

HPC File #16-003

700 Fourth Street East, Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District, by the Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority, for a demolition permit to raze the Edward McNamnee house and garage

HPC staff presented the staff report and based on the findings staff recommends denial of the demolition permit application.

Chair Dana requested that everyone present be careful not to make inferences or be inflammatory in the way comments are made or questions are asked. There are people who are involved in this work and these properties who could be personally offended by inferences about personal behavior.

Ms. Boulware stated that because the Fourth Street Preservation Project has been brought up she would provide some background on the project. It was a community, District Council and City led group. There were many stakeholders including neighbors and businesses that met starting in 2008 and continued through when the RFPs went out. There were open houses and a lot of community involvement, specifically those houses on Fourth Street, and the two on Bates Avenue. This house at 700 Fourth Street was part of that project and people had the opportunity to walk through it and look at it, like many of the others on Fourth Street, it didn't receive an immediate proposal.

Joe Musolf, HRA staff, stated they believe a decision to allow demolition is warranted considering both the structural condition of the building and the lacking economic viability of the building. The structural condition review included in the application cited numerous structural deficiencies. The structural engineer concluded that the building is in poor structural condition and repairs would likely be relatively costly. They worked diligently to find an economically viable rehabilitation proposal for the building. They have offered the property via requests for proposals three times in 2009, 2013 and 2014. They have received two proposals. One in 2013, requesting a subsidy of \$325,000 and one in 2014, requesting a subsidy of \$311,000. It was determined that both of these proposals were not economically viable. In the spring of 2015 they requested assistance from HPC staff and the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota to identify interested developers and three new developers were contacted, but no proposals emerged.

Tom Dimond, 2119 Skyway Dr., testified he has restored the house behind this property without subsidy so he knows it's economically viable to rehab a house on this block. This house is very nice and does need extensive work, but it can be done. To lose a good property like this would be terrible for this neighborhood.

Sage Holben, 705 Fourth Street East, testified as bad as this house may look it really is a beautiful home inside. She has become a contact person for several of the new neighbors that have recently moved into the rehabbed homes. She said that through social media and in person people are asking about this house and others in the neighborhood. People want to

move to Dayton's Bluff because of the architecture, community and the economics. Dayton's Bluff is growing and beginning to thrive. They have certainly always thrived as a neighborhood. She request that demolition of this property be denied so that the community can look at this in more detail.

Kirstin Scanlan Madore, 326 Maria Avenue, testified right now this house is an eyesore, but feels strongly that the Commission should deny approval of the demolition because she feels it could be renovated.

HPC staff read written testimony into the record requesting that the items pertaining to the demolition of HRA owned properties in the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District be withdrawn from the October 8, 2015, Heritage Preservation Commission agenda pending a community meeting to consider the impacts and/or opportunities that the properties in question represent to the Dayton's Bluff community. The letter includes sixteen names of people in support of this request: Lou Ann Norquist, Barry Madore, Benjamin Mason, Jennifer Mason, Karin DuPaul, Erica Schneekloth, Aron Thomas, Casie Radford, Carla Riehle, Carrie Obry, Sage Holben, Cliff Carey, Carol Carey, Bob Parker, David Durant, and Tammy Durant.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel moved to deny the application of demolition. Commissioner Trimble seconded the motion.

The motion to deny passed by a vote of 8-0.