

MINUTES
Meeting of the
Edina Heritage Preservation Board
Edina City Hall – Community Room
Tuesday, December 11, 2012
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER 7:05 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

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

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

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

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES November 14, 2012

Member Mellom moved approval of the minutes from the November 14, 2012 meeting. Member Moore seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENT - None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Guest – David Mather, National Register Archaeologist, MN Historic Preservation Office “the Role of Archaeology in Edina’s Heritage Preservation Program

Chair Carr introduced David Mather who was invited to the meeting to discuss the role archaeology can play in Edina’s heritage preservation program.

Mr. Mather thanked the HPB for the opportunity to discuss archaeology in Edina – pointing out that he enjoyed reading Edina’s Historic Context Study and Heritage Preservation chapter of the Comp Plan in preparation for his visit.

Board members asked Mr. Mather what time period he would consider historic from an archaeological standpoint. Mr. Mather explained that much like antiques, 50 years is the short term age to be considered historic from the archaeological standpoint. However, prehistorically the contexts can date from 10,000 B.C. Mr. Mather added that much of the archaeological work done in Minnesota dates from the Dakota cultural traditions of 1650 A.D. – 1851.

Consultant Vogel commented that there is very little archaeological information that has been discovered about Edina, with the exception of a small dig which took place at the Edina Mill in the late 1970's. The purpose of that dig was to uncover the foundation of the old Edina Mill which had been torn down in 1932. In addition to finding the original footings for the Mill, a few old bottles were unearthed, but not a whole lot more. Mr. Vogel added that because Edina has virtually no vacant land, the areas that have the greatest potential for archaeology would be in the City parks which have for the most part not been disrupted.

Mr. Vogel pointed out that the City of Eden Prairie has identified over 300 archaeological sites, and it stands to reason that the archaeology of Edina would be similar to Eden Prairie since the Native Americans settled near the same types of water bodies that flow through both communities. However, the reason Eden Prairie has so many sites is due to the fact that the community was developed much later than Edina and environmental impact studies were required for new roadways and construction in that community; whereas, during Edina's growth periods, archaeological awareness was not a consideration.

Chair Carr observed that the new Three Rivers bike path has been approved to follow Nine Mile Creek through Edina, and she wondered if there has been any consideration to evaluate the archaeology of the area as part of that project. Planner Repya explained that she was unsure what considerations have been made to the archaeology of the area planned for the bike trail; however she would check into that with the City's Park Department and report back to the Board.

Member Davis asked Mr. Mather what archaeological periods the HPB would find most interesting in Edina. Mr. Mather explained that there are two main branches: 1st is the prehistoric period, however those sites are very fragile and typically only found where there is undeveloped land to pursue research for that era. Thus the 2nd and most pertinent to Edina would be the historic archaeology dating from the 1850's to the 1950's – artifacts found during this period can give clues to daily life in the community, and provide a connection and an involvement to the past. Mr. Mather added that there are very successful public archaeological programs which give the residents of a community an opportunity to get involved with discovering clues as to how previous residents in a community lived.

Mr. Mather pointed out that Minnesota is fortunate to have funding opportunities available for archaeology projects through the Certified Local Government (CLG) program as well as the Legacy funds. He added that a first step would entail surveying the city to determine what areas would be most likely to provide archaeological significance; then an archaeologist would organize a dig – and if the public is involved, the archaeologist would serve as a coach to train community members interested in the project.

Mr. Mather recalled that the City of Elk River did some important archaeological surveys in the late 1990's, and he encouraged the HPB to check out that work as a good example.

A brief discussion ensued among the Board regarding potential areas of archaeological interest in Edina - those included the original cite of the Grange Hall on the southeast corner of W. 50th Street and Wooddale Avenue; and the areas storied as potential Indian Mounds on the south side of W. 70th Street near Cornelia School, and the northwest area of Hwy 62 and Gleason Road.

Planner Repya asked Mr. Mather what projects have been keeping him busy as of late. He responded that a project at Indian Mounds Park in St. Paul has been very interesting. They have found that using radar rather than digging up sensitive earth has provided very good results.

The Board thanked Mr. Mather for attending their meeting and sharing how they can consider the archaeology of the community's past as part of their preservation planning.

B. Edina History Presentation – As Taught in the Schools

Planner Repya explained that when discussing the mission of educating the public about the City's history, the Board has wondered how involved the schools have been in portraying Edina's past. To demonstrate that the schools are doing a fine job of telling Edina's story, Ms. Repya shared a Power Point presentation created by teachers from Highlands Elementary School which did a very good job of teaching Edina's history in a very visual way.

Ms. Repya also provided the Board with a copy of the most recent City map which now includes a listing of Edina's historic properties with a description of each on the back side.

The Board expressed their delight in viewing the Edina History presentation, asking for a copy to share with others. The new City map was also well received.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Country Club District – COA Process Evaluation

Board members reviewed the COA Evaluation form that Member Curran had perfected since the last meeting. All agreed that even though the form was a full page rather than a half page, the information included was important, and the form will be an excellent tool to use when evaluating COA applications. Planner Repya agreed to provide the Board with laminated copies of the form which they can keep for reference in their meeting packet envelopes.

B. Properties Determined Eligible for Heritage Landmark Designation

Planner Repya provided the Board with a packet of information that included a listing of the fifteen properties determined eligible for Heritage Landmark designation which included a property description, photograph and location map for each site. Also included was an explanation of the designation process.

Of the fifteen properties on the list there are seven private homes, the Morningside bungalows, two churches, four commercial properties, and one bridge (owned by the City). Ms. Repya pointed out that some of the property owners have been approached in the past regarding a potential heritage landmark designation, however they either did not respond or declined.

Chair Carr commented that she found the information provided to be very helpful, adding that the HPB has identified in the 2013 Work Plan that at least two properties will be designated Heritage Landmark properties, and this baseline information is very important.

Consultant Vogel pointed out that he would not recommend designating the churches individually, pointing out that a plan to study all of the churches in Edina has been identified for the future.

Member Stegner suggested that an invitation to consider heritage landmark designation be sent to each of the property owners identified (with the exception of the churches). If a property owner declines, a new invitation could be sent when the property changes ownership.

Member Moore pointed out that since 2013 is Edina's Quasquicentennial (125th Anniversary), the invitations for landmark designations could be an excellent marketing tool and a way to participate in the year-long celebration.

Board Members agreed that tying the invitation into the anniversary celebration was an excellent idea. Member Moore offered to work with Planner Repya to produce an invitation package to send to the properties on the determined eligible list. The Board agreed that sending out the letters after the first of the year would be a great idea, and they looked forward to receiving a project update at the January 2013 meeting. No formal action was taken.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Preservation Consultant's 2013 work Plan

Consultant Vogel explained that his 2013 Work Plan includes the following activities:

- 1) Advise city officials on all matters relating to heritage preservation, including the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of heritage resources.
- 2) Attend four (4) regular meetings of the Heritage Preservation Board at the direction of the City Planner. I have also agreed to be available for presentations to the Edina Planning Commission and the City Council as needed.
- 3) Review and comment on all Certificate of Appropriateness applications and work with city staff to ensure that heritage resources are considered in city planning for community development and public works.
- 4) Revise and update the city's heritage preservation resources inventory.

- 5) Complete the reconnaissance-level survey of heritage resources in the West Minneapolis Heights/Mendelssohn neighborhood.
- 6) Initiate a reconnaissance-level survey of heritage resources in the White Oaks neighborhood.
- 7) Prepare Edina Heritage Landmark nomination studies for a minimum of two (2) properties previously determined eligible for local designation.
- 8) Provide the HPB and other city officials with information, education, and training in heritage preservation.

Mr. Vogel pointed out that there are an additional eighteen projects of interest the HPB has identified over the past few years, however there has not been the time and/or funds available to accomplish them.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Work Plan and additional projects. Board members agreed that they liked the Work Plan provided, however wanted more information on the eighteen additional projects listed. Member Davis suggested Vogel provide an explanation of each of the eighteen additional items, to include the list prioritized from most to least important. It was agreed that this information would be helpful. Mr. Vogel stated that he would provide the requested information for the Board. No formal action was taken.

IX. CORRESPONDENCE & PETITIONS None

X. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Mellom commented that she was concerned about a house on Arden Avenue that replaced the siding with stone which she feels detracts from the homes historic integrity. Planner Repya responded that the Country Club District's plan of treatment does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to replace the siding, roofing, trim, fascia, soffit, eave moldings, windows or doors. A COA is required for new structures (homes and detached garages) and additions to the home on a street facing façade. Ms. Mellom pointed out that in her opinion, even though a COA may not have been required, changing the siding of the home to stone was wrong.

Member Stegner commented that several weeks ago he shared an article with the HPB about the Jewish cemeteries in the Metro area. One of the cemeteries is located in Edina, north of Minnehaha Creek and east of France Avenue. The Board members agreed that the article was very interesting and expressed an interest in finding out more about the cemetery. Planner Repya agreed to find out what she could about the cemetery and include this item on the January 2013 HPB meeting agenda.

Chair Carr advised the Board that televising the next HPB meeting on January 8, 2013 has been canceled because the City Council needs to use the Council Chambers for a special meeting. That being the case, the January 8th meeting will take place in the Community Room as usual. A date for televising a 2013 meeting will be coordinated with the Communications Department, and once scheduled, that date will be shared with the HPB.

XI. STAFF COMMENTS None

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE January 8, 2013

XIII. ADJOURNMENT 9:00 p.m.

Member Davis moved for adjournment at 9:00 p.m. Member Moore seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Repya