

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION
FILE NUMBER: #15-I94 Sound Wall Extension
DATE: May 14, 2015

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul has declared as a matter of public policy, in Chapter 73 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, “that the preservation, protection, perpetuation and use of areas, places, building, structures and other objects having special historical, community or aesthetic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people;” and

WHEREAS, Chapter 73 also establishes the purposes of heritage preservation to be to: “safeguard the heritage of the City of Saint Paul by preserving sites and structures which reflect elements of the city’s cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history; protect and enhance the City of Saint Paul’s attraction to residents, tourists and visitors, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry; enhance the visual and aesthetic character, diversity and interest of the City of Saint Paul; foster civic pride in the beauty and notable accomplishments of the past; and promote the use and preservation of historic sites and structures for the education and general welfare of the people of the City of Saint Paul;” and

WHEREAS, Chapter 73 also establishes the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) and states that it “shall serve as an advisory body to the mayor and city council on municipal heritage preservation matters” and the HPC “shall review and approve or disapprove the issuance of city permits” for all new construction within designated heritage preservation sites; and

WHEREAS, on July 23, 1992, the Dayton’s Bluff Heritage Preservation District was established under Ordinance No. 17942 (Council File #92-900) authorizing the Heritage Preservation Commission authority to protect the architectural character of heritage preservation sites through review and approval or denial of applications for city permits for exterior work within designated heritage preservation sites §73.04.(4); and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) is proposing to extend the existing sound wall along Mounds Boulevard from Maria to approximately Conway Street; and

WHEREAS, MNDOT and Saint Paul Public Works (PW) staff presented this proposal to the HPC at their Business Meeting on April 9, 2015; and

WHEREAS, there was no determination at the time of the April 9th HPC Meeting whether portions of the new wall were within the boundaries of the Dayton’s Bluff Heritage Preservation Site or if the new wall bordered the historic district; and

WHEREAS, MNDOT showed before and after wall photos of how views would be impacted at Euclid Street and Surrey Avenue during the April 9th Meeting; and

WHEREAS, MNDOT submitted a map to city staff on May 13, 2015 who determined that portions of the wall fall within the boundaries of the Dayton’s Bluff Heritage Preservation District which requires a formal application to be submitted, a public hearing and review by the HPC per §73.04.(4); and

WHEREAS, per a memo dated May 4, 2015, HPC staff requested the City Council (Resolution PH 15-117 and State Project No. S.P. 6283-175) delay a decision for municipal consent which was

scheduled for a City Council public hearing and held on Wednesday, May 6, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Dayton's Bluff Historic District Handbook states the following with respect to the historic significance of the setting and development of the neighborhood:

"The Plan of gridded streets employed by Lyman Dayton's land surveyor was generally like that used elsewhere in the city, but many of the streets were oriented toward views of the Mississippi River and the growing city below. As the blocks of Dayton's Bluff were developed with a diverse collection of residences and commercial buildings, a sense of the steep, rolling terrain was retained. Houses crowned terraced hilltop sites, and porches and prominent windows were oriented towards views of distant river bluffs. Today, the District has strong edges at the south, where I-94 divides it from the Mounds Park area... It is important to conserve the historic buildings of this area, but the natural setting should also be conserved and enhanced. The first settlers of the area who sought large lots perched near the edge of the bluff highly valued their special view of the city. Today, the broad vistas of the river and downtown St. Paul remain among the reasons new residents are drawn to this unique neighborhood;" and

WHEREAS, Legislative Code §74.90(b)(7) for views and vistas states "Exceptional views of the city and river valley provided from the public way should not be obstructed by new buildings or structures; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, if the sound wall extension proposal continues to move forward, MNDOT shall submit a formal application to the HPC and the HPC must conduct a public hearing, establish findings based on applicable preservation standards and either approve, disapprove or approve with conditions; now

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, given the preliminary information presented, the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission anticipates that the proposed wall will negatively impact the historical and architectural character of the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District and advises the City Council to delay their municipal consent determination until after the HPC has completed their required review or deny municipal consent once negative historic impacts are verified.

MOVED BY	Commissioner Bezat
SECONDED BY	Commissioner Riehle

IN FAVOR	8
AGAINST	0
ABSTAIN	0