

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

Certificate of Appropriateness
BZH-26264

Date: May 4, 2010

Proposal: Certificate of Appropriateness for park improvements, including installation of pedestrian lighting, installation of electrical outlets for use with holiday lighting, replacement of existing sidewalks, and installation of new seating benches and picnic tables.

Applicant: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Address of Property: 28 University Avenue SE

Project Name: Chute Square Park Improvements

Contact Person and Phone: Jennifer Ringold, 612-230-6464

Planning Staff and Phone: Chris Vrchota, 612-673-5467

Date Application Deemed Complete: April 15, 2010

Publication Date: April 27, 2010

Public Hearing: May 4, 2010

Appeal Period Expiration: May 14, 2010

Ward: Ward 3

Neighborhood Organization: Nicollet Island- East Bank Neighborhood Association

Concurrent Review: N/A

Attachments: Attachment A: Materials submitted by CPED staff –

- 350' map (A-1)

Attachment B: Materials submitted by Applicant –

- Notification letter to Council Member and neighborhood organization (B-1)
- Application form submitted April 1, 2010 (B-2 – B-3)
- Additional information from the Applicant (B-4 – B-10)
- Brochure created for applicant (B-11 – B-14)
- Site plan (B-15)
- Photos (B-16 – B-19)
- Spec sheets for seating, lighting and paving (B-20 – B-28)

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

Attachment C: Materials Submitted by Others

- Meeting Minutes from Nicollet Island East-Bank Neighborhood Association



Existing Sidewalk
Photo Submitted by Applicant

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Existing Bench
Photo Submitted by Applicant

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CLASSIFICATION:	
Local Historic District	St. Anthony Falls
Period of Significance	1858- 1940
Criteria of significance	Architecture, Commerce/Industry
Date of local designation	1971
Applicable Design Guidelines	St. Anthony Falls Historic District Guidelines, Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Current name	Chute Square Park
Historic Name	Chute Square Park
Current Address	28 University Avenue SE
Historic Address	28 University Avenue SE
Original Construction Date	Unknown
Original Contractor	Unknown
Original Architect	Unknown
Historic Use	Park
Current Use	Park
Proposed Use	Park

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is a passive park area of just over one acre, filling an area between Bank Street SE and Central Avenue SE and University Avenue SE and Ortman Street SE. The park was originally purchased by the Park Board in November, 1903 and officially named Chute Square in 1904. The park is named Chute Square in honor of Richard Chute, an early settler of St. Anthony who owned a large amount of property in the area, including some of the land that the park sits on. Since 1909, it has been the location of the Ard Godfrey House, the oldest wood-framed house remaining in the City of Minneapolis. Outside of the Godfrey house, the park features a few amenities, including two sidewalks that form an "X" across the park, 10 wooden benches and 2 picnic tables. The park features approximately 19 trees of various sizes and species, with especially heavy canopy coverage of the section adjacent to Bank Street SE.

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL:

The Applicant is proposing to make a number of improvements to the park site. These include the replacement of the existing sidewalks with new concrete or asphalt sidewalks, the installation of six new pedestrian scaled lights, the installation of six electrical outlets throughout the park to allow for the installation of holiday lighting, the replacement of the 10 existing wood benches with 11 new red powder-coated benches, and the removal of one existing picnic table and installation of two new red powder-coated picnic tables. The other existing picnic table is a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project table, and will be left in place. There are no plans to restore or altar the WPA table in any way.

The funds for the proposed work have been raised through the joint efforts of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and a group of neighborhood residents known as the Friends of Chute Square Park.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

A letter from the Nicollet Island- East Bank Neighborhood Association has been submitted which supports the proposed improvements. (See attachment C-1.)

CETIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Certificate of Appropriateness for park improvements, including installation of pedestrian lighting, installation of electrical outlets for use with holiday lighting, replacement of existing sidewalks, and installation of new seating benches and picnic tables.

Findings as required by the Minneapolis Preservation Code:

The Planning Division of 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 St. Anthony Falls Historic District is significant for its connection to the Mississippi River and St. Anthony Falls area, as well as the milling industry that grew up around the river and falls. The district contains a number of mill and warehouse buildings, as well as early residential structures. Chute Square Park is the current home of the Ard Godfrey House. This house, originally built in 1848 near the corner of Main Street and 2nd Avenue SE and moved to the park in 1909, is the oldest remaining wood-frame house in the City of Minneapolis. The property has been a park for approximately 107 years and was a park at the time that the St. Anthony Falls Historic District was designated. The proposed project will maintain the property as a park.

The Applicant is proposing to install pedestrian lighting and outlets for holiday lights, replace existing sidewalks with new concrete or asphalt sidewalks, and replace existing wood benches and picnic tables with new powder-coated benches and picnic tables. The subject property has been a park area for nearly 107 years. The proposed improvements would be compatible with the criteria of significance for the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The benches and tables being proposed by the Applicant feature a modern design and materials. While the design and materials of the proposed benches and tables are not compatible with the period of significance for the district, they would have little to no impact on the ability of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District to convey its significance. The benches and tables would be clearly distinguished from the historic features of the district, and would be easier for the Park Board to maintain.

The proposed sidewalks would replace existing but deteriorated sidewalks, making the park more attractive for visitors. The new light posts would increase safety in the interior of the park, and would match 6 existing light posts installed by the City of Minneapolis on the sidewalks adjacent to the park along University Avenue, Bank Street, and Central Avenue.

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

The Ard Godfrey House is the primary contributing resource on the subject property. None of the proposed improvements would have a direct impact on the structure of the Ard Godfrey House. A more inviting park would have a positive benefit for those who visit the house. The park itself has little to no connection to the milling history or heritage of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. As proposed by the Applicant, the alteration would be compatible with and support the exterior designation in which the property was designated.

(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 would not impair the integrity of the contributing resource.

Location: The Applicant is not proposing to change the location of any contributing resource, thus the project will not impair the contributing resource's integrity of location.

Design: The Applicant is proposing to install pedestrian lighting and outlets for holiday lights, replace existing sidewalks with new concrete or asphalt sidewalks, and replace existing wood benches and picnic tables with new powder-coated benches and picnic tables. The subject property is primarily a park, though the Ard Godfrey House is located on the site. The proposed changes would not have any impact on the Ard Godfrey House. The proposed changes would not result in any significant change to the design of the park. The proposed changes will not impair the contributing resource's integrity of design.

Setting: The Applicant is not proposing any off-site changes or any on-site changes that would impact the way the structure relates to its neighbors. The proposed sidewalks would replace existing sidewalks on the property. The proposed lights would match six existing pedestrian lights found along the perimeter of the park that were installed by the City of Minneapolis. The project will not impair the contributing resource's integrity of setting.

Materials: The Applicant is proposing to install pedestrian lighting and outlets for holiday lights, replace existing sidewalks with new concrete or asphalt sidewalks, and replace existing wood benches and picnic tables with new powder-coated benches and picnic tables. The Applicant is not proposing any changes to the Ard Godfrey House or an existing WPA picnic table on the site. The proposed work would not impair the contributing resource's integrity of materials.

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

Workmanship: The Applicant is proposing to install pedestrian lighting and outlets for holiday lights, replace existing sidewalks with new concrete or asphalt sidewalks, and replace existing wood benches and picnic tables with new powder-coated benches and picnic tables. The Applicant is not proposing any changes to the Ard Godfrey House, which is the primary contributing resource on the site. The proposed work would not impair the contributing resource's integrity of workmanship.

Feeling: The subject property has been a park since 1903. The proposed changes are meant to enhance its usability as a park. The project would not impair the property's integrity of feeling.

Association: The project will not impair the property's integrity of association.

- (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.***

The applicable design guidelines for this project are the St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines, which were adopted by the Heritage Preservation Commission in June of 1980.

The Applicant is proposing to install pedestrian lighting and outlets for holiday lights, replace existing sidewalks with new concrete or asphalt sidewalks, and replace existing wood benches and picnic tables with new powder-coated benches and picnic tables.

The St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines deal almost exclusively with infill construction and provide very little guidance for a park improvement project.

The only section that may be applicable addresses color used for new construction. The Guidelines state "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." The section on trim color could be used as a guide for the site amenities such as tables and benches. If this section were to be applied, it's unlikely that the red benches and tables would be in keeping with this guideline. However, the benches and tables are scattered throughout the park, many screened by trees, and are not located near the Godfrey House or in close proximity to any of the other contributing structures in the district.

- (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 Guidelines for windows in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are most applicable to the proposed project.

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

In regard to making changes to historic sites, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend: "Identifying, retaining, and preserving building and landscape features which are important in defining the historic character of the setting." The most important feature of the site in terms of defining the historic character of the setting is the Ard Godfrey House, which was moved onto the site in 1909. The proposed changes will not have a direct impact on the Ard Godfrey House. The improvements will make the park a more inviting place for those who visit the Ard Godfrey House. The improvements will not result in any changes to the house itself, and will not detract from character of the setting that the house is in. There is also a WPA picnic table on the site, for which no changes are being proposed. The proposed work meets this guideline.

- (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.***

The proposed alterations are considered a major alteration and require a Certificate of Appropriateness application.

As proposed, the project would conform to policy 8.1.1 of The Minneapolis Plan, which states: "Protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance." This policy would be met because the proposed work would not have an impact on the integrity or significance of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District or the Ard Godfrey House, the most significant resource on the site.

The proposed improvements are also in keeping with policy 1.1.5 of The Minneapolis Plan, which is: "Ensure that land use regulations continue to promote development that is compatible with nearby properties, neighborhood character, and natural features; minimizes pedestrian and vehicular conflict; promotes street life and activity; reinforces public spaces; and visually enhances development." The park improvements will be compatible with the nearby properties, many of which are modern ear townhouses. It will promote activity in the park and on the adjacent street, and will reinforce the park as an asset for the neighborhood and City.

Finally, making improvements to the park is in keeping with the Land Use Plan and the Parks Plan, which both indicate the continued use of the subject property as a park.

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:

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

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

The Applicant submitted material addressing each of the 12 findings required for a Certificate of Appropriateness. (See Appendix B-6 - B-8.) The Applicant included a copy of the statement of significance from the designation, but did not specifically address how they believe the project is in keeping with it. As outlined in finding number 1 of this report, staff has found that the proposed work is in keeping with the criteria and period of significance of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

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

The proposed does not require site plan review as outlined in Title 20, Chapter 530 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances.

(9) *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 proposed work falls under the scope of rehabilitation. As outlined in finding number 5 of this report, staff has found that the proposed work is in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Applicant submitted material outlining how they believe the project is in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix B-7-B-8). They addressed the same finding that staff addressed in section 5 of this report.

Before approving a certificate of appropriateness that involves alterations to a property within an historic district, the commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

(10) *The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued significance and integrity of all contributing properties in the historic district based on the period of significance for which the district was designated.*

The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued significance and integrity of all contributing properties in the historic district based on the period of significance (1858-1940) for which the district was designated. The proposed work would not have any impact on the Ard Godfrey House or the existing WPA picnic table. The installation of the benches, tables and light posts are all reversible. The subject property has been a park for over 100 years, and the improvements will enhance the usability of the site for this purpose. The work will not impact any other resources in the district.

(11) *Granting the certificate of appropriateness will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not negatively alter the essential character of the historic district.*

The spirit and intent of the City of Minneapolis' Heritage Preservation Regulations is to preserve historically significant buildings, structures, sites, objects, districts, and cultural

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

landscapes of the community while permitting appropriate changes to be made to these properties. The Applicant is proposing to install pedestrian lighting and outlets for holiday lights, replace existing sidewalks with new concrete or asphalt sidewalks, and replace existing wood benches and picnic tables with new benches and picnic tables. None of the proposed work will have an impact on the Ard Godfrey house or the existing WPA picnic table on the site. The proposed improvements would make the park a more useable and inviting spot for neighboring residents and visitors to the Godfrey House. The improvements would have a positive impact on the park, which has been a part of the landscape of the district for nearly 107 years. The changes will not negatively alter the essential character of the historic district.

(12) The certificate of appropriateness will not be injurious to the significance and integrity of other resources in the historic district and will not impede the normal and orderly preservation of surrounding resources as allowed by regulations in the preservation ordinance.

The proposed work meets all applicable standards and guidelines and is sensitive to the subject property and the district as a whole. The certificate of appropriateness will not be injurious to the significance and integrity of other resources in the historic district and will not impede the normal and orderly preservation of surrounding resources as allowed by regulations in the preservation ordinance.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

CPED-Planning staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission **adopt** staff findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness for park improvements, including installation of pedestrian lighting, installation of electrical outlets for use with holiday lighting, replacement of existing sidewalks, and installation of new seating benches and picnic tables with the following condition(s):

1. Bituminous is not approved as a paving material. Material sample for sidewalks shall be reviewed and approved by CPED staff prior to final stamp off of plans.
2. Color samples must be reviewed and approved by CPED staff.
3. All workmanship must be completed in conformance with the Secretary of Interior Standards, see: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>
4. The Applicant shall obtain all other necessary City approvals prior to the commencement of work.
5. Approvals are durable for one year. Extension of approvals will only be considered if written request is made prior to April 20, 2011.
6. CPED-Planning reviews and approves final plans.

Attachment A: Submitted by CPED staff

Attachment B: Materials submitted by Applicant

Attachment C: Materials submitted by other parties