



CPED STAFF REPORT

Prepared for the Heritage Preservation Commission
HPC Agenda Item #4
July 28, 2015
BZH-28269

HERITAGE PRESERVATION APPLICATION SUMMARY

Property Location: 3744 4th Avenue South
Project Name: Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder Building Designation Study
Prepared By: John Smoley, Ph.D., (612) 673-2830
Applicant: Council Member Elizabeth Glidden
Project Contact: John Smoley, Ph.D., (612) 673-2830
Ward: 8
Neighborhood: Central
Request: Landmark Designation Study

HISTORIC PROPERTY INFORMATION

Current Name	Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder Building
Historic Name	Minneapolis Spokesman and St. Paul Recorder Building
Historic Address	3744 4 th Avenue South
Original Construction Date	1958
Original Architect	Vernon K. Hosso
Original Builder	Carlson-LaVine
Historic Use	Print Shop and Office
Current Use	Office
Proposed Use	Office

CLASSIFICATION

Local Historic District	Not applicable
Period of Significance	1958-1976
Criteria of Significance	<p>Criterion #1: The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.</p> <p>Criterion #2: The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.</p> <p>Criterion #3: The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity.</p>
Date of Local Designation	Not applicable
Date of National Register Listing	Not applicable
Applicable Design Guidelines	Not applicable

SUMMARY

In June, 2014 Elizabeth Glidden submitted an application for nomination to the City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) for the *Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder* building at 3744 4th Avenue South in Minneapolis. The submission was in result to proactive steps that Tracey Williams-Dillard initiated to consider a designation for an important African American resource that has served the community for over 80 years.

After completing an initial review, CPED recommended to the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) on July 22, 2014 that the property exhibited at least one of the local designation criteria found in section 599.210 of the Heritage Preservation Ordinance. The HPC adopted CPED's findings and placed the *Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder* building under interim protection and called for a designation study to be conducted. A copy of the draft designation study prepared by Ward 8 staff Jeremiah Osokpo and Deebaa Sirdar is attached.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES

Title 23, Chapter 599.260 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances requires the planning director to submit all proposed designations to the Minneapolis City Planning Commission for review and comment on the proposed designation. In its review, the City Planning Commission shall consider but not be limited to the following factors:

- (1) The relationship of the proposed designation to the city's comprehensive plan
- (2) The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area
- (3) The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the City Council

The relationship of the proposed designation to the city's comprehensive plan: Policy 8.1 states, "Preserve, maintain and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city's

architecture, history, and culture.” By designating the subject property as a landmark, the City will require the preservation of a building significant for its association with the twentieth century African American civil rights movement. Policy 8.10 states, “Promote the benefits of preservation as an economic development tool and a method to achieve greater environmental sustainability and city vitality.” Designating this property and encouraging its maintenance and rehabilitation may provide an anchor property for future redevelopment of this commercial node. Policy 8.10.5 states, “Prioritize the reuse of the city’s historic buildings as a strategy for sustainable development.” Oftentimes, the greenest building is the one that is already built. By designating the subject property and protecting it from any demolition in the future, embodied energy is conserved that would be spent in any demolition and construction of a new structure on this site. Policy 8.11 states, “Raise awareness of the history of Minneapolis and promote the quality of the built environment.” Designation of this property will help to tell the story of Minneapolis’ civil rights history to current and future residents of the city.

The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area: The proposed designation of the subject property will set an example of the value of rehabilitating and maintaining existing commercial building stock.

The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the City Council: The 38th Street and Chicago Avenue Small Area/Corridor Framework Plan identifies historically significant structures in the area, to include the subject property. In the Sabathani/4th Avenue Focus Area (immediately adjacent to the subject property) the plan recommends no alterations to the subject property, calling instead for the redevelopment of vacant land on the south side of the 38th Street and 4th Avenue intersection.

LOCAL DESIGNATION CRITERIA

Title 23, Chapter 599.210 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances list seven criteria which shall be considered in determining whether a property is worthy of local designation as a landmark because of its historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance. The Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder Building meets the following designation criteria:

Criterion #1: The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.

The property is associated with the twentieth century African American civil rights movement, as discussed in part two of the designation study.

Criteria #2: The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.

The property is associated with the lives of Cecil Newman and Gordon Parks, as discussed in part two of the designation study.

Criteria #3: The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity.

The property is associated with distinctive elements of South Minneapolis’ identity, as discussed in part two of the designation study.

REVIEWS AND COMMENTS

The Preservation Chapter of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances (Chapter 599) requires that the designation be submitted to the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for review and comment.

State Historic Preservation Office

In a letter dated July 5, 2015 (designation study appendix E), the State Historic Preservation Office identified the subject property as an ideal candidate for designation. *City Planning Commission*

Chapter 599 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances also requires that the designation be submitted to the Minneapolis City Planning Commission (CPC) for review and comment. The Ordinance states that the city planning commission shall consider, but not limited to, the following factors:

- (1) The relationship of the proposed designation to the city's comprehensive plan.
- (2) The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area.
- (3) The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council.

City Planning Commission

On June 18, 2015, the City Planning Commission's Committee of the Whole recommended approval of the proposed designation.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission and City Council adopt staff findings for the local designation of the Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder Building, located at 3744 4th Avenue South:

A. Landmark Designation.

Recommended motion: **Recommend to approve** the local designation of the Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder Building located at 3744 4th Avenue South, subject to the following conditions:

- I. The designation applies to the exterior of the building.

ATTACHMENTS

- I. Designation Study