

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

FILE NAME: 2nd Avenue North, between Washington Avenue and 3rd Street North
BZH-25879

CATEGORY/DISTRICT: North Loop Warehouse Historic District & Interim Protection for the
NRHP Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District

CLASSIFICATION: Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for the reconstruction of the 2nd
Avenue North between Washington Avenue North and 3rd Street North.

APPLICANT: Jenifer Loritz, City of Minneapolis Department of Public Works (612) 673-3625

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APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRATION: May 22, 2009

STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Brian Schaffer (612) 673-2670

A. BACKGROUND

The North Loop Warehouse District was adopted in 1978 by the City of Minneapolis. While the designation is focused mainly on the buildings that housed the wholesaling warehouse industry and the railroads that facilitated the rise of the industry, the designation does states that the district "...consists of linkage of buildings, structures, lands and space, a majority of which continue to exist in their original location..." The streets in the district provide the setting and consistent edges for building walls and are significant and contribute to the district. This evaluation holds true for the NRHP Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District as well.

The subject area is a one block section of the 2nd Avenue North between Washington Avenue North and 3rd Street North. The project area also includes an alley that is perpendicular to this section of 2nd Avenue and is located between 3rd Street North and Washington Avenue. This site lies on the northwestern edge of the North Loop Warehouse Historic District and is within the National Register of Historic Places Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District.

The roadway currently carries two lanes of traffic in the northeast direction and has parking on both sides. The project is adjacent to the Target Field. The ballpark project required the closure of 3rd Avenue North south of its intersection with 5th Street North. To mitigate the loss of 3rd Avenue North, 2nd Avenue North between 5th Street and 10th Street will be converted from a one-way street to a two-way street. The applicant states that the project is an opportunity to participate with Hennepin County to reconstruct an aging roadway and improve the pedestrian environment.

Within the project area 2nd Avenue North is a concrete street that was last constructed in 1968. The street is rated in poor condition by the City's pavement management system. The average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) rating is a 6 out of a possible 100.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES

Layout

The applicant is proposing to reconstruct this one block of 2nd Avenue North and the adjacent alley. The project will consist of the complete removal and replacement of pavement, curb and gutter and sidewalk surfaces. The street and sidewalk material is not original and was installed in 1968 and repaired and resurfaced with bituminous since then. The existing right-of-way is 80 feet wide and is not proposed to be reduced. However, the layout of the street is proposed to change.

The proposed layout of for the project includes three traveling lanes, two in the north-easterly direction and one in the south-westerly direction, parking on both sides of the street and a one foot expansion in the width of the sidewalks on either side of the roadway. The project also includes the installation of trees and tree grates in the right-of-way.

The project area does not include any loading docks or other elements that will be affected by the proposed reconstruction and the width and dimensions of the alleyway remain the same.

Materials

The existing roadway and alley are concrete and bituminous and the proposed roadway will be constructed of bituminous and the alley will constructed of concrete. The sidewalks are currently made of concrete and the proposed replacement sidewalk is concrete.

C. FINDINGS

- (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 period of significance for the district is 1865-1930. The right-of-way for 2nd Avenue has not changed as evidence by the continuous building wall for the structures along this section of 2nd Avenue North. The alignment of the right-of-way and the alley provide the setting and context for the structures. The proposed alteration does not modify the width of the right-of-way or alley, which is the only extant element of the original street.

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

The district was designated for the impact the wholesaling industry had on the commerce of Minneapolis and the architecture that embodied that industry. The designation includes "linkages of buildings, structures, lands and space..." The right-of-way are alley are part of the designation and the spatial relationship it creates with the surrounding buildings is

intact. The proposed reconstruction does not alter that relationship only the configuration of the pedestrian and roadway.

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

The proposed reconstruction will not impair the integrity of the district and will allow for better pedestrian and street use of the area, which will likely have positive impacts to the district through increased access and activity.

- (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 current North Loop Warehouse District design guidelines do not offer specific guidance to the treatment of the public right-of-way of the alley.

- (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 Setting in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are most applicable to the proposed project. The guidelines recommend "retaining the historic relationship between buildings and landscape features of the setting." The proposed alterations maintain the width of the right-of-way and retain the relationship of the features.

- (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 layout meets the City's Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks and implements the policies called out in the Access Minneapolis plan. The inclusion of street trees is supported by implementation step 8.5.2 of the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth, which states "Encourage planting and maintenance of street trees and other natural elements in historic districts to promote livability."

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:

- (1) **The description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which designation of the landmark or historic district was based.**
See above analysis
- (2) **Where applicable, Title 20 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Zoning Code, Chapter 530, Site Plan Review.**
Not applicable
- (3) **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 treatment can be best described as rehabilitating. The setting and location of the street are original, but the materials are not. The configuration of the street has varied over time and the proposed project does not attempt to reconstruct the street, just reuse it.

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:

- (1) **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 proposed reconstruction of the roadway and the introduction of street trees maintain the relationship between structures by retaining the width of the right-of-way. The one foot expansion of the sidewalks, reconfiguration of the roadway and the introduction of street trees will make increase accessibility of the area and be more inviting to pedestrians. These improvements could increase pedestrian traffic which will ensure the use and access to the structures within the district.

- (2) **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 improvements will make the area more accessible, while preserving the relationship between buildings. The minor changes in the configuration of the pedestrian and roadway areas will not negatively alter the essential character of the district.

- (3) **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 alterations to the right-of-way and the alley will not alter the significance or integrity of other resources in the district and will continue to allow for normal and orderly preservation of surrounding resources in the district.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission **adopt** staff findings and **approve** the certificate of appropriateness to allow for the reconstruction of the 2nd Avenue North between Washington Avenue North and 3rd Street North with the following condition:

1. CPED-Planning review and approve final site plan, floor plans, and elevations.

F. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Map
- B. Application Materials
- C. Construction Plans