

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL  
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

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FILE NAME: 451 Selby Avenue  
OWNER: Mi2 LLC  
AGENCY: Department of Safety and Inspections- Code Enforcement  
DATE OF HEARING: June 14, 2012  
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Hill Historic District  
CATEGORY: Contributing  
CLASSIFICATION: Demolition  
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Christine Boulware, Hilary Holmes  
DATE: June 7, 2012

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**A. SITE DESCRIPTION:**

The Charles F. F. Abbott house at 451 Selby Avenue is a two and one-half story wood frame Eastlake style dwelling, constructed in 1883. The roof is intersecting gables with asphalt shingles and one central chimney. The exterior is wood lap siding and the foundation is limestone. The front entry porch has a pedimented roof and a transom over the door. A rectangular bay window flanks the side entry porch on the east elevation. Fenestration is two-over-two double-hung windows, with Queen Anne style upper and fixed sash. There is a three-course stone retaining wall at the front and east side of the property. This is one of four ornate, Eastlake style houses on this block of Selby Avenue. The property is classified as contributing to the character of the Hill Historic District.

**B. PROPOSED CHANGES:**

This property has been vacant since September 5, 2006. Records indicate that the owner is Mi2 LLC and on March 9, 2012 an Order to Abate Nuisance Building was issued. HPC will review a potential demolition permit application by the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) or the property owner or owner's representative. The Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) has issued a Remove or Repair order given the structure's nuisance conditions. Given the building is located within the Hill Historic District, the HPC is required to review and approve or disapprove the issuance of city permits for demolition pursuant to Leg. Code § 73.06(a)(4) generally and Leg. Code § 74.67 specifically.

**C. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:**

**Hill Historic District Guidelines**

**Leg. Code § 74.64. Restoration and Rehabilitation.**

**A. General Principles:**

- (1) All work should be of a character and quality that maintains the distinguishing features of the building and the environment. The removal or alteration of distinctive architectural features should be avoided as should alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance. The restoration of altered original features, if documentable, is encouraged.*
- (2) Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.*
- (3) Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event of replacement, new materials should match the original in composition, design (including consideration of proportion, texture and detail), color and overall appearance.*
- (4) New additions or alterations to structures should be constructed in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the form and integrity of the original structure would be unimpaired.*
- (5) The impact of alterations or additions on individual buildings as well as on the surrounding streetscape will be considered; major alterations to buildings which occupy a corner lot or are otherwise prominently sited should be avoided.*

- (6) *New construction should be compatible with the historic and architectural character of the district.*
- (7) *The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.*
- (8) *Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.*
- (9) *Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.*
- (10) *Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.*

(Ord. No. 17815, § 3(II) 4-2-91)

### **§ 74.67. Demolition**

*When reviewing proposals for demolition of structures within the district, the Heritage Preservation Commission refers to Section 73.06 (i)(2) of the Saint Paul Legislative Code which states the following:*

*In the case of the proposed demolition of a building, prior to approval of said demolition, the commission shall make written findings on the following: the architectural and historical merit of the building, the effect of the demolition on surrounding buildings, the effect of any proposed new construction on the remainder of the building (in case of partial demolition) and on surrounding buildings, and the economic value or usefulness of the building as it now exists or if altered or modified in comparison with the value or usefulness of any proposed structures designated to replace the present building or buildings.*

(Ord. No. 17815, § 3(V) 4-2-91)

### **SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION**

#### **District/Neighborhood**

#### **Recommended:**

*-Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings, and streetscape, and landscape features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the district or neighborhood. Such features can include streets, alleys, paving, walkways, street lights, signs, benches, parks and gardens, and trees.*

*-Retaining the historic relationship between buildings, and streetscape and landscape features such as a town square comprised of row houses and stores surrounding a communal park or open space.*

*-Protecting and maintaining the historic masonry, wood, and architectural metals which comprise building and streetscape features, through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and reapplication of protective coating systems; and protecting and maintaining landscape features, including plant material.*

*-Repairing features of the building, streetscape, or landscape by reinforcing the historic materials. Repair will also generally include the replacement in kind - or with a compatible substitute material - of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes such as porch balustrades, paving materials, or streetlight standards.*

*-Replacing in kind an entire feature of the building, streetscape, or landscape that is too deteriorated to repair - when the overall form and detailing are still evident - using the physical evidence to guide the new work. This could include a storefront, a walkway, or a garden. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.*

**Alterations/Additions for the New Use**

*-Designing required new parking so that it is as unobtrusive as possible, i.e., on side streets or at the rear of buildings. "Shared" parking should also be planned so that several business' can utilize one parking area as opposed to introducing random, multiple lots.*

*-Designing and constructing new additions to historic buildings when required by the new use. New work should be compatible with the historic character of the district or neighborhood in terms of size, scale, design, material, color, and texture.*

*-Removing nonsignificant buildings, additions, or streetscape and landscape features which detract from the historic character of the district or the neighborhood.*

**Not Recommended:**

*-Removing or radically changing those features of the district or neighborhood which are important in defining the overall historic character so that, as a result, the character is diminished.*

*-Removing or relocating historic buildings, or features of the streetscape and landscape, thus destroying the historic relationship between buildings, features and open space.*

*-Failing to undertake adequate measures to assure the preservation of building, streetscape, and landscape features.*

*-Removing a feature of the building, streetscape, or landscape that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.*

**Design for Missing Historic Features**

*-Introducing a new building, streetscape or landscape feature that is out of scale or otherwise inappropriate to the setting's historic character, e.g., replacing picket fencing with chain link fencing.*

**Alterations/Additions for the New Use**

*-Placing parking facilities directly adjacent to historic buildings which cause the removal of historic plantings, relocation of paths and walkways, or blocking of alleys.*

*-Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the district or neighborhood.*

*-Removing a historic building, building feature, or landscape or streetscape feature that is important in defining the overall historic character of the district or the neighborhood.*

**E. FINDINGS** The following findings are based upon HPC records, research and HPC staff inspection of the property's exterior:

1. Leg. Code § 74.67. - The Preservation Program for the Hill Historic District states that *In the case of the proposed demolition of a building, prior to approval of said demolition, the commission shall make written findings on the following the architectural and historical merit of the building, the effect of the demolition on surrounding buildings, the effect of any proposed new construction on the remainder of the building (in case of partial demolition) and on*

*surrounding buildings, and the economic value or usefulness of the building as it now exists or if altered or modified in comparison with the value or usefulness of any proposed structures designated to replace the present building or buildings.*

2. *The category of the building.* The building is classified as contributing to the Hill Historic District.
3. *Architectural and historical merit of the building and effect of demolition on surrounding buildings.* Although in need of repair, staff considers the building's historic and architectural integrity to be fair to good. The house is an example of Eastlake Patternbook style of architecture and is part of a collection of buildings on the north side of Selby between Arundel and Mackubin. The house was constructed during the period of significance and during building boom of the late 1880's and early 1890's. The Saint Paul Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District Guidelines for Design Review Booklet states the following about late 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular properties;

*The original Ramsey Hill neighborhood expanded north and west from Summit Avenue. Houses north of Summit were of wood frame construction with some brick or stone, contrasting with the more substantial masonry houses along Summit. While these houses are generally not of the same design quality as those found along Summit Avenue, they represent upper-middle class, late nineteenth-century architectural taste.*

The Sanborn Insurance map for this site indicates the footprint of the house since 1925 has changed slightly with the removal of a one-story rear addition and a one-story shed near the rear of the house.

Selby Avenue has more commercial uses than residential, and 451 Selby Avenue is one of a row of four houses that still remain on the avenue. The block face on the north side of Selby Avenue has a collection of four houses, including 451 Selby, in a Victorian-era "Painted Lady" Eastlake style, with architectural continuity between the four structures. The south side of the block is faced with a surface parking lot, two story commercial building, the Saint Paul Curling Club, a larger surface parking lot and a corner commercial building.

Staff has not researched other historical associations, such as persons that have contributed in some way to Saint Paul's history and development or an architect or association with an important event, with this property. The original building permit and Saint Paul and Ramsey Historic Sites Inventory form identify the builder and original owner as Charles F.F. Abbott, a carpenter.

4. *Structural condition of the building.* On March 1, 2012 a Building Deficiency Inspection Report was compiled. The list of deficiencies is not necessarily all the deficiencies present at the time and would not substitute for a team inspection and Code Compliance Report. A more comprehensive report would be necessary for staff to review for compliance with the rehabilitation guidelines. Staff is not aware of any other structural evaluations that have been completed. Staff has received a voicemail from the owner, Matt Miller, on May 30<sup>th</sup>, stating his intent to order a code compliance report and post the performance bond.
5. *The economic viability of the structure.* According to DSI Code Enforcement, the rehabilitation costs of the structure exceed \$100,000 and demolition costs are estimated to exceed \$15,000. For 2012, Ramsey County estimates the land value at \$87,100 and the building value at \$59,900. The property is sited on a 40 ft. wide by 117 ft. deep lot (4,680 sq. ft.).

6. In general, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend against removing buildings that are important in defining the overall historic character and destroying historic relationships between buildings and open space. Given the architectural integrity of 451 Selby Avenue and its contribution to a collection of similar neighboring houses, HPC staff finds that the building reinforces and contributes to the architectural and historic character of the Hill Historic District and its removal would destroy the historic relationship of the built environment along the north side of Selby Avenue.
7. HPC staff finds that the proposed demolition of the building at 451 Selby Avenue will have a negative impact on the Hill Historic District. A vacant lot will have a negative impact on the historic district and the loss of historic fabric is irreversible.

**F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Based on the findings, staff recommends denial of a potential demolition permit application.

# Historic Sites Survey

Ramsey County Historical Society Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission

1. Street Address/Location: 451 W. Selby Avenue
2. District/village: 8
3. Common name: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Historic name: Charles F.F. Abbott House
5. Original use: House
6. Present Use: House
7. Access: Yes  No  Limited
8. Period of construction: 1883
9. Style: Victorian
10. # of bays: 2
11. # of stories: 2
12. Roof style: Intersecting gable
13. Roof covering: Asphalt shingles; paper
14. Dormer style & #: 1 gable
15. Chimney style, material, location & #: Interior brick
16. Type of fenestration: 1/2, 1/1 rectangular
17. Type of foundation: Limestone
18. Structural system/main exterior wall covering:  Wood frame:  clapboard  shingle  
 aluminum  asbestos  Brick:  stretcher bond  American bond  header bond  
 Stone:  random rubble  coursed rubble  random ashlar  coursed ashlar  
Type of stone/brick or other bonding pattern: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Concrete block  Cast concrete  Stucco  Terra cotta  Curtain wall  
 Glass/metal  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
19. Other significant details: Asymmetrical design. Bargeboards with squared ends with incised roundels. Band of rectangular windows on 2nd story of main facade. Fishscale shingled overhang between floors. Pediment over entrance is all that remains of the original front porch. Transom over door. Rectangular bay window flanking entrance.
20. Integrity of Design:  basically intact & unaltered  altered slightly  
 alterations & additions more apparent than original  original design not apparent
21. Physical condition of building:  Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor  Deteriorated
22. Additions and alterations: Part of porch has been removed. Vertical sheathing in gable ends. New windows. Some ornamentation removed.
23. If a corner lot, describe:  NW  NE  SE  SW corner of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ cross street
24. Side of street: North
25. Setting:  agricultural  residential  commercial  industrial  suburban  
 Other: Near Curling Club
26. Significant site and landscape features: Small stone retaining wall.
27. Threats to site: \_\_\_\_\_
28. Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_
29. Date(s) of site visit(s): 7/1/82
30. Negative file number(s): 382/8/4
31. Map location code (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_
32. Name of fieldworker: D. Olson

Planning district/  
village #: 8  
Address/  
location: 451 W. Selby Avenue  
Historic  
Name: Charles F.F. Abbott House  
Common  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

33. Architect/engineer: Charles F.F. Abbott 151 Selby  
34. Builder/contractor: Charles F.F. Abbott 151 Selby  
35. Present Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ 36. Date built: 1883  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ 37. Date source: Building Permit  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

38. Legal Description: Lot 28, Block 2, Selby, McClung & Van Meter's Addition

39. Building Permit #: 68

40. Location of architect's drawings: \_\_\_\_\_

41. On National Register? Yes  No 42. National Register potential? Yes  No

43. HPC/local historic site? Yes  No 44. Local designation potential? Yes  No

45. In historic district?  Yes No 46. Historic district potential?  Yes No

Which? H.P.C. District If yes, explain rationale: Possible extension  
\_\_\_\_\_ of National Register District  
\_\_\_\_\_

47. Historical background: This house was built in 1883 by and for Charles F.F. Abbott, a carpenter who lived here.

48. Level of significance:  Local  State  National

49. Statement of significance: This deteriorated house is one of the oldest in the area.

50. Sources of information:

1885-86 Polk's St. Paul City Directories.

Photographs



REPORT OF INSPECTOR.

St. Paul, Oct 22 1883

Work was commenced on the within described building on the 22 day of Oct, and completed on the 22 day of Oct, and has been done in accordance with the plans and specifications except as noted below.

Respectfully submitted,

H. M. Elwood  
Inspector.

REMARKS.

MEMORANDA.

Detailed Statement of Specifications

FOR

NEW BUILDINGS.

No. 68 Submitted Oct 22 1883

LOCATION.

Alley cor Street

Lot 28 Block 2 of Alley

McClung & W. M.

Owner C. F. Abbott

Architect " "

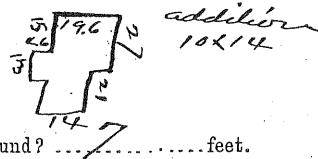
Builder " "

11



# Detailed Statement of Specifications for the Erection of Buildings.

1. What side of Street or Avenue? North Side Selby Ave  
Between Grand and Mackubin Streets.
2. Lot 28 Block 2 of Selby McClung & Co Hotel
3. Size of Lot? No. of feet front 40 No. of feet rear 40 No. of feet deep 176
4. Size of Building? No. of feet front 196 No. of feet rear 14 No. of feet deep 48  
No. of stories in height 2 cellar, basement and attic. No. of feet in height, from curb level to highest point 30
5. What will building cost (exclusive of lot)? \$ 2350.00
6. What will be the depth of foundation walls, from curb level or surface of the ground? 7 feet.
7. Will foundation be laid on earth, rock, timber or piles? Earth
8. What will be the base—stone or concrete? ..... If base stones, give size and how laid .....  
..... If concrete, give thickness .....
9. What will be the size of piers? .....
10. What will be the sizes of the base of piers? .....
11. What will be the thickness of foundation walls? 20 and of what materials constructed? Stone
12. What will be the thickness of cellar walls? 24 inches; basement walls? .....
13. What will be the thickness of walls in 1st story? 6 inches; 2d story? 6 inches; 3d story? .....
14. Whether independent or party walls? If party walls, give thickness thereof .....
15. With what material walls to be coped? .....
16. What will be the materials of front? wood If of stone, what kind? ..... Give thickness of front ashlar ..... and thickness of backing thereof .....
17. Will the roof be flat, peaked or Mansard? Peaked
18. If flat, height of rear and side walls above roof? .....
19. Height of division and party walls above roof? .....
20. What will be the materials of roofing? Shingle
21. What will be the means of access to the roof? .....
22. What will be the materials of cornices? wood
23. If there are to be skylights, of what material constructed? .....

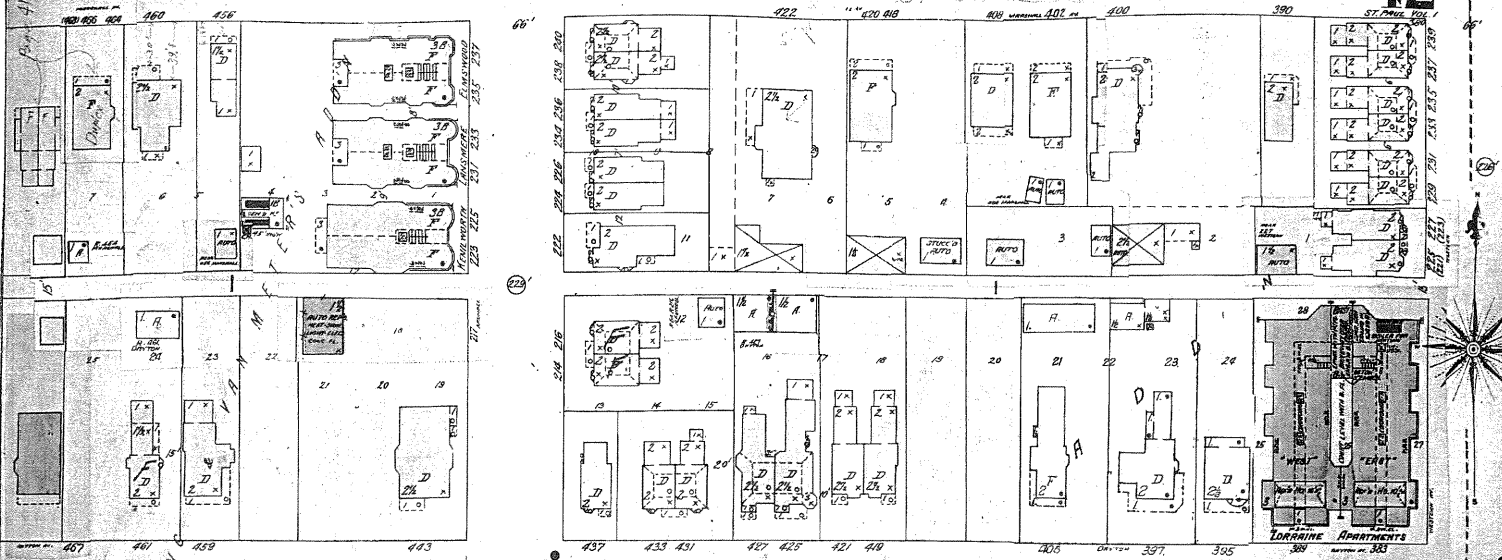


- Building - 1  
7-1565X  
8-70110
24. Are skylights provided with proper screens? .....
25. Is the building to be provided with iron shutters or blinds? .....
26. Give size and material of floor joists: 1st tier 2 x 10 2d tier 2 x 8  
 3d tier..... x..... 4th tier..... x..... 5th tier..... x..... 6th tier..... x.....  
 ceiling tier 2 x 6 roof tier 2 x 4 State distance from centers on 1st tier  
16 inches; 2d tier 16 inches; 3d tier..... inches; 4th tier..... inches; 5th tier.....  
 inches; 6th tier..... inches; ceiling tier..... inches; roof tier..... inches.
27. If floors are to be supported by columns and girders, give the following information: size and material of  
 girders under 1st floor..... x..... under upper floors..... x.....  
 size and material of columns under 1st floor..... x.....  
 under upper floors..... x.....
28. What will be the distance of wooden girders from all flues and steam pipes? .....
29. State if hot air, steam or other furnaces .....
30. If the front, rear or side walls are to be supported, in whole or in part, by girders or lintels, give definite  
 particulars .....
31. If girders are to be supported by brick piers and columns, state the size of piers and columns .....
32. Will a fire escape and standpipe be provided? .....
33. For what purpose is building constructed? Dwelling House
34. Any boiler house or room connected with building? No
35. If so, distance of any woodwork from boiler, breeching or smoke conductor and dome. ....
36. Of what material floor constructed? .....
37. If any hoistways, state how protected .....
38. How are the stairways to be constructed, and of what materials? .....
39. How are the wall partitions to be constructed, and of what materials? .....
40. How are the floors of cellars, basement and other stories to be constructed? .....
41. How are the ceilings to be constructed? Gypsum Plaster
42. Will all materials and workmanship be in accordance with the requirements of the law? Yes

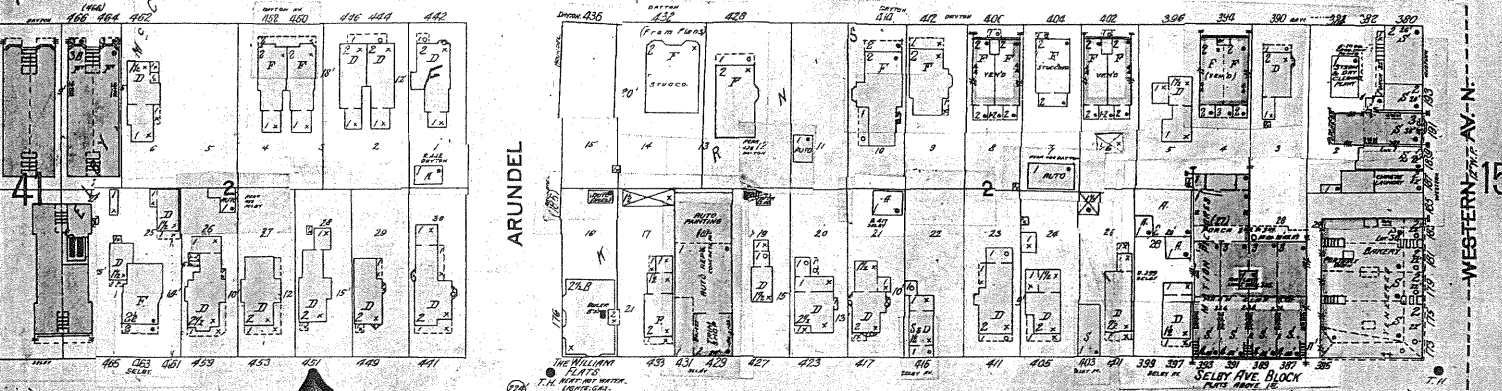
Owner C. F. Abbott Address 157 Selb ave  
 Architect " " Address.....  
 Builder " " Address.....  
 Plumber..... Address.....



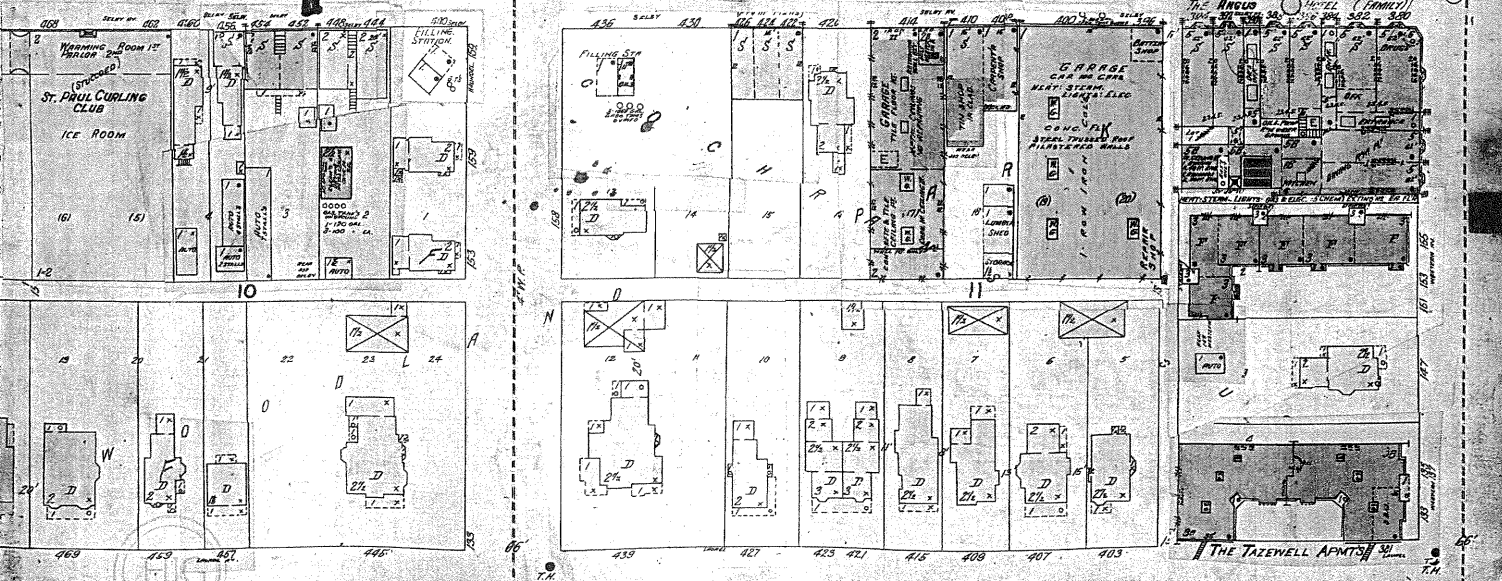
MARSHALL ST. AV.



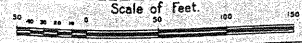
DAYTON ST. AV.



SELBY ST. AV.



LAUREL ST. AV.





# GISmo Oblique Photography

Images courtesy of: Microsoft® Virtual Earth™ 2006

Show Dashboard  Show Reference Map



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