

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Certificate of Appropriateness and Historic Variances
BZH-27903

Date: October 8, 2013

Applicant: Minnesota Streetcar Museum

Address of Property: 4291 Queen Avenue South/Lake Harriet trolley/Como-Harriet streetcar line

Project Name: George K. Isaacs Streetcar Barn Expansion

Contact Person and Phone: Aaron Isaacs, 612-929-7066

CPED Staff and Phone: Aaron Hanauer, 612-673-2494

Date Application Deemed Complete: September 19, 2013

End of 60-Day Decision Period: October 29, 2013

Date Extension Letter Sent: September 27, 2013

End of 120-Day Decision Period: December 28, 2013

Ward: 13 **Neighborhood Organization:** Linden Hills Neighborhood Council

Proposed Use: Streetcar barn addition and the running of an additional streetcar (Winona 10 streetcar) on the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

Concurrent Review:

- Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for a streetcar barn addition and the running of an additional streetcar (Winona 10 streetcar) on the Como-Harriet streetcar line.
- Historic variance to allow for the expansion of a nonconforming use beyond the boundaries of the existing zoning lot.
- Historic variance to allow for development on a steep slope in the shoreland overlay district.
- Historic variance to allow for the proposed addition to be built within the side yard setback (development would be built to the property line and extend onto Minneapolis Park Board land).

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
BZH-27903

CLASSIFICATION:	
Local Historic District	Not applicable
Period of Significance	Trolley No. 1300/1908-present Track/1887-1954
Criteria of Significance	Criterion 1: cultural, economic, and social history
Date of Local Designation	1986
Date of National Register Designation	1977
Applicable Design Guidelines	Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Current name	Lake Harriet trolley/Como-Harriet streetcar line
Historic Name	Twin City Rapid Transit Streetcar No. 1300/Como-Harriet streetcar line
Current Address	4291 Queen Avenue South
Historic Address	N/A
Original Construction Date	Trolley/1908 Streetcar line/1884
Original Contractor	Twin Cities Rapid Transit Snelling Shop
Original Architect	N/A
Historic Use	Streetcar and streetcar line
Current Use	Streetcar and streetcar line
Proposed Use	Streetcar and streetcar line

HISTORIC BACKGROUND: The Como-Harriet streetcar line (once known as the Como-Harriet-Hopkins line) served southwest Minneapolis and at one point extended to downtown St. Paul to the east and Lake Minnetonka to the west. Electric streetcars began running to Lake Harriet in 1891. John W. Diers and Aaron Isaacs provide a visual description of the Como-Harriet-Hopkins streetcar line in their book, *Twin Cities By Trolley*:

“Como-Harriet-Hopkins was the longest line in the Twin Cities Rapid Transit system and the most scenic, traversing some of the most beautiful neighborhoods in the Twin Cities. While many people rode the Como-Harriet just for the experience, many more people took it to work downtown or to classes at the University of Minnesota. At rush hour there would be more than fifty cars on the line, enough to move more than 6,000 people at any one time.” The Como-Harriet streetcar line and all Twin Cities Rapid Transit Company (TCRT) streetcar lines ended in 1954 when buses became the mode of public transportation.”

In 1969, the Minnesota Transportation Museum, with the assistance of the Minneapolis Park Board, started a project to relay a single track along the original Como-Harriet-Hopkins streetcar line right of way. In 1971, the Museum began operating the fully restored Streetcar No. 1300 along a half mile stretch. This line was extended to be a mile in length and runs from the west shore of Lake Harriet to the east shore of Lake Calhoun. Passengers board the streetcars from an original platform at the intersection of West 42nd Street and Queen Avenue South.

Streetcar No. 1300 was built in Saint Paul in 1908 as part of an order for faster cars to be used on the St. Paul-Minneapolis Interurban line (University Avenue). The car was frequently used on the Como-Harriet Line in its 46 years of service. Today, the car appears as it did in the early 1930s following rebuilding to allow one or two man operation (Source: Minnesota Transportation Museum brochure). After the end of streetcar operations in 1954, Streetcar No. 1300 was donated intact to the Minnesota Railfan's Association, a predecessor of the Minnesota Streetcar Museum.

The Como-Harriet streetcar line was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977 and locally designated in 1986. The contributing features of the Como-Harriet streetcar line include the tracks, right of way, TCRT Streetcar No. 1300, the Cottage City Stop, and the Queen Avenue South pedestrian bridge near the Linden Hills Depot.

The Minnesota Streetcar Museum was created in December, 2004, as part of the restructuring of the Minnesota Transportation Museum which "spun off" its streetcar and steamboat operations at that time. Today, the Minnesota Streetcar Museum oversees the operation of the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

In 2000, a second streetcar began running on the Como-Harriet streetcar line, The Presidents' Conference Committee (PCC) Streetcar No. 322. Streetcar No. 322 was built by the St. Louis Car Company in 1946. The PCC car was developed by the electric railway industry to allow it to compete with the automobile. No. 322 was sold by the TCRT Company in 1953 for use in the Newark, New Jersey city subway. It was sold again in 1978 for use on the Shaker Heights Rapid Transit system in Cleveland, Ohio. The Minnesota Transportation Museum acquired the car in 1990 and worked on restoring the car for the next 10 years.

Streetcar No. 1300 and No. 322 are stored in a streetcar barn that is located below the Queen Avenue/Linden Hills Boulevard Bridge (where Queen Avenue South, Linden Hills Boulevard and West Lake Harriet Parkway meet). The barn was originally constructed in 1970. Additions were completed in 1979, 1984, and 1996.

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL: There are two parts to the applicant's project: a streetcar barn addition and allowing an additional streetcar to run on the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

The streetcar barn addition is proposed to be a 950 square foot expansion to the noncontributing metal streetcar carbarn that dates back to the 1970s. The existing structure is 3,235 square feet. The addition would be located on the east side of the streetcar barn (towards West Lake Harriet Parkway). It would be 62 feet long and 19.6 feet wide at its widest point. The height of the addition is proposed to be 13 feet at its tallest point. This is lower than the existing structure that is 14 feet – 8 inches. Like the existing streetcar barn, the addition is proposed to have a vertical metal clad exterior without windows. The addition is proposed to be located on the 50-foot wide streetcar right of way that is now owned by the City of Minneapolis (today the right of way addresses as 4291 Queen Avenue South) and expand onto Minneapolis Park Board land (the Park Board land addresses as 4525 Upton Avenue South). The applicant points out that when the original streetcar barn was constructed in 1970, and when it was expanded in 1977, the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park Board and the Minnesota Transportation Museum all believed the 50-foot wide streetcar right of way was owned by the Park Board. Later, it was discovered that the streetcar right of way was owned by the City of Minneapolis.

The applicant has been working with the Park Board and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District staff to minimize the visual and physical impact of the addition. Given the proposed height and location, the addition will not be viewable from Queen Avenue South. The addition is shorter and narrower than the existing structure (the existing structure is approximately 100 linear feet at its longest point), which will not increase its horizontal massing when viewing it from Lake Harriet and West Lake Harriet Parkway. The applicant is also designing the building to slow down stormwater runoff from the addition towards Lake Harriet.

The applicant states that the proposed addition serves four purposes:

1. Storage of a small track maintenance car. This is currently stored in the rear of the carbarn. The applicant points out that whenever the maintenance car is needed, they need to move two streetcars to the other track to get them out of the way, which is time-consuming and inconvenient. By placing the maintenance cars in the new addition on their own track, they can be deployed without moving any streetcars, so the inconvenience is eliminated.
2. Additional storage space for an additional historic streetcar (Winona No. 10) that will run on the Como-Harriet streetcar line.
3. Additional space for streetcar maintenance and restoration.
4. Room for a museum office/archive room, to house records of streetcar maintenance and restoration, parts inventories and historic paper files. There is currently no room in any Museum building to house these items.

The second part of this project is to have an additional historic streetcar run along the Como-Harriet streetcar line. Like Streetcar No. 322, Winona No. 10 was manufactured by the St. Louis Car Company. It is a smaller streetcar built in 1913 that ran in Winona until 1938. After its service in Winona, its body was used as a cabin for 62 years. The Minnesota Streetcar Museum purchased the streetcar in 1999 and has been restoring it at their Excelsior carbarn.

ZONING BACKGROUND: The property at 4291 Queen Avenue South is owned by the City of Minneapolis and the property at 4525 Upton Avenue South is owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreational Board. Both properties are zoned R1/Single-Family District and are in the SH/Shoreland Overlay District.

In 1996, the Minnesota Transportation Museum received a conditional use permit for an addition that expanded the streetcar barn to its current dimensions (C-1778). At that time, the Minneapolis Planning Department allowed for a conditional use permit to be applied for by referencing Section 538.140 [4], Conditional Uses of the Minneapolis zoning code. The conditional use permit was approved and the addition was built.

The Minneapolis zoning code has been updated since the processing of the conditional use permit application in 1996. The current zoning code does not allow a streetcar car barn or museum as a permitted or conditional uses in the R1 zoning district (Table 546-1). Therefore, an expansion of a streetcar barn at 4291 Queen Avenue South is not allowed by right or allowed to be applied for through a conditional use permit application.

Since the streetcar barn structure is not a permitted or conditional use, but was lawfully established, it is considered a legal nonconforming structure. A lawfully established nonconforming use may continue so long as it remains otherwise lawful, but may not be expanded without City approval as outlined in Chapters 525 and 531 of the Minneapolis zoning code. Section 531.50 of the Minneapolis zoning code, however, does not allow for legally nonconforming structures to be expanded across the boundaries of a zoning lot. Therefore, an expansion of a streetcar barn at 4291 Queen Avenue South that would be expanded on to the property at 4525 Upton Avenue South is not allowed to be applied for through an expansion of nonconforming use application.

CPED made the determination that the applicant could apply for a historic variance for the expansion onto another property given that the proposed addition would allow for storage of a maintenance vehicle that is essential for the preservation of a local landmark, the Como-Harriet streetcar line, additional room for the maintenance on the TCRT Streetcar No. 1300, as well as for the storage of an additional historic streetcar for the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

Compliance with applicable building codes and obtaining a building permit is also required in addition to needing approval of the historic variances. The applicant will need to work with the Construction Code Services Office to identify any code issues and to process the necessary permit(s).

PUBLIC COMMENT: The applicant has received community support for the project. On July 25, 2013, the Park Board and the Minnesota Streetcar Museum held an open house at Linden Hills Park for residents living near the streetcar barn. The attendees supported the project. On August 13, 2013, the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council voted unanimously to support the streetcar barn expansion project. On September 13, 2013, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board submitted a letter of support for the project stating the following:

The Minnesota Streetcar Museum (MSM) approached the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) staff with a concept for the proposed expansion in late 2011. Since then, our

organizations have collaborated to refine the proposal, minimize visual and physical impacts and develop innovative stormwater management strategies that exceed Minnehaha Creek Watershed District requirements. The proposal is consistent with MPRB policies and goals.

MSM has been a valued partner of MPRB since the 1970's. MSM's events and programs conducted at their Lake Harriet location contribute to parks and to the community. MSM is a good neighbor and maintains the "Como-Harriet" rail corridor in coordination with MPRB. The proposed addition is important to MSM's continued operation and will expand the Museum's capacity as a steward of historic resources.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: to allow for a streetcar car barn addition and the running of an additional streetcar (Winona 10 streetcar) on the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

Findings as required by the Minneapolis Preservation Code:

The Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Department has analyzed the application based on the findings required by the Minneapolis Preservation Ordinance. Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

(1) The alteration is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark or historic district was designated.

The Como-Harriet streetcar line and TCRT Streetcar No. 1300 are significant and locally designated for their association with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history (Criterion 1). The Twin Cities Rapid Transit system was once an extensive public transportation system and played a profound role in shaping where development took place in Minneapolis. The period of significance for the tracks is 1887-1954 and the period of significance for the trolley is 1908 to the present. The proposed addition on a noncontributing streetcar car barn and the running of an early 20th century Minnesota streetcar is compatible with and will continue to support the criteria of significance and the period of significance. The streetcar car barn addition will allow more room to store the train track maintenance equipment, complete maintenance on the existing historic streetcars (TCRT No. 1300 and PCC No. 322), and the storage of an additional streetcar (Winona No. 10).

(2) The alteration is compatible with and supports the interior and/or exterior designation in which the property was designated.

The proposed addition on a noncontributing streetcar car barn and the running of an early 20th century Minnesota streetcar is compatible with and will continue to support the exterior designation in which the property was designated. The Twin Cities Rapid Transit system was once an extensive public transportation system and played a profound role in shaping where development took place in Minneapolis. The proposed addition will allow additional room for train track maintenance equipment, additional space for maintenance on the streetcars, and the storage of another early 20th century Minnesota streetcar, Winona No.10.

(3) The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the landmark or historic district for which the district was designated.

Both the City of Minneapolis' Heritage Preservation Regulations and the National Register of Historic Places identify integrity as the authenticity of historic properties and recognize seven aspects that define a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Based upon the evidence provided below, the proposed work, as conditioned, is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the historic district.

Location: The applicant is not proposing to change the location of the Como-Harriet streetcar line or TCRT Streetcar No. 1300, thus the project will not impair the landmark's integrity of location.

Design: The proposed project will not have an adverse impact on the landmark's design. The proposed design is similar to the existing car barn with vertical metal cladding. The proposed addition will not impact the spatial relationship of the right of way and the applicant has designed it to minimize the visibility from Queen Avenue South, Lake Harriet Parkway, and Lake Harriet.

Setting: The proposed project will not have an adverse impact on the landmark's setting. As previously mentioned, the proposed addition would not disturb the Como-Harriet streetcar line right of way. In addition, the applicant is proposing to minimize the visibility of the streetcar barn from the picturesque setting surrounding the Como-Harriet streetcar line's boundaries.

Materials: The proposed materials of the addition will not adversely impact the Como-Harriet streetcar line. The applicant is proposing that the addition have a simple metal building without windows to match the existing noncontributing structure.

Workmanship: The proposed project will not have an impact on the workmanship of the Como-Harriet streetcar line. The proposed addition is taking place on a noncontributing structure and is sympathetic to the landmark, the landmark's contributing features, and the surrounding area's picturesque setting.

Feeling: The proposed project would not have an adverse impact on the landmark's ability to evoke the historic and scenic sense of the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

Association: The proposed project would support the ability of the landmark to retain its transportation significance. The proposed addition will allow for efficient storage of maintenance equipment for the streetcar tracks, more room to perform maintenance on the existing streetcars and allow for room to store an additional historic streetcar along the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

- (4) **The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the applicable design guidelines adopted by the commission.**

Not applicable. Design guidelines were not adopted by the commission for the Como-Harriet streetcar line.

- (5) **The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the recommendations contained in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.**

The streetcar car barn addition and running of Winona No.10 streetcar will be consistent with the following Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

- (6) **The certificate of appropriateness conforms to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable preservation policies in small area plans adopted by the city council.**

As stated in Findings No.1 through No.5, CPED is supportive of the proposed addition and allowing the Winona No.10 streetcar to run on the Como-Harriet streetcar line. The certificate of appropriateness for the proposed project will conform to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and would be consistent with the following policies of the comprehensive plan.

- Policy 7.1: Promote the physical and mental health of residents and visitors by recognizing that safe outdoor amenities and spaces support exercise, play, relaxation and socializing. Implementation Step 7.1.4 Ensure open spaces provide peaceful, meditative, and relaxing areas as well as social, recreational, and exercise opportunities.
- Policy 7.5: Protect landscapes that are significant to the historic legacy of Minneapolis, the region and state, and preserve and expand artistic features in publicly accessed open spaces.

- Preservation policy 8.1: Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city's architecture, history, and culture. The proposed work will help preserve the historic building by allowing for adaptive reuse. These actions will not impair the building's integrity of design. (Implementation Step 8.1.1) City shall protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance.
- Preservation policy 8.8: Preserve neighborhood character by preserving the quality of the built environment. (Implementation Step 8.8.1) Preserve and maintain the character and quality of residential neighborhoods with regulatory tools such as the zoning code and housing maintenance code.

- (7) **Destruction of any property. Before approving a certificate of appropriateness that involves the destruction, in whole or in part, of any landmark, property in an historic district or nominated property under interim protection, the commission shall make findings that the destruction is necessary to correct an unsafe or dangerous condition on the property, or that there are no reasonable alternatives to the destruction. In determining whether reasonable alternatives exist, the commission shall consider, but not be limited to, the significance of the property, the integrity of the property and the economic value or usefulness of the existing structure, including its current use, costs of renovation and feasible alternative uses. The commission may delay a final decision for a reasonable period of time to allow parties interested in preserving the property a reasonable opportunity to act to protect it.**

The project does not involve the destruction of the property. The applicant is proposing an addition to a noncontributing portion of the local landmark and the addition of a historic Minnesota streetcar.

Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings that alterations are proposed in a manner that demonstrates that the Applicant has made adequate consideration of the following documents and regulations:

- (8) **Adequate consideration of the description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which designation of the landmark or historic district was based.**

The proposed alteration demonstrates that the applicant has made adequate consideration of the original nomination. The applicant has designed the proposed addition in a sensitive manner to the important elements of the landmark designation and the surrounding park area. Allowing the Winona No.10 streetcar to run on the Como-Harriet streetcar line will bring more attention to the significance of streetcars in Minneapolis and statewide. The applicant's project will not adversely impact the landmark's contributing structures which includes the tracks, the right of way, TCRT Streetcar No. 1300, the Cottage City Stop, and the Queen Avenue South pedestrian bridge.

- (9) **Where applicable, Adequate consideration of Title 20 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Zoning Code, Chapter 530, Site Plan Review.**

The proposed project will not require a site plan review application.

- (10) **The typology of treatments delineated in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the associated guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, reconstructing, and restoring historic buildings.**

The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation recommend that landscape features that are important in defining the historic character of the setting be preserved. The applicant's proposed streetcar carbarn addition will not have an adverse impact on the setting of the Como-Harriet streetcar line or on the parkland setting to the east.

HISTORIC VARIANCE: to allow for the expansion of a nonconforming use beyond the boundaries of the existing zoning lot.

Before recommending approval of a Historic Variance, the Commission shall make the following findings:

- 1. The variance is compatible with the preservation of the property and with other properties in the area.**

The applicant's proposal is compatible with the preservation of the property. Allowing the streetcar carbarn addition to slightly expand the boundaries of the existing zoning lot will allow for additional room to efficiently store train track maintenance equipment and another historic streetcar. It will also allow more room for the maintenance on the existing historic streetcars. Streetcar No. 1300 is recognized by the local designation as a contributing feature to the designation (Streetcar No. 322 was added to the landmark after the local designation in 1986).

The applicant's proposal is also compatible with other properties in the area. The uses closest to the Como-Harriet streetcar line are West Lake Harriet Parkway and Lake Harriet to the east and low density residential to the west and south. The applicant has taken measures to minimize the visibility of the structure from these areas. The addition will not be visible from Queen Avenue South to the west and it will have minimal visibility from West Lake Harriet Parkway and Lake Harriet. The applicant is proposing to expand the building to the east in order to not expand the width of the carbarn.

- 2. The variance is necessary to alleviate undue hardship due to special conditions or circumstances unique to the property and not created by the applicant.**

The variance is necessary to alleviate undue hardship due to special conditions or unique circumstances unique to the property that were not created by the applicant. The subject property is zoned R1, Single Family District and contains a legally nonconforming streetcar barn. The first zoning district that allows for train cars to be warehoused is the I1, Light Industrial District.

Rezoning this property to I1 in order to allow the proposed use would not be consistent with the adopted policies of the comprehensive plan, *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*.

In addition, the variance is needed to allow the Minnesota Streetcar Museum the ability to efficiently store their historic streetcars and maintenance equipment. When the Twin Cities Rapid Transit Company was in operation, streetcars and maintenance equipment were stored in carbarns that were primarily in nonresidential areas. This is not possible today, as the Como-Harriet streetcar line is a standalone streetcar line without supportive storage facilities.

Furthermore, as the applicant points out, when the landmark was listed on the National Register (1977) and became a local landmark (1986), the City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Park Board, and Minnesota Transportation Museum thought the Como-Harriet streetcar line was on Park Board land. If the area where the existing streetcar barn was owned by the Park Board, the applicant would have been able to apply for an expansion of nonconforming use that would allow for the addition.

HISTORIC VARIANCE: to allow for development on a steep slope in the shoreland overlay district.

Before recommending approval of a Historic Variance, the Commission shall make the following findings:

1. The variance is compatible with the preservation of the property and with other properties in the area.

The applicant's proposed streetcar carbarn addition is compatible with the preservation of the property. Allowing the streetcar carbarn addition to develop on a steep slope, while keeping environmental concerns in mind, will allow for additional room to efficiently store train track maintenance equipment which is needed to maintain the tracks for the Como-Harriet streetcar line, and more room for the maintenance on the existing historic streetcars. The expansion will also allow for the storage of an additional historic Minnesota streetcar.

As conditioned, the applicant's proposal is compatible with other properties in the area. The subject property and the Park Board land is in the SH Shoreland Overlay District. The purpose of the Shoreland Overlay District is to preserve and enhance the environmental qualities of surface waters and the natural and economic values of shoreland areas within the city, to provide for the efficient and beneficial utilization of those waters and shoreland areas, to comply with the requirements of state law regarding the management of shoreland areas, and to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

The proposed addition is at the top of a steep slope (20 percent slope) and would be located 141 feet from Lake Harriet. There are ten trees that are proposed to be removed in association with this project. Those trees proposed to be removed are those that have a root system that will be impacted by the building construction and grading, including excavation for the stormwater management system. The applicant states that the current tree mitigation plan includes the plating of three 2.5"

caliper trees (New Horizon Elm). CPED is recommending the following conditions of approval for the development within the shoreland overlay district:

- Final plans shall show that the foundation and underlying material are adequate for the slope condition and soil type.
- Final plans shall show that precautionary measures are in place to prevent falling rock, mud, uprooted trees or other materials.
- The applicant shall work with the Minneapolis Park Board to evaluate whether additional trees are required to shield the building from Lake Harriet and West Lake Harriet Parkway to an existing level.

2. The variance is necessary to alleviate undue hardship due to special conditions or circumstances unique to the property and not created by the applicant.

The variance is necessary to alleviate undue hardship due to special conditions or circumstances unique to the property and not created by the applicant. Storage for the streetcars and maintenance equipment is required for this historic landmark in order to protect them from the natural elements. When the Twin Cities Rapid Transit Company was in operation, streetcars and maintenance equipment were stored in streetcar barns that were typically located on nonresidential lots. This is not possible for the Como-Harriet streetcar line as it is a standalone streetcar line that requires storage facilities on site.

HISTORIC VARIANCE: to allow for the proposed addition to be built within the side yard setback (development would be built to the property line and extend onto Minneapolis Park Board land).

Before recommending approval of a Historic Variance, the Commission shall make the following findings:

1. The variance is compatible with the preservation of the property and with other properties in the area.

The applicant's proposal is compatible with the preservation of the property. The side yard setback for a nonresidential structure in the R1 zoning district is five feet. The applicant is proposing to build to the property line and extend 14 feet - 5 inches onto Minneapolis Park Board land at its furthest point. Allowing the addition to expand to the subject property's property line and onto the neighboring parcel will allow for additional room to efficiently store train track maintenance equipment, and additional room to perform maintenance on the historic Minneapolis streetcars.

The applicant's proposal is compatible with other properties in the area. The Minneapolis Park Board land, where the proposed addition would be partially located, is a large parcel (14 acres). This parcel includes the green space between Queen Avenue South and West Lake Harriet Parkway. The location of the proposed addition is away from residential structures to the west and will be a minimum of 37 feet from West Lake Harriet Parkway and 141 feet from Lake Harriet. Furthermore, the applicant is proposing to improve the stormwater runoff of the carbarn and complete a tree replacement plan for the trees impacted by the addition.

2. The variance is necessary to alleviate undue hardship due to special conditions or circumstances unique to the property and not created by the applicant.

The variance is necessary to alleviate undue hardship due to special conditions or circumstances unique to the property and not created by the applicant. Storage for the historic streetcars and maintenance equipment is required for this historic landmark in order to protect them from the natural elements and to complete maintenance. When the Twin Cities Rapid Transit Company was in operation, streetcars and maintenance equipment were stored in streetcar barns typically in nonresidential areas. This is not possible as the Como-Harriet streetcar line is a standalone streetcar line without supportive storage facilities. The applicant is not able to build the addition within the parcel's setback for two reasons:

1. The Park Board will not permit an addition that increases the horizontal mass of the building when viewed from Queen Avenue South or from West Lake Harriet Parkway. If the addition was built on the northern side of the streetcar barn, it would increase its horizontal massing.
2. According to the applicant, a building addition in front of the existing structure would be impractical. The small rail cars used for track and overhead wire maintenance are currently stored in the rear of the westernmost carbarn track. Whenever they are needed, the Minnesota Streetcar Museum has to move two streetcars to the other track to get them out of the way. This is time-consuming and inconvenient. By placing the maintenance cars in the new addition on their own track, they can be deployed without moving any streetcars, so the inconvenience is eliminated.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development for the Certificate of Appropriateness:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the certificate of appropriateness to allow for a streetcar carbarn addition and the running of an additional streetcar (Winona 10 streetcar) on the Como-Harriet streetcar line at 4291 Queen Avenue South, subject to the following conditions:

1. By ordinance, approvals are valid for a period of two years from the date of the decision unless required permits are obtained and the action approval is substantially begun and proceeds in a continuous basis toward completion. Upon written request and for good cause, the planning director may grant up to a one year extension if the request is made in writing no later than October 8, 2015.
2. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this certificate of appropriateness shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this certificate of appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.

3. Department of Community Planning and Economic Development staff shall review and approve the final plans and elevations prior to building permit issuance.

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development for the Historic Variance:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the historic variance to allow for the expansion of a nonconforming use beyond the boundaries of the existing zoning lot at 4291 Queen Avenue South, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approvals for this historic variance shall expire if they are not acted upon within two years of approval, unless extended by the planning director.
2. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this historic variance shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this certificate of appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development for the Historic Variance:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the historic variance to allow for development on a steep slope in the shoreland overlay district at 4291 Queen Avenue South, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approvals for this historic variance shall expire if they are not acted upon within two years of approval, unless extended by the planning director.
2. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this historic variance shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this certificate of appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.
3. Final plans shall show that the foundation and underlying material are adequate for the slope condition and soil type.
4. Final plans shall show that precautionary measures are in place to prevent falling rock, mud, uprooted trees or other materials.

5. The applicant shall work with the Minneapolis Park Board to evaluate on whether additional trees are required to shield the building from Lake Harriet and West Lake Harriet Parkway to an existing level.

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development for the Historic Variance:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the historic variance to allow for the proposed streetcar car barn addition to be built within the side yard setback (development would be built to the property line and extend onto Minneapolis Park Board land) at 4291 Queen Avenue South, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approvals for this historic variance shall expire if they are not acted upon within two years of approval, unless extended by the planning director.
2. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this historic variance shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this certificate of appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.

Attachments:

- Zoning map
- Aerials
- Streetcar background (TCRT 1300, PCC No. 322, Winona No. 10)
- PDR report
- Project narrative and statement to findings
- Notification: Council member and neighborhood
- Letters of Support: Minneapolis Park Board letter and Linden Hills Neighborhood Council
- Project overview and Minneapolis Park Board presentation
- Plan set: existing condition site plan, stormwater management plan, tree plan, elevations, and floor plan