

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting of the**  
**Edina Heritage Preservation Board**  
**Edina City Hall – Community Room**  
**Tuesday, April 10, 2012**  
**7:00 p.m.**

I.     **CALL TO ORDER**                   7:00 P.M.

II.     **ROLL CALL**    Answering roll call were Chair Carr, and Members Stegner, Davis, Moore, Christiaansen, Mellom, Sussman, Anger, and Ellingboe. Absent were Members Curran, Moore and Copman. Staff present was Planner Joyce Repya. Preservation Consultant Robert Vogel was also in attendance.

III.    **APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

Member Mellom moved to approve the meeting agenda. Member Stegner seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

IV.    **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**    **Regular meeting of March 13, 2012**

Member Stegner moved approval of the minutes from the March 13, 2012, meeting of the board. Member Davis seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

V.     **COMMUNITY COMMENT**    None

VI.    **REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**A. 44<sup>th</sup> & France – Westgate Commercial Area Survey**

Consultant Robert Vogel shared the results of the 44<sup>th</sup> & France Commercial area survey which provided a history of the district and recommendations for properties to add to the list of Edina properties eligible for Heritage Landmark designation. Mr. Vogel explained that the HPB requested this study in 2005, because the area had not been reevaluated since the original city wide survey completed in 1979.

Explaining that the commercial development occurred in conjunction with the street car line as well as the commercial development to the east in the Linden Hills area of Minneapolis; Mr. Vogel shared the histories of eight commercial properties and recommended the following three properties be added to the list of Edina properties determined eligible for landmark designation:

1.   The Odd Fellows Hall (1918 –1919) 4384-4390 France Avenue
2.   Commercial Building (1920) 4404-4412 France Avenue and 3904 Sunnyside Road
3.   Convention Grill – (1941)3912 Sunnyside Road

Mr. Vogel pointed out that these properties have experienced some changes overtime, however the changes would be considered reversible and would not interfere with the structures' historic integrity. He added that all three buildings have deep roots in the community, yet there is no urgency to designate

them at this time because they are not threatened, furthermore, simply the determination of eligibility provides protection from public projects which are usually the biggest threat.

Member Davis opined that he did not think the Odd Fellows Hall should qualify for eligibility for landmark designation because it has been altered too much. Member Mellom disagreed, pointing out how the building's original hip roof, brick exterior and window placement are clearly evident. Mr. Vogel explained that the Odd Fellows Hall was built to serve as the community center of its time, and was designed to be changed and remodeled.

Member Sussman asked if when determining landmark eligibility for a property, whether there was a threshold for how much change would be tolerated before it would no longer qualify. Mr. Vogel explained that would be a subjective determination; however key criteria would include integrity, design, materials, and also the character or feeling one senses from a building.

Member Sussman then questioned the status of the old Westgate Theater, 4500 France Avenue, now being used for the dry cleaning facility. Consultant Vogel explained that the old theater building actually consists of three parcels, all of which have been considerably altered. When one asks the question "Are the buildings preservable?" - being that the current use is a dry cleaner, it would be very difficult to recover the site, due in large part to the impact the current use has had on the environment/building.

Discussion ensued regarding the Westgate Theater building. Member Sussman pointed out that one can make out the form of the old theater from the exterior, and it would be a shame to lose the history of the building. Mr. Vogel did point out in the study that this building needed more research to assess its integrity and if with the other building components before a determination of heritage landmark eligibility can be made. Member Stegner then moved to postpone to a future meeting determining the heritage landmark eligibility of 4500 France Avenue allowing the time for more research. Member Sussman seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Member Davis suggested that the three properties Consultant Vogel has recommended to determine eligible for heritage landmark designation be considered separately. The Board agreed.

Member Davis moved the Convention Grill at 3912 Sunnyside Avenue be added to the list of Edina properties that have been determined to be eligible for heritage landmark designation. Member Stegner seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Member Mellom moved the commercial building including the central two-story structure and the one story wings on either side, at 4404-4412 France Avenue and 3904 Sunnyside Road be added to the list of properties in Edina determined eligible for heritage landmark designation. Member Davis seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Member Stegner moved the Odd Fellows Hall at 4384-4390 be determined eligible for heritage landmark designation. Member Anger seconded the motion. Members Stegner, Carr, Anger, Mellom, and Sussman voted aye. Member Davis voted nay, explaining that he believed the building had been altered too much from the original structure. The motion carried. Member Mellom then opined that much of the beautiful original building still exists with the brick exterior, window systems and hip roof. Member Sussman stated that the social significance of the building is also a huge consideration, and he believed the alterations could be reversed.

Member Stegner suggested that the HPB communicate to the public the addition of these 3 new properties to the list of the Edina properties that are eligible for heritage landmark designation. Planner Repya explained that the practice of the HPB has been to notify the property owners of the eligibility determination, including an explanation of the advantages and ramifications of a potential landmark designation. If the property owner agrees to the heritage landmark designation of their property, public notification would take place at that time.

Member Mellom commented that she found the study to be very interesting, and suggested that some older photos of the buildings would add to the interest. Planner Repya agreed to check to archives at the Edina Historical Society for older photos and report back to the Board.

### **B. Southdale Center Artifacts – Working Group’s Update**

Member Anger, a member of the Southdale Center Artifact working group explained that since the March meeting, members of the working group along with Marci Matson, Executive Director of the Edina Historical Society were given an opportunity to tour two basement storage rooms of Southdale Center led by Laurie Vandalen, the center’s manager.

A result of their tour unearthed the following “treasures”:

- Six large format scrapbooks of newspaper clippings: ranging in date from 1956 through the 1970s.
- Minutes from the merchants’ association meetings, 1950s.
- Brochures with mall maps, various eras.
- Tear-sheets of newspaper ads from the 1950s, possibly 1960s. Ads show various iconic images from early Southdale, including sculptures, birdcage, parking lot animal signage, etc.
- Photo album of mall storefronts, circa 1970s.
- Several dozen 8 x 10 black and white photos of major publicity events in opening year (auto show, circus, Truth or Consequences show, etc.) and major art works and their artists.
- Press kit announcing Southdale opening.
- Miscellaneous paper ephemera.

Mr. Anger pointed out that Simon Properties also retains ownership of one of the original sculptures, “Unicycle” by Dorothy Berge, originally displayed near the Dayton’s (Macy’s) outdoor entrance until the mid-1990s. It was taken down when the Edina mall's parking lot was reconfigured, and Simon is

considering refurbishing the sculpture (which is intact except for its concrete pedestal base) for reinstallation at Southdale.

Board members expressed the need to ensure that the history of Southdale Center being the first enclosed mall in the country not be lost. Southdale has played a large role in the post war development of Edina, and since it has been determined that designating the entire mall an Edina Heritage Landmark is not the right approach – recognizing the remaining original objects (the clock and “trees” sculpture in the garden court) which still exist appears to be another possible approach if the owners of the center agree.

Consultant Vogel questioned the wisdom of designating the artistic objects within the mall, even though they are original. He observed that designating objects as heritage landmarks is almost never done because there is no way to control them. Unlike buildings which require permits when work is proposed; work on objects do not require permits, thus changes could occur without the City’s knowledge. Furthermore, parts of the mall would not be eligible for designation, such as the clerestory windows. One would either designate the entire mall; or nothing at all. He added that designating the mall would be very complicated with only remnants of the original structure remaining, and the owners being from out of town.

Board members shared their frustration with determining the appropriate preservation approach for Southdale; noting that the HPB has struggled with preserving the history of the center for years. Member Stegner pointed out that that the garden court or atrium area where one finds the original clock, tree sculpture and clerestory windows is what remains of the original mall. There are also important archival materials, recently discovered that document the roots of the country’s first enclosed shopping mall – all worthy of being preserved, and in the best interest of the community as well as the property owner.

Chair Carr suggested that the Southdale working group meet with Consultant Vogel to firm up a preservation strategy for Southdale Center, perhaps in the form of a curatorial agreement (also known as a plan of treatment) which could be presented for the Board to review at the June meeting. The Board and Consultant Vogel agreed that would be a good approach. No formal action was taken.

### **C. Preservation Month (May) Activities**

Planner Repya reported that the following activities have been planned during the month of May to recognize Preservation Month:

- May 1 - City Council Proclamation “Discovering America’s Hidden Gems”
  - Heritage Award Presentation
- May 5 -Community Education class – “Caring for Your Old House – The Basics”  
Saturday, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the Grange Hall
- May 8 - Open House: Grange Hall/Cahill School & St. Stephen’s Church

5:00 – 7:00 p.m. prior to the regular HPB meeting.

Board members briefly discussed the activities, agreeing that interesting events have been planned which they looked forward to attending.

#### **D. 2012 Edina Heritage Award**

Planner Repya reported that the 2012 Heritage Award subcommittee made up of Members Anger, Mellom and Stegner met prior to the meeting to review the nominations submitted. Member Mellom announced that the committee unanimously agreed that they would recommend the Convention Grill receive award. She pointed out that the nomination provided good information on the history of the business which has served the community for over 70 years; as well as great photos of both the exterior and interior of the building, including few famous menu items i.e. burgers and fries. Ms. Mellom added that in light of the recent Westgate Commercial Area Survey where the Convention Grill has been determined eligible for landmark designation, receiving the Heritage Award would be very fitting.

Following a brief discussion, Member Stegner moved that the 2012 Edina Heritage Award be presented to the Convention Grill, 3912 Sunnyside Road. Member Davis seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

#### **E. Board & Commission Survey Results**

Member Joel Stegner who assisted Assistant City Manager Karen Kurt in the creation of the Board and Commission survey presented a Power Point presentation highlighting the results of the survey, particularly relating the HBP's responses.

Mr. Stegner pointed out that overall the HPB felt their work was very satisfying and they were well supported by staff. Following a brief discussion of the results, the Board agreed to continue the following discussion items to the May meeting:

- A better understanding of Consultant Vogel's roles/responsibilities
- HPB's presence on the City's web site
- How the HPB can have a greater impact on the community

The Board thanked Member Stegner for his work on the survey noting that it will be a valuable tool to improve the work of the City's advisory boards and commissions.

#### **F. 2012 Work Plan: Objectives & Action Steps**

Chair Carr explained that she has created a work plan spreadsheet that will provide information on the objectives that have been identified as well as the individual/groups responsible for the item, and relevant dates for initiation/review/and completion. The Board reviewed the spreadsheet and agreed that it will go a long way to provide clarity, accountability, and ensuring that projects aren't forgotten.

#### **G. Update on Board & Commission Project**

Chairman Carr reported that she received an email from Assistant City Manager Karen Kurt that provided an update on the Board & Commission projects. The City Council has approved the unified

bylaws for all boards and commissions with a few edits. A copy of the corrected bylaws will be available to the HPB at the May meeting.

It appears that the committee will continue its work as it takes on developing a formalized work plan and a new annual calendar; as well as coordinating the new member selection process.

Ms. Carr noted that Member Stegner had represented the HPB on the committee, and she asked if he wished to continue. Mr. Stegner stated that he would like to continue serving on the panel as they take on the new projects.

**VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS - None**

**VIII. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

**A. Member Davis** - Asked that the topic of “Recycling Housing Materials” be added to the agenda for the May meeting.

**B. Member Stegner** – Reminded the Board that the Minnesota Historical Society is offering trolley tours of Mid-Century Modern homes in the Twin Cities area during the month of May. The schedule is available on SHPO’s web site at [www.minnesotahistorycenter.org](http://www.minnesotahistorycenter.org).

**C. Chair Carr** - Asked Planner Repya to provide a list of the current HBP working groups and subcommittees including information on their respective projects.

**IX. STAFF COMMENTS**

**A. Joint Meeting With City Council scheduled for August 6, 2012**

Planner Repya asked the Board to reserve Tuesday, August 6, 2012 for the joint meeting with the City Council from 5:00 – 7:00 prior to the City Council meeting.

**B. Elizabeth Montgomery – 2012 Recipient of Mayor’s Youth Commendation Award**

Planner Repya was pleased to announce that Elizabeth Montgomery, a former student member of the HPB has been chosen to be the 2012 recipient of the Mayor’s Youth Commendation Award. Elizabeth is currently finishing her sophomore year at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN. Since her junior year in high school, Elizabeth has volunteered

For the City of Edina in several capacities – not only serving as a student member of the HPB for two years, but also assisting the Cahill School marm’s during summer camp; not to mention working as an intern to the Planning Department taking on research and community outreach projects.

The HPB fondly remembers Elizabeth for choosing the project of upgrading the HPB website as her May Project during her senior year in high school, as well as planning for a tour of the Morningside neighborhood. Fortunately for the Community Development Department, Elizabeth will come back this summer to provide support to the Planning staff.

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Board members agreed that the HPB and the community have definitely benefited from Elizabeth's contributions; noting that she is well deserving of the award.

**C. May 8<sup>th</sup> Open House - Cahill School, Grange Hall & St. Stephen's Church**

Ms. Repya reminded the Board that the open house/tours will take place from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. prior to the regular HPB meeting.

**X. NEXT MEETING DATE May 8, 2012**

**XI. ADJOURNMENT 9:10 p.m.**

Member Davis moved the meeting be adjourned at 9:10 p.m. Member Mellom seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Joyce Repya**