



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

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October 22, 2015

Richard Dana
Chair, Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)
C/O Christine Boulware
Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development
25 West 4th Street, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Re: Appeal of HPC decision
737 Plum Street

Dear Chair Dana,

On October 8, 2015, the HPC denied the Housing and Redevelopment Authority's (HRA) application for a demolition permit to raze the building at 737 Plum Street (HPC File #16-005). I wish to appeal the HPC's decision and ask that the City Council consider the matter per HRA's rights as the applicant under Chapter 73 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code.

I set forth the following grounds for appeal in accordance with §73.06(i)(2) and §74.90(j):

- The HPC staff report indicated that the building is classified as contributing, but not pivotal to the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District. However, a stable structure has already been razed and replaced by a non-contributing garage.
- According to the HPC staff report, the building's integrity has been compromised and the architectural integrity of the structure is considered fair to poor.
- The HPC staff report claims that the context is good. However, the adjacent structure at 207 Maple was constructed in 1969 and compromises the context of 737 Plum and affects its access to light and air to the east, which in turn affects the economic viability of the structure.
- A Structural Condition Review, prepared by a third party structural engineering firm, was submitted with the application, and was discussed via verbal testimony at the public hearing. The Structural Condition Review concluded that the building is in poor structural condition and repairs would likely be costly. Issues contributing to the condition include water damage, rotting joists and settling that's resulted in loads that are no longer being carried.
- As was testified to in the public hearing, HRA staff has worked diligently to find an economically viable rehabilitation proposal for the building.

- HRA staff received 1 proposal in 2012 requesting a subsidy of \$334,500. HRA staff determined that this proposal was not economically viable.
- HRA staff has offered the property via Requests For Proposals 2 times, in 2013 and 2014. These requests did not result in any interest or proposals.
- In the spring of 2015, HRA staff requested assistance from HPC staff and the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota to identify interested developers. Three new developers were contacted, but no proposals emerged.

While the building is classified as contributing, the HRA submits that those factors are outweighed by the fact that the garage is non-contributing and the overall architectural integrity has been significantly compromised. Additionally, the HRA submits that the building is in poor structural condition and the economic viability of the building is compromised due to site conditions and the proximity of the adjacent multi-unit building. In consideration of these factors, the HRA respectfully requests approval of this appeal under Saint Paul Legislative Code Sections 73.06(i)(2) and 74.90(j).

Respectfully,



for Jonathan Sage-Martinson
HRA Executive Director

Cc: Patty Lilledahl, Director of Housing PED
Joe Musolf, Principal Project Manager, PED
File