Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

Certificate of Appropriateness
BZH-26609

Date:	May 17, 2011
Proposal:	Continuance: Request for amendment to COA for mechanical equipment
Applicant:	Charlene Roise, Hess, Roise and Company
Address of Property:	420 5th Street North
Project Name:	Ford Centre Rehabilitation and Addition Project
Contact Person and Phone:	Charlene Roise, (612) 338-1987
Planning Staff and Phone:	Aaron Hanauer, (612) 673-2494
Date Application Deemed Complete:	April 29, 2011
Publication Date:	May 10, 2011
Public Hearing:	May 17, 2011
Appeal Period Expiration:	May 27, 2011
Ward:	7
Neighborhood Organization:	North Loop

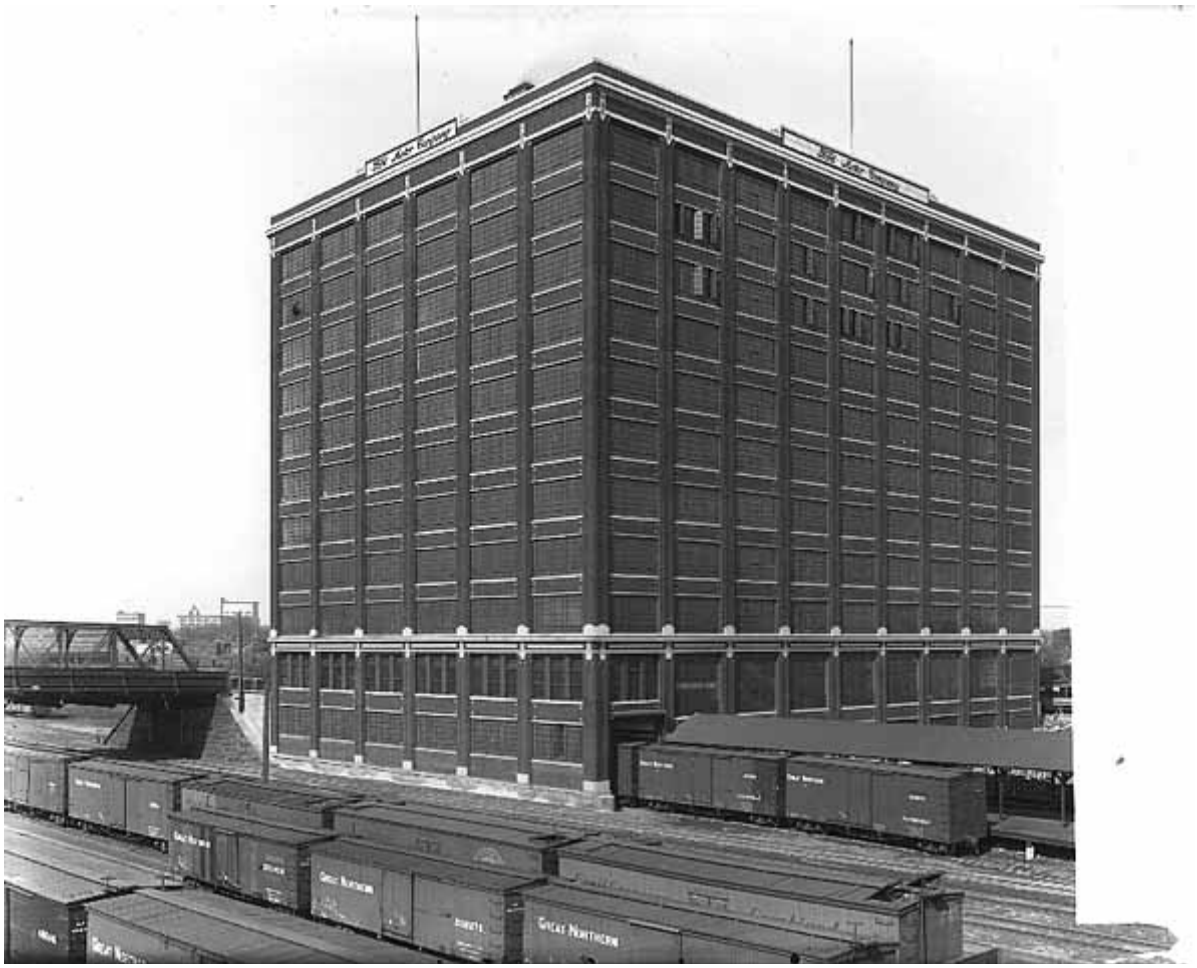
Attachments:

Attachment A: Materials submitted by CPED- (A1-A28)

- A1-A2: Zoning map
- A2: Minneapolis Warehouse District map
- A3-A6: Building photographs
- A7-A9: North elevation comparison
- A10-A12: Roof plan comparison
- A13: October 26 rooftop mechanical proposal
- A14: February 1 elevator penthouse proposal
- A15-A16: Applicant letter recommending continuance (1/31/2011)

Attachment B: Materials submitted by Applicant– (B1-B16)

- B1-B4: COA Amendment Narrative
- B5-B9: Penthouse Mock-Up
- B10-B12: 10th Floor Plan, Roof Plan, and Mechanical Plan
- B13-B16: Elevations



Ford Centre: 1914-1915, East (left) and north (right) facades. Source: Charles J. Hibbard, photographer; Minnesota Historical Society

420 5th Street North: Ford Centre, 2010, East (left) and north (right) facades. Source: Applicant

CLASSIFICATION:	
Local Historic District	Warehouse Historic District
Period of Significance	1865-1930
Criteria of significance	Architecture, Commerce, Master Craftsmen
Date of local designation	1978, 2010, revised
Applicable Design Guidelines	Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties, Warehouse District Design Guidelines.

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Current name	Ford Centre
Historic Name	Ford Centre
Current Address	420 5th Street North
Historic Address	412-428 5th Street North
Original Construction Date	1913
Original Contractor	Splady-Albee-Smith Company
Original Architect	Kees and Colburn
Historic Use	Vehicle motor plant
Current Use	Office
Proposed Use	Office

BACKGROUND:

Building description: The Minneapolis Ford Plant is a large, ten-story curtain wall building constructed with a reinforced concrete, red pressed brick and terra cotta, and built at a cost of $400,000. The architects followed the basic design used for other Ford assembly plants throughout the country. The exterior of the building expresses the structural system with pilasters, narrow spandrels, and large industrial windows. There is minimal decorative terra cotta trim at the top of the pilasters and cornice. The original parapet has been removed and the structure contains multiple window types, but many of the original industrial divided light windows remain (Attachment A7.1-A7.4).

In October and November of 2010, the Heritage Preservation Commission approved a Certificate of Appropriateness application for a rehabilitation project of the Ford Centre. In February 2011, the Applicant submitted a revision to their rooftop plan that included the construction of a freight elevator penthouse and lobby at the northeast corner of the building and a revised rooftop mechanical equipment plan (Attachment A14). The mechanical plans submitted in February did not include the replacement of nine window openings with louvers on the north elevation as proposed and approved in October and November 2010; nor the amount of mechanical equipment shown in October 2010 alternatives (Attachment A14). This change in plans is an improvement as it will allow the north elevation to have a full façade of windows on floors two through ten.

For the February 1, 2011 Certificate of Appropriateness, CPED recommended approval of the proposed penthouse and revised mechanical equipment plan with the following conditions:

1. The proposed freight elevator penthouse shall not be greater than 14 feet in height measured from the roof floor of the top of the parapet.
2. The proposed chiller equipment shall not be greater than 14 feet in height measured from the roof floor to the top of the chiller.
3. CPED-Planning Preservation Staff shall review and approve the final plans and elevations prior to building permit issuance.
4. The Certificate of Appropriateness approval shall expire if it is not acted upon within one year of approval, unless extended by the Planning Director in writing prior to one-year anniversary date of approvals.
5. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this Certificate of Appropriateness shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this Certificate of Appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.

At the February 1 HPC meeting, the Applicant requested a continuance to allow time for revisions to their plans (Attachment A15-A16)

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The Applicant submitted revised plans for an elevator penthouse and mechanical plans. The freight elevator is now proposed to be located in the existing northeast elevator shaft. A new two-stop passenger elevator (with penthouse) is proposed to be constructed in Bay 7 (north elevation) from the tenth floor to the roof, with the pit on the ninth floor. It will be the only elevator serving the roof and will provide the only handicap accessibility to the roof. The new penthouse will be set one bay from the north facade and two bays from the east façade; it will be located between two existing penthouses (Attachment B11-B15).

The proposed penthouse will be directly south of the existing north penthouse, of the same height (15'-2"), also have a flat roof, and clad in a matching brick (Attachment B13-B14). A single door with a sidelight will be set in the east wall. Like the historic penthouses, there will be a concrete curb at the doorway to prevent water from draining into the building. The floor of the lobby will be the height of the concrete curb at the doorway. Directly outside of the penthouse, a metal landing at the same elevation as the lobby floor, will provide access to a set of steps and an ascending wheelchair ramp, both leading to the roof terrace to the south (Attachment B2).

The Applicant states that the size and scale of the penthouse is appropriate in relation to the adjacent historic penthouses and to the ten-story building. “The design complements the historic character of the building but is differentiated by the glass door and sidelight. The penthouse can be seen from the north and east but its visibility will be diminished by the backdrop of the historic penthouses and water tower (see penthouse mock-up). As a result, the proposed addition meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Attachment B2).”

Plans for the HVAC system have been revised since November 2010. As shown in the 2010 plans, two chiller units will be located on the roof. Each unit will be 7'-4" wide and 39'-6" long, and will rest on steel framework. Including the base of the framework, each unit will rise 12"-10” above the roof slab. The location of the units (setback two bays from the north elevation and one bay from the west elevation) will minimize their visibility from the street and avoid touching the historic water tower and penthouses on the roof (Attachment B1-B2).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public notices for the Certificate of Appropriateness were mailed on April 28, 2011. As of May 10, 2011 no letters have been received.

CETIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Certificate of Appropriateness to rehabilitate the steel fence as part of Phase I of the fence restoration project.

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.

CPED believes the proposed construction of the elevator penthouse and chiller equipment is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the Ford Centre is a contributing building to the Minneapolis Warehouse District.

The Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District is historically significant as an area of early commercial growth fueled by access to markets and goods created by the expansion of the railroads during the development of the City of Minneapolis and as the city's warehouse and wholesaling district which expanded during the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Minneapolis became a major distribution and jobbing center for the northwest. The Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District is architecturally significant for its remarkably intact concentration of commercial buildings designed by the city's leading architects in styles which evolved from the Italianate Style of the 1860s to the curtain wall structures of the early 20th century (Minneapolis Warehouse District Designation Study).

The proposed elevator addition will have minimal visibility from the east and north elevation, and no visibility from the west and south elevations (Attachment B5-B9). CPED also believes that the proposed chillers are compatible with and continue to support the criteria of significance of the Ford Centre. Even though the chillers sit in front of the iconic Ford Centre water tower on the north elevation, the chillers are setback to the middle of the building which will reduce their visibility. In addition, allowing the chillers instead of the window replacement for louvers will allow the north elevation to have a full façade of windows on floors two through ten.

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

CPED believes the proposed construction of the elevator penthouse and chiller equipment is compatible with and continues to support the exterior designation in which the property was designated.

The Ford Centre is an important and highly visible part to the Minneapolis Warehouse District. The building captures all three areas of the district's significance. The building embodies high-quality commercial architecture (lightly classicized, concrete-frame industrial), built by master architects (Kees and Colburn), and captures the social significance of the district (major employment center).

The proposed amendment to the mechanical system is an improvement compared to the October 26, 2010 proposal and approval. The new mechanical system proposal does not require the replacement of nine window openings with louvers on the north elevation as previously approved. The revised proposal will allow the north elevation to have a full façade of windows on floors two through ten.

The proposed elevator penthouse is also an improvement over the February 1, 2011 elevator penthouse proposal. The proposed penthouse will have minimal visibility on the north and east elevations and will not be visible from the south and west elevations.

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

CPED believes the proposed construction of the elevator penthouse and chiller equipment is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the Ford Centre which is a contributing building to the North Loop Warehouse District. The Applicant's revised mechanical proposal that does not include windows being replaced with louvers on the north elevation will help ensure that the building's original design, materials, workmanship, and feeling are maintained.

CPED agrees with the Applicant's findings statement from October 26 that, "The [Ford Centre] building is a visually important anchor to a corner of the historic district. In completing a substantial rehabilitation of the Ford Centre as proposed, the project will ensure that the building continues that role in future decades."

(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 Minneapolis Warehouse District guidelines were updated by the Heritage Preservation Commission in March 2010. CPED believes the revised mechanical equipment plan and proposed elevator penthouse are in compliance with the MWD guidelines.

The mechanical system chillers will be setback a minimum of one structural bay from all elevations and will not be taller than 14 feet (the height is proposed to be 12''-10"). The setback location will reduce their visibility. CPED believes the Applicant's mechanical system proposal is in compliance with the following guidelines:

- *2.62: The original building roofline including the cornice, parapet, and other elements shall be retained and not altered.*
- *2.63: Rooftop decks and equipment including HVAC, wind or solar power equipment that projects above the roofline shall be set back from the primary building elevation(s) one structural bay. They shall not be visible from the street. More visible locations will be considered if evidence is provided of structural load needs.*
- *2.68: A new rooftop addition shall be set back a minimum of one structural bay or 15 feet, whichever is greater, from all sides of the building. This setback does not constitute a standard right, but a baseline, additional setbacks may be required to meet the intent of the guidelines.*
- *2.70. The design of rooftop additions shall be clearly differentiated from the historic building in a way that does not detract from the character of the historic building or the district.*

In addition, it is recognized that the revised mechanical system will allow the building's north elevation to have a full façade of windows from floors two through ten, rather than a column of louvers that was proposed and approved on October 26, 2010. This proposed modification to the approved Certificate of Appropriateness will allow the rehabilitation proposal to meet window guideline 2.21 and 2.24:

- *2.21. Original and historically significant windows shall be retained and repaired.*
- *2.24. Windows on primary facades shall not be removed or blocked to install air conditioning, mechanical equipment, louvers, or for any other reason.*

The elevator penthouse is proposed to extend to a height of 15''2" and be setback one bay from the north elevation and two bays from east elevation. The penthouse will not be visible from the west and south elevations, and will have minimal visibility from the north and east elevations. The visibility of the proposed penthouse addition would be further minimized by its location behind the historic penthouse (Attachment B5-B9). Although, the proposed penthouse is slightly taller than the 14' height requirement for rooftop additions (Guideline 2.69), given the height of the Ford Centre and the proposed location it will not have an adverse impact on the Ford Centre.

The proposed elevator penthouse is in compliance with the following Guidelines:

- *2.62: The original building roofline including the cornice, parapet, and other elements shall be retained and not altered.*
- *2.70. The design of rooftop additions shall be clearly differentiated from the historic building in a way that does not detract from the character of the historic building or 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.

CPED believes that the proposed rooftop plan is compatible with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. CPED believes that the revised mechanical system will assist in having the rehabilitation project meet Standard 1.

> *Standard 1: A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

The revised mechanical system will help the building retain its distinctive materials and features. Specifically, the proposal to not install louvers in Bay 6 on the north elevation will help retain the steel industrial windows which are the most important character defining feature of the building.

CPED agrees with the Applicant's assessment that the project is in compliance with Standard 2 and Standard 9 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

(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.

CPED believes the Applicant's proposed mechanical plan will help restore the historic character of the Ford Centre and is in compliance with Policy 8.1 of the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan.

> *Policy 8.1: Preserve, and maintain historic resources which serve as reminders of the city's architecture, history, and culture.*

(7) 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.

The project does not constitute the destruction of the subject property.

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:

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

CPED believes the Applicant gave adequate consideration of the description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which the designation of the Minneapolis Warehouse District took place. For this project, the Applicant is proposing to retain and rehabilitate character defining features of the building including the steel industrial windows and masonry.

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

The proposed rooftop equipment amendment will require zoning review by the CPED-Development Services Team.

(10) 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.

For the Ford Centre project, the Applicant has proposed to follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

CPED-Planning staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission **adopt** staff findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following condition(s):

1) The proposed chiller equipment shall not be greater than 14 feet in height measured from the roof floor to the top of the chiller.
2) CPED-Planning Preservation Staff shall review and approve the final plans and elevations prior to building permit issuance.
3) The Certificate of Appropriateness approval shall expire if it is not acted upon within one year of approval, unless extended by the Planning Director in writing prior to one-year anniversary date of approvals.
4) By ordinance, all approvals granted in this Certificate of Appropriateness shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this Certificate of Appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.