

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

FILE NAME: Victory Memorial Drive
CATEGORY/DISTRICT: Victory Memorial Drive Historic District
CLASSIFICATION: Non-binding Certificate of Appropriateness
APPLICANT: Hennepin County, ATTN: Jan Duffie, 612-348-8648
DATE OF APPLICATION: May 7, 2009
PUBLICATION DATE: June 9, 2009
DATE OF HEARING: June 16, 2009
APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRATION: June 26, 2009
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: John Smoley, Ph.D., (612) 673-2830
REQUEST: Change landscaping, walkways, markers, benches, plazas, interpretive panels, gateways, and other components of the memorial

A. SITE DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND:

District/Area Information	
Historic District	Victory Memorial Drive Historic District
Period of Significance	1909-1956
Affected Neighborhoods	Willard-Hay, Jordan, Cleveland, Victory, Webber-Camden
Original Architect	Theodore Wirth

Victory Memorial Drive was designated a historic district by the state of Minnesota in 2003. Section 138.73 of the Minnesota Historic District Act of 1971 identifies Victory Memorial Drive Historic District in Hennepin County as the drive extending from Lowry Avenue North on the south to Humboldt Avenue North on the east, and all property associated with the drive owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, including the Lincoln Statue area and the Flagpole Memorial area (Attachment A).

The Victory Memorial Drive Historic District has not been designated by the Minneapolis Heritage preservation Commission or the Minneapolis City council. As such, all actions taken by the Heritage Preservation Commission are non-binding.

The Minnesota Historic District Act of 1971 does not identify the subject property's specific resource type, significance, integrity, or characteristic features but the 2004 Victory Memorial Regional Park Master Plan (Attachment B) and a 2005 assessment of the significance of Victory Memorial Parkway (Attachment D) prepared by Hess, Roise and Company for the Minneapolis Park Board indicate these characteristics. The district

is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A, B, and C:

Victory Memorial Parkway is significant under Criterion A for its influence on the growth and character of North Minneapolis and the adjacent suburb of Robbinsdale. When the parkway was initially developed, the adjacent areas were largely farmland that was being platted for residential development. Such development followed in the wake of parkway construction. It also appears to be significant as a precedent-setting World War I memorial that embodied its memorial function in its landscape.

Wirth was instrumental in the conception and execution of Victory Memorial Parkway as part of the Grand Rounds and as a memorial in its own right. His role was widely recognized and recommended. Hence the parkway is eligible under Criterion B for its association with Wirth.

Victory Memorial Parkway is significant under Criterion C as an example of early twentieth-century parkway design. When Wirth joined the Minneapolis park system, he zealously furthered the Grand Rounds throughout Minneapolis, particularly in the northern part of the city. Although not a part of the original Grand Rounds, Victory Memorial Parkway was consciously planned as an extension of the system. The landscape design principles of formality and axiality, accompanied by the regular grid of trees, reinforce the memorial character of the parkway.

These two documents also identify the period of significance of the district as 1909, when the Board of Park Commissioners began the acquisition of the park land, to 1956, when individual markers dedicated to each service man and woman were installed horizontally. Changes made since 1956, to include the replacement of disease-ridden Elms with Hackberry trees in the 1970s, the installation of a bicycle path in 1975, and a new flagpole in 1976, are minor enough to permit the memorial to retain its integrity.

The Victory Memorial Drive Task Force was formed by the state legislature in 2006 to develop strategies around the master plan for restoration of Victory Memorial Drive Historic District including, but not limited to, efforts to secure National Register designation and other efforts to provide funding to preserve and restore the district's significant historical components and natural features.

The applicant has applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness to obtain feedback on the proposed restoration from the Heritage Preservation Commission. This hearing is the second public meeting at which the applicant will solicit public input on behalf of the task force. Two additional public meetings will take place prior to the anticipated task force review and implementation meeting in July 2009.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES:

On behalf of the Victory Memorial Drive Task Force, Hennepin County has applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness to conduct the following work in the areas specified (see Overall Site Plan and Focal Areas, Attachment C):

- Gateway:
 - o Install gateway monument at the northeast entrance to Victory Memorial Drive (at Humboldt Avenue North) (see Proposed Gateway Monument, Attachment C)
- Tree Grid:
 - o Close vehicle cut throughs at 39th, Xerxes, Queen, Penn, Oliver, Morgan, Logan, James, and Irving Avenues North, replacing them with grass and sidewalks (see Proposed Circulation Plan and Proposed Closure sheets, Attachment C)
 - o Replace the mix of trees in the grid that extends from Xerxes Avenue North to the eastern border of the district (Humboldt Avenue North) with Dutch Elm Disease resistant elm trees of a uniform size and species (see Bronze Marker and Tree Replacement Strategy, Attachment C)
 - o Remove and reinstall bronze markers in an angled, precast stone display (see Bronze Markers, Attachment K, and Bronze Marker and Tree Replacement Strategy, Attachment C)
 - o Replace existing street light posts along Victory Memorial Drive (see Proposed Light Post, Attachment C)
 - o Install light posts along the existing bicycle-pedestrian trail (see Proposed Light Post, Attachment C)
- Flagpole Plaza:
 - o Remove polished red granite flagpole base and inscribed interpretive text, replacing it with a cast stone flagpole base with uplighting and inscribed interpretive text (see Polished Red Granite Flagpole Base, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza Details, Attachment C)
 - o Remove polished red granite memorial walls (see Polished Red Granite Memorial Walls and Benches with Skatestoppers; Bronze Plaques; and Sunburst Shaped Flagpole Plaza Paving, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza Details, Attachment C)
 - o Salvage bronze plaques for reinstallation on new cast stone memorial walls (see Proposed Flagpole Plaza Details, Attachment C)
 - o Remove the existing wood benches, utility box, and protective fence at flagpole plaza (See Existing Flagpole Plaza Benches, Utility Box, and Fence, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza Details, Attachment C)
 - o Remove the polished red granite benches and skatestoppers (see Polished Red Granite Memorial Walls and Benches with Skatestoppers; Bronze Plaques; and Sunburst Shaped Flagpole Plaza Paving, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C)
 - o Replace polished red granite benches with cast stone benches (see Polished Red Granite Memorial Walls and Benches with Skatestoppers; Bronze Plaques; and Sunburst Shaped Flagpole Plaza Paving, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza Details, Attachment C)

- Replace sunburst shaped flagpole plaza cement paving with two types of patterned paving arranged in a circle (see Sunburst Shaped Flagpole Plaza Paving, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C)
- Replace and straighten asphalt and concrete pedestrian paths leading to plaza with concrete walks and special pavers at intersections (see Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C)
- Install bollards at intersections of flagpole plaza paths with road (see Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C)
- Remove all trees at flagpole plaza except for the ash, elm, spruce, and cedar (see Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C)
- Install spruce and cedar trees on the north, south, and west sides of the plaza (see Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C)
- Plant ornamental trees along the three pedestrian walkways proposed to lead to the plaza (see Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C)
- Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) circle (Lincoln statue):
 - Install an interpretive Civil War cenotaph (monument built to honor people whose remains are interred elsewhere) in the GAR circle (see Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C)
 - Remove lilac bushes and install a “strong hedge” flanking pathway leading to Lincoln statue in GAR circle (see GAR Circle, Attachment K; Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle, Attachment C; and Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C)
 - Install 6’ wide walkway circling Lincoln statue in GAR circle (see Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C)
 - Install additional gardens around Lincoln statue in GAR circle (see Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C)
 - Remove apple and cherry trees to make room for new circle of elm trees around Lincoln statue in GAR circle (see Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle and Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C)

Roughly half of the historic district lies outside of the City of Minneapolis. This report examines proposed changes within the City of Minneapolis’ jurisdiction. Additional changes are proposed for that portion of the memorial lying within the boundaries of the City of Robbinsdale.

C. FINDINGS REQUIRED FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

Certificate of Appropriateness

***In general.* 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 2004 Victory Memorial Regional Park Master Plan (Attachment B) and a 2005 assessment of the significance of Victory Memorial Parkway (Attachment D) indicate that Victory Memorial Drive is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A, B, and C:

Victory Memorial Parkway is significant under Criterion A for its influence on the growth and character of North Minneapolis and the adjacent suburb of Robbinsdale. When the parkway was initially developed, the adjacent areas were largely farmland that was being platted for residential development. Such development followed in the wake of parkway construction. It also appears to be significant as a precedent-setting World War I memorial that embodied its memorial function in its landscape.

Wirth was instrumental in the conception and execution of Victory Memorial Parkway as part of the Grand Rounds and as a memorial in its own right. His role was widely recognized and recommended. Hence the parkway is eligible under Criterion B for its association with Wirth.

Victory Memorial Parkway is significant under Criterion C as an example of early twentieth-century parkway design. When Wirth joined the Minneapolis park system, he zealously furthered the Grand Rounds throughout Minneapolis, particularly in the northern part of the city. Although not a part of the original Grand Rounds, Victory Memorial Parkway was consciously planned as an extension of the system. The landscape design principles of formality and axiality, accompanied by the regular grid of trees, reinforce the memorial character of the parkway.

These two documents also identify the period of significance of the district as 1909, when the Board of Park Commissioners began the acquisition of the park land, to 1956, when individual markers dedicated to each service man and woman were installed horizontally. Changes made since 1956, to include the replacement of disease-ridden Elms with Hackberry trees in the 1970s, the installation of a bicycle path in 1975, and a new flagpole in 1976, are minor enough to permit the memorial to retain its integrity.

Regardless of what changes are made to the district, it will maintain its historical significance, but proposed changes may affect its integrity (i.e. the property's ability to communicate its historical significance), therefore the proposed alterations are compatible with and continue to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark or historic district was designated.

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

The exterior portions of this district communicate its historical significance. The district has no contributing resources with interior spaces. As conditioned, the alterations are compatible with and support the exterior designation in which the property was designated because they will help return the district to its appearance during the period of significance, eliminate some out of character features installed since that time, and install new features that complement the character of the district without creating a false sense of history.

(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. To retain integrity, properties must possess several, and usually most, of the seven aspects of integrity.

Location: The Applicant proposes no changes to the district's location, thus the project will not impair the district's integrity of location.

Design: As conditioned, the project will not impair the district's integrity of design. The existing tree grid will be maintained, as will pedestrian paths of travel and spatial relationships within the tree grid. The flagpole plaza and GAR circle will be modified to more closely resemble their appearance during the district's period of significance.

Setting: The Applicant proposes no offsite changes, thus the project will not impair the district's integrity of setting.

Materials: As conditioned, the project will not impair the district's integrity of materials. While most trees will be replaced, few date back to the district's period of significance, and those that do are not resistant to Dutch Elm Disease. Historic materials in the flagpole plaza and GAR circle will be maintained.

Workmanship: The Applicant proposes to maintain all bronze plaques in the flagpole plaza; to maintain the Lincoln statue in the GAR circle; and to maintain all bronze memorial markers in the grid that extends from Xerxes Avenue North to the eastern border of the district (Humboldt Avenue North). These features are the foremost indicators of human workmanship among the district's contributing resources. The project will maintain the property's integrity of workmanship.

Feeling: As conditioned, the project will change the district in ways that will partially restore its appearance to that during its period of significance. The project will improve the property's integrity of feeling.

Association: As conditioned, the project will institute no changes that would break the district's association with the development of the area, early World War I memorials that embody their memorial functions in their landscape, Theodore

Wirth, and early twentieth-century parkway designs. The project will not impair the property's integrity of association.

As conditioned, the proposed work permits the historic district to retain integrity.

(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 Heritage Preservation Commission has not adopted guidelines for the Victory Memorial Drive Historic 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 most recent standards for the treatment of historic designed landscapes established by the National Park Service are *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* edited by Charles A. Birnbaum with Christine Capelle Peters and published in 1996. The most appropriate treatment for this historic resource is rehabilitation.

Vehicle Cut Throughs

The applicant proposes to close vehicle cut throughs at 39th, Xerxes, Queen, Penn, Oliver, Morgan, Logan, James, and Irving Avenues North, replacing them with grass and sidewalks (see Proposed Circulation Plan and Proposed Closure sheets, Attachment C). These cut throughs existed during the period of significance, and have helped define the pedestrian, cyclist, and driver experience along this parkway throughout the parkway's history.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p56, 59, and 68) recommend identifying, retaining and preserving the existing spatial organization and land patterns of the landscape as they have evolved over time. They do not recommend removing historic features which are important in defining spatial organization and land patterns. They also recommend identifying, retaining, and preserving the existing circulation systems prior to project work.

The 2004 Victory Memorial Regional Park Master Plan (Attachment B) indicates that the closure of these vehicle cut throughs will improve the continuity of the parkway's green space and improve trail safety. A 2005 assessment of the significance of Victory Memorial Parkway (Attachment D) prepared by Hess, Roise and Company for the Minneapolis Park Board indicates that the parkway was specifically planned for automobiles. Since the end of the period of

significance, a new use has arisen: recreational use of the parkway on a paved bicycle-pedestrian trail, installed in the mid-1970s. The document further notes that the bicycle-pedestrian trail installed during the mid-1970s does not preclude the district from maintaining its integrity of design.

The historic district is named Victory Memorial Drive after the primary linear terrain features permeating the district: Victory Memorial Drive/Parkway and its precedent-setting World War I memorial tree grid. While significantly reshaping the district to improve the user experience of a feature not present during the district's period of significance is inappropriate, elimination of some secondary uses, such as vehicular use of cross streets that bisect Victory Memorial Drive/Parkway, to improve the new use of the district (trail use) is acceptable. To accomplish this, the applicant proposes to replace street paving with grass and eliminate one sidewalk at each eliminated cross street. The paving on these streets does not date to the district's period of significance. As such, replacement of such material is acceptable, but maintenance of this space devoid of trees and other vertical memorial features is crucial to maintaining historic lines of sight. Maintenance of both existing sidewalks at each cross street will further maintain the historic space and communicate its original use as a vehicular corridor. Staff recommends the project be conditioned to maintain all sidewalks and lines of sight at cross streets.

Tree Grid

The applicant proposes to replace the mix of trees in the grid that extends from Xerxes Avenue North to the eastern border of the district (Humboldt Avenue North) with Dutch Elm Disease resistant elm trees of a uniform size and species (see Bronze Marker and Tree Replacement Strategy, Attachment C). Plans indicate that the historic tree grid would be eliminated, and a new, offset tree grid would be gradually installed. This offset grid would maintain the existing east-west lines of sight but would alter the existing north-south lines of sight along the parkway.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p58) recommend replacing in kind an entire feature that defines spatial organization and land patterns that is too deteriorated to repair. The standards do not recommend removing a feature that is beyond repair and not replacing it; or, replacing it with a new feature that does not respect the spatial organization and land patterns.

The intent to replant disease-resistant elm trees is laudable, since elm trees were present during the district's period of significance, but the existing tree grid should remain, in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards* and the 2004 Victory Memorial Regional Park Master Plan (Attachment B) implementation recommendations (see page 26). Historical records indicate that disease has caused the replacement of most of the grid trees since the end of the district's period of significance. The removal of hackberry trees and replacement of these trees with disease-resistant Elm trees of a uniform size and species will return the tree grid to its look during the period of significance. While the replacement of existing large trees with smaller specimens will create a different appearance, this replacement is characteristic of the district during its period of significance, when cold killed many of the original trees. Aerial photographs from 1960 (four years after the end of the district's period of significance) and 2004 (Attachment

G) indicate that the tree grid has deteriorated substantially over time. Today the grid is characterized by trees of a variety of sizes and species as well as holes in the grid where trees are missing. These conditions will make a replacement of the existing grid less obvious than the proposed infill of new trees in an offset grid and eventual removal of trees in the historic/existing grid. Preserving the existing tree grid will also negate the need to move 568 markers originally collocated with 568 trees. These markers and trees are the central component of the district, as they memorialize the 568 Hennepin County servicemen and women killed during World War I.

Flagpole Plaza Paving and Pedestrian Paths

The applicant seeks to replace sunburst shaped flagpole plaza cement paving with two types of patterned paving arranged in a circle (see Sunburst Shaped Flagpole Plaza Paving, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C). The applicant also seeks to replace and straighten asphalt and concrete pedestrian paths leading to plaza with concrete walks and special pavers at intersections (see Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C).

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p 58) recommend designing and installing new features which respect or acknowledge the historic spatial organization and land patterns. It may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the spatial organization and land patterns.

An aerial photograph from 1960 (four years after the end of the district's period of significance) (Attachment G) indicate that the current flagpole plaza paved area and walkways do not date to the district's period of significance. The proposed plaza and path design and alignments are in keeping with the circular, not sunburst, design of the plaza during the district's period of significance.

Flagpole Plaza Trees

In the flagpole plaza the applicant intends to remove all trees except for ash, elm, spruce, and cedar. The applicant also wishes to install spruce and cedar trees on the north, south, and west sides of the plaza. Additionally, the applicant desires to plant ornamental trees along the three pedestrian walkways proposed to lead to the plaza (see Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C).

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p 58-59) recommend removing non significant features which detract from or have altered the spatial organization and land patterns. They do not recommend creating a false historical appearance because replacement features are based on insufficient historical, pictorial and physical documentation.

Aerial photographs from 1960 (four years after the end of the district's period of significance) and 2004 (Attachment G) indicate that the plaza area presently maintains essentially the same

tree planting plan as it did at the end of its period of significance, with the exception of additional trees in close proximity to the paved area. Plans indicate that these additional trees are, appropriately, slated for removal, as they have altered the spatial organization and land patterns of the district. Plans also indicate that ornamental trees are slated for planting along the pedestrian pathways leading to the plaza and that spruce and cedar trees are slated for “infill” at unspecified locations along the perimeter. Pictorial documentation (Attachment G) indicates that these trees were not present at the end of the district’s period of significance. The applicant has not produced evidence that these trees were present at any time during the district’s period of significance, nor produced specific plans that document how the trees will maintain historic spaces. Staff recommends that no additional trees be planted in the plaza area.

GAR Circle Vegetation

In the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) circle the applicant seeks to a) remove lilac bushes and install a strong hedge flanking the pathway leading to the Lincoln statue, b) install additional gardens around the Lincoln statue, and c) remove apple and cherry trees to make room for new circle of elm trees around the Lincoln statue (see GAR Circle, Attachment K; Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle, Attachment C; and Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C).

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p 58-59) recommend removing non significant features which detract from or have altered the spatial organization and land patterns. They do not recommend creating a false historical appearance because replacement features are based on insufficient historical, pictorial and physical documentation.

The proposed changes are in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. A 1936 photograph of GAR Circle (Attachment H) indicates the presence of a hedge, not lilac bushes, leading to the Lincoln statue during the period of significance of the district. The photo does not indicate the presence of apple and cherry trees. The timeline in the 2004 Victory Memorial Regional Park Master Plan (Attachment B) indicates that ten elm trees planted in 1924 originally formed the GAR circle, and the 1936 photo indicates the presence of at least some of these trees, as well as some raised planting beds.

GAR Circle Walkway and Flagpole Plaza Bollards

The applicant is proposing to:

1. install an additional walkway circling the Lincoln statue in the GAR circle (see GAR Circle, Attachment K; Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle, Attachment C; and Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C); and
2. install bollards at intersections of the flagpole plaza paths with the road (see Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C).

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p 68) recommend identifying, retaining, and preserving the existing circulation systems prior to project work.

A 1936 photograph of GAR Circle (Attachment H) and an aerial photograph from 1960 (four years after the end of the district's period of significance) (Attachment G) indicate only one walkway around the Lincoln statue in the GAR circle. Staff can find no evidence of bollards at the proposed locations during the district's period of significance. The applicant has not presented evidence that the bollards or walkway are necessary to facilitate a new use in the district nor does the flagpole plaza depict evidence that it has been damaged by illegal vehicular traffic. Staff recommends that these requests not be approved.

Gateway Monument and Civil War Cenotaph

The applicant has requested to install a gateway monument at the northeast entrance to Victory Memorial Drive (at Humboldt Avenue North) (see Proposed Gateway Monument, Attachment C) and an interpretive Civil War cenotaph (monument built to honor people whose remains are interred elsewhere) in the GAR circle (see GAR Circle, Attachment K; Existing Conditions: Flagpole Plaza and GAR Circle, Attachment C; and Proposed GAR Circle, Attachment C).

When considering additions or alterations proposed for a new use, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (Rehabilitation, p 84) do not recommend locating any new structure, furnishing, or object in such a way that it detracts from or alters the historic character of the landscape. They do not recommend installing period pieces that were never present in the original landscape.

The applicant has not identified new uses for the gateways to the district that warrant the installation of a monument beyond a need for better identification of the parkway as Victory Memorial Drive. The proposed gateway monument does not comply with the 2004 Victory Memorial Regional Park Master Plan (Attachment B), which recommends the installation of a simple sign and colorful plantings clearly not dating to the district's period of significance. Nevertheless, the proposed monument can be conditioned to be distinguishable from pieces dating back to the district's period of significance thereby ensuring that it complements the landscape without creating a false historical appearance. The monument is designed in a streamlined moderne style with somewhat classical columns. This blend is found nowhere else in the district. The iconography (service banner, doughboy faces in negative relief) and symbology (eleven columns) are also found nowhere else in the district. The monument is proposed to be made of granite of an unspecified color. Staff recommends the project be conditioned to ensure the proposed gateway monument granite is clearly distinguishable from existing district granite (especially the granite in GAR circle and flagpole plaza) in terms of color and finish.

One of the characteristic features of the district is its lines of sight created by the tree grid. The applicant has not provided scaled plans depicting the proposed gateway monument or topographic plans of the district, thus it is difficult to determine whether the proposed monument will block existing lines of sight. Staff recommends that the project be conditioned to ensure the proposed gateway monument does not block existing lines of sight for an adult pedestrian standing at the entrance to the district.

No details of the proposed cenotaph have been provided. The applicant has not provided reasons why a monument built to honor people whose remains are interred elsewhere should be added to a historic district with 568 bronze plaques installed for that purpose. The proposed location of the cenotaph at the edge of GAR circle implies that the stone will honor Civil War veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Union Army. The applicant has not identified new uses or expansions of existing uses that necessitate this new landscape component. Additionally, the applicant has not provided details that indicate how proposed cenotaph will complement the landscape without creating a false historical appearance. Staff recommends that the proposed cenotaph not be approved.

Bronze Markers

The applicant seeks to remove and reinstall bronze markers in a precast, angled stone display (see Bronze Markers, Attachment K, and Bronze Marker and Tree Replacement Strategy, Attachment C).

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p79 and 81) do not recommend removing and relocating structures, furnishings, or objects, thus diminishing and destroying the historic relationship between the landscape and these features. They also do not recommend replacing or destroying a feature of structures, furnishings or objects when repair is possible nor do they recommend removing a structure, furnishing, or object that is deteriorated and replacing it with a *new* feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

During the district's period of significance, the bronze markers were displayed in two methods: standing upright and laying flat inset in concrete. The latter configuration is their current positioning. Staff does not recommend the bronze markers be forcibly removed from their concrete base, which dates back to the district's period of significance, only to be reinstalled in a new concrete base that does not convey the visual appearance of either configuration from the district's period of significance.

Street Light Posts

The applicant also seeks to replace existing street light posts along Victory Memorial Drive, installing posts that match the globular post present at places in the district (see Proposed Light Post, Attachment C).

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p79 and 81) do not recommend removing and relocating structures, furnishings, or objects, thus diminishing and destroying the historic relationship between the landscape and these features. They also do not recommend replacing or destroying a feature of structures, furnishings or objects when repair is

possible nor do they recommend removing a structure, furnishing, or object that is deteriorated and replacing it with a *new* feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

Historic district photos (Attachment I) do not indicate the presence of this particular type of lighting, and in fact depict other lighting types. Contemporary photos (Attachment J) depict the proposed lighting as well as other lighting types. A 2005 assessment of the significance of Victory Memorial Parkway (Attachment D) prepared by Hess, Roise and Company for the Minneapolis Park Board indicates that the proposed lighting type was installed at various parks in the City beginning in 1927. Such lighting is more complimentary to the district's period of significance than the present lighting installed since the 1970s (Attachment J).

The applicant also seeks to install light posts along the existing bicycle-pedestrian trail (see Proposed Light Post, Attachment C). These posts are proposed to be smaller versions of the globular light posts requested to be installed along Victory Memorial Drive. A 2005 assessment of the significance of Victory Memorial Parkway (Attachment D) prepared by Hess, Roise and Company for the Minneapolis Park Board indicates that the bicycle-pedestrian trail installed during the mid-1970s does not preclude the district from maintaining its integrity of design. Nevertheless, installing a new, repetitive vertical feature (such as light posts) into the historic tree grid where none have previously existed would significantly affect the district. The applicant has provided no evidence that such a feature, absent for the past 30+ years, is warranted. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards do not prohibit improvements to features not present during the district's period of significance, but they do require more sympathetic designs. Staff recommends the trail lighting be conditioned to not introduce new vertical features into the landscape and to not create a false historical appearance.

Wood Benches, Utility Box, and Protective Fence at Flagpole Plaza

The applicant also seeks to remove the existing wood benches, utility box, and protective fence at flagpole plaza.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p79) do not recommend removing and relocating structures, furnishings, or objects, thus diminishing and destroying the historic relationship between the landscape and these features.

The existing wood benches, utility box, and protective fence at flagpole plaza clearly do not date back to the district's period of significance, and their removal would improve the district's ability to communicate its historical significance.

Granite Flagpole Base, Memorial Walls, and Benches at Flagpole Plaza

The applicant also seeks to:

1. remove the polished red granite flagpole base and inscribed interpretive text, replacing it with a cast stone flagpole base with uplighting and inscribed interpretive text (see Polished Red Granite Flagpole Base, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza Details, Attachment C);

2. remove the polished red granite memorial walls at flagpole plaza, salvaging the bronze plaques for reinstallation on new cast stone memorial walls (see Polished Red Granite Memorial Walls and Benches with Skatestoppers; Bronze Plaques; and Sunburst Shaped Flagpole Plaza Paving, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza Details, Attachment C); and
3. remove the polished red granite benches and skatestoppers at flagpole plaza, replacing them with cast stone benches without skatestoppers (see Polished Red Granite Memorial Walls and Benches with Skatestoppers; Bronze Plaques; and Sunburst Shaped Flagpole Plaza Paving, Attachment K, and Proposed Flagpole Plaza, Attachment C).

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Rehabilitation, p79 and 81) do not recommend removing and relocating structures, furnishings, or objects, thus diminishing and destroying the historic relationship between the landscape and these features. They also do not recommend replacing or destroying a feature of structures, furnishings or objects when repair is possible nor do they recommend removing a structure, furnishing, or object that is deteriorated and replacing it with a *new* feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

The 2005 assessment of the significance of Victory Memorial Parkway (Attachment D) prepared by Hess, Roise and Company for the Minneapolis Park Board indicates that the polished red granite features of the memorial date back to the district's period of significance. Visual evidence indicates no substantial deterioration in these features. Staff recommends that the request to replace the polished red granite features of the flagpole plaza not be approved.

As conditioned, the project meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.

(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.

Action item 8.1.1 of the City of Minneapolis' comprehensive plan states, "Protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance." As conditioned, the project complies with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

There are no adopted small area plans for the Victory Memorial Drive Historic District area of the city.

Adequate consideration of related documents and regulations. 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) The description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which designation of the landmark or historic district was based.

As conditioned, the project will institute no changes that would break the district's association with the development of the area, early World War I memorials that embody their memorial functions in their landscape, Theodore Wirth, and early twentieth-century parkway designs.

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

The applicant has not submitted scaled site plans or elevations of the proposed gateway monument or cenotaph, but the proposal appears to violate the Zoning Code's standards related to site triangles that require signs within fifteen feet of intersections to remain clear of obstructions that would block views of cross streets and alleys (Zoning Code section 543.390(b)).

While the applicant has indicated that some trees will be relocated, the applicant has not indicated the disposition of all trees proposed for removal. Section 535.300 of the Zoning Code requires the preservation or mitigation for the loss of all trees over twelve inches in diameter at breast height (roughly 4.5 feet above grade). As conditioned, the project will relocate some non-historic trees and restore the historical appearance of the parkway, meeting this Zoning Code standard.

(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.

As discussed in finding #5, the application, as conditioned, is in compliance with the rehabilitation standards within *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. No historic buildings will be affected by this project.

Additional findings for alterations within historic districts. 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.

As conditioned, the project will institute no changes that would break the district's association with the development of the area, early World War I memorials that embody their memorial functions in their landscape, Theodore Wirth, and early twentieth-century parkway designs. As conditioned, the project will change the district in ways that will partially restore its appearance

to that during its period of significance. The project complies with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

(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 landscapes of the community while permitting appropriate changes to be made to these properties. As conditioned, the project will change the district in ways that will partially restore its appearance to that during its period of significance. The project complies with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

(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.

As conditioned, the project will make no changes that would break the district's association with the development of the area, early World War I memorials that embody their memorial functions in their landscape, Theodore Wirth, and early twentieth-century parkway designs. As conditioned, the project will change the district in ways that will partially restore its appearance to that during its period of significance. The project complies with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

Staff received no public comment on the project.

E. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission **adopt** staff findings and **approve** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work subject to the following conditions:

1. Maintain all sidewalks and lines of sight at cross streets.
2. Maintain the existing tree grid.
3. Plant no additional trees in the plaza area.
4. No additional walkway circling the Lincoln statue in the GAR circle shall be installed.
5. No bollards shall be installed at intersections of the flagpole plaza paths with the road.
6. The proposed gateway monument granite shall be clearly distinguishable from existing district granite in terms of color and finish.
7. The proposed gateway monument shall not block existing lines of sight for an adult pedestrian standing at the entrance to the district.

8. The proposed cenotaph is not approved.
9. The bronze marker remount request is not approved.
10. The trail lighting shall not introduce new vertical features into the landscape and shall not create a false historical appearance.
11. The request to replace the polished red granite features of the flagpole plaza is not approved.
12. CPED-Planning Preservation Staff shall review and approve the final plans and elevations prior to building permit issuance.

Attachments

Maps

- A. Vicinity and district maps (prepared by staff)

Applicant Submittals

- B. Historic Victory Memorial Drive; Hennepin County Collaborative Restoration (submitted by Applicant)
- C. Plans (submitted by Applicant)
- D. Victory Memorial Regional Park Master Plan (submitted by Applicant)

Staff Submittals

- E. Victory Memorial Parkway, Webber Park, and Webber Parkway: An Assessment of Significance (taken from staff files)
- F. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes: Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Cultural Landscapes*
- G. Aerial photographs from 1960 and 2004 (Courtesy of City of Minneapolis and Borchert Map Library)
- H. 1936 photograph of GAR Circle (Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society)
- I. Historic photos of lighting in the Victory Memorial Drive Historic District (Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society)
- J. Photos of current lighting in the Victory Memorial Drive Historic District (prepared by staff)
- K. Existing conditions (prepared by staff)