I did not go into an analysis of the apartment building proposed for this site. There is a development proposed for this site but the purpose of the appeal is strictly on whether this is considered an historic resource. Should you grant the appellant their request, then the Heritage Preservation Commission might, at least in part, review the proposed development on site through the demolition of historic resource application process where economic feasibility (*taping issues*).

The appellant is here, but I am available for any further questions you may have at this time.

**Chair Larsen:** Ok, I think we have some questions ... Commissioner Hunter Weir.

**Hunter Weir:** Other than criterion number 6, did you look at any of the others? Did staff evaluate in terms of 1, 2, 3? I mean I don't see archaeological plans in here, but for person, social movement, and neighborhood identity? Did staff talk about those as criterion that might be considered?

**Smoley:** Commissioner Hunter Weir, Chair Larsen, I certainly can but the appeal did not, the appeal basis itself was Healy's significance, it wasn't archaeological significance or anything, that's what the staff report was based on.

**Chair Larsen:** Commissioner Tableporter.

**Tableporter:** I was just wondering, do you, there was a comment made in the package about this property representing a transitional period between Victorian and Classical styles. And you mentioned that there was 140 homes built or preserved. Do you have any sense about whether this is significant, how many homes might be in the transitional style, etc.?

**Smoley:** Commissioner Tableporter, Chair Larsen, that's a great question and I guess the first thing I would say in response would be that staff reviews, as you know because you receive wrecking reports, several hundred of these a year, and when properties come along we don't usually have time to delve into the entire career of an architect or whether a property might represent a significant turning point or not. First and foremost in staff's mind in this application was the district that we have, if we have repeated properties (*taping issues*). Having said that, I did not take a close look at that, but having said that, we did look at other properties that have been identified as potential historic resources as well actual district (*taping issues*) and we did identify a few others. This is an example of 1716

Dupont Avenue South constructed in 1894. This is right after the subject property was constructed. It certainly is similar, it's not the same, but it certainly is similar to what 2320 looked like back in 1893. You can see here a bay here, a 2-story bay off to the side (*taping issues*), decorative dormer. The porthole window is of a different design, it's not identical but if this is a turning point in the architect's career, for an architect with 140 properties I have a feeling that you could find a way to, that consideration to some of these other better remaining examples should be taken into account. If there is a specific turning point, it certainly would be beyond the scope of a wrecking review to identify when there would be "the" turning point, and I think it would be challenging to a historian to be able to find one specific instance. So having said that, further study could possibly (*taping issues*) but even for a designation study rarely would staff look at 140 other examples to try and find some specific turning point.

**Chair Larsen:** Any more questions of staff? Ok, seeing none if the appellant wishes to step forward then we'll open up the public hearing to others as well. Please state your name and address for the record.

**Anders Christensen:** Hello, my name is Anders Christensen, I live at 4347 Garfield Avenue South. Mr. Chairman, I have some remarks. The reason we are so impassioned about this property, 2320 Colfax Avenue South, is that T.P.Healy, the designer and builder of this house, is such a critical piece of Minneapolis civic and architectural history. Healy was the most prolific, and is today the most famous master builder in Minneapolis history. His work is iconic, widely known, and much loved as you can tell from the letters. This is his older brother John's house in Round Hill Nova Scotia, Healy's home town. This house sat vacant for 10 years and is now being restored.

Theron Potter Healy left Nova Scotia in 1883 with his family to move to Bismark in the Dakota territories. He arrived in Minneapolis in 1885. He died suddenly in 1906 at age 62. Over his 20 year career in Minneapolis, he built over 140 buildings, designed 98 of them and built 59 of them on speculation.

Thirty years ago, Trilby Busch nicknamed Healy "King of the Queen Anne" and this is still how we think of him, his Queen Annes. Healy built 3111 Second Avenue South in 1891. Today this is Pete and Marge's house on the Healy Block. This exotic Queen Anne with Moorish Revival elements was on University Avenue across from the U of M. The reverse version of this is in Old Highland, Greg Rosenhaus' house on the north side today. A Whittier house near the art institute. The Bennett McBride house in the Healy district a year ago, last fall after John Cunningham, architect and Healy's great grandson redid the exterior, the photo is by David (?). Healy was a builder, a general contractor, a designer of houses, an architect without academic credentials, he was a spec builder, a real estate developer, an entrepreneur, a very successful businessman. Healy was all these things. In 1892 he built 13 houses, all Queen Annes. Seven were in the Healy block and what is colloquially known as the undercover Healy block, the 3300 block of Second Avenue South. Six were in the North Wedge. Eleven of the 13 were built on speculation. Of the North Wedge houses, 4 were built on Bryant, 2 on Colfax. Five of the 6 are still standing. All five are rooming houses, including 2320 Colfax Avenue South. 1893 brought dramatic change to America.

The Chicago World's Fair of the same year introduced Neoclassicism through the White City and the Colonial Revival through the State Buildings. Many East Coast states, all original colonies, reproduced houses evocative of their colonial history. Twenty-seven million people visited the State Fair. The panic of 1893 was the worst financial breakdown in U.S. history until the Great Depression of 1929. By December, 600 banks had failed. By June, 1894, 194 railroads had gone bankrupt. By year's end, two and a half million people were unemployed. Faced with a severe financial crisis, having built eleven Queen Anne's on speculation the year before, the Queen Anne style, the style Healy had perfected, is now out of fashion. He must now invent a new vernacular form adapting what he knows how to do to conform to the new principals of design emerging from the White City and the State Building at the Chicago World's Fair. 2320 Colfax Avenue South is that house. And amidst the panic, Healy built it on spec. It becomes one of his new prototypes as he moves from the Central neighborhood Healy District, the Queen Anne District, to the 2400 block of Bryant and Lowry Hill in the middle and later years of his career. He had a client for his second and only other house from 1893. This enormous shingle-style house, or unadorned Queen Anne, was at 821 Douglas, the corner of Douglas and Bryant. He never built as far as we know another house like this, although he did create several versions of a shingle style Queen Anne hybrid in the Wedge that are very successful designs. This was Healy's first house in Lowry Hill. It was torn down in 1981 real estate developer Paul Clute for this apartment building. Before 1893, Healy designed virtually all his houses and built 75% of them speculatively. After 1893 half of his houses were designed by architects and only 20% were built speculatively.

While Healy deserves credit for designing two-thirds of the houses he built, he also built the designs of the most renowned architects of the day. The numbers represent the number of buildings he built for each architect. He built houses for many prominent Minneapolis families. Many of these families are still prominent today. One of the reasons that Healy is Minneapolis' master builder is that he built in 14 different neighborhoods that we are aware of. The importance of this house was noted by Trilby Busch in 1981: "a watershed in Healy's career as a designer came in 1893 with the construction of a relatively expensive \$7,000 house at 2320 Colfax Avenue South. The house represents a significant change from Healy's earlier rectangular shaped structures with gable end roofs. The house at 2320 is square, more symmetrical, more compact in its massing than Healy's earlier houses. It was a decided change from the fanciful invention of Queen Anne design."

Here are some pictures documenting the interior of the Orth House, 2320 Colfax. I have worked on many Healy houses, I have toured many dozens, I am a licensed Minnesota building contractor, a trained and EPA registered lead-safe contractor. I have spent the last 35 years working on old houses as a tradesman and contractor in Minneapolis and St. Paul. I am an expert witness. This house can be restored on the outside and adaptively reused on the inside. I attended four neighborhood meetings in Lowry Hill East, the Wedge, where the representatives of Mr. Lander repeatedly told the neighborhood that there was nothing original left inside the house. These pictures show the many important and irreplaceable features that remain. On the outside, a classic Healy chimney that needs repointing. The dormer with a Gothic arched inset becomes a classic form in a New American architecture, post-Chicago. Built upon a rock, this house is level, straight and true. A hip roof with a complicated set of dormers and gabled ends in classic Healy, balancing a variety of diverse elements. On the second floor in front are an octagonal bay and bow, each with their articulated faux roof caps, Queen Anne towers melting into the new orderliness, vestigial vernacular elements.

This building merits a designation study. In Minneapolis the name Healy is synonymous with Victorian house, with exquisite craftsmanship, with elegant design. He has a legion of fans. Healy is our civic master builder. The Orth House, 2320 Colfax Avenue South, is an original design in a time of change and crisis. It is my belief as a historian and as a restoration, maintenance, and painting contractor, that the Orth House is a valuable Minneapolis historic resource and that it should be preserved. Thank you for your time.

**Chair Larsen:** Alright, thank you. I'll ask if the owner of the property is here and wishes to speak?

**Michael Crow:** I don't have any pretty pictures and the only history I have ...

**Chair Larsen:** Please, if you can state your name and address for the record.

**Michael Crow:** Michael Crow, 2320 Colfax Avenue South. I've owned the house for 22 years, when I bought it after it had burned in 1991. The only pictures he showed you is the only part of the house that still has anything left, and a good portion of that is not the original house. Everything on the second and third floor was completely gutted. There is 24 new doors inside of the house, they are all fire doors, metal and wood. The hardwood floors on the second and third floors are all gone, none of the original bathrooms or fixtures exist, none of the light fixtures exist. There just isn't much of the house left. Part of the outside that he showed you isn't original either. But aside from all of that, I can't, I haven't up until this point figured out exactly, I didn't even think that anybody would even care that the house was so old. So, I guess I'm kind of at a loss up here now, but anyway that's about all I've got – if you've got any questions.

**Chair Larsen:** You had provided a letter, so I appreciate that we had an opportunity to review that.

**Michael Crow:** Yah, I've been trying to sell the house for five years. The biggest reason I haven't been able to sell it is because there is nothing of the inside of intrinsic value left. The only other thing it is really good for is a rooming house that it is, and not many people want a rooming house anymore. It is actually just too much work.

**Chair Larsen:** Thank you very much. Jody, did you want to ... ok, so who here is here to speak? Alright, two minutes apiece, come on up and state your name and address for the record.

**Brian Nelson:** My name is Brian Nelson, I live at 2400 Bryant Avenue South which is a block away from this home. I, along with my wife, was personally involved in renovating six houses within one block of this home. Those six houses were either duplexes or 4-units or rooming houses, and we converted them back to single family. It was a different market time, a different time, an unusual time. We did look at this house 20 years ago to decide whether or not we could renovate it and convert it back to a single family, and we decided it would cost too much money at that time because of the fires and so on. I admire the people who are appealing this demolition permit and I admire all of you for trying to protect our historic resources. I live in a pretty significant house in the neighborhood and I live on a significant block, the 2400 block. It's not enough though to just want to save houses, we have to figure out what to do with them. This one is going to require a lot of money to bring it back to something significant. I know that's not necessarily part of why an appeal is either granted or not, but I have sympathy for the current owner. Most of us who are sitting out here are current owners, so I have sympathy for all of us in terms of what could happen to our homes. I am really not for tearing the place down, but I'm worried about what is going to end up there if it doesn't get changed. I'm worried about the new owner of a rooming house in our neighborhood. I'm worried about those things. One of the things that was in one of the newspaper articles was a concept that maybe someone from HGTV was interested in trying to figure out a way to move this. If that is foolishness, I'm disappointed. If it isn't foolishness, I'm willing to throw a thousand bucks at, for one of the permits, but I would challenge the developer to throw 20, 30, 40, 50 thousand dollars at moving it if that is what ultimately happens. Because if it is serious, certainly the bones are there in terms of the structure of the home. I'm worried about whether or not there is enough significance. Again, I admire Anders and (?) particularly for all the historic work they've done in our neighborhood. I think we've done a good job the last 30 years keeping our homes up and doing a lot of good things. Those are important. So you've got a difficult decision, I don't think I helped.

**Chair Larsen:** Alright, thank you. Is there anybody else that wishes to speak, please step forward at this time. Please state your name and address for the record.

**Brian Finstad:** Hi, my name is Brian Finstad, I live at 2618 4<sup>th</sup> Street North. I'm here to speak in favor of preserving the Orth House. I had a whole bunch of things I was going to say, but because Anders said them all I'm going to keep it much briefer, or more brief. And the first is about the condition of the house. When a lot of the information that this is based off with staff report, from the owner, from the developer, from the developer's architect, people that are paid and that have a financial interest in this property, and initially we heard over and over – it was said at the neighborhood level, it was said at the planning commission – they said that there was nothing left inside. And then we find out that, oh well, there is transoms left, and then there is a big sweeping staircase, and some beamed ceilings, and some wainscot, oh, and there's a fireplace in that room, and oh yah, original moldings in those rooms too. Pretty much the formal rooms of the first floor are intact. Another thing, when John was pointing out the siding and saying that there was a frieze here and decorative shingle there and it was clabored and there were corner boards ... that's all there. What was removed was the asbestos siding covering the original T.P. Healy façade and then the vinyl was applied to the T.P. Healy façade. I do understand that maybe there were some portions that were fire damaged, but the T.P. Healy façade isn't gone, it is there. So basically what it comes down to is I think that, you know, we are making a really serious irreversible decision about something that has significance. And we're doing it with very little understanding and very little information. As this has gone forward, like I said, the information is basically based off of self report. And we're constantly, I mean all the time, finding out where there is something new that we didn't know. And then we find out things that we thought we knew aren't true. So I feel like we're asking a decision making body to make a decision about something really serious, permanent, irrevocable, and I think we need to know a lot more than we know. And of course that gets back to the significance. I just want to point out a couple things and that a really good litmus test of significance is are people getting up here and saying this is significant because it's going to be torn down? And the answer to that is no. Anders showed that Trilbe, I think in 1981, had written that this house was sort of in an evolutionary chain of his body of work. This was his transition property, 2320 Colfax specifically. And actually before this whole controversy came up, we have a really robust online discussion group of a T.P. Healy facebook group, and we were actually discussing 2320 Colfax in terms of the body of Healy's work and how it just changed everything. The other house that John had shown that was much different from his earlier ones, that was because of 2320 Colfax. This house, literally, it was a change in point house and we were discussing that before this even ever came up. So if that isn't significance, I really don't know what is.

**Chair Larsen:** Ok, thank you. Anybody else, please step forward, state your name and address for the record.

**John Jepsen:** John Jepsen, Jepsen Incorporated, 3329 Irving Avenue South. I was able to take a look at the house as a potential of moving it, I'm a structural shoring and moving contractor, we do a lot of historic buildings and homes such as the Maywood Mansion down in Rochester, the Whitney condominium building, we recently saved from falling inward. I examined the house and it is definitely a movable house. It is a very large one to move in the city of Minneapolis. I didn't get a lot of time to examine the house to try to figure out the contents and all that, how much it weighed. But really looking through the home, and I'm not a Healy expert, let me tell you that right now. But being in so many of these old historic buildings and homes there is quite a bit of stuff that is still there. Something that people don't have pictures of, and I was able to gain access to the front area where the porch is, that entire wall, interior and exterior with some beautiful bowed windows is all 100% intact, all the corner boards on the exterior siding, beautifully mitered corners on the siding where the corner boards aren't. The interior woodwork is there, some of which is painted but some of it is still original. Kind of trying to determine how much this would weigh when I was measuring the outside of it, I pulled back a couple of the seams of the existing vinyl siding, everything underneath is the original clapboard siding with the exception of the front porch area that has been enclosed which is OSB. There really is some beautiful features that are intact in that home. Some of them are covered up and can't be seen. It's, on top of that, tearing it down, it is an estimated 180 tons of waste, not including the foundation in the landfill. Any questions?

**Chair Larsen:** I don't think so, ok, thank you, is there anybody else that wishes to speak either for or against this application, please step forward at this time.

**Marian Biehn:** Marian Biehn, Whittier Alliance. I didn't intend to speak on this topic, but I will say that if the house is in danger of being torn down or if it needs to be moved, the Whittier neighborhood has 2007 Stevens Avenue South, which is a lot and a quarter lot and a half in the historic district. Whether it is affordable or not is another question, I'm just speaking to the fact that there is a lot in an historic district that might make a good home. Thank you.

**Chair Larsen:** Thank you, alright is there anyone else that wishes to speak either for or against this application, please step forward.

**David Piehl:** David Piehl, 2137 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South which is the Hudson House in the Healy District. You might remember me from last week. I had to kind of chuckle when they talked about the fact that because it was a rooming house meant that it could never be declared historic since about four of the National Register properties on the Healy Block were rooming houses at one point and a lot more had been cut up into duplexes and triplexes. Really only about four had never been multi-plexed on the Healy Block. You know, it's been 120 years, there's been several wars and a lot of depressions, things happen with a big house. Very few are original. So that one was kind of interesting to me. Beyond that, I think that the quality of the research as noted in my letter was pretty dang low, but take it from the source it was a hire done for the developer. So I think there is a lot more research available, much of which has been shared. I know there is a lot more beyond that. I definitely support preserving the house and preserving it where it is at, if possible. It would be a sort of a consolation prize to move it, but that would be better than throwing 180 tons in the landfill. So I think it should be preserved and I think I've seen a lot worse. 3131 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave South was restored in the late '90s and that had been a 13-unit crack house for quite awhile, and it is a beautiful single family home today. And really one of the contributors to the historic district. There has been talk of a possible historic district adjacent, immediately adjacent to this property, 2320, and it occurs to me that if you start picking off all the properties around the area that could potentially be a historic district, you've just walled in a historic district with all these pock-ups that nobody wants to live next to as a single family occupied property. So I would suggest you don't let this house be demolished. It needs to stay where it's at and be renovated. I've seen worse, a lot worse.

**Chair Larsen:** Alright, thank you very much. Is there anybody else that wishes to speak for or against this application please step forward.

**Robert Hank:** Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and chairpersons, my name is Robert Hank. I live at 1820 Colfax Avenue South. I can say that I'm privileged to live in a T.P. Healy home and have enjoyed it nearly my entire life. Merely because someone was a prolific builder with 140 homes, I don't think that it is at this point we have to limit how many are allowed to remain. The simple fact that it has survived 3 fires and countless alterations is a testimony to the bones, its very essence. I think that we give it some due diligence to see if there is a way to actually restore it to its previous grandeur and allow it to continue its influence in the neighborhood in a better fashion. Truly yes, some of the homes because of their size, have been split up in perhaps less tasteful or thoughtful manner. That doesn't mean that some of that can't be undone. What can't be undone is if we simply say because so much has taken place it is time to discard this. I mean if you are going to end up setting up limits to how many homes a specific architect or builder can have, I truly hope that my home doesn't fall into that category, one that is one too many. Thank you for your time.

**Chair Larsen:** Thank you, alright is there anybody else?

**Sean Ryan:** My name is Sean Ryan, 1011 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street, I live directly across the street from the property in question. I support further examination of this historic resource. I believe much more is retained in the property than the self-reporting that Landscape Research was led to believe. Some of the key points were that windows had been changed, and things like that. Well we are in a historic building right here and there isn't one original window except for the stair landing out in the lobby. And this room here is really a recreation from a few moldings stuck behind a 1970s façade. So I think it deserves another look. Thank you.

**Chair Larsen:** Thank you. Alright, is there anybody else?

**Tom Dunn:** Hello, my name is Tom Dunn, I'm a commercial real estate broker with (?), and I do have an economic interest in seeing this transaction accomplished. I do represent the seller. But I also appreciate the historical significance of buildings and having been through this building, there really is nothing there. I mean I have to admire the passion of these people speaking about the Healy homes, and how valuable they were, but in this instance there is really nothing there. And there is economics involved as well. And to move this building and to rebuild it, it is just not economically feasible. It would be nice to think that it is, but unfortunately the highest and best use of this property for the neighborhood is as a bulwark to future development. By removing these properties that are both zoned R6, you are limiting the seller, the owner of the property, that has ran it for a number of years and been a good citizen of the neighborhood. But the thing is there just really isn't anything worth saving in the building. Being that it was a multi-family property, it has seen hard abuse. Even saving the elements that are there, it will cost money to fix what is there to get any value out of it. But I do appreciate the passion that Anders has brought forward here. And I respect it and I hope that it continues, but in this instance it just doesn't apply.

**Chair Larsen:** Ok, is there anybody else that wishes to speak for or against? No? Ok, we're going to close the public hearing. So, Commissioners, as indicated before, so before us our decision is to deny the appeal, that's one option, deny the appeal on the information provided by staff and what has been presented here, or to approve the appeal and which would turn things back to the owner of the property to make, for their consideration. In which case, if we were approving the appeal, we would be finding that we believe there would be a potential historic resource for the property. And as we look at that, certainly considering integrity and what would be looked at certainly further on as the viability for an individual landmark versus a contributing property, so I think those are considerations as well. Alright, yes, Commissioner Lindberg.

**Lindberg:** Earlier Commissioner Hunter Weir had mentioned or asked the question of asking about significance of the owner of other criteria. And just looking at the Orth name, I'm wondering about, so this is just my question amongst ourselves, if we're looking at is this a possible historic resource, how would this tie into the Orth remains that are buried below or near the Grain Belt site. Does that tie in or what significance does that bring, I guess. That's just a question I have and I don't know if staff has an answer to that, how direct this Orth family is to the Orth remains that we have.

**Smoley:** Commissioner Lindberg, Chair Larsen and members of the Commission, Edward Orth was the son of John Orth who was the founder of Orth Brewery which you correctly noted is part of our Minneapolis Brewing and

Malting Company landmark. The remnants of that Orth Brewery are part of that landmark itself, and John Orth was instrumental in the combination of the four Minneapolis breweries that formed the Minneapolis Brewing and multi-company, or Grain Belt Brewing Company. So we do technically have a landmark dedicated to the Orths. The landmark is not standing, it is archaeological remnants. But Edward Orth, taking a look at his obituary and other documents that staff could find, he appears to be most significant due to his association with his father's company which he worked in during the early part of his career, and then he branched out and went into real estate and ran an ice business here in the city of Minneapolis. But taking a look at his life in general, Edward Orth did not appear to meet the significance criterion for association with significant persons, just based upon himself alone it appears that his, the families foundation of the brewery, the Orth Brewery itself, was significant. I think it is worthwhile to note too that Edward Orth lived in a variety of residences, this was not his first home, it was not his last home either. So, just examining his significance itself, he didn't appear to rise to that level, that threshold of historical significance within the context of Minneapolis' commercial history itself.

**Chair Larsen:** Alright, Commissioner Stade.

**Stade:** Well, this is, I'm pretty conflicted about this one. I see what the owner is going through and I see the historic significance. But if I, and correct me if I am wrong here, but the way that I understand how Healy's trajectory went as a builder is that he was building these Queen Annes up to 1893 and basically they were nice houses, expensive houses, for people in the Minneapolis area. The panic hit, and he had to reinvent himself, and this house is an example of his reinvention, or he has to get smaller and adapt to a new economic reality. And I think that is a great significance argument for this building. Mr. Orth, although not very active in his father's brewery, he was pretty important in real estate in Minneapolis, so I might say that may be an argument for designation there too.

**Chair Larsen:** Alright, Commissioner Tableporter.

**Tableporter:** I suppose the thing I'm struggling with most on this is the difference in what should be a fact base of what does the inside really look like. And it's hard for us without seeing any images, we've seen a couple images but I'm wondering, and this is as much a procedural question as anything, if we could ask somebody independently to go away or if it could be done and come back with images. Is that an intermediary step we could take before making a decision or would that essentially be a decision that goes in concert with approving the appeal, in which there would be no demolition.

**Chair Larsen:** I would say that the, sort of two different questions, that landmark designations can be based on many different things and it is often the exterior that is of the primary concern. Interior, when intact, can sometimes be designated and sometimes it is just the existence of the property based on the particular criteria. So the condition of the property isn't always the only deciding factor. But it depends on if you are talking about architecture, and that's certainly where the exterior condition becomes of importance. Commissioner Hunter Weir?

**Hunter Weir:** Boy the word demolition is just about not in my vocabulary, surprise guys. So I've spent a lot of time thinking about this one and looking things up and curiously exemplified does not mean best example, it just means example. So the ordinance is a little peculiar that way. Be that as it may, the questions for me, at first I was not a 100% persuaded about the master builder piece because of the issues of alterations and so forth. I think I've been more persuaded along those lines, but I was curious from the beginning about the other criteria. The development of that neighborhood in the city, and I think it was the references to the Golden Age of architecture and when that area was sort of coming into its own. The significant persons, that's one that is always, I do local social history so the question of who is significant and who isn't is one that kind of keeps me away at night. But I do know that names like Orth, and Kenyon, and Prey you trip over every time you turn around. If you are reading local history, they are there. So they are not insignificant people in that sense. I think out of all of them, it was the neighborhood identity. And I was thinking about do they mean historically or do they mean currently? And I'm not 100% sure what the ordinance is getting at.

**Chair Larsen:** It would be towards the period of significance for the property.

**Hunter Weir:** Ok. So, in a way I think that is something that needs to be looked at because the houses do seem to have a lot in common, that there was some kind of identity within that neighborhood. I'd need a lot more time to think about it, but those were sort of the conclusions I came to. And like I say, I'm much more persuaded about the master builder if the good stuff is hidden underneath the siding and there is that much of the interior intact, I think it is worth another look.

**Chair Larsen:** Ok, Commissioner Linda Mack.

**L. Mack:** Well, it is pretty clear that Theron P. Healy is a master builder. I don't think we really need to debate that. That there are wonderful examples of his work throughout the city is certainly something to be celebrated. I don't think that means, however, that we need to preserve everything, or call, or label historic, every structure that he built. And I also don't think that we probably have to exemplify every phase of his career with a historic resource. I doubt that we do this with other architects. I know with Long and Kees we try to pick out the best examples of certain types of houses or certain types of monumental buildings and those are the ones that rise to a level that really makes them worthy of designation. I think here we are on the kind of border line of like every house has a story, I mean lots of houses have great architects. We want to have them preserved, we want every Healy house that has a wonderful owner and has been well taken care of preserved. But as John mentioned, we have a lot of historic resources that we haven't had staff resources and so forth to pursue designation. And I am personally not feeling that this is one that we should add to that list.

**Chair Larsen:** Commissioner Lindberg.

**Lindberg:** I also agree that this, both pieces, raise questions. I think a portion that doesn't help is the self-reporting that has been on both sides. You know, we don't know exactly, I mean I personally haven't toured the house. I don't know exactly what it is. It is great to see the pictures, it has an excellent story. I think it is a challenge in the reporting so I think that may kind of lead to a grander source of the city. Maybe pieces need to be stepped up, different pieces need to be clarified, maybe we need to look at ordinances and that's probably not a discussion that is going to happen in a day or two. But maybe that is something that we look at amongst ourselves as the HPC grows and matures, do we need better reporting sources. If I want to demolish something and I am a salesperson, I am going to sell you the best thing that I can either way. So I think that is a challenge for HPC, maybe we need to look at what do we consider when applications come in and what additional materials do we ask for? So I think that has just been a challenge for me, it is kind of, you know the neighborhood is great to want to save the house which is fantastic, and there is economic ... so it is a challenge.

**Chair Larsen:** Commissioner Faucher.

**Faucher:** I guess I feel that there has been a pretty compelling argument made as far as this house exemplifying a change in style for TP Healy. But my main concern is integrity and strictly speaking if we follow the National Register guidelines we can really only evaluate what we see even though we know what is behind it because some people have verified it. I have a very hard time (*gap due to turn in tapes*) so it really pains me to see this and I would encourage the owner to look into other options but I guess, again, the integrity and there is a lot there and yes you can restore a great deal of it but then how much of it is new material versus original material so that is something I think we maybe need to talk about.

**Chair Larsen:** Anybody else? Commissioner Hunter Weir.

**Hunter Weir:** Just one more comment in response to that. One of the other things I did, you can tell I had a lot of time on my hands, was I looked at the properties that have been designated specifically for that question. It was kind of how pristine were they? And the answer seems to be that there are more than a handful where it mentions in the description restoration ... rehabilitation ... that the houses had frankly not a lot to do. And one of my primo examples always, because I'm quite familiar with what it looked like in the old days, was Milwaukee Avenue, which didn't look anything like what Milwaukee Avenue does today, in its earlier iterations. So I found I would say at least a half a dozen where there was a reference to significant restoration and rehabilitation and in fact that may have been a part of why the property was designated. It is not clear, looking from the web, but ....

**Chair Larsen:** Which property?

**Hunter Weir:** I'm glad you asked.

**Chair Larsen:** Are you talking about a particular property, or ...

**Hunter Weir:** Several houses, yup.

**Chair Larsen:** So in a neighborhood, like a district?

**Hunter Weir:** No, I'm talking about several houses throughout the city. Individual houses. And I've found probably six where that was mentioned in the description on the web. So that was just kind of something I was curious about is, sort of what her standard is ... I'm kind of with Commissioner Lindberg on this one. This is kind of an oh dear, what am I thinking about here. But that was something that troubled me and I spent some time looking it up. So it has not been consistent, I guess is what I'm saying.

**Chair Larsen:** Alright, is there anybody else? Commissioner Bob Mack?

**R. Mack:** I have a couple thoughts and one is our whole conversation I think spends too much time thinking about the interior and its integrity or lack of integrity. The large majority of our designated properties are exterior only. There is only a handful of interior designations and those are mostly things like the interiors of major churches or the trading floor of the Grain Exchange. I don't know of any, and there may be a few, but I don't personally know of any residences that have interior designation. The other point is that if we grant this appeal, that doesn't mean that the house is designated. It simply means that when the owner comes and says give me a permit to demolish it, as a historic resource it will kick in a whole different process. So granting the appeal is in no way giving long term protection to the property, it simply says let's think about it more.

**Chair Larsen:** Ok, Commissioner Lackovic.

**Lackovic:** Just a couple of thoughts from the end of the row. There were two things that I thought about. One of course is condition, and I'm not nearly as concerned about the integrity because the bones are there. You can certainly tell that this is a Healy house just by looking at it and the fact that there, or the possibility that there may be things hidden beneath, that's a given, there always are. But there is such good documentation for these houses for what was there, that to bring it, you could bring it back. There is nothing that would preclude you from bringing it back other than money. But you know the house itself, condition and massing and just the overall design intent for the house is intact and as Commissioner Mack stated, typically we keep it to the exterior. And so in that sense there is nothing about the house as it is now that would prevent it from being restored back to its original condition. And you know in context, as far as the body of work, I think there has been a lot of conversation about that, that it may not exemplify his highest aspirations or the highest level of his career, but it is still a part of the body of work. And the way we judge a body of work is by setting extremes and by looking at all the examples. So it is all important, whether it is stellar or not, it is still part of the body of work and if we make those decisions to eliminate things that at this point in time that we don't feel are significant, you've now just narrowed the focus of the body of work in a way that's not realistic. So I think that on condition and context I think that this is a significant property and should be given more consideration. I think for me what it came down to was how it fits in its current location, how it fits in the district. And I think one of the comments that was raised looking forward, is this individual landmark status or does it, do you start to look at it or think about it in terms of how it fits into its location and then the possible neighboring historic district, which it was excluded from, for some reason. So for me, what it came down to for me, was the house was significant at first blush, but I don't feel I have enough information yet to make a decision for where to go with it. So I guess my inclination was to approve the appeal just so that we had some more time to really find out a little bit more about how it fits in. So I'm not sure if that was a motion, it really isn't a motion but just more thoughts to chew on.

**Chair Larsen:** Ok, anybody else? Somebody want to make a motion? We can have a little discussion based on the motion as well. Commissioner Hunter Weir.

**Hunter Weir:** I move that we approve the appeal. What more wording do we need at this point? Anything? Is that enough?

**Chair Larsen:** That's about it.

**Stade:** Second.

**Chair Larsen:** Ok, discussion on the motion? Any further discussion on the motion, alright, let's see where we go. Let's call the roll.

**Roll Call**

**Aye:** Faucher, Haecker, Hunter Weir, Lackovic, Lindberg, R. Mack, Stade, Tableporter

**Nay:** Larsen, L. Mack

**Motion Passed**