

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Certificate of Appropriateness
 BZH-28085

Date: February 18, 2014

Proposal: Certificate of Appropriateness for Signage

Applicant: Daniel Hunt, Hunt Associates, LLC

Address of Property: 24 University Avenue NE, Tract B

Project Name: JL Beers Sign Plan

Contact Person and Phone: Randy Andrews, Indigo Signworks, 651-249-8254

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

Date Application Deemed Complete: January 24, 2014

End of 60-Day Decision Period: March 17, 2014

End of 120-Day Decision Period: Not applicable for this application.

Ward: 3

Neighborhood Organization: Nicollet Island- East Bank

Concurrent Review: N/A

CLASSIFICATION:	
Local Historic District	Saint Anthony Falls Historic District
Period of Significance	1858-1940
Criteria of significance	Architecture and Social Significance
Date of local designation	1971
Applicable Design Guidelines	- <i>Saint Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines</i> - <i>Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties</i> - <i>Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings</i>

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
BZH-28085

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Current Name	Fire Barn Building
Historic Name	Minneapolis Fire Department Repair Shop
Current Address	24 University Avenue NE, Tract B
Historic Address	24 University Avenue NE
Original Construction Date	1910 (main building) 1922 (annex)
Original Contractor	Unknown
Original Architect	Downs and Eads
Historic Use	Fire Department repair/maintenance facility
Current Use	Commercial
Proposed Use	Restaurant

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is an 80'x155' 2-story brick building located at the intersection of University Avenue NE and 1st Avenue NE. It was constructed in 1910, with a 1-story brick annex constructed at the west end of the building, facing 1st Avenue NE, in 1922. Both the University Avenue NE and 1st Avenue NE elevations are finished, featuring a red brick watertable with lighter brick above. There are two sets of pedestrian doors on the University Avenue NE elevation, and one pedestrian entry and two garage entries on the 1st Avenue NE elevation. Windows on both elevations are nine-over-nine double-hung windows with stone sills. The windows are replacements which replicate the original windows, installed during a rehabilitation project approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission through a Certificate of Appropriateness in 2001.

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL:

The Applicant is proposing to install a total of four new signs on the building for a new restaurant tenant:

- One 84"x54¾" (33.65 square foot) projecting sign. The sign is proposed to be mounted at an angle at the corner of the building adjacent to the University Avenue NE and 1st Avenue NE intersection. The proposed sign is a combination of aluminum and Plexiglas, and would be internally illuminated.
- One 29"x160" (32 square foot) wall sign. The sign would be mounted above the third bay of windows on the 1st Avenue NE elevation. The sign would be aluminum with vinyl graphics applied to it. The aluminum panel would then be mounted to the building through mortar joints. No illumination is proposed for this sign.
- Two 36"x60" (15 square foot) wall signs. The signs would be mounted on either side of the corner window on the University Avenue NE elevation. The signs would be aluminum with vinyl graphics applied to them. The aluminum panels would then be mounted to the building through mortar joints. No illumination is proposed for these signs.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

A letter from the Nicollet Island- East Bank Neighborhood Association supporting the proposed signage is attached.

Findings as required by the Minneapolis Preservation Code:

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.

The St. Anthony Falls Historic District is significant for its association with early patterns of residential, commercial and industrial development along the river and near the falls.

The proposed signage meets this finding. While the subject building likely did not have substantial amounts of signage historically due to its use, both wall and projecting signs would have commonly been found throughout 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 signs on the district as a whole will be negligible. It is unlikely that the installation of any signage would have any significant impact on the association of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District to the early patterns of residential, commercial and industrial development along the river and near the falls.

(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 proposal would not impact the integrity of the property or the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

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 would not have a significant impact on the integrity of design. While the building does not contain a discernable sign band, the placement of the signs is not out of character for the building. The installation of the signs will not result in any additional design modifications to the building.

Setting: Wall and projecting signs were found throughout the St. Anthony Falls Historic District during the period of significance, and are still found there today. The proposed signs would not have an impact on the integrity of setting.

Materials: The installation of the signs would not have an impact on any significant or character defining materials. The signs are proposed to be attached to the building through mortar joints. Staff is recommending a condition that only 1 brick can be removed or modified to accommodate the electrical conduit needed for illumination of the projecting sign.

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: Signs of all types and sizes were found throughout the St. Anthony Falls Historic District during the period of significance, and are still found there today. The proposed signs would not have an impact on the integrity of feeling.

Association: The project would 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. The *St. Anthony Falls 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 number of signs meets the standards outlined in the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings*. The three proposed wall signs all meet the size standards of the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings*. The 32 square foot wall sign proposed above the windows on the 1st Avenue NE elevation exceeds the height maximum of 14', though this area could be considered the sign band which would be in keeping with the standards. The proposed corner mounted projecting sign exceeds the maximum size of 12 square feet established by the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings*, as well as the maximum height of 14' above grade.

The corner mounted projecting sign will be visible from both University Avenue NE and 1st Avenue NE, eliminating the potential need for larger, more visible signage on each elevation. The proposed signage is not out of scale with the building and would not impair the significance or integrity of the St. Anthony Falls Historic 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.**

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 installation/modifications of the signs on the building would not have an impact on any historic materials or features.

Standard #9 states: "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment."

The installation of the signs will not impact materials that characterize the property. The signs will be mounted through mortar joints, and a maximum of one brick will be removed or altered to allow for the installation of electrical conduit. While the three wall signs are shown to feature a brick pattern background to the signage, the signs will still be easily recognizable as modern additions to the building.

- (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."

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 material stating that they feel the proposed work meets the applicable findings and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, though did not elaborate on how or why the proposal met these guidelines (see Appendix B).

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

The proposed alterations do not trigger any additional review under Title 20, Chapter 530.

- (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.**

As outlined in finding #5 of this report, staff found that the project 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 signs would be compatible with and would not impact the continued significance and integrity of the subject property and all other contributing properties in the St. Anthony Falls 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. The intent of the *Design Guidelines for On-Premise Signs and Awnings* is to allow for sensitive, appropriately sized and designed signage for historic buildings. The proposed signs meet the spirit and intent of the ordinance and guidelines and would not 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 occupancy by new tenants should have a net positive impact on the significance and integrity of the district. The installation of appropriately scaled signage is an important component of creating successful tenant spaces and a new identity for this building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness for signage for the building located at 24 University Avenue NE Tract B subject to the following condition(s):

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
BZH-28085

1. CPED staff shall review and approve the final plans.
2. 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.
3. All workmanship must be completed in conformance with the Secretary of Interior Standards, see: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>
4. The Applicant shall obtain all other necessary City approvals prior to the commencement of work.
5. By ordinance, approvals are valid for a period of two years from the date of the decision unless required permits are obtained and the action approval is substantially begun and proceeds in a continuous basis toward completion. Upon written request and for good cause, the planning director may grant up to a one year extension if the request is made in writing no later than February 18, 2016.

Attachments:

- Zoning map
- Project description and statement addressing the applicable Certificate of Appropriateness findings
- Plans
- Photos