



**Request for City Council Committee Action  
From the Department of Community Planning & Economic Development**

**Date:** June 4, 2008

**To:** Council Member Gary Schiff, Chair of Zoning and Planning Committee

**Subject:** Landmark designation of the Pierson-Wold House, 1779 Emerson Avenue South. Referral from the May 20, 2008 public hearing of the Heritage Preservation Commission.

**Recommendation:** To adopt the staff findings and approve the landmark designation of the Pierson-Wold House, located at 1779 Emerson Avenue South.

**Previous Directives:** N/A

Prepared by: Carol Ahlgren, Senior Planner, CPED-Planning (612) 673-2847  
Approved by: Jack Byers, Planning Supervisor  
Presenters in Committee: Carol Ahlgren

**Reviews**

- Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Approval \_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Civil Rights Approval Approval \_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Policy Review Group (PRG): Approval \_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial Impact**

- No financial impact
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the \_\_\_ Capital Budget or \_\_\_ Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Action is within the Business Plan
- Action requires a change to the Business Plan
- Other financial impact
- Request provided to the Finance Department when provided to the Committee Coordinator

**Community Impact**

- Neighborhood Notification: Lowry Hill
- City Goals: Consistent with "preserve and enhance our natural and historic environment and promote a clean, sustainable Minneapolis."
- Comprehensive Plan: Consistent
- Zoning Code: N/A
- Other: Chapter 599 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Heritage Preservation Regulations, authorizes the HPC to "hold a public hearing to consider proposed

designations and to make findings and recommendations to the Zoning and Planning Committee of the City Council.”

**Background/Supporting Information Attached:** The attached summarizes the actions taken by the City Planning Commission at a hearing on April 28, 2008 and the Heritage Preservation Commission at a public hearing on May 20, 2008. The findings and recommendations are respectfully submitted for your consideration.

Attachment 1: Actions of the Heritage Preservation Commission, May 20, 2008.

Attachment 2: Staff report to the Heritage Preservation Commission, May 20, 2008 with Attachments: A: Pierson-Wold House Designation study, Bob Glancy, February, 2008.

B: State Historic Preservation Officer comments, March 28, 2008.

C: CPED Planning Division report to the City Planning Commission, April 5, 2008.

D: Action of the City Planning Commission, April 28, 2008.

**MINNEAPOLIS CPED PLANNING DIVISION REPORT**  
**HERITAGE PRESERVATION DESIGNATION**

**DATE OF HPC REVIEW:** May 20, 2008

**ADDRESS OF PROPERTY:** Pierson-Wold House, 1779 Emerson Avenue South

**STAFF CONTACT AND PHONE:** Carol Ahlgren (612) 673-2847

**PROPERTY OWNER:** Natalie and Gilbert Westreich (612) 377-9798

**CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE:** Bob Glancy (612) 242-8122

**WARD: 7    NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:** Lowry Hill

**BACKGROUND:**

The Pierson-Wold House, located at 1779 Emerson Avenue South, was constructed in 1902 in the Lowry Hill neighborhood of Minneapolis. In 2006, the owners initiated city landmark designation with the designation study completed by Bob Glancey, historic preservation consultant and former member of the Heritage Preservation Commission.

The designation study was completed in January, 2008. The designation study found that the Pierson –Wold House meets designation criteria (1), (2), and (6), contained in section 599.210 of the city’s Heritage Preservation Regulations. The property exhibits good interior and exterior integrity. A copy of the designation study/nomination form is attached.

The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) was sent a copy of the proposed designation pursuant to the requirements of state law and section 599.250 of the city’s Heritage Preservation Regulations. The SHPO has determined that the property is an ideal candidate for local designation under Criteria 1, 2, and 6 for its association with broad patterns of social history, with the lives of significant local persons or groups, and as a good example of the work of a master builder. The SHPO comments are contained in an attached letter dated March 28, 2008.

In addition, the proposed designation was submitted to the City Planning Commission (CPC) for its review and comment, pursuant to section 599.260 of the Heritage Preservation Regulations. The CPC was asked to consider the relationship of the proposed designation to the city’s comprehensive plan, the effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area, and the consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or objectives. On April 28, 2008, the CPC adopted the findings and recommendations included in the CPED Planning Division staff report.

Copies of the staff report dated April 5, 2008 and Planning Commission action are attached.

**AUTHORITY FOR REVIEW:**

Chapter 599 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Heritage Preservation Regulations, authorizes the HPC to hold a public hearing to consider proposed designations and to make findings and recommendations to the Zoning and Planning Committee of the City Council with respect to proposed designations as follows:

**599.270. Designation hearing.** Following completion of the designation study the commission shall hold a public hearing to consider the proposed designation, as provided in section 599.170. Any person having a legal or equitable interest in a nominated property shall be allowed reasonable opportunity to give testimony or present evidence concerning the proposed designation.

**599.280. Commission recommendation.** Following the public hearing, the commission shall make findings with respect to the proposed designation and shall submit the same together with its recommendation to the Zoning and Planning committee of the City Council. In making its findings and recommendation, the commission shall consider the designation criteria contained in section 599.210, the information contained in the designation study, the State Historic Preservation Officer's comments, the City Planning Commission's comments, the Planning Director's report and all testimony and evidence received at the public hearing relating to the designation.

**DESIGNATION CRITERIA:**

Section 599.210 of the Heritage Preservation Regulations establishes criteria to be considered in determining whether a property is worthy of designation as a landmark or historic district because of its historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance. To be eligible for designation, a property must meet at least one of the following designation criteria:

- (1) The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.
- (2) The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.
- (3) The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city identity.
- (4) The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.
- (5) The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.

- (6) The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.
- (7) The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

## **FINDINGS**

### **1. Consistency with designation criteria:**

The designation study for the Pierson-Wold House (January 2008) shows that the property meets designation criteria (1) (2) and (6) as follows:

- (1) *The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.*

The Pierson-Wold house is significant under Criterion No. 1 for its representation of the growth and expansion of the upper class neighborhood called Lowry Hill. The house is located within the eastern half of the neighborhood which was platted in 1872 by Thomas Lowry and Calvin Goodrich. By the 1880s, the Lowrys were marketing lots in the area with restrictive covenants to ensure that residential development would be characterized by broad streets, with large houses set back on the lots. By 1915, more than 80 percent of the residences featured masonry exteriors. For almost a century, the name “Lowry Hill” has been synonymous with large, single family architect-designed houses. The area retains a high degree of historic integrity.

- (2) *The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.*

The Pierson-Wold house is significant under Criterion No. 2 for its association with prominent local banker Theodore Wold. During his 50 year career, Wold rose to the position of president of the Northwestern National Bank and was active in numerous community and charitable organizations such as the Red Cross, the United Church Hospital, and Minneapolis Foundation, and the Community Fund of Minneapolis. The Pierson-Wold house is also significant for its association with Theodore’s son, Ernest Groves Wold a pilot who was selected to train in France in 1917 and became a member of the First Aero Squadron. Wold became a first lieutenant and was assigned to fly observation planes to photograph enemy locations and died in action in 1918. Ernest was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame in 1989.

- (6) *The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.*

The Pierson-Wold House is significant under Criterion No. 6 for its association with local builder Theron Potter Healy. A native of Nova Scotia, Healy moved to Minneapolis in 1884 and soon established a construction business, primarily focused on houses. Many of the houses he built were in the Queen Anne style and were designed by architects. Healy died in 1914; toward the end of his career, he worked from his own designs. The Pierson-

Wold House, constructed in 1902, is a good example of Healy's later work and retains a good degree of interior and exterior integrity. In 1989, the Heritage Preservation Commission designated an entire block of Healy designed houses between 31<sup>st</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> Streets East, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues South as the T.P. Healy Historic District.

**2. Consistency with the comprehensive plan:**

The proposed designation promotes preservation of an historic resource and supports the following goal and policies of *The Minneapolis Plan*:

*Goal 6. Preserve, enhance and create a sustainable natural and historic environment citywide.*

*Policy 1.7. Minneapolis will recognize and celebrate its history.*

*Policy 9.14. Minneapolis will increase citizen awareness of preservation and the important role it plays in fostering community revitalization and civic pride.*

**3. Effect on the surrounding area:**

The proposed designation will preserve a unique local landmark. The designation will not negatively affect the surrounding area. Designation will be a positive contribution to the surrounding area.

**4. The consistency of the designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council:**

The proposed designation is consistent with the plan, which calls for no change to the property other than simply recognizing it as an historic and cultural resource.

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE CPED PLANNING DIVISION:**

Planning Staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission **adopt** the above findings and submit the same together with a recommendation to **approve** the landmark designation of the Pierson-Wold House to the Zoning and Planning Committee of the City Council.

**Attachments:**

- A. Pierson-Wold House Designation Study, Bob Glancy, February, 2008.
- B. State Historic Preservation Officer comments, March 28, 2008.
- C. CPED Planning Division report to the City Planning Commission, April 5, 2008.
- D. Action of the City Planning Commission, April 28, 2008.