

**CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS
CPED PLANNING DIVISION
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

FILE NAME: 520 Second Street SE, 520 ½ Second Street SE, 110 5th Avenue SE

DATE OF APPLICATION: 7/21/04

APPLICANT: Bluff Street Development LLC for Lupe Development Partners

DATE OF HEARING: 8/10/04

HPC SITE/DISTRICT: St. Anthony Falls Historic District

CATEGORY: contributing

CLASSIFICATION: Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition

STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Amy Lucas

DATE: 7/30/04

A. SITE DESCRIPTION:

The three buildings located at 520 Second Street SE, 520 ½ Second Street SE and 110 5th Avenue SE sit within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The three buildings sit mid-block between Fifth Avenue SE and Sixth Avenue SE on the river side of the street. The rear of the buildings face the Mississippi River and are backed with rows of railroad tracks that spur into the Pillsbury “A” Mill complex on the northern blocks. The buildings on this block were all designed to accommodate the rear rail yard and many have their original loading docks and large garage doors.

129 Sixth Avenue SE: The two-story brick building on the corner of Second Street and Sixth Avenue is currently operated by the W.D. Forbes Company. Forbes also has one and two-story manufacturing buildings across Second Street. The building located at 129 6th Avenue SE was constructed in 1884 as the Shepard Manufacturing Company which manufactured broom handles. A rear addition was added after 1947. This building will remain on the site under continued ownership of the Forbes Company. The proposed new construction will abut this building.

520 ½ Second Street SE: The building located at 520 ½ Second Street SE sits between 520 Second and the corner building on 6th Avenue SE (Forbes building, 129 Sixth Ave SE). This one-story, red brick building was constructed in 1892 as an addition to the Union Railway Storage Company complex which began operation on this block in approximately 1883. The elevation facing Second Street has received new windows with brick infill and the central garage door has been filled with brick and a window. The elevation facing the river and railroad tracks retains original integrity. The elevation facing the tracks is raised to accommodate load transfers from trains and has a large garage door. The location of the building was specifically chosen for the proximity to the railroad and the design reflects the industrial use of the historical period. As the rail yards disappear and the riverfront is redeveloped few historical warehouse type buildings survive.

520 Second Street SE: The building located at 520 Second Street SE is a two-story, red brick building with a central garage door opening. The building was constructed in 1945 for the Minneapolis Equipment Company and was used as a machinery repair shop. The brick veneer faces Second Street and the rear of the building is concrete block facing the river and the railroad tracks. The elevation facing the tracks is raised to accommodate load transfers from trains and has a large garage door. Previous buildings on this property were built and operated by the Union Railway Storage Company.

110 Fifth Avenue SE (518 Second Street SE): The building located at 110 Fifth Avenue SE is at the opposite corner of the block. The property is currently owned by the Soap Factory art gallery (a.k.a. No Name Gallery). The applicant is applying for the demolition of a small portion of this building which sits at 518 Second Street SE; the owner has made arrangements with the Soap Factory owners to demolish a portion of their building. This one-story concrete block building measures 30' by 24' and was constructed in 1938. The building is an early two-car garage with a brick lintel over the doors. The applicant is also applying for the removal of the loading dock behind the garage. The loading dock is attached to the rear of building at 110 5th Avenue SE which was constructed in 1883. It is unclear how the applicant will treat this early warehouse which is part of the Soap Factory property. The Soap Factory building owners will retain ownership of the remainder of the building. The Soap Factory building was constructed in 1883 for the Union Railway Storage Company and has a later 1892 addition also. These historic buildings will abut the proposed new development.

The street faces of these buildings are all at the same alignment against the sidewalk edge. This wall of historic one and two-story masonry buildings creates a viewscape that continues into the next few blocks of Second Street with the historic Herzog buildings.

A single-family, two-story residence with a two-story carriage house sits directly across the street at 204 Fifth Avenue SE. The Tuttle-Chapman House was constructed in 1885. The building next to the residence is a one story steel warehouse which was constructed in 1956 for Butler Manufacturing Company. The historic district boundary is along Sixth Avenue SE, but the historic viewscape continues along the block south of Second with the long two-story brick building built in 1890 for the Herzog Iron Manufacturing Company (a.k.a. American Bridge Company Plant).

B. BACKGROUND:

Historical research is attached to the application. This research was completed by Scott D. McGinnis for the applicant as part of the EAW process.

The St. Anthony Falls Historic District Nomination was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in March of 1971, and that same year, the Minnesota State Legislature established a state historic district with the same name and boundaries. The legislature also authorized the creation of the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC), assigning it design review powers within the state's St. Anthony Falls Historic District. In the fall of 1977, the municipally-funded Riverfront Development Coordination Board (RDCB) sponsored the first intensive architectural survey of the historic district and published their findings in the book, *St. Anthony Falls Rediscovered*. This book specifically cites the buildings located at 520 ½ Second Street SE and 110 Fifth Avenue SE. This survey divided the historic district into five "thematic" neighborhoods and developed design guidelines for each of these districts. This current application sits within the "East Side Milling Area" of the design guidelines which were adopted by the HPC.

The St. Anthony Falls Historic District Nomination was completed in 1971 and discussed the importance of 14 contributing buildings in the district. In 1991, the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office provided funds for further research in the district and provided information on 20 more contributing buildings in the district. Many of the structures in the historic district have not been individually evaluated by the National Register Keeper. The period of significance for the St. Anthony Falls Historic District begins with the construction of the Falls of St. Anthony Dam in 1858 and concludes with the construction of the Hydraulic Laboratory on Hennepin Island in 1940.

Susan Roth, National Register Historian, submitted an email regarding these three properties on July 22, 2004. (See attached) Roth writes “these resources may not be directly associated with lumber and flour milling, they nonetheless contributed to the overall economic vitality of the historic district.”

C. PROPOSED CHANGES:

The applicant is applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the three buildings located at 520 Second Street SE, 520 ½ Second Street SE and 518 Second Street SE (part of 110 Fifth Avenue SE). The applicant would like to replace these buildings with an eight-story condominium building. (See separate staff report for new construction proposal.)

D. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

Title 23, Chapter 599.350 (b) of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances states:

(b) *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.

ST. ANTHONY FALLS HISTORIC DISTRICT GUIDELINES (June 1980)

An addition to "District Guidelines for Utilization" (adopted April 18, 1978)

Preamble

The St. Anthony Falls Historic District is a varied area that includes structures of historical significance (e.g. mills), some that are architecturally distinguished (e.g. Our Lady of Lourdes), buildings that contribute to the historicity of the district (e.g. Salisbury Mattress Co., now Main Place), some non-contributive buildings (e.g. Post Office Parking Ramp), and also a great deal of open space. Traditional, uniform regulations are not adequate because of this variety. Instead, the HPC has divided the district into sub-areas that contain structures with common features and that share common concerns.

Purpose

The purpose of the Heritage Preservation Commission in following these regulations for permit review is to provide architectural control and maintenance of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District by promulgating regulations governing construction and rehabilitation for the preservation, protection and perpetuation of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District designated by the State of Minnesota.

These regulations apply to any and all new construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings and structures within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

The furthermore are intended to:

- 1) preserve the memory of past events
- 2) encourage sympathetic new development

- 3) encourage and enable access to the river
- 4) foster along the riverfront and adjacent areas a viable community geared to the pedestrian.

General Regulations

Infill construction shall be visually compatible with historic structures within the sub-area with regard to siting, height, proportions of facade, walls of continuity, rhythm of projections, directional emphasis, materials, nature of openings, texture, roof shapes, details, and color.

The Heritage Preservation Commission shall review all permit requests according to the standards established in the regulations. Variances to these regulations will be granted only in cases where an applicant clearly demonstrates that an alternative design is a superior and compatible solution.

H. Left (East) Bank Milling

This area is bounded by Central Avenue, University Avenue and Sixth Avenue Southeast, excluding the block bounded by University Avenue, Sixth Avenue Southeast, Second Street Southeast, and Fifth Avenue Southeast.

1. Siting: New buildings shall be constructed with principal elevations in line with the facades of existing buildings. New construction shall continue to form a visual wall along the street.
2. Height: New buildings to be no higher than that of existing silo-mills in the area.
3. Rhythm of Projections: There shall be no major projections on the principal facades, since there is no consistent pattern of projections of the existing buildings.
4. Directional Emphasis: The existing buildings have both vertical window bays and horizontal belt courses, resulting in a non-directional emphasis. Therefore, new construction also shall have no strong directional emphasis.
5. Materials: The exterior surface of new buildings shall be constructed of brick, stone or concrete.
6. Nature of Openings: Openings should appear in a consistent and repeated pattern across the principal facades. Window openings should be approximately 2-1/2 to 3 times as tall as they are wide. Doors and windows should be set toward the front of the openings but should not be flush with the masonry surface. "Storefront" construction may be used on the first floor.
7. Roof Shapes: New buildings should have flat or nearly flat roofs.
8. Details: New buildings should have some emphasis given to the upper termination of the building. Where other surface treatment is used, it should reflect details from other buildings.
9. Color: The primary surfaces of new buildings should be deep red or buff, similar to the existing unpainted buildings. Trim should be subdued earth tones or flat black.

E. FINDINGS:

1. The demolition of the three buildings is not necessary to correct an unsafe or dangerous condition.
2. The applicant has not presented evidence that reasonable alternatives to the demolition were studied.
3. The applicant has not provided a cost analysis of the costs of renovation.
4. The current value of the buildings against the proposed use is difficult to determine without further information from the applicant. These buildings are currently being used.
5. The historic district guidelines note that applications should “preserve the memory of past events” and “encourage sympathetic new development.” Demolition of historic resources does not preserve the past and is not sympathetic to the historic district.
6. The building located at 520 ½ Second Street SE was constructed during the period of significance for the historic district. The design and the location reflect the early era of the historic district and this example remains well preserved.
7. The building located at 520 Second Street SE was constructed outside the period of significance, but the industrial character, materials, design and scale of the building are compatible with the surrounding character of the historic district.
8. The building located at 518 Second Street SE was constructed during the period of significance. The scale and design of the building and its loading dock reflect the industrial character of the historic district.
9. All three buildings are compatible with the design, scale, proportions and materials of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. These three buildings characterize the early industrial uses along the riverfront and contribute to the story and historic building fabric of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.
10. These three buildings also contribute to the historic viewscape along the river side of Second Street SE which maintains one and two-story masonry buildings aligned against the sidewalk edge.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the HPC adopt staff findings and **deny** the Certificate of Appropriateness.