City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Application

La Rive Condominiums, 110 Bank Street, Minneapolis, MN

STATEMENT OF PROPOSED USE AND DESCRIPTION

The La Rive Condominium Cooling Tower and Boiler Flue Screening project encloses new cooling tower equipment proposed for the top of La Rive Condominium Tower and encloses a new boiler flue proposed at the terrace level.

La Rive Condominiums, located at 110 Bank Street in Minneapolis, are part of the 1980's Riverplace development which includes the Pinnacle tower located at 20 Second Street NE, Minneapolis. La Rive Condominiums are part of the Nicollet Island/East Bank Neighborhood Group, the St. Anthony Falls Historic District, and the Hennepin and Central Character District.

The building is considered a non-contributing property in its historic districts due its more recent construction that does not fit within the district's period of significance. As a non-contributing property the design team looked to Chapter 9 New Infill Building Guidelines of the St. Anthony Fall Historic District Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as a framework for compatibility within the district.

The intent of this project is to separate heating and cooling generation which occurs in plants located within Pinnacle from La Rive Condominiums. This is due to a change in agreement between Pinnacle and La Rive Condominiums. According to the agreement, Pinnacle will no longer provide heating and cooling to La Rive as of end of year 2014.

ALTERNATIVES EXPLORED:

Since summer of 2010, La Rive has been engaged in analyzing possible alternatives for an energy plant capable of providing heating/cooling for the 118-unit condominium. Professionals consulted include Trak International and Michaud-Cooley regarding engineering issues, BKV and Miller Dunwiddie regarding architectural issues, McGough and Cy-Con regarding construction issues. Survey and legal work was also required to verify property lines and tie-ins to the Riverplace complex.

Given the land footprint of the existing building, the most difficult issue is the cooling tower size required. More than a dozen options were considered, including:

1. Geothermal- Insufficient land available.
2. Outside Supplier- Best possible option, NRG Energy, has not yet crossed river in the downtown area.
3. Front Yard Location at Grade- Interference with lower condominiums and resulting limit of drive area.
4. Lower Level Roof Options at La Rive – Options for placement conflicted with and interfered with views from balconies and interior living space of existing condominium units.

5. Off-Site Across Road/Riverplace Garage Entrance- Although favored by engineers and architects, the legal issues with City of Minneapolis and Riverplace management were considered too difficult to overcome.

La Rive is still considering the option to attempt to modernize the existing plant and gain a new contract with Riverplace Management. To date, La Rive has received little or no encouragement from them. Given the 12/31/2014 contract-end and expected 18- month cycle needed for design/construction, La Rive required an alternative that does not reduce quality of life in the condominium or neighborhood as well as does not reduce property values. This application describes the only feasible alternative proposed to date.

STATEMENT OF APPROPRIATENESS – ALTERATIONS TO A PROPERTY WITHIN A HISTORIC DISTRICT

1) The alterations to La Rive are compatible with the St. Anthony Falls Historic District guidelines and protect the significance of the surrounding district. Access to light and air of surrounding properties is respected, and key views are maintained. As noted above, many locations for new heating and cooling equipment were considered, including at grade and on various La Rive rooftops, before settling on the current locations. The final proposed locations strike a good balance between equipment efficiency, constructability, and the least visual and acoustical disturbance to all neighbors.
2) The primary consideration for compatibility within the historic district lies in the increase in height for the cooling tower screening and how the building will be seen from key public viewpoints inside and outside the historic district. The enclosed before and after renderings from Hennepin Avenue and Central Avenue illustrate the minimal visual impact the screening will have at two primary viewpoints. The cooling tower enclosure will not be illuminated. Existing FAA lighting on the roof will be reviewed and adjusted per FAA regulations. The cooling tower screen situated at the top of La Rive will increase the height of the building approximately 19 feet at the Mississippi River façade from 310.5 feet to 329.84 feet. The structure itself is designed minimally to reflect the simple shapes of the existing building and to simply enclose the cooling tower with the required minimum clearances around the equipment. It will be constructed of structural steel framing with perforated painted aluminum panels as the skin. The cooling tower will require yearly maintenance and therefore, an access ladder from the penthouse level roof is also incorporated into the design. All components of the mechanical screen and access will be painted to closely match the existing brick color.

   The second mechanical screen is that of the boiler flue at terrace level. Due to the many operable openings near the location where the boiler flue exits the building, the flue must extend a minimum of 20 feet from the building face. A screen of wood slats and steel structure similar in construction to the existing pergola will be constructed to screen the boiler flue from view. The structure itself is subordinate in height, mass, and scale to the surrounding building. The location of the boiler flue screening is such that it will not be viewed from the street below.

3) The cooling tower and boiler flue screening follow the guidelines of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District related to screening mechanical equipment. There is little or no impact on the neighborhood or surrounding district, as the cooling tower's increased height does not impact the area and the color of the materials are compatible with the current building. The boiler flue screen cannot be seen from the adjacent street or neighborhood. The metal screening on the cooling tower is a perforated metal with a matte finish. This finish has no luster and very low reflectivity.

Nicollet Island – East Bank Neighborhood Association
132 Bank St SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Date: April 19, 2013

To: Whom it may Concern

RE: Support for change in La Rive roofline required by installation of new cooling tower

It is meeting on April 18, 2013 the NIEBNA Board of Directors passed by unanimous vote the following resolution:

Resolved: NIEBNA supports the change in the La Rive roofline required by the installation of a new cooling tower as shown in the architect's renderings below:

Please contact me with any questions.

For the Nicollet Island – East Bank Neighborhood Association

/s/ P. Victor Grambsch

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