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The Van Dusen Mansion and Event Center wishes to apply for a historical variance for the use of the property located at 1900 LaSalle Ave N, Minneapolis, MN 55403, as an event center. The property contains three buildings, the mansion, the carriage house, and the banquet hall. The mansion and the carriage house were built circa 1892 and the banquet hall was built in the last 20 years. The property is currently zoned as a High Density Office Residence District which does not allow for an event center use. However, by using this property as an event center, the two requirements to authorize a Historical Variance are satisfied: 1) Compatibility with the preservation of the property, and 2) necessity to alleviate undue hardship due to special conditions existing on the property.

The Van Dusen Mansion and Event Center is used for a variety of events, including weddings, corporate meetings, charitable and political fundraisers, private parties, retreats, educational seminars and training. All of these different types of events are compatible with the preservation of the property for two reasons. First, in order to host such events the premises must be immaculately maintained for safety reasons. Furthermore, since a major draw for customers looking to host an event at the Event Center is its historic beauty, the staff is driven to ensure that every ornate detail of the building is well preserved. Second, all events hosted at the Mansion and Event Center are carefully planned and therefore scheduled in the building most appropriate for the size and function of the event. For example, large events such as weddings are held in the banquet hall so as not to tax the mansion itself. As a result of this careful planning and desire to maintain the historic character of the property, use as an event center is compatible with the preservation of the property.

The second requirement for authorizing a Historic Variance is also satisfied. All buildings on the property are geared towards hosting groups of people in a communal fashion. To convert this building to either a residential use or an office space use would require a great deal of structural change to the building and a great deal of expense. In fact, given the historic nature of the property it is unlikely that any such conversion would even be allowed, thus rendering the property virtually useless without zoning approval of even a permitted use. As a result the Heritage Preservation Commission would not be in violation of the Zoning Code to recommend this Historic Variance.

A proposed project does not accompany this application because no such project exists. This application is exclusively for a Historic Variance to use the property as an event center. Using this national historic masterpiece to enrich the culture of the twin cities stands to benefit the properties surrounding the mansion and the Minneapolis area generally.

The Van Dusen Event Center



Main Entrance La Salle Av.

MEMO

DATE: July 3 2013

TO: City of Minneapolis CPED

FROM; Gleeson Architects 1175 Hwy 36e St. Paul Mn. 55109

SUBJECT: Van Dusen Event Center 1900 La Salle Av. Mpls

RE.: Building code and Zoning review

This memo is part of an application for variance for changes in occupancy at above subject. The owners have been informed by the city that the present use does not conform with the use on record, and that a building permit application will have to be made by a licensed design professional for variance purposes.

The accompanying survey, site plan and floor plans prepared by Gleeson Architects show existing conditions. There is no new construction on the project.

The buildings are being used similar to the use prior to the purchase by the present owner some five years past except that it no longer has a bed and breakfast component. City records show last use as residential in OR2 zoning district.

The present and proposed use is for an event center, with offices and storage for owners with no residential uses.

The owners request that the allowed discretion to the zoning and building code by the Building Official and administrators be applied under the Conservation Code and HPC review because of existing conditions and the historic designation of the site.

The buildings (3) are of one hour combustable non sprinkled masonry load bearing construction with separation all sides except for questionable five feet on south lot line. See drawings for areas heights and exits.

The main building (bldg.#1) basement and first floor willis used for reception and waiting areas and grooms dressing (A2). Floor structure has been previously strengthened for this use. The second floor is for office use (B). The third floor is private storage (S2) and is not occupied during scheduled events.

The event center (bldg.#2) basement will be used for storage (S2) and has two hour separation between floors with first floor being used for banqueting and private liquor bar (A2). The floor has been previously designed for this use. A food prep area is included to serve catered food.

The carriage house (bldg.#3) is for dining and liquor consumption on both floors which are open. Food is served by contracted caterer.

All three buildings have accessable routes except basement and second floor of building #1.

Exterior patio area will be used for assembly (AS3) on occasions. It has exits to ROWs.

As no changes to structure are proposed there are no building elevations included in documents. The following photos key issues for this application.



View to SW from corner of La Salle and Groveland



Existing Sign



Groveland Entrance and drive through canopy Main Building.



Back of Carriage House showing 14ft wide alley and 8ft high W.I. fence with exit gate.



Patio between Carriage House and main building showing exit through arch with W.I. gate and accessible ramp to Carriage House entrance.



View west in patio showing separation buildings and accessible route between Main Building and Event Center, and exit route through patio to ROW.



Accessible route and separation looking east.



View south toward entrance to Event Center.



View west showing mechanical area attached to Carriage House.



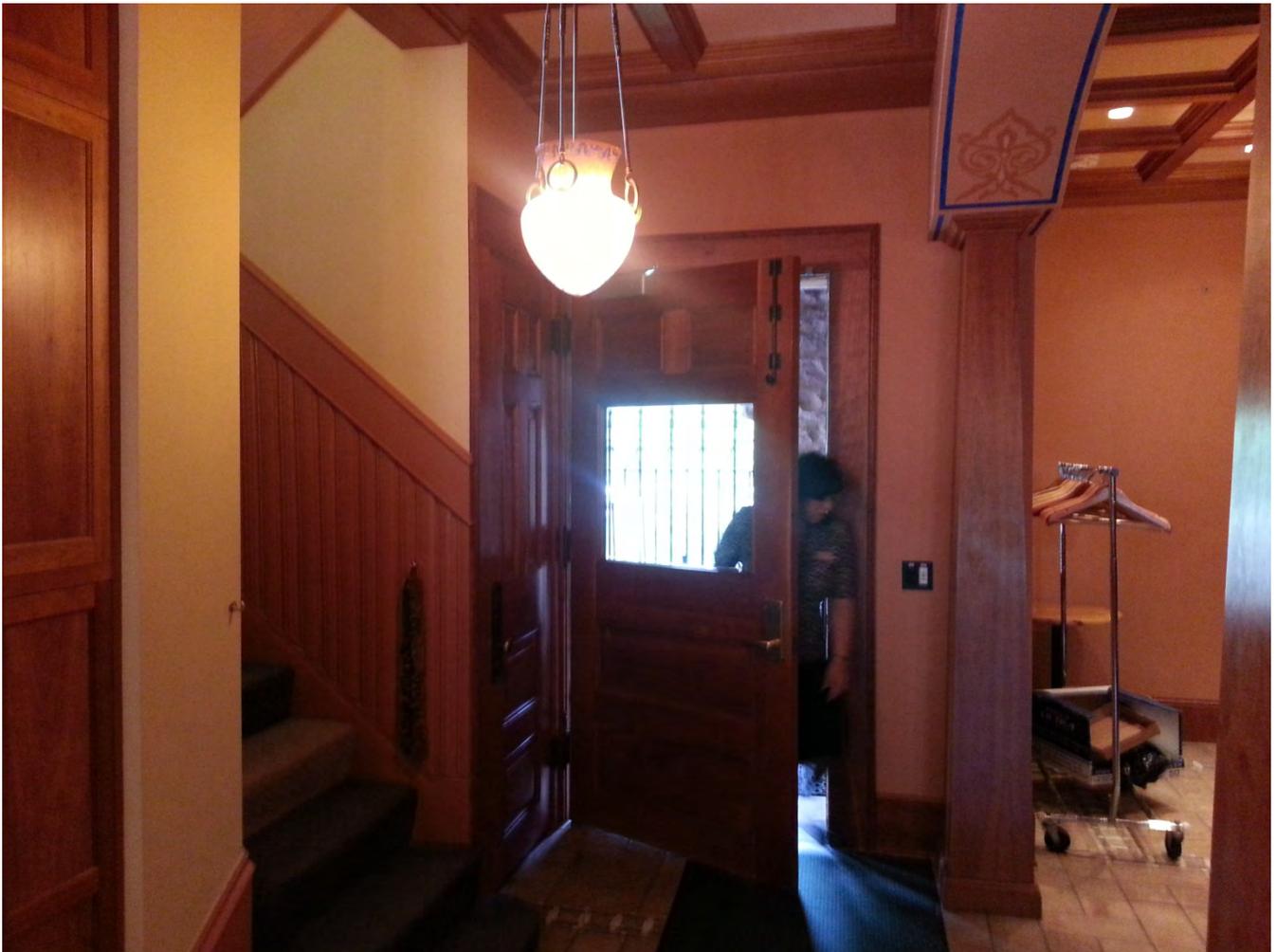
View south toward east end of Event Center with temporary structure structure in west front yard.



Interior of Event center looking south east.



Event Center prep kitchen.



One of two exits doors and stair to Groveland from Main Building.



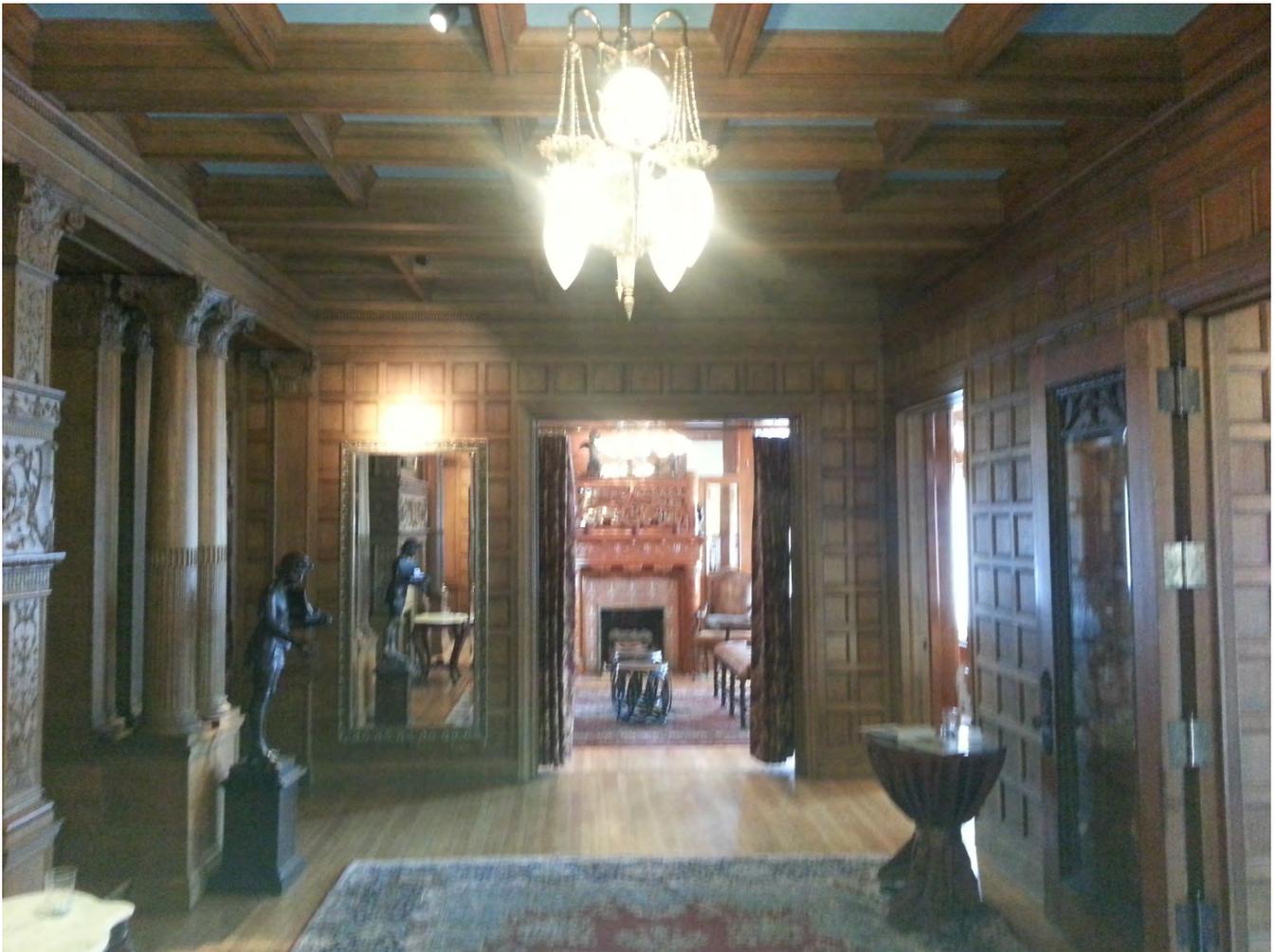
NW corner of first floor reception area in Main Building.



West bay reception area first floor Main Building.



View west foyer/reception first floor Main Building.



View south foyer/reception first floor Main Building.



Foyer Main Building.



Second floor Brides Dressing Area Main Building second floor.