

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning
Division
Site Plan Review
BZZ-2568**

Date: September 19, 2005

Applicant: Mike Heffron, BKV Group, 222 N. 2nd Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401,
(612)339-3752

Addresses of Property: 222 N. 2nd Street

Project Name: BKV Group 3rd Floor Addition

Contact Person and Phone: Mike Heffron, BKV Group, 222 N. 2nd Street,
Minneapolis, MN 55401, (612)339-3752

Planning Staff and Phone: Becca Farrar, (612)673-3594

Date Application Deemed Complete: August 12, 2005

End of 60-Day Decision Period: October 10, 2005

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

Ward: 5 **Neighborhood Organization:** North Loop Neighborhood Assoc.

Existing Zoning: B4C-1 (Downtown Commercial District), DP (Downtown Parking
Overlay District)

Proposed Zoning: Not applicable for this application.

Zoning Plate Number: 13

Lot area: 5,368 square feet or .12 acres

Legal Description: Not applicable for this application.

Proposed Use: New third-story addition to an existing two-story office.

Concurrent Review:

- Site Plan review for a new 4,275 square foot third-story addition to an existing two-story building.

Applicable zoning code provisions: Chapter 530 Site Plan Review.

Background: The applicant proposes to construct a new 4,275 square foot third-story addition to an existing 11,040 two-story office building located on the property at 222 N. 2nd Street. The properties is zoned B4C-1 and is located within the DP (Downtown Parking) Overlay District. The property is historically referred to as the Grant Storage Battery Company and is a contributing building in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District and the National Register Warehouse Historic District. The proposed building addition has already been reviewed and approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) subject to specific conditions. The applicant has incorporated said conditions into the submitted drawings for the required site plan application.

The office space is currently being utilized by BKV Group, an architectural, engineering and interior design company. The proposed third-story addition would include a new metal structure attached to existing concrete columns, formed steel stud exterior walls with metal panels, as well as storefront window and door systems.

Staff has not received correspondence from the North Loop Neighborhood Association or any neighborhood letters prior to the printing of this report.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Required Findings for Site Plan Review

- A. The site plan conforms to all applicable standards of Chapter 530, Site Plan Review. (See Section A Below for Evaluation.)**
- B. The site plan conforms to all applicable regulations of the zoning ordinance and is consistent with applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable small area plans adopted by the city council. (See Section B Below for Evaluation.)**

Section A: Conformance with Chapter 530 of Zoning Code

BUILDING PLACEMENT AND FAÇADE:

- **Placement of the building shall reinforce the street wall, maximize natural surveillance and visibility, and facilitate pedestrian access and circulation.**
- **First floor of the building shall be located not more than eight (8) feet from the front lot line (except in C3S District or where a greater yard is required by the zoning ordinance). If located on corner lot, the building wall abutting each street shall be subject to this requirement.**
- **The area between the building and the lot line shall include amenities.**
- **The building shall be oriented so that at least one (1) principal entrance faces the public street. In the case of a corner lot, the principal entrance shall face the front lot line.**
- **Except in the C3S District, on-site accessory parking facilities shall be located to the rear or interior of the site, within the principal building served, or entirely below grade.**
- **For new construction, the building walls shall provide architectural detail and shall contain windows as required by Chapter 530 in order to create visual interest and to increase security of adjacent outdoor spaces by maximizing natural surveillance and visibility.**

- **In larger buildings, architectural elements, including recesses or projections, windows and entries, shall be emphasized to divide the building into smaller identifiable sections.**
- **Blank, uninterrupted walls that do not include windows, entries, recesses or projections, or other architectural elements, shall not exceed twenty five (25) feet in length.**
- **Exterior materials shall be durable, including but not limited to masonry, brick, stone, stucco, wood, metal, and glass.**
- **The exterior materials and appearance of the rear and side walls of any building shall be similar to and compatible with the front of the building.**
- **The use of plain face concrete block as an exterior material shall be prohibited fronting along a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or adjacent to a residence or office residence district.**
- **Entrances and windows:**
- **Residential uses:**
 - **Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as porches and roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Twenty (20) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:**
 - a. **Windows shall be vertical in proportion.**
 - b. **Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.**
 - **Nonresidential uses:**

Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Thirty (30) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:

 - a. **Windows shall be vertical in proportion.**
 - b. **Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.**
 - c. **The bottom of any window used to satisfy the ground floor window requirement may not be more than four (4) feet above the adjacent grade.**
 - d. **First floor or ground floor windows shall have clear or lightly tinted glass with a visible light transmittance ratio of 0.6 or higher.**
 - e. **First floor or ground floor windows shall allow views into and out of the building at eye level. Shelving, mechanical equipment or other similar fixtures shall not block views into and out of the building in the area between four (4) and seven (7) feet above the adjacent grade. However, window area in excess of the minimum required area shall not be required to allow views into and out of the building.**
 - f. **Industrial uses in Table 550-1, Principal Industrial Uses in the Industrial Districts, may provide less than thirty (30) percent windows on the walls that face an on-site parking lot, provided the parking lot is not located between the building and a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway.**

Minimum window area shall be measured as indicated in section 531.20 of the zoning code.

- **The form and pitch of roof lines shall be similar to surrounding buildings.**
- **Parking Garages: The exterior design shall ensure that sloped floors do not dominate the appearance of the walls and that vehicles are screened from view. At least thirty (30) percent of the first floor building wall that faces a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway shall be occupied by active uses, or shall be designed with architectural detail or windows, including display windows, that create visual interest.**

The building is existing and is constructed up to the lot line on all sides of the property. The applicant is proposing a new third-story addition to an existing two-story office building. An existing principal entrance faces 2nd Street North and is a shared principal entrance with the existing three-story building located to the west on the property at 127 N. 3rd Avenue (on the corner of 3rd Avenue North and 2nd Street North). No walkways are necessary as the building is constructed up to the public sidewalk along 2nd Street North. Required parking for the proposed office use are not located on site. The required parking is located in a surface parking lot off of 3rd Avenue North and 1st Street North. The parking lot contains 62 parking spaces. The parking lot is not being reviewed at this time for compliance with the design and maintenance provision in Chapter 530.

As previously mentioned, the two-story building is existing and a 4,275 square foot third story is proposed. The existing building does incorporate windows at the first floor which would exceed the 30% requirement. The 10% window requirement would also be exceeded on the existing second floor. As proposed, the third would also exceed the 10% window requirement as well. The windows would be vertical in proportion and distributed in a more or less even manner.

The proposed exterior materials for the addition have been deemed compatible by the HPC and would be compatible on all sides of the proposed building. The addition will have an aluminum and glass front facing Second Street (south elevation) and zinc shingles on the side (east) and rear (north) walls. The Second Street elevation (south) will have a handrail setback from the parapet but attached to the parapet and roofing system. The parapet along the east side of the building must remain and the new addition must be setback from the historic parapet along the east and north elevations. The side (east) wall of the addition will be devoid of windows; this elevation currently faces a surface parking lot. The east elevation as proposed does have blank walls in excess of 25 feet in length. Alternative compliance would be necessary based on the proposal which was approved by the HPC. The rear (north) elevation will have an inset patio that measures 12' by 12'. The roof pitch matches those of surrounding buildings as the roof will be flat.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION:

- Clear and well-lighted walkways of at least four (4) feet in width shall connect building entrances to the adjacent public sidewalk and to any parking facilities located on the site.
- Transit shelters shall be well lighted, weather protected and shall be placed in locations that promote security.
- Vehicular access and circulation shall be designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic and surrounding residential uses.
- Traffic shall be directed to minimize impact upon residential properties and shall be subject to section 530.150 (b) related to alley access.
- Site plans shall minimize the use of impervious surfaces.

No walkways are necessary as the building is constructed up to the public sidewalk along 2nd Street North. Required parking for the proposed office uses are not located on site. The required parking is located in a surface parking lot approximately a half block away

off of 3rd Avenue North and 1st Street North. The parking lot is accessed off of 3rd Avenue North.

The proposal should have no impact on impervious surfaces. The site is entirely impervious as the building is constructed up to all lot lines. The site currently has no landscaping and the footprint of the building to which the 3rd story addition is being added to is existing.

LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING:

- **The composition and location of landscaped areas shall complement the scale of the development and its surroundings.**
 - Not less than twenty (20) percent of the site not occupied by buildings, including all required landscaped yards, shall be landscaped as specified in section 530.160 (a).
- **Required screening shall be six (6) feet in height, unless otherwise specified, except in required front yards where such screening shall be three (3) feet in height.**
- **Except as otherwise provided, required screening shall be at least ninety-five (95) percent opaque throughout the year. Screening shall be satisfied by one or a combination of the following:**
 - A decorative fence.
 - A masonry wall.
 - A hedge.
- **Parking and loading facilities located along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway shall comply with section 530.170 (b), including providing landscape yards along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway and abutting or across an alley from a residence or office residence district, or any permitted or conditional residential use.**
- **The corners of parking lots where rows of parking spaces leave areas unavailable for parking or vehicular circulation shall be landscaped as specified for a required landscaped yard. Such spaces may include architectural features such as benches, kiosks or bicycle parking.**
- **In parking lots of ten (10) spaces or more, no parking space shall be located more than fifty (50) feet from the center of an on-site deciduous tree. Tree islands located within the interior of a parking lot shall have a minimum width of seven (7) feet in any direction.**
- **All other areas not governed by sections 530.160 and 530.170 and not occupied by buildings, parking and loading facilities or driveways, shall be covered with turf grass, native grasses or other perennial flowering plants, vines, mulch, shrubs or trees.**
- **Installation and maintenance of all landscape materials shall comply with the standards outlined in section 530.210.**
- **The city planning commission may approve the substitution or reduction of landscaped plant materials, landscaped area or other landscaping or screening standards, subject to section 530.80, as provided in section 530.220.**

There is no landscaping on site. The building is existing and is constructed up to the property line on all side of the building.

ADDITIONAL STANDARDS:

- **All parking lots and driveways shall be designed with wheel stops or discontinuous curbing to provide on-site retention and filtration of stormwater. Where on-site retention and filtration is**

not practical, the parking lot shall be defined by six (6) inch by six (6) inch continuous concrete curb.

- Lighting shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 535 and Chapter 541. A lighting diagram may be required.
- Parking and loading facilities and all other areas upon which vehicles may be located shall be screened to avoid headlights shining onto residential properties.
- To the extent practical, site plans shall minimize the blocking of views of important elements of the city.
- To the extent practical, buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize shadowing on public spaces and adjacent properties.
- To the extent practical, buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize the generation of wind currents at ground level.
- Site plans shall include crime prevention design elements as specified in section 530.260 related to:
 - Natural surveillance and visibility
 - Lighting levels
 - Territorial reinforcement and space delineation
 - Natural access control
- To the extent practical, site plans shall include the rehabilitation and integration of locally designated historic structures or structures that have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated. Where rehabilitation is not feasible, the development shall include the reuse of significant features of historic buildings.

The applicant is not proposing any additional lighting with the proposed project. The proposed addition would likely not block any views of important elements of the city, would not be expected to shadow adjacent properties or public spaces and wind currents would not be expected to be substantial.

The proposal does include the integration of the existing building which is a contributing building in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District and the National Register Warehouse Historic District.

Section B: Conformance with All Applicable Zoning Code Provisions and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Applicable Small Area Plans Adopted by the City Council

ZONING CODE - The proposed use is permitted in the B4C-1 District

With the approval of the site plan review this development will meet the requirements of the B4C-1 zoning district.

Parking and Loading: Chapter 541 of the zoning code requires one off-street parking space per 300 square feet of gross floor area in excess of 4,000 square feet for office uses. The surface parking lot that provides the required parking for the development contains 62 spaces which exceeds the requirement. A total of 42 off-street parking spaces are required for the development.

Signs: No signage is being proposed. All new signage is required to meet the requirements of the code. A separate permit is required from the Zoning Office as no signage is being approved as part of the submitted applications.

Maximum Floor Area: The maximum F.A.R. for multiple-family dwelling units in the B4C-1 District is the gross floor area of the building which is 15,315 square feet divided by the area of the lot which is 5,520 square feet. The outcome is 2.8 which is less than the maximum of 4.0 that is permitted in the B4C-1 District.

Minimum Lot Area: Not applicable. There is no minimum lot area or lot width requirement for office uses in the Downtown Districts.

Height: Not applicable. There is no maximum building height for principal structures located in the Downtown Districts. The applicant is proposing a third-story or 12 feet, 11 ½ inch addition on to an existing two-story building.

Yard Requirements: Not applicable for this development as the footprint of the building is existing and is not being altered as the building is constructed up to all property lines. The proposal is to construct a building addition on top of the existing building.

Building coverage: Not applicable. There is no maximum building coverage restriction in the Downtown Districts.

Impervious surface area: Not applicable. There is no maximum impervious surface restriction in the Downtown Districts.

MINNEAPOLIS PLAN

According to the Principles and Policies outlined in the *Minneapolis Plan*, the following apply to this proposal:

9.11 Minneapolis will support urban design standards that emphasize a traditional urban form in commercial areas.

- *Implementation step: Enhance unique characteristics of the city's commercial districts by encouraging appropriate building forms and designs, historic preservation objectives, site plans that enhance the pedestrian environment, and by maintaining high quality public spaces and infrastructure.*

9.23 Minneapolis will continue to provide a wide range of goods and services for city residents, to promote employment opportunities, to encourage the use and adaptive reuse of existing commercial buildings, and to maintain and improve compatibility with surrounding areas.

- *Implementation step: Facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized commercial areas and promote their reuse as infill development, such as office or housing, while maintaining neighborhood compatibility.*

The applicant proposes to construct a new 4,275 square foot, third-story addition to an existing two-story building in order to provide more office space for the occupant. This development is in conformance with the above noted principles and policies of the comprehensive plan.

Section C: Conformance with Applicable Development Plans or Objectives Adopted by the City Council

No small area plans for this area of Minneapolis have been adopted by the City Council.

ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE

The Planning Commission may approve alternatives to any site plan review requirement upon finding any of the following:

- **The alternative meets the intent of the site plan chapter and the site plan includes amenities or improvements that address any adverse effects of the alternative. Site amenities may include but are not limited to additional open space, additional landscaping and screening, green roof, decorative pavers, ornamental metal fencing, architectural enhancements transit facilities, bicycle facilities, preservation of natural resources, restoration of previously damaged natural environment, rehabilitation of existing structures that have been locally designated or have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated as historic structures, and design which is similar in form, scale and materials to existing structures on the site and to surrounding development.**
- **Strict adherence to the requirements is impractical because of site location or conditions and the proposed alternative meets the intent of this chapter.**
- **The proposed alternative is consistent with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council and meets the intent of this chapter.**

Alternative compliance is necessary based on the proposal as the east elevation of the proposed building addition has blank walls in excess of 25 feet in length. The proposal was previously approved by the HPC. The proposal does include the integration of the existing building which is a contributing building in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District and the National Register Warehouse Historic District. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission grant alternative compliance as the intent is met with the integration of the existing building into the proposed development.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division for the site plan review:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development– Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the site plan review application for an addition to the existing building on the property located at 222 N. 2nd Street subject to the following conditions:

1. Planning Staff review and approval of the final site and elevation plans.
2. All site improvements shall be completed by September 19, 2006, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.

Attachments:

1. Statement of use / description of the project
2. Correspondence
3. HPC Staff Report
4. Zoning map
5. Plans – Site, elevations, floor plans, etc.
6. Photos