

Heritage Preservation Commission  
December 14, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes  
Web-Ex Meeting Format

*Due to the COVID-19 emergency, the HPC members participated through video conference from home. The meeting was held as a Special Meeting pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.021 in response to the Covid-19 emergency.*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

President Jessica Fortney called to order the meeting of the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at 12:02 p.m. on Monday, December 14, 2020.

**Attendance:** (Via WebEx video conferencing – all votes conducted via roll call)

Attending: Ken Buehler, Stacey DeRoche, Jessica Fortney, Brandon Hartung, Mike Poupore, and Sarah Wisdorf (joined meeting after consideration of minutes)

Absent: Meredith Anderson

Staff Present: Steven Robertson, Adam Fulton, Eleanor Bacso

2. Public Hearings

None at this time

3. Consideration of Minutes

Minutes from the November 9, 2020, meeting were read

**MOTION/Second:** Buehler/Hartung approve the minutes

**VOTE: (5-0)**

4. Communications

-Marten Trail Plan, Informational Meeting

Robertson stated that this item will be on the January agenda, adding that there are informational meetings this month that the members of the public are invited to attend and comment.

5. Report of Final Disposition of Matters Previously Before the Commission

-President Fortney asked if there is an update on the Pastoret Terrace. Adam Fulton stated that they are still evaluating an engineering report from LHB, but initial findings indicate that the portion of the structure along 1<sup>st</sup> Street was compromised.

6. Reports of Officers, Staff and Committees

Commissioner Wisdorf gave a brief update on the Planning Commission, noting that the changes to the form districts (related to designated historic landmarks) is proceeding.

7. Consideration of Matters Regarding Commission Action

Adam Fulton discussed the potential reuse of the Historic Old Central High School into a housing project of up to 200 units by a developer called Saturday Properties. Fulton discussed the preservation plan, noting that it was adopted in the mid 1990s. He stated that this area is proposed to go through a minor rezoning on the Planning Commission's December agenda, s that the entire block is one zone district, instead of two zone districts as it is currently. Fulton

added that this is a very important building to the city and it is important that the project is done right and historic preservation aspects are maintained. Fulton added that he wanted to give the members of the commission some advance knowledge of the project, and that a formal application for Certificate of Appropriateness may be coming to the commission for their February or March meeting. He concluded by stating it is likely that the developer may want to alter the receiving dock, but noted that the dock is not original to the building and is not a contributing element. Members of the commission commented on aspects of the structure, including the wide hallways and unique façade; defining features of the structure that make it an asset to the community.

#### 8. Other Business

The group discussed the 2021 Work Plan/Goals in detail, and made amendments to the existing 2020 work plan documents. The discussion concluded with a desire to review older preservation plans to see if some adjustments need to be made, since many are 30 years old. Commission DeRoche offered to share a template that was used last time she participated in the creation of a preservation plan.

#### 9. Adjournment

Adjournment at 12:59 p.m. (Next meeting scheduled for Monday, 1/11/2021.)

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:  
Adam W. Fulton  
6F120D73DC4F4F5...

Adam Fulton – Deputy Director  
Department of Planning and Economic Development

#### Annual Meeting

1. Election of Officers - Ken Buehler asked if the existing officers are willing to serve another term. President Jessica Fortney and Vice President Stacey DeRoche both are willing to serve again.

**MOTION/Second:** Buehler/Wisdorf nominate Chair Fortney to serve as president and Commissioner DeRoche to serve as vice-president.

**VOTE: (5-0)**

(Commissioner Mike Poupore joined the meeting)

2. Discussion on Bylaws and Potential Proposed Changes – Steven Robertson gave an overview. The bylaws were last updated in 2013. The commissioners can choose to leave as is, but the meeting date and time should be updated. Chair Fortney is in agreement to update the meeting date and time. She asked if the other commissioners would like to see any changes. No changes were requested.

**MOTION/Second:** Fortney/DeRoche amendment to the bylaws to change meeting date and time to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at noon.

**VOTE: (5-0, Poupore abstained due to technical issue)**

Work Plan Items (Added to the agenda) – Chair Fortney asked if the commission should revisit now, or wait until the next meeting? Sarah Wisdorf suggested waiting until the next meeting, so it can be on the agenda for December.

### Unfinished Business

3. Update on RFP for Design Guidelines for the Duluth Commercial Historic District – Robertson noted staff is hoping to move forward in the next two weeks.

Update on Pastoret Terrace (Added to the agenda) – Robertson noted there was a fire in the building about ten days ago. There is an ongoing investigation. The city is waiting on an engineering analysis to determine the extent of the damage.

### Communication and Other Business

4. Unified Development Chapter (UDC) Proposed Text Change for Historic Preservation – Robertson gave an overview and noted this was more of clerical change. The challenge is to receive a preservation plan after the fact, so giving the applicant a set timeline (one-year) is being proposed. The timeline of “in the future” is too vague. Mike Poupore stated in the past the HPC had more power over property owners. Can this language be added to the UDC? Chair Fortney suggested looking at what it was, and what it is now to compare. Poupore doesn’t have the specific language at hand. Chair Fortney suggested adding it to their work plan. She asked if this proposed change would go before the planning commission. Robertson noted any zoning code change requires two bodies to approve. Staff proposed it, if it passes the planning commission, it goes to the city council. He asked the HPC if they are in agreement to moving forward, or if not, it can be removed. Poupore would like it tabled until they can revisit it before it moves forward. Robertson thought the language to the UDC may have changed in 2009. Poupore will do some research and share his findings with the other commissioners. Wisdorf stated UDC changes can be made throughout the year. If there are no objections, she would like to move the preservation plan clause forward to get it in the books. Poupore agrees.

**MOTION/Second:** Fortney/Poupore move forward with the updated language to the UDC regarding the preservation plan timeline be adjusted to one year.

**VOTE: (6-0)**

5. Update on EAW Related to the Proposed Demolition of Two Structures that Contribute to the Historic Character of Downtown Duluth. Robertson gave an overview and noted the Hacienda and the Duluth Oriental Grocery buildings. The EAW will be shared with the HPC during the 30-day comment period. The timeline is proposed for February or March. Poupore asked if this item can be added to the HPC’s December agenda. Robertson noted the EAW is still in the research phase and it would be best to wait for the actual EAW to come out. Poupore wants to make sure the HPC’s comments are included in the EAW. Robertson noted the HPC’s minutes can be shared with the EAW consultant.
6. Correspondence: US Army Corps of Engineers, The Rehabilitation of the Piers and Headwall of the Duluth Vessel Yard (30 Day Public Comment Period), October 28, 2020 – Robertson noted the correspondence found in the commissioners’ packet, and noted

they can comment, Chair Fortney is not familiar with the vessel yard, and asks for comments from the other commissioners. Commissioner Buehler reviewed the paperwork, and does not find it clear on what they are proposing, or who would do the signage. Poupore asked if this includes Pier B. Robertson stated it does not, and agrees the document could be more clear and include exhibits. Chair Fortney would like to see a map of the proposed changes. Commissioner Wisdorf asked staff if they can request more specific information. Robertson agreed to email the individual and request more information. Chair Fortney noted she clicked on the link on page 93 for the MOA, but there was not much detail on the interpretive display.

7. Consideration of Minutes from 8-24-2020  
**MOTION/Second:** Wisdorf/Buehler approve the minutes

**VOTE: (6-0)**

Chair Fortney asks the commissioners to be thinking about their work plan to discuss at their December meeting. She asked if there is an opening for another commissioner on the HPC? Robertson noted they had appointed Meredith Anderson, but she accepted a new job and may have to resign from the HPC. There may be an opening soon.

Commissioner Wisdorf – gave a planning commission update. There is nothing of interest to the HPC at this time.

Adjournment at 12:52 p.m. (Next meeting scheduled for Monday, 12/14/2020.)

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:  
*Adam W. Fulton*  
6F120D73DC4F4F5...

---

Adam Fulton – Deputy Director  
Department of Planning and Economic Development