

November 3, 2023

Mr. George Gause
Supervisor, Heritage Preservation
Planning & Economic Development
1400 City Hall Annex
25 4th Street West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Local designation of the Dwight and Clara Watson House, 402 Hall Avenue, SHPO Referral Number 2023-2700

Dear Mr. Gause,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above referenced designation. It has been reviewed pursuant to Minnesota Statute §471.193, subd. 6., and 73.05 (c) of Saint Paul's Legislative Code.

Constructed in 1886 according to the design of architect Cass Gilbert, the Dwight and Clara Watson House is a modified 2 ½-story, wood frame American Foursquare residence that is eclectic in design and combines architectural elements of both the Queen Anne and the Shingle styles. The house rests on a raised basement of limestone and is clad with drop siding accented by decorative wood shingles. The west elevation features an enclosed screen porch, original double hung sash windows, and an oriel bay on the second floor. There is a two-story, gable roofed wood frame carriage house/barn clad with wood shingles at the rear of the lot.

The Dwight and Clara Watson House is significant as a well conserved example of the work of master architect Cass Gilbert. While Gilbert's designs for the Minnesota State Capitol, the Woolworth Building in New York City, and the U.S. Supreme Court earned him wide acclaim, his early career included designing relatively modest houses in St. Paul and elsewhere. The Watson House is the most intact and best preserved of those. Finally, the Watson House was listed in the National Register on December 16, 2019. As such, we concur that it is an ideal candidate for local designation.

If you have any questions regarding our assessment of these properties, please contact me at 651.201.3291 or michael.koop@state.mn.us.

Sincerely,



Michael Koop
State Historic Preservation Office

MINNESOTA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

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