

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

Design Guidelines

Date: February 23, 2010

Proposal: Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines

Applicant: City of Minneapolis CPED

Address of Property: Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District

Planning Staff and Phone: Brian Schaffer, 612.673.2670

Publication Date: February 23, 2010

Public Hearing: March 2, 2010

Ward: Wards 5 & 7

Neighborhood Organization: North Loop Neighborhood Association
Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association

Attachments: Attachment A: Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District
Design Guidelines

Attachment B: Letter from Minnesota State Historic Preservation
Office – October 9, 2009

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Background

On January 13, 2009 the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) nominated the National Register of the Historic Places (NRHP) Minneapolis Warehouse District for local designation and called on the Planning Director to commence a designation study of the district. On December 4, 2009 the Minneapolis City Council passed a resolution adopting the Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District as a local historic.

During the designation study process CPED initiated the development of design guidelines for the Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District. Design guidelines for historic districts are required by the Preservation chapter of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinance, Chapter 599.

Public Process and Engagement

Public engagement on the design guidelines has involved many outlets. CPED has held public several meetings on the design guidelines, has presented at other organizations' meetings and has made several presentations to the HPC on the design guidelines. On top of our active outreach we have been utilizing a project webpage to provide updates on the process and products during the development of the design guidelines. The webpage is frequently updated and has been the primary tool in providing information about the design guidelines.

CPED has worked with the recognized neighborhood, business and other active organizations in the area to increase awareness and outreach of the design guidelines. These organizations include:

- Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
- North Loop Neighborhood Association
- Warehouse District Business Association
- 2010 Partners
- Preserve Minneapolis
- Urban Land Institute
- Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

The following is a list of meetings which the design guidelines has been discussed.

- May 14, 2009: Community Meeting on History and Character of District
- May 20, 2009: NLNA Planning & Zoning Meeting
- June 9, 2009: Community Meeting Components of Compatible Design in District
- June 16, 2009: 2010 Partners Meeting
- June 16, 2009: HPC Business Meeting: Discuss Compatible Design in District
- July 9, 2009: Community Meeting: Discuss Design Guidelines
- July 21, 2009: HPC Business Meeting Discuss Draft Design Guidelines
- September 17, 2009: City Planning Commission: Discuss and Review Designation
- October 6, 2009: Walking Tour of proposed local Minneapolis Warehouse District
- October 8, 2009: Developer Forum on Draft Design Guidelines
- December 8, 2009 HPC Business Meeting: Discuss Draft Design Guidelines
- December 29, 2009 HPC Business Meeting: Discuss Draft Design Guidelines

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In addition to the public process to gather input on the development of the design guidelines CPED formed a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). The TAG was comprised of City of Minneapolis staff, professionals working in preservation and architecture, and neighborhood representatives. The organizations represented included:

- Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission
- City of Minneapolis Public Works
- City of Minneapolis CPED-Planning
- North Loop Neighborhood Association
- Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects
- Preserve Minneapolis
- Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office

Consistency with City of Minneapolis Adopted Plans and Policies

The design guidelines for the Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District are supported by the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth. In 2009 the City Council approved the comprehensive plan: The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth.

Policy 8.1 of the comprehensive plan provides the most guidance on this item and states the following: “Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city’s architecture, history, and culture.” The policy was supported by the following implementation steps.

- 8.1.1 Protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance.
- 8.1.2 Require new construction in historic districts to be compatible with the historic fabric.
- 8.1.3 Encourage new developments to retain historic resources, including landscapes, incorporating them into new development rather than removal.

The proposed design guidelines protect the historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance and they create a framework to ensure that new construction in the district is compatible with the historic fabric while allowing for creativity in design. The proposed design guidelines recognize the cultural landscape of the district and provide direction on retaining historic features and integrating new development within the existing historic fabric.

The proposed design guidelines further the policies and implementation steps of the Urban Design chapter of The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth. Policy 10.1 states “Promote building designs and heights that enhance and complement the image and form of the Downtown skyline, provide transition to the edges of Downtown and protect the scale and quality in areas of distinctive physical or historical character.” Implementation step 10.1.2 calls for building placement to enhance public view corridors that focus attention on natural or built

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features. The proposed design guidelines provide guidance on building scale and massing that is based on the surrounding historic context.

Reviews & Comments

The Preservation Chapter of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances (Chapter 599) requires that a draft of the design guidelines be submitted to the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for review and comment.

State Historic Preservation Office

In a letter dated October 9, 2009 (see attachment B for the letter) SHPO provided favorable comments on the designation and stated:

“The Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines are sensitive to the historic character of the buildings and cultural landscape within the district. They define a range of appropriate and inappropriate treatments that allow property owners, contractors, city officials, and other to devise innovative solutions that fall within this range. The Warehouse District Guidelines provide suggestion and recommendation for appropriate treatments as defined by the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and by the existing preservation ordinance. They suggest to property owners, designers, and other stakeholders a set of guiding principals that respect a range of characteristics that define the district, including massing and scale, materials, rhythm, loading docks, industrial infrastructure, architectural features, and contemporary uses.

The Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines represent a significant body of work that should serve the city well in providing a clear basis for making decisions about changes that may affect the appearance of individual properties or the overall character of the district.”

Design Guideline Format

The proposed design guidelines are in a text format. In order to not distract from the specifics of the design guidelines graphics have not been included in the guidelines at this time. Once the text is adopted, CPED will work on a developing formatting and graphics for design guidelines.

Staff Recommendation

CPED recommends that the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission **adopt** the staff recommendation and **approve** the Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines.