

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

**HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION**

**FILE NUMBER: 1179-1181 Seventh Street East, Historic Resource Review  
RA-SPC-5392; RLH RR 19-23**

**DATE: September 9, 2019**

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**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 and states that it “shall serve as an advisory body to the mayor and city council on municipal heritage preservation matters;” and

**WHEREAS**, the building at 1179-1181 Seventh Street East is now threatened with demolition as the City has issued an *Order to Abate a Nuisance Building*; and

**WHEREAS**, the ornate, corner commercial building at 1179-1181 Seventh Street East was constructed in 1890 and designed to house a commercial use on the first floor and apartments on the second floor. This Victorian-era commercial block is two-stories tall and masonry load-bearing. The brick parapet wall has a centrally located projecting brick pediment topped by a cornice with a rounded-arched pane of decorative brick-work in the tympanum. Corner piers and interior end-wall chimneys project above the parapet wall. Second story windows are rounded-arched and arranged in groups of three on the main-façade and one or two on the sidewalls. Decorative brickwork in the spandrels of the arches on the main façade and south bay of sidewalks. Rock-faced stone sills. First floor side window and door openings are segmental arched. The storefront retains the original cornice. The free-standing column at the recessed corner entrance was removed at some point after 1983. The storefront is framed by brick piers with rock-faced stone blocks supporting the cornice. The storefront cornice extends east across the small one-story wood-frame addition to the building. The historic massing and footprint remain intact and the building still displays its historic form. The 1983 Historic Sites inventory form identifies the architect/engineer as Matley and Garlough and the builder/contractor as A.C. Angston. The original building permit is #23964. The estimated cost of construction was \$6,400 and the building was originally owned by Lewis Finkelstein of 1189 Seventh Street east who was a jeweler and diamond broker. The building has also been owned by the Schmidt Brewery and was home to the Red Mill Tavern. The property is listed in the 2001 St. Paul Historic Context Study: Neighborhood Commercial Centers: 1874-1960. Additional research and survey has not been undertaken; and

**WHEREAS**, on August 13, 2019 at the Legislative Hearing, the Legislative Hearing Officer requested the HPC consider this property for review as a historic resource. A historic resource is defined as “a property that is believed to have historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance and to meet at least one of the criteria for designation as a heritage preservation site or district as provided in Chapter 73.05;” and

**WHEREAS**, the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, based upon information gathered by staff and presented at their September 9, 2019 meeting, made the following findings of fact:

1. The Victorian era commercial block at 1179-1181 Seventh Street East was inventoried during the 1983 Historic Sites Survey of Ramsey County (RA-SPC-5392) and the 2001 Historic Context Study, Neighborhood Commercial Centers: 1874-1960.
2. 1197-1181 Seventh Street East was constructed in 1890 as a store and flats.
3. **Property Description:** According to Ramsey County Property Records, the lot is ~76 ft. wide by ~130 ft. deep – the parcel size is 0.227 acres. The building is ~11,970 sq. ft. and two-stories. The property is zoned T2.
4. **Sale Information:** According to Ramsey County Property Records, the property was sold for \$200,000 in 2016 and the use changed to become tax exempt – church, public worship.

**5. Property Value:**

Assessment Date	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Est. Mkt. Value	\$237,100	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Est. Land Value	\$98,800	\$98,800	\$98,800	\$98,800
Est. Building Value	\$138,300	\$101,200	\$101,200	\$101,200

6. The property has not been resurveyed since the 1983 Historic Sites Survey of Saint Paul and Ramsey County.
7. *Strategy 3.1 in the City’s Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan recommends: Implementing an ongoing survey program to identify and evaluate all types of historic resources in Saint Paul, including buildings, structures, objects, archaeological sites, districts, and landscapes.* Given the inclusion in the 1983 Survey and the listing in the 2001 Historic Context Study, Neighborhood Commercial Centers: 1874-1960, an intensive-level survey should be the next step.
8. *Strategy 3.6 in the City’s Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan recommends: Continuing to develop new and expand on existing historic contexts to allow for the continual identification of a full spectrum of historic resources.* There may be further architectural or ethnic contexts to explore.
9. *Strategy 4.5 and 5.3 in the City’s Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan recommend: Acquiring key threatened historic properties until a suitable owner can be found and realizing the full economic potential of key historic resources.* It is preferable to work with the current owner to avoid demolition and rehabilitate the building. The rehabilitation of 1179-1181 Seventh Street East could serve as a catalyst for additional rehabilitation of historic resources in the surrounding neighborhood.
10. The Sanborn Insurance map for this site indicates the footprint of the building has changed very little since 1925. While some windows have been blocked in and the corner post at the entry has been removed, those changes are reversible and the property retains architectural integrity.
11. Staff has not extensively researched other historical associations with the subject building such as persons that have contributed in some way to Saint Paul’s history and development or an architect or an association with an important event. The association as a tied bar to the Schmidt Brewery should be explored.
12. It is always better to retain historic buildings, materials, and details that are associated with a context and/or a period of significance for a neighborhood than it is to demolish and create a

hole in the neighborhood.

13. The integrity, or authenticity as evidenced by a site's location, design, setting, workmanship or association is good because the architectural alterations that have occurred can be reversible. The design features appear to be mostly intact and the neighboring properties have varying degrees of integrity and detail that give this area a fair degree of architectural integrity and context. The site's location and setting would be considered to have good integrity.
14. 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 alterations to the building and its current condition, HPC staff finds that the building generally reinforces the architectural and historic character of the neighborhood. The reopening of historic window openings and storefront and the removal of non-original materials would help to restore/reinforce the properties architectural integrity.
15. HPC staff finds that the demolition of the 1179-1181 Seventh Street East would have an adverse impact on the neighborhood. A vacant lot can have a negative impact on the neighborhood and the loss of historic fabric is irreversible.

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Kenneth Udoibok and architect Dennis Kroll were present to answer questions and discuss the condition of the property and their plans for rehabilitation; now

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that based on the findings, the HPC strongly encourages the City Council to delay an order to demolish 1179-1181 Seventh Street East to fully explore and consider all options for rehabilitation. It is the opinion of the HPC that 1179-1181 Seventh Street East has, "historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance" and meets "at least one of the criteria for designation as a heritage preservation site or district" as provided in Chapter 73.05 of the City of Saint Paul Legislative Code.

Several adjacent buildings were demolished over the past decade and the loss of historic fabric is irreversible; this building is a unique historic resource with architectural integrity. The neighborhood is improving economically; there have been recent investments in the area by new businesses. This building is sustainable in that environment. The rehabilitation of 1179-1198 Seventh Street East would activate the northeast corner of Duluth and East Seventh streets and could serve as an additional economic catalyst for the neighborhood.

The HPC concurs with the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office that the building may have National Register significance and that more research should be conducted in evaluating the significance and historic integrity of the site.

**MOVED BY** Commissioner William Lightner

**SECONDED BY** Commissioner Joe Peroutka

**IN FAVOR** 11

**AGAINST** 0

**ABSTAIN** 0