

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

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FILE NAME: 275 Bates Avenue – Louis Hansen House and Bakery

DATE OF APPLICATION: September 17, 2015

APPLICANT: Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)

OWNER: HRA

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: October 8, 2015

HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District

CATEGORY: Pivotal

CLASSIFICATION: Demolition Permit

STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Christine Boulware

DATE: October 5, 2015

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**A. SITE DESCRIPTION:** The Louis Hansen House and Bakery, at 275 Bates Avenue, was constructed in 1884. It is a two-story, L-shaped, frame building with Italianate-derived design on a coursed limestone foundation with an intersecting gabled roof. Fenestration consists of two-over-two double-hung windows arranged symmetrically throughout the façade, and the roof is characterized by shallow, simple soffits and fascia. The clapboard exterior walls were covered with cement-shingle on the first floor and scalloped asphalt shingle on the second floor in 1935. Craftsman-style, canopies at the front entries replaced the one-story, open, wrap-around porch around the same time. The simple massing of the structure and presence of two front entryways make this a unique visual example of late nineteenth century live-work construction within the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District.

**B. PROPERTY HISTORY AND CONTEXT:** Constructed in 1884 for a cost of \$800 by Saint Paul contractor M. Almquist, Louis Hansen's combined bakery and residence survives as a rare example of mixed-use residential architecture within Dayton's Bluff. Additions totaling \$1450 were added in 1885 shortly after the original structure was completed by contractor C.P. McClellan. Hansen is listed as a baker in the 1886 City Directory, with Thomas Mullen employed as a clerk. By 1887, Hansen's business had grown to include another clerk, Theresa Meehan, and John F. Meehan, who was listed as the bakery's truckman. While running the bakery, Hansen also offered his services in order for others to learn his trade, taking out an ad in the "Situations Wanted" section of the *Saint Paul Daily Globe* for an "apprentice situation in a clothing store or to learn the "bakers" trade by a young Scandinavian who speaks good English; can give good references." Hansen also lent his hand in helping stop an unpopular proposal in 1889 to build a park within Dayton's Bluff that would only be accessible by well-off residents, signing a petition to "Protest against the action of the board in rescinding its resolution creating Indian Mound park and the proposed plan to condemn land for Lincoln park" (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*).

Hansen's bakery was in operation at 275 Bates until sometime in 1893, when the bakery either closed or relocated elsewhere. Hansen retained ownership of the building and performed \$625 of alterations to the structure in 1894, presumably to convert the entirety of the structure into residential uses. The Louis Hansen House and Bakery would be home to railroad workers, stenographers, tailors, clerks, foremen, engineers, cigar makers, carpenters, elevator operators, musicians, painters, and many other renters well into the twentieth century as indicated in city directories. Staff has not determined when the property left Louis Hansen's ownership, but it is listed as owned by Fred A. Anselment, a designer at the Minnesota Chandelier Company, by 1924.

**C. PROPOSED CHANGES:** The applicant proposes to raze the residence; there are no current plans for new construction. The lot would be graded and seeded.

**D. TIMELINE:**

- July 23, 1992 - the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District was designated by the City Council for Heritage Preservation and established under Ordinance No. 17942 (Council File #92-900)
- June 2, 2006 - the property became a Category 1 vacant building - Single Family Residential
- June 6, 2007 – the property became a Category 2 vacant building
- December 7, 2007 – the HRA purchased the property for \$80,000 with CDBG funds
- July 24, 2009 - Code Compliance Report generated (issued August 4, 2009)
- In 2009, the HRA offered the property for \$1 as part of the Fourth Street Preservation Project and did not receive any proposals.
- Inspiring Communities RFPs were released on October 15, 2013 and November 3, 2014.
- In response to the October 15, 2013 RFP, the HRA received one proposal to demolish 275 Bates, renovate 279 Bates, and combine the lots. The total development cost proposed was \$538,813 with a projected sale of the renovated house at \$160,000 for a subsidy request of \$378,813. This also assumed a land cost write-down to \$3,000, for an additional \$162,000 HRA investment (HRA acquired 275 and 279 Bates for a total of \$165,000)

**E. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:**

**Dayton's Bluff Historic District Guidelines**

**Leg. Code § 74.87. 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.*

**§ 74.90. – New construction and additions.**

- (j) *Demolition. Demolition permits will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be determined by the category of building (pivotal, contributing and noncontributing) and its importance to the district, the structural condition of the building and the economic viability of the structure.*

**§ 73.06(i)(2): Demolition**

*When reviewing proposals for demolition of structures within the district, the Heritage Preservation Commission refers to § 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.*

**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 businesses' 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 non-significant 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.*

## **F. FINDINGS:**

1. On July 23, 1992, the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District was established under Ordinance No. 17942 (Council File #92-900). The Heritage Preservation Commission shall protect the architectural character of heritage preservation sites through review and approval or denial of applications for city permits for demolition within designated heritage preservation sites **§73.04.(4)**.
2. **The category of the building.** The Louis Hansen House and Bakery at 275 Bates Avenue is classified as pivotal to the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District.
3. **Leg. Code § 74.90.(j)** - The Preservation Program for the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District states that consideration of demolitions will be determined by the category of building (pivotal, contributing and non-contributing), its importance to the district, the structural condition of the building and the economic viability of the structure.
4. **The importance of the building to the district.** The building's integrity has been compromised; however, it has been classified as pivotal in contributing to the district's architectural and historical character. The building is important to the district and in a rehabilitated state would enhance the character of the district.

The Louis Hansen House and Bakery was constructed in 1884 with substantial alterations and additions in 1885 and 1894, all during the Period of Significance for the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District (1857-1930).

The Dayton's Bluff Handbook states the following:

*In the 1880s, and particularly during the peak years 1882-1884, Dayton's Bluff became a densely-built urban neighborhood. The construction of a series of bridges and the extension of streetcar service brought a new and diverse population to the bluff. Factory and railroad workers purchased small lots and erected a great variety of single and multiple-family houses. The newly-arrived settlers included recent immigrants from Sweden, Ireland, and Germany, but German-Americans were the predominant group. They joined a large contingent of well-established German-American business owners...*

The residential context of this structure is good, as it is one of three historic properties on this block face that were all built during the Period of Significance. They are all different in form, massing, style and setback given their dates of construction, styles, and historic uses. To the north, the John Kullberg house at 279 Bates Avenue was constructed in 1906 as a single family home and is currently being rehabilitated; to the south, the Krueger Double-house at 267-269 Bates is a side-by-side, double-residence constructed in 1885. 279 Bates resembles a farm house more than it does a mixed-use building.

Staff did not find any historical associations, other than Hansen, 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 1989 Dayton's Bluff inventory form did not identify other individuals.

The 1903-25 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for this site indicates the footprint of the building, as well as the other residences on the block that have not changed since 1925. Removal of this building on this block face will be the first principle structure change since 1925. The map shows that the building was used as a single-family dwelling by the time it was published in 1903. There were no other buildings constructed on this block. There is no alley and the grade drops steeply to the west and retained by concrete block walls.

HPC staff considers the architectural integrity to be fair-to-poor; the non-original siding materials would need to be removed for staff to accurately assess the presence of historic fabric and detailing.

- 5. *Structural condition of the building.*** The current structural condition of the building is considered poor but the recent report did not note any imminent structural danger. The building has been classified as vacant since June of 2006 and the lack of maintenance and mothballing/stabilization is evident.

Since the HRA's ownership in 2007, a Code Compliance Report was issued on August 4, 2009. The report called for repointing the interior/exterior foundation as necessary, installation of safety glass in the window over the stair landing, repair/replacement of deteriorated window sash and broken glass, complete storms and screens at all door and window openings, repair/replacement of doors, repair siding, soffit, fascia and trim as necessary.

HPC staff conducted a site visit on October 1, 2015. Much of the original/early architectural or decorative features of the interior have been removed or covered by a drop-ceiling or wall paneling. The original, two-over-two, double-hung windows are intact along with the interior stairway and balustrade to the second floor. The exterior features of the house have been covered with asphalt cement- and shingle-siding. Staff observed general deferred maintenance. Staff cannot assess the condition of the original exterior materials given that they are not visible.

On September 14, 2015, structural engineering firm, Mattson Macdonald Young, submitted a report to the HRA that summarized the observed conditions of the property. The report notes the structural elements of the building framing and foundation to be in poor condition, the front porch slab is displaced/settled, water damage was observed at the second floor ceiling and in the basement joists, the parging on the foundation wall are cracked/crumbling/bulging on the interior, shoring columns in the basement are rusted and bent, the retaining wall at the rear of the property is out of plumb, the stucco over the exterior foundation is deteriorated, the roof and exterior walls appear to be in good condition. The report summarized that 275 Bates Avenue is in generally poor condition based on visually observed conditions. It added the repairs are possible, but would likely be relatively costly.

- 6. *The economic viability of the structure.*** The economic viability of the structure cannot be fully determined given that a rehabilitation estimate was never completed or provided.

The HRA estimates the demolition costs to be \$24,000. Staff did not receive a cost range to

rehabilitate the building. The HRA purchased the property on December 7, 2009 for \$80,000 with CDBG funds. In 2014, Ramsey County estimated the 2015 land value at \$9,100 and the building value at \$31,500. In 2015, Ramsey County estimated the 2016 land value at \$7,200 and the building value at \$43,900. The 2013 bid that came from the Inspiring Communities RFP was to demolish this property in order to provide a larger lot for 279 Bates. The 1640 square foot property is sited on the west side of Bates Avenue between Conway and Surrey and the parcel size is 40 ft. wide by 54 ft. deep (.05 acres).

The property is currently zoned RTI with the use as Single Family - Residential.

7. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend against removing buildings that are important in defining the overall historic character of the district or the neighborhood. Given the pivotal categorization, even with fair to poor architectural integrity, and good context, HPC staff finds that the building reinforces the District's architectural and historic character. The Standards also recommend against destroying historic relationships between buildings and open space. The demolition of the building would have a significant impact on the relationship of residential buildings along the west side of Bates Avenue.

The Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District Design Guidelines, General Principle (1) states *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...* The proposal to demolish this property does not comply with the guidelines as loss of the property would result in the loss of historic character.

8. This property is in the anticipated Area of Potential Effect for the Gold Line BRT and will be evaluated for National Register Eligibility. Proceeding evaluation, determined effects will be evaluated for impacts with potential mitigation.
  9. HPC staff finds that the proposed demolition of the Louis Hansen House and Bakery at 275 Bates Avenue will adversely affect the Program for the Preservation and architectural control of the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District (Leg. Code §73.06 (e)) for reasons outlined in the findings which include: pivotal classification, poor condition and lack of a rehabilitation estimate. A vacant lot would have a negative impact on the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District and the loss of historic fabric is irreversible.
- G. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:** Based on the findings, staff recommends denial of the demolition permit application.

#### **H. ATTACHMENTS**

1. HPC Design Review Application
2. Applicant Submittals:
  - A. *Structural Report and Photographs*
  - B. *Exterior Photographs*
3. August 4, 2009 Code Compliance Report
4. 2015 Photographs
5. Aerial Photographs
6. 1903-25 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map