

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development - Planning Division**  
Certificate of Appropriateness  
BZH-27297

**Date:** May 15, 2012

**Applicant:** Shea, Inc. on behalf of Lund's

**Address of Property:** 1201 Hennepin Avenue

**Project Name:** Lund's Grocery Store Signage

**Contact Person and Phone:** Greg Houck, 612-339-2257

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

**Date Application Deemed Complete:** April 13, 2012

**Publication Date:** May 8, 2012

**Public Hearing:** May 15, 2012

**Appeal Period Expiration:** May 25, 2012

**Ward:** 7

**Neighborhood Organization:** Citizens for a Loring Park Community

**Concurrent Review:** N/A

**Attachments:**  
Materials Submitted by CPED – A1  
Materials Submitted by Applicant – B1-B-17

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<b>CLASSIFICATION:</b>	
Historic District	Harmon Place Historic District- Contributing Resource
Period of Significance	1907-1930
Criteria of significance	Broad patterns of economic history (automotive industry in Minneapolis); Architecture
Date of local designation	2001
Applicable Design Guidelines	Harmon Place Historic District Design Guidelines, Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings, Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties

<b>PROPERTY INFORMATION</b>	
Current name	Lund's
Historic Name	Reno Motor Company Building
Current Address	1201 Hennepin Avenue
Historic Address	1201 Hennepin Avenue
Original Construction Date	1912
Original Contractor	C.P. Johnson & Sons Co.
Original Architect	Long, Lamoreaux and Long
Historic Use	Commercial
Current Use	Commercial
Proposed Use	Commercial

**BACKGROUND:**

Constructed in 1912 on the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street South and Hennepin Avenue, the Reno Motor Company building is a three-story, flat-roofed concrete building clad in grayish-tan brick. One of the earliest automotive buildings remaining on Hennepin Avenue, this Long, Lamoreaux and Long designed building features a fine terra cotta cornice with paired brackets at the roofline, a terra cotta cornice between the first and second stories, and terra cotta molding around the windows on the upper floors. The building originally had stone storefronts at street level. The building housed a number of automobile showrooms before it was converted into offices in 1950 according to plans prepared by Liebenberg and Kaplan.

The building is currently undergoing renovations approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness in 2011, including an addition and window replacement. The site is being converted for use as a Lund's grocery store and office tenant space. (See photos on Appendix B-9 – B-11.)

**SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL:**

The Applicant is proposing to install three signs on the building; one wall sign and one projecting sign on the addition, and one projecting sign on the historic portion of the building. All three signs exceed the maximum size and height outlined in the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings*, and thus require a Certificate of Appropriateness. (See plans and elevations on Appendix B-12-B-17.)

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment had been received by the time of publication.

***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.***

According to *The Harmon Place Historic District Final Report*, prepared by Landscape Research, the Harmon Place Historic District is locally significant for its depiction of auto-related commercial development and automotive architecture during the period 1907-1930.

The proposed signs will be compatible with the criteria and period of significance for the Harmon Place Historic District. As shown in the historic photographs of the district provided by the Applicant (see Appendix B-7- B-8), large projecting signs were not uncommon in the district during the period of significance.

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

The alterations are compatible with and support the designation of the property. The overall impact of the three signs on the district as a whole will be negligible. As mentioned in Finding #1, the Applicant has demonstrated that large projecting signs were found in the district during the period of significance.

- (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 landmark.

*Location:* The Applicant is not proposing to change the location of the structure, thus the project will not impair the landmark's integrity of location.

*Design:* The proposed signs will not have a significant impact on the integrity of design. Installation of the signs will not result in any design modifications to the building.

*Setting:* The signs will not have any significant impact on the integrity of setting.

*Materials:* The installation of the signs would not have an impact on any significant or character defining materials. A condition has been included reinforcing the requirement that the signs be attached through mortar joints and that only one brick (per sign) can be removed for electrical conduit.

*Workmanship:* The signs would not require the removal or alteration of any distinct decorative or character defining elements on the building. The proposed signs would not have an impact on the integrity of workmanship.

*Feeling:* Large projecting signs were found in the district during the period of significance. The new proposed signs would help invoke the feeling of the district during the period of significance.

*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 *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings* are the relevant design guidelines for this application. (Commissioners can find the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings* in section 6 of their Preservation Resource Binders.) The *Harmon Place Historic District Design Guidelines* defer to the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings* for design guidance for signage. The *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings* allow for signs that do not meet the guidelines to be approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness, taking into consideration "special situations including building condition, building orientation, historic precedence and exceptional design proposals."

The *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings* limits wall signs to 32 square feet in area, and projecting signs to 12 square feet in area. The proposed wall sign measures 6' x 9'-4<sup>3/4</sup>", totaling 56.359 square feet. The two projecting signs are slightly irregular, generally measuring 11' x 4', totaling 40.8 square feet.

In this instance, the Applicant has demonstrated historic precedence for larger signs than permitted in the sign guidelines. The automotive sales showrooms and service businesses used large signs to draw the eye of motorists entering the district. The two projecting signs will identify the Lund's location from both Hennepin Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, while the wall sign will identify the store from the adjacent parking lot. None of the signs are out of scale or character for the building.

Regarding height, the design of the building essentially necessitates that the signs be higher than 14 feet above grade, which is the maximum height allowed by the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings*. As shown on the elevation drawing on

Appendix B-17, the first story of the building is 16.5 feet tall. The vertical design of the projecting signs makes them even taller. The wall sign on the west wall of the addition is above the entry and the large transom over the entry, again creating a starting point of over 16 feet. The placement of the signs fits the scale and design of the building.

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

Standard #2 states: "The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided." The proposal to add three signs to the building- two on the addition and one on the historic portion, will not have a significant impact on the historic character of the building. Attaching the signs to the building will not result in the loss or damage of any historic materials that characterize the property, and the signs are designed in a manner that is complimentary to the building. The proposed work is in keeping with this standard.

Standard #9 states: "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment." As previously mentioned, the installation of the signs would not necessitate the destruction of any historic materials that characterize the property. The signs are compatible with the massing, size and scale of the building and would not have any significant impact on the integrity of the property or the Harmon Place Historic District. The proposed work meets this finding.

- (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.***

As conditioned, the project would comply with policy 8.1.1 of The Minneapolis Plan, which states: "Protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance." This is evidenced by the project being in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

***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.**

The Applicant submitted statements outlining how they feel the proposed work meets the applicable findings and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix B-5 – B-6).

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

The site plan was reviewed and approved by the City Planning Commission on June 27 2011. The proposed signs are within the allowed size and height requirements for this zoning district.

- (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 Applicant submitted a statement saying that they believed the proposal was in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, though provided little detail as to how. (see Appendix B-5). As outlined in Finding #5 above, staff finds that the proposed work is in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

**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 proposed changes are limited to the installation of three signs. As previously outlined, the signs are in keeping with the size and scale of the building. Larger signs were found in the district during the period of significance. The proposed signs would be compatible with and ensure the continued significance and integrity of all contributing resources in the Harmon Place Historic 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

landscapes of the community while permitting appropriate changes to be made to these properties. As conditioned, the project complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, and would 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 ongoing rehabilitation of the original historic building should have a net positive impact on the significance and integrity of the district. Re-investment in this property and bringing a strong commercial tenant to this busy intersection may help spur further reinvestment in the district, furthering the preservation of the remaining resources. The addition of three signs to the subject property would not be injurious to the significance or integrity of any other resources in the district.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness for signage exceeding the size and height permitted in the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings* on the building located at 1201 Hennepin Avenue subject to the following condition(s):

1. The following signs are approved: one 56.359 square foot 22'-7" high wall sign on the west elevation, one 40.8 square foot 28' high projecting sign on the north elevation of the addition, and one 40.8 square foot 27'-6" high projecting sign at the northeast corner of the historic building.
2. CPED-Planning shall review and approve the final plans.
3. Signs shall be anchored to the wall through mortar joints. Not more than one brick shall be altered or removed for the installation of wiring.
4. No other signs are approved.
5. All workmanship must be completed in conformance with the Secretary of Interior Standards, see: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>
6. The Applicant shall obtain all other necessary City approvals prior to the commencement of work.
7. The Certificate of Appropriateness approvals shall expire if not acted upon within one year of approval, unless extended by the Planning Director in writing prior to the one-year anniversary date of the approvals.

**Attachment A: Submitted by CPED staff**

## **Attachment B: Materials submitted by Applicant**