

**Community Planning & Economic Development
Planning Division**
250 South 4th Street, Room 110
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385



City of Minneapolis
*Department of Community Planning
& Economic Development - CPED*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heritage Preservation Commission

FROM: Chris Vrchota

DATE: January 31, 2012

RE: Conceptual Review, 101 5th Street S- Soo Line Building- Rehabilitation and Rooftop Addition

Background:

The Soo Line Building is a 19-story commercial building designed in the Renaissance Revival style, constructed between 1914-1915. Designed by architect Robert Gibson and built by the Thompson and Starrett Company, the Soo Line Building was the tallest building in Minneapolis at the time of its completion. Despite alterations including the installation of a skyway connection, replacement of most of the windows and replacement of the street level storefronts, the building retains its integrity.

The Soo Line Building was designated as a local landmark in 1996 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2008.

Summary of Applicant's Proposal:

The Applicant intends to convert the building into a mixed use development, with commercial uses on the street and skyway levels and apartment units in the remainder of the building.

The Applicant has an extensive proposed scale of work that includes rehabilitation, restoration, and alterations to the building. (See the project description and plans in Appendix B for the detailed scope of work proposed by the Applicant.) General, building-wide work includes: cleaning and re-pointing the existing masonry, repair and replacement of damaged or deteriorated terra cotta cladding, reconstruction of the rooftop parapet wall, repair of terra cotta coping, repair and restoration of historic window units, replacement of existing non-historic windows with new aluminum window units, and replacement of the street-level storefronts. The Applicant is also proposing to construct rooftop additions.

The Applicant is pursuing state and federal tax credits for the project. As a result, this project will be subject to review by the State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service.

Discussion Items

Staff and the Applicant are looking for general feedback on the proposed project, but are particularly interested in specific feedback regarding the following issues.

Window Replacement- All Facades

The Applicant is requesting feedback on the proposed design for the replacement windows proposed for use on all elevations. The majority of the windows on the building have been replaced, with the exception being in the center of the rear of the building. The Applicant is proposing to replace many of the existing replacement windows on the building with new windows that they believe are more historically appropriate. Replacement windows are identified as aluminum, though information on finish/color and glass has not been provided. See plan sheets A510-A511 for a window survey, and sheet A950 for a window schedule. (NOTE: The key on sheets A510 and A511 includes one category- “2: Historic window to be replaced w/ historic replica” that is not used on the plans. The Applicant has not identified any windows that meet this description at this time. Staff will ask the Applicant to remove this category from the formal submittal if it is not used.)

Rooftop Additions

The Applicant is proposing a number of changes to the roof, including removal of some mechanical equipment and restoration of the existing rooftop penthouse. They are also proposing to construct a 15’ tall club room addition (which is considered to be a 2-story addition, per the zoning code), as well as a lower 11’ tall addition to the existing penthouse. Material information and detailed designs for the proposed addition have not been provided. Other proposed rooftop alterations include the construction of a 15’ tall open steel arbor, installation of a terrace area with seating, installation of a lap pool with related seating and shelters, and the installation of a bar area with additional seating and planting elements. See plan sheets AD120, A120 and L300 for existing and proposed rooftop plans.

Treatment of 3rd Floor Skylight

The first 3 stories of the building are a solid rectangle, while the 4th-19th stories form a squared “U” shape. There is an existing skylight in the center of the building on the 3rd floor which has been covered with roofing material. The Applicant is exploring options for the treatment of this skylight, including leaving it in its current state, replacing it with a new skylight system, or refurbishing the existing skylight. See the last page of the photo packet in Appendix B for photos of the existing skylight.

Action Requested

The Heritage Preservation Commission is asked to provide the Applicant and staff with feedback and guidance on the proposed project, particularly regarding the three items for which the Applicant has specifically requested feedback. This input will be used by the Applicant as they prepare a formal application, and by staff when reviewing the application and preparing the staff report.

Attachments

Appendix A- Material Provided by Staff:

- A-1- Location Map
- A-2 – A-7 Local Designation Study Form

Appendix B- Material Provided by the Applicant

- Project overview and detailed scope of work (unnumbered)
- Historic Photos (unnumbered)
- 11x17 plan sheets, Pages numbered L100-A5