

Heritage Preservation Commission
December 8th, 2025 Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers – City Hall

Call to Order and Roll Call

President Jess McCullough called to order the annual meeting of the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at 12:05 p.m. on Monday, December 8th, 2025.

Attendance:

Attending: Ken Buehler, Kathleen Cargill, John Hest, Michael Schuetze, and Andrea Wedul

Absent: Jess McCullough

Staff Present: Chris Lee and Sam Smith

Consideration of Minutes

Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting – November 10th, 2025 –

MOTION/Second: Buehler/Wedul approved

VOTE: (5-0)

Consideration of Matters Regarding Commission Action

PLHCDP-2511-0001: Exterior renovations at 2403 W 6th St (Belanger Block Building) –

Staff: Lee summarized the staff memo that was provided to the commissioners. The property is known as the F. Belanger Block. The F. Belanger Block was nominated to the Local Landmark Designations in 2024. On November 10, 2025, the city received a zoning application from the owner of 2403 West 6th Street requesting HPC approval to make repairs to deteriorated elements of the exterior including porches, windows, and entrances.

Commissioners' role is to review the project to ensure that the proposed exterior work is in alignment with preservation plan for this property. Staff is looking for a recommendation from commissioners, and they may accept, deny, or table this item. Lee encouraged commissioners to ask questions of staff as well as the applicant.

Applicant: Dave Sundberg addressed the commissioners. He is the owner of the building and went through the adaptative reuse process earlier this year for this property. This is the next step of the process and they are currently doing other work on the site, including foundation repairs, with direction from city.

Lauen Anderson addressed the commissioners. She is a consultant working on the project and provided a brief presentation on the history and the proposed changes and repairs to the building. The plan for rehabilitation will restore integrity and historic mixed commercial and residential use. The general approach to the rehabilitation includes the repair of historic features and materials, replacing in kind where beyond repair or missing, and installing new features to be simple and compatible with the historic character of the property. Desired outcomes of the project include stabilization of the building, rehabilitation to restore historic residential and commercial functions, and to support preservation of the property into the future.

Greg Strom with Foundations Architecture was also present to answer questions about the project.

Commissioners: Wedul asked the applicant if there is intention for the units to be used as vacation dwelling units. She asked staff if the HPC should look at the colors being chosen for the exterior changes.

Applicant: Sundberg responded that they do not intend to have vacation dwelling units at the site, just long-term renters.

Staff: Lee stated that the HPC does not necessarily need to consider the color scheme while reviewing the project, but they are welcome to address those smaller details if they see fit. Commissioners are being asked to review historical aspects regarding proposed materials, façades, and accuracy of openings and windows. Commissioners' role is to ensure that the proposed changes align with the preservation plan, and they can make slight variations if they choose.

Commissioners: Commissioners asked the applicant about exterior brick replacement, project, the overall neighborhood response to the project, and if any research has gone into color schemes.

Applicant: Strom responded that there will be minimal brick replacement since most of it is in good shape. They have pallet of bricks to use where spot replacement is needed.

Sundberg stated that there is no set timeframe, but he estimated that the project would wrap up in about a year. When the adaptive reuse application went to planning commission earlier this year, the project seemed to be well-received. Sundberg previously hosted an open house where public concerns were brought forward and addressed, but he is welcome to additional feedback. They chose to have a laundromat on the first floor because it requires minimal effort on his part and he believes it will be more of a long-term need for the tenants and the community, as opposed to coffee shops that come and go.

They have not done any extensive research on color, but their approach is to include colors that would have been present during the relevant historical period. They will not pursue flashy colors as they don't want to take away from the historic architecture.

Public: Asher Estrin-Haire, 2417 W 6th St – Estrin-Haire is opposed to the project. He was opposed when DEDA took ownership and wanted to give this building the historic designation because it has been a blighted property for a long time. He wanted it demolished, but he was convinced DEDA and planning commission members that the reuse of the building would be good for the community. Estrin-Haire was not aware of any public meeting held for this project, and he expressed concerns about the units becoming vacation dwelling units and parking limitations.

Commissioners: Commissioners asked the applicant about parking at the project site and when tenants are expected to move in.

Applicant: Sundberg responded that all six units will have designated off-street parking spots. The laundromat is small and is meant to be used only by the tenants of the building and those who pay a subscription to use the laundromat. It is not intended to be a destination laundromat, so there is adequate parking space for the tenants in the units. They are looking at having tenants move in sometime around fall of 2026.

Commissioners: Wedul noted that planning commissioners reviewed this project earlier this year and found that it complied with zoning regulations. She suggested making changes to the site plan so it is clearer what the parking spaces are designated for and asked if the proposed siding meets the requirements for the preservation plan.

Staff: Lee stated that the materials might not be the same as what was used before, but it meets the intents of the period of significance. Commissioners are welcome to make other recommendations or add conditions.

Commissioners: Discussion ensued about possible siding materials that could be used to ensure that the visual presentation of the exterior aligned with the period of significance. Wedul suggested cedar.

MOTION/Second: Wedul/Cargill approved with the condition that cedar wood is used in the exterior design.

VOTE: (5-0)

Other Business/Presentations

Opportunity to Comment on National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Lincoln Park – Charlene Roise addressed the commissioners and gave a presentation on the project. She talked about the history of the site, and she gave an overview of the timeline for this project that led to this point in the process. She clarified that the nomination is for the park itself, not the entire Lincoln Park neighborhood. As part of this process, SHPO sent out a letter on December 2nd requesting CLG comments, so commissioners are welcome to submit comments. Roise talked about the remaining steps of the process that will follow today's meeting.

Commissioners expressed their support for the plan and thanked Roise for the informational presentation. Wedul asked about the boundaries of the project area.

MOTION/Second: Cargill/Schuetze approve the project

VOTE: (5-0)

Review Bylaws – Lee stated that this is an opportunity for commissioners to revise the bylaws.

MOTION/Second: Schuetze/Wedul approve bylaws with no changes

VOTE: (5-0)

Communications

Wayne Gannaway, Executive Director of the St. Louis County Historical Society, addressed the commissioners. He started in his current position in February of 2025 and before that he worked for the Olmstead County Historical Society in Rochester, Minnesota. They are beginning a strategic planning process intended to put the historical society in position where it can capitalize on its strengths and partner with others who can help work on areas that have opportunity for growth. They intend to prioritize engagement throughout the county and Gannaway invited HPC members to be part of the process. He encouraged commissioners to give additional community connection suggestions as well.

Report of Final Disposition of Matters Previously Before the Commission

N/A

Reports of Officers, Staff and Committees

PC Liaison Update – Wedul spoke about the downtown AUAR item currently going through planning commission. The AUAR is a tool that will be used to help development in downtown Duluth by eliminating the need for individual EAWs for projects within the project boundaries, which should help developers save time and money. There will be a public hearing for this item at the December meeting, and there is more information on the website.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:13 p.m.

Respectfully,

Jenn Moses, Manager
Planning and Development Division