

Heritage Preservation Commission  
July 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes  
Council Chambers – City Hall

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

President Jessica Glander called to order the meeting of the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at 12:10 p.m. on Monday, July 8, 2024.

**Attendance:**

Attending: Chris Adatte, Jessica Glander, Jess McCullough, and Kal Randa

Absent: Ken Buehler and Brandon Hartung

Staff Present: Jenn Moses, James Gittemeier, and Sam Smith

**Consideration of Minutes**

N/A

**Consideration of Matters Regarding Commission Action**

Preservation Plan for Belanger Building at 2401-2403 W 6<sup>th</sup> Street: President Glander explained preservation plan was in the packets and is part of the requirement for a local designation. This is the next step in their designation. It is a DEDA property currently, through the remaining historic preservation process. Jenn Moses confirmed preservation plan needs to be approved by HPC.

Kal Randa asked about transfer of the property. Jenn Moses explained DEDA acquired it from the previous property owner and has agreed to finish the historic designation process. DEDA has an agreement with a private property owner to acquire the property when finished. Glander commented that this plan references many of the same recommendations that are found in the Secretary of the Interior's preservation standards. She likes that they referenced photos with important features. Discussion ensued about potential future plans for this building among the commissioners. Randa suggested that they could do a commercial space on the ground floor as that is historically appropriate.

New commission member Adatte asked questions about the process for preservation plans. Glander answered that HPC has already decided it meets criteria and now the preservation plan is the next step. Adatte asked if historic tax credits were put back in place and Glander said yes, and explained historic tax credit process. Adatte asked about criteria for historic designation. Moses explained criteria is in UDC. Preservation plans give guidelines to maintain eligibility for historic landmark status.

Randa inquired about current state of basement and noted that foundation issues can make or break a building. Glander responded that the preservation plan focuses on visible exterior. Moses added that this is a consideration for property owners but not the preservation plan. McCullough expressed support for the project and said he's glad it's moving along at a good pace.

**MOTION/second:** Glander/Randa motion to approve the preservation plan

**Vote: (4-0)**

## **Presentation**

Update on West Superior Street Reconstruction: James Gittemeier introduced himself and gave a presentation. A design has been selected for this project and his team is finishing up design work. The City of Duluth received a \$25 million Rebuilding America Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant from FHWA administered by MnDOT. Design is expected to be complete by the end of this year with preliminary construction expected to begin in 2025 which may include reconstructing intersections needed to help manage traffic, and continue through 2028. This is a 3-phase, multi-year reconstruction project similar to downtown Duluth. A total of 4 open houses have been held along with numerous meetings with various project stakeholders, including City staff, the DTA, the port, local business groups, and neighboring properties. A 5<sup>th</sup> and final open house is anticipated to be held this fall to present the final plans and discuss construction impacts, as well as how to mitigate them.

There are four "character districts" along the stretch. Design is intended to be a cohesive design, but different areas within the project have different needs that are generally driven by the surrounding land uses. This street used to be Highway 61, however, there has not been any major reconstruction since the 1920s. Part of this street still have a US highway form, but it has not been a highway for 50 years. The new design will reflect the new businesses and uses that are there now, but will still have capabilities for oversize loads passing through. The proposed design will also be community focused to make the residents comfortable, offering amenities like benches and sidewalks, landscaping for trails, as well as canopy trees for shade and greenspace to help mitigate pollution from cars and promote calmness for drivers.

Commissioner McCullough asked Gittemeier if moss has been considered to aid in pollution absorption. Commissioner Adatte asked for clarification as to whether this will be a maintenance project or full reconstruction. Gittemeier answered that this project is indeed a full reconstruction, but the design pieces should be easy to maintain (ex: built in snow storage along the road, places for utility access that are not on the roadway surface, etc.).

Glander inquired if there is any documentation of a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) done for this project like there was one done for other similar projects in Duluth. She also wondered how this reconstruction will impact the historic district regarding vibrations from utility work, views with the new trees, and so forth. Glander said she liked the greenspace and likes this design in general.

Jenn Moses answered Glander's question saying that the city did a survey of the craft district a few years ago and staff still has that survey documentation. Chris Adatte asked whether historic considerations are important in road design. Gittemeier said that in transportation they consider it if it is a historic street, or building removal affects the history of the area. Gittemeier noted the old streetcar and railway office building is on corner of 27<sup>th</sup> and Superior. Kal Randa suggested keeping some tracks and putting them somewhere outside the railway building. Another suggestion was made to use it in public art. Gittemeier also confirmed that there are no plans to tear down buildings, but he and his team will take all points made by commissioners into consideration and will make a point to bring back more information in the future regarding the questions during this HPC meeting.

## **Communications**

President Glander commented that they did see the National Register nomination for Morgan Park Church, and noted that SHPO might have an update if anyone is interested.

Jess McCullough requested an update on what is happening with Old Main Park from the Parks department. Jenn Moses explained that Parks is looking into funding options. They are also making sure the arches at the park are not a safety hazard before they move forward with any next steps.

**Report of Final Disposition of Matters Previously Before the Commission**

N/A

**Reports of Officers, Staff and Committees**

PC Liaison Update: Jenn Moses introduced new member Chris Adatte to the rest of the present HPC members. Adatte was recently appointed by the Planning Commission to serve as it's representative to this commission.

**Other Business**

Jessica Glander mentioned the need for an Annual Meeting. Jenn Moses said staff will look into bylaws and she said that they have also discussed with the Planning department manager the need to fill vacancies.

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

Respectfully,

Signed by:

*Jennifer L R Moses*

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Jenn Moses – Manager  
Planning and Development Division