

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Certificate of Appropriateness
 BZH-27932

Date: November 4, 2013

Proposal: Certificate of Appropriateness for New Construction.

Applicant: Daniel Hunt, Hunt Associates, LLC

Address of Property: 24 University Avenue NE, Tract G

Project Name: Corner Apartments

Contact Person and Phone: Gretchen Camp, BKV Group, 612-33-9122

Planning Staff and Phone: Chris Vrchota, 612-673-5467

Date Application Deemed Complete: October 1, 2013

End of 60-Day Decision Period: November 18, 2013

End of 120-Day Decision Period: January 17, 2014

Ward: 3

Neighborhood Organization: Nicollet Island- East Bank

Concurrent Review: N/A

CLASSIFICATION:	
Local Historic District	Saint Anthony Falls Historic District
Period of Significance	1858-1940
Criteria of significance	Architecture and Social Significance
Date of local designation	1971
Applicable Design Guidelines	- Saint Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines - Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties

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PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Current Name	N/A- Open surface parking lot
Historic Name	N/A
Current Address	24 University Avenue NE, Tract G
Historic Address	Unknown
Original Construction Date	N/A
Original Contractor	Unknown
Original Architect	Unknown
Historic Use	Hotel (1914 plat map shows a “Hotel Laberta” on the site. It is not known when this building was removed from the site.)
Current Use	Surface Parking Lot
Proposed Use	Residential

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is presently a surface parking lot. When most of the remaining properties on the block were redeveloped and/or rehabilitated in the early 2000s, no plans were brought forward for the subject property, outside of a few minor improvements to the parking lot.

A Certificate of Appropriateness (BZH-26898) for a new 10-story, 94-unit multiple-family building on the site was reviewed and approved with conditions by the Heritage Preservation Commission on July 12, 2011. That project was not built and the approvals, which were granted the maximum allowed 1 year extension, expired on July 12, 2013.

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT’S PROPOSAL:

The Applicant is proposing a scaled back project on the site. The revised plans call for a 6-story apartment building on the site, containing 56 dwelling units. The proposed flat-roofed building would be 69’ tall at the top of the main structure and 79’-6” tall at the top of the rooftop penthouse. The Applicant is proposing to use a combination of cast stone, brick and metal panels to clad the building exterior.

The development proposal was given a concept review at the June 4, 2013, Heritage Preservation Commission meeting.

This item was originally brought forward for a public hearing at the October 22, 2013, Heritage Preservation Commission meeting. At the public hearing, it was discovered that outdated plans had been provided to the Commissioners and public in the report packets. The correct plans are attached to this report. The original staff analysis and recommendation were made using the proper plans, so the report and recommendation remain unchanged.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comments have been received by the time of publication.

CETIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a new 6-story apartment building in the Saint Anthony Falls Historic District.

Findings as required by the Minneapolis Preservation Code:

The Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Department has analyzed the application based on the findings required by the Minneapolis Preservation Ordinance. Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

(1) The alteration is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark or historic district was designated.

The St. Anthony Falls Historic District is significant for the falls and the water body that was the lifeblood of Minneapolis in the 19th century. In addition, the district is significant in that it still retains important mill and industrial buildings from the 19th century.

The site presently contains a surface parking lot and is non-contributing to the district. Because of this, concerns about the potential impacts of the proposed development are focused on how it would impact the adjacent buildings and the district as a whole, rather than how it impacts the subject site.

The proposed new construction is compatible with the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the St. Anthony Falls Historic District was designated, as evidenced by its conformance to the applicable design guidelines (see finding #4). Most of the properties in the vicinity of the subject property are new construction. Efforts have been made to address the visual transition between the new construction and the adjacent Fire Barn building, which dates to the period of significance, through the use of brick at the corner of the building nearest to the Fire Barn building.

(2) The alteration is compatible with and supports the interior and/or exterior designation in which the property was designated.

The proposed new construction would generally be compatible with the neighboring properties and the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. Use of brick as one of the primary construction materials, especially near street level, ties back to the brick used on the adjacent Fire Barn building, as well as other historic properties in the area and throughout the district. Additionally the stepped back design of the façade helps with the visual transition between the 1-story Fire Barn building and the proposed new 10-story building. The scale and massing of the building are also compatible with the surrounding properties.

(3) The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the landmark or historic district for which the district was designated.

Both the City of Minneapolis' Heritage Preservation Regulations and the National Register of Historic Places identify integrity as the authenticity of historic properties and recognize seven aspects that define a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling

and association. Based upon the evidence provided below, the proposed work would not impair the integrity of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

Location: The Applicant is not proposing to change the location of any contributing resources, thus the project will not impair the integrity of location.

Design: The proposed new construction would have a limited impact on the integrity of design. The area around the subject site contains a mix of historic and modern commercial buildings, modern high-rise residential buildings, and modern townhouses, as well as a structured parking ramp. Each of these uses features a design unique to its use, as the proposed new construction would.

Setting: The new construction would replace a surface parking lot, which would have a positive impact on the setting of the area. The proposed new building would be built to the property lines along both 1st Avenue NE and 2nd Street NE, maintaining the street wall along these roads, another positive impact on the integrity of setting.

Materials: The Applicant is proposing to use brick and metal panels as the primary cladding material, along with painted metal balconies and painted metal window frames as secondary materials for the building.

The use of brick would be compatible with the integrity of materials for the St. Anthony Falls historic district and the adjacent properties. Metal would not have traditionally been used in the district in the manner being proposed by the applicant, though it does recall the industrial heritage of the district in a modern application. Metal balconies and windows are appropriate for the district.

Workmanship: The proposed new construction would not alter any historic buildings in the district and would not impair the integrity of workmanship.

Feeling: Any new construction in a historic district will have an impact on the integrity of feeling. New construction will inevitably stand out as modern and different from the historic surroundings. In the case of the subject property, the number of historic properties in the immediate vicinity is limited, though the historic Fire Barn building does sit adjacent to the site. The size of the building and the use of brick on the street-facing elevations help to limit the impact on the integrity of feeling.

Association: The project would not impair the district's integrity of association.

- (4) The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the applicable design guidelines adopted by the commission.**

The Heritage Preservation Commission adopted the *St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines* in 2012. The following guidelines apply to this proposal:

- 7.10 On a new building, locate balconies such that the traditional character of the block, as perceived at the street level, is maintained.
- When a building wall is positioned near the sidewalk edge, locating a balcony at the third floor or above is preferred.
 - Consider providing a balcony that is inset instead of one that projects from the front facade. This can reinforce the concept of a simple rectangular form.
- 7.12 Minimize the visual impact of a roof deck as seen from the street.
- On a commercial or industrial building, set any guard rails and other supporting elements back one structural bay or 15', whichever is greater from the façade
- 9.1 Maintain the alignment of building fronts along the street.
- Locate a new building to reflect established setback patterns along the block. For example, if existing buildings are positioned at the sidewalk edge, creating a uniform street wall, then a new building should conform to this alignment. However, alternative placements are encouraged for upper floors when the building is required to be set back from the sidewalk edge.
 - Maintain the established sequence of public-to-private spaces in residential neighborhoods.
 - Provide a walkway that leads from the sidewalk to a porch or portico, and then to the residential entry.
- 9.3 Maintain the traditional orientation pattern of buildings facing the street.
- Locate the primary entrance to face the street and design it to be clearly identifiable.
- 9.4 Design a new building to reflect its time while respecting key features of its context.
- In those character areas with a high concentration of historic structures, relating to the context is especially important. In other areas where new construction is more predominant, respecting broader traditional development patterns that shaped the area historically is important.
- 9.7 Incorporate traditional facade articulation techniques in a new design.
- Use these methods:
 - A tall first floor
 - Vertically proportioned upper story windows
 - Window sills and frames that provide detail
 - Horizontal expression elements, such as canopies, moldings and cornices
 - Vertical expression features, such as columns and pilasters
 - A similar ratio of solid wall to window area
- 9.8 Maintain the traditional size of buildings as perceived at the street level.
- The height of a new building should be within the height range established in the context, especially at the street frontage.
 - Floor-to-floor heights should appear similar to those of traditional buildings.
- 9.9 The overall height of a new building shall be compatible with the character area.
- A building height that exceeds the height range established in the context will be considered when:
 - It is demonstrated that the additional height will be compatible with adjacent properties, within the character area as a whole, and for the historic district at large.
 - Taller portions are set back significantly from the street.

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- Access to light and air of surrounding properties is respected.
 - Key views are maintained.
- 9.10 Position taller portions of a structure away from neighboring buildings of lower scale.
- a. Locate the taller portion of a new structure to minimize looming effects and shading of lower scaled neighbors, especially when adjacent to smaller historic structures.
 - b. Taller portions of a building should be compatible and not loom over adjacent buildings at any time.
- 9.15 Establish a sense of human scale in the building design.
- a. Use vertical and horizontal articulation techniques to reduce the apparent mass of a larger building and to create visual interest.
 - b. Express the position of each floor in the external skin of a building to establish a scale similar to historic buildings in the district.
 - c. Use materials that convey scale in their proportion, detail and form.
 - d. Generally, the facade in most contexts should appear as a relatively flat surface, with any projecting or recessed “articulations” appearing to be subordinate to the dominant form. Exceptions are in lower scale single-family settings.
 - e. Design architectural details and other features to be in scale with the building. Using windows, doors, storefronts (in commercial buildings) and porches (in lower scale residential buildings) that are similar in scale to those seen traditionally is appropriate.
- 9.16 Use simple, rectangular roof forms in commercial, warehouse and industrial contexts.
- a. Flat roofs are appropriate on the majority of the buildings in the district.
- 9.18 Locate a primary building entrance to face the street.
- a. Position a primary entrance to be at the street level in an urban setting.
- 9.19 Design a building entrance to appear similar in character to those used traditionally.
- a. Clearly define the primary entrance.
 - b. Use a contemporary interpretation of a traditional building entry, which is similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically.
- 9.20 Building materials shall be similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen historically in the context.
- a. Masonry (i.e., brick and stone) that has a modular dimension similar to those used traditionally is appropriate.
 - b. A facade that faces a public street should have one principal material, excluding door and window openings, and may have one to two additional materials for trim and details. Permitted materials include, but are not limited to, brick, stone, terracotta, painted metal, exposed metal, poured concrete and precast concrete.
 - c. The material also should be appropriate to the context.
- 9.21 Contemporary materials that are similar in character to traditional ones will be considered.
- a. Generally, one primary material should be used for a building with one or two accent materials. Accent materials should be used with restraint.

- b. A second material may be used on side or rear walls in a context in which such a tradition is demonstrated historically. It is inappropriate in the Water Power Area.
- c. A glass curtain wall will be considered as a principal material.
- d. Contemporary, alternative materials should appear similar in scale, durability and proportion to those used traditionally.
- e. Cementitious-fiber board, with exemplary detailing, will be considered in lower scaled residential settings. Other imitation or synthetic siding materials, such as plastic, aluminum or vinyl, are inappropriate in the lower scale residential contexts.

9.24 Arrange windows to reflect the traditional rhythm and general alignment of windows in the area.

- a. Use appropriate window rhythms and alignments, such as:
 - Vertically proportioned, single or sets of windows, “punched” into a more solid wall surface, and evenly spaced along upper floors
 - Window sills or headers that align
 - Rows of windows or storefront systems of similar dimensions, aligned horizontally along a wall surface
- b. Creative interpretations of traditional window arrangement will be considered.

9.25 Use durable window materials.

- a. Appropriate window materials include metal and wood frame.
- b. Inappropriate window materials include plastic snap-in muntins and synthetic vinyl.

9.26 A canopy/awning should be in character with the building.

- a. Mount a canopy/awning to accentuate character defining features.
- b. A canopy/awning should remain a subordinate feature on the building.

The Applicant is proposing to construct a new 6-story building, measuring 69’ to the top of the primary building and 79’-6” to the top of the proposed rooftop penthouse. Other development in the area ranges from the immediately adjacent 1-story Fire Barn building to 2-story commercial structures to the 28-story pinnacle building across the street. The height of the building is appropriate for the character of the area.

The Applicant is proposing to use a mix of brick and metal panels to clad the exterior of the building. The extent of the use of metal panels likely exceeds what would be considered “accent” materials under Guideline 9.21(a). However, the design of the building limits the impact of the more extensive use of the metal panels in two ways. First, the metal-clad sections of the building are stepped back, making the brick the more visually dominant material. Secondly, the brick is concentrated at the street level and on the street-facing sides of the building, with the metal used more prominently on the upper stories and on the side and rear elevations. Because the majority of the development in the surrounding area is modern infill rather than contributing historic buildings, the use of two cladding materials instead of just one has a less significant impact on the integrity of the district than it would in other parts of the district.

The proposed windows are metal, vertical in proportion and regularly spaced on the facades, which is in keeping with the Guideline 9.24. The simple metal balconies are in keeping with Guidelines 7.10 and 7.12. A metal canopy is being proposed at the top of the building along a portion of the 1st

Avenue NE and 2nd Street NE sides. Details for the canopy are included in the attachments. The canopy meets Guideline 9.26.

- (5) The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the recommendations contained in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.**

Regarding new construction on historic properties or within historic districts, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards state:

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The proposed new construction would replace an existing surface parking lot, which is not considered to be historic or to characterize the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The new construction would be clearly identifiable from historic buildings within the district. It would be compatible with the massing, size, and scale of the adjacent non-historic, non-contributing properties.

- (6) The certificate of appropriateness conforms to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable preservation policies in small area plans adopted by the city council.**

The proposed alterations are considered a major alteration and require a Certificate of Appropriateness application.

The proposal would be in keeping with Policy 8.1.2: "Require new construction in historic districts to be compatible with the historic fabric." While the proposal does not express a great deal of character that would directly tie it to the St. Anthony Falls Historic District, it would not negatively impact the character or integrity of the district.

The proposed construction project is in keeping with Policy 1.2.1: "Promote quality design in new development, as well as building orientation, scale, massing, buffering, and setbacks that are appropriate with the context of the surrounding area." There is a wide range of building heights in the surrounding area. The proposed 6-story building would act as a transition between the 28-story tall Pinnacle building across 2nd Street NE and the 1-story Fire Barn building adjacent to the site. The stepped back design and mix of materials help to aid this visual transition. The proposed zero foot setback would maintain and strengthen the existing street wall, also in keeping with this policy.

The proposal would also be in keeping with policy 3.1.1, which states: “Support the development of new medium- and high-density housing in appropriate locations throughout the city.” The proposed development adds additional density to the riverfront area near other medium and high-density residential development.

Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings that alterations are proposed in a manner that demonstrates that the applicant has made adequate consideration of the following documents and regulations:

(7) Adequate consideration of the description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which designation of the landmark or historic district was based.

The Applicant submitted statements addressing each of the findings. The design and scale of the building are sensitive to the area, and provide a transition between the adjacent Fire Barn building- one of the few historic buildings in the vicinity- and the larger Pinnacle building across the street.

(8) Where applicable, Adequate consideration of Title 20 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Zoning Code, Chapter 530, Site Plan Review.

In addition, to the Certificate of Appropriateness, the proposal will require new land use approvals in addition to the new preservation approvals. The Applicant is working with staff on the application process for necessary City Planning Commission reviews.

(9) The typology of treatments delineated in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the associated guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, reconstructing, and restoring historic buildings.

As outlined in finding #5 of this report, staff found that the project is in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

The Applicant submitted a document addressing the 12 required findings (see Appendix B-7 – B-11). The Applicant stated that they do not believe that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties apply to the project, as it does not involve the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction of any existing properties.

Before approving a certificate of appropriateness that involves alterations to a property within an historic district, the commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

(10) The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued significance and integrity of all contributing properties in the historic district based on the period of significance for which the district was designated.

The form and materials for the proposed building are compatible with the character of the district. The proposed construction would not negatively impact the significance or integrity of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

(11) Granting the certificate of appropriateness will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not negatively alter the essential character of the historic district.

The spirit and intent of the City of Minneapolis' Heritage Preservation Regulations is to preserve historically significant buildings, structures, sites, objects, districts, and cultural landscapes of the community while permitting appropriate changes to be made to these properties. The Applicant is proposing to construct a new residential building on what is currently an open surface parking lot. The proposal to develop a new building on the site is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance.

(12)The certificate of appropriateness will not be injurious to the significance and integrity of other resources in the historic district and will not impede the normal and orderly preservation of surrounding resources as allowed by regulations in the preservation ordinance.

There are very few contributing resources to the St. Anthony Falls Historic District in the vicinity of the proposed development. The project would not have a direct impact on any contributing resource. The development is sensitive to the adjacent Fire Barn building and is generally compatible with the district as a whole. The proposed development is in keeping with this finding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission adopt staff findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a new 6-story 56 unit residential building located at 24 University Avenue NE, Tract G with the following conditions:

1. The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development reviews and approves final site plan, floor plans, signage, lighting and elevations.
2. All glass must be clear, non-tinted, non-reflective glass. One coat of Low-E glazing is permitted on the interior surface of the windows.
3. The applicant shall obtain all other necessary City approvals prior to the commencement of work.
4. By ordinance, approvals are valid for a period of two years from the date of the decision unless required permits are obtained and the action approval is substantially begun and proceeds in a continuous basis toward completion. Upon written request and for good cause, the planning director may grant up to a one year extension if the request is made in writing no later than October 22, 2015.
5. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this Certificate of Appropriateness shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this Certificate of Appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.

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Attachments:

- Zoning map
- Applicant's project description and statement addressing the *St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines* and applicable Certificate of Appropriateness findings
- Plans
- Photos