

Heritage Preservation Commission APPROVED: 12/17/2009
November 19, 2009 – 4:30 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Chair Bob Will, Judy Swanson, Steve Edwins, Susan deMalignon,
Peter Carlson, Steve Wilmot, Mary Titus, Cliff Clark, Maggie Lee

Member Absent:

Also Present: Community Development Director Brian O'Connell, Jim Braucher &
Aaron Evenson - Professional Design Group, Northfield News,
KYMN, Recording Secretary Barb Neitzel

1. Call to Order

Chair Will called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. with a quorum present.

2. Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by S. deMalignon and seconded by C. Clark to approve the October 15, 2009, minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. Project Review:

b. Construction of New Office Building - 25 Bridge Square

HPC members S. Edwins and S. Wilmot recused themselves from this discussion due to a conflict of interest in which they have had a relationship with the site in the past as employees of SMSQ Architects and may consult on it in the future.

B. O'Connell stated the HPC would need to decide whether or not to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness on the construction of the building and also determine if demolition should occur. He gave a brief summary of the proposed plans detailing various design elements of past and future buildings. He also distributed an email from the State Historic Architect, which states that the design of the proposed building and demolition of the Aldsworth Building do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation or Reconstruction. She suggested that the proposed design should take queues from the buildings surrounding it and an effort should be made to have its own historical character or its own sense of time.

J. Braucher, Professional Design Group, spoke on the project in general and noted the building will consist of a condominium association of local investors committed to expanding adequate office space downtown.

A. Evenson, Professional Design Group, reported on the design elements of the project and noted they have tried to match the historical flavor of other downtown buildings. He stressed that the designs are only preliminary at this stage. They are not trying to recreate

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the past. He noted the existing sidewalk along the Aldsworth building is 40" lower because of the slope of the street to the river.

The HPC indicated that they would expect to see final plans to verify consistency with early approval.

Discussion from the HPC resulted in the following items that they would like to see revised with respect to the plans for the construction of the new building as presented:

- Alter window heights and scale down or eliminate the white window bands so as not to appear continuous from building to building.
- Refine elaborate cornices and make more simple.
- Simplify street level façade entrance, especially above the doorway, at the intersection of 4th Street and Division Street.

It was determined that Professional Design Group will present revised building plans at the January 21, 2010, HPC meeting.

a. Review project plan for demolition of existing buildings - 19 Bridge Sq. (Aldsworth Bldg.)

The HPC agreed to the demolition of the existing Community Resource Bank building without further review. A discussion ensued regarding demolition of the Aldsworth Building, which was built in 1893 and is designated as a historically contributing building.

B. O'Connell distributed Appendix II of the City of Northfield Historic Preservation Guidelines, which includes the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which clearly states that changes to buildings over time should be respected and retained. He noted that if the HPC chooses to demolish the Aldsworth Building, the State Historic Architect advised documenting reasons why the building is no longer contributing.

HPC members discussed modifications to the Aldsworth building that deter from its original historical character.

Various members questioned the historic integrity of a contributing property and expressed concern over setting precedent for the demolition of other historically designated buildings. B. O'Connell stated that setting precedent should not be a major concern and that future cases would be decided on their own merit.

B. O'Connell summarized the discussion of the HPC that outlines the following changes to the Aldsworth building that have compromised its integrity:

- Original "soft" brick was replaced with a more modern "hard" brick.
- Upper story windows were replaced with non-historic nine over nine windows.
- Top cornice does not extend the full length of building.
- Entire first floor façade renovations, which include the elimination of a main entrance, have no historical character.

A motion was made by C. Clark and seconded by M. Lee to demolish the Community Resource Bank and Aldsworth Building. Yes votes by C. Clark, M. Lee, S. deMalignon, and P. Carlson. No votes by M. Titus and J. Swanson. B. Will did not vote since there was a majority in favor of demolition. Motion carried.

c. Review subcommittee approval for exterior painting - 315 & 317 Division Street
This item was previously approved by the subcommittee and was not discussed at the meeting. Details of approval were included in the packet.

4. **Sign Review: None**

5. **Other**

6. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by C. Clark and seconded by S. deMalignon to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

Submitted by:

Barb Neitzel
Recording Secretary