

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
EDINA HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD  
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2008, AT 7:00 P.M.  
EDINA CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
4801 WEST 50<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Karen Ferrara, Chris Rofidal, Lou Blemaster, Laura Benson, Jean Rehkamp Larson, Connie Fukuda, and Sara Rubin

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bob Kojetin and Nancy Scherer

**STAFF PRESENT:** Joyce Repya, Associate Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Joe Sullivan, 4504 Casco Avenue  
Dan & Cheryl Dulas, 4609 Bruce Avenue  
Bruce Christensen, 4515 Browndale Avenue  
William Horn, 4511 Browndale Avenue  
H.L. Saylor, 4900 Bruce Avenue  
Ralph Tully, 4619 Bruce Avenue

**Request for Addition to the Agenda:**

Member Rehkamp Larson advised the Board that the issue of the traffic calming measures approved for the Country Club District has come to the attention of residents who are now expressing their disapproval of the measures. Some residents from the neighborhood were in attendance and would like to address the Board. Ms. Rehkamp Larson asked that the Country Club District traffic calming measures be added to the agenda. The Board agreed to hear the concerns of the residents after the work on Item # III C. the Revised Plan of Treatment.

**I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: February 12, 2008**

Planner Repya asked for approval of the minutes. Member Blemaster moved approval of the minutes from the February 12, 2008 meeting. Member Ferrara seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

**II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

Planner Repya requested nominations for the office of chairman. Member Fukuda moved to nominate Chris Rofidal to the office. Member Blemaster seconded the nomination. Member Rofidal offered his philosophy for the responsibilities of the

chairman and explained that if the Board was comfortable with his approach, he would accept the nomination. Board members appreciated Member Rofidal's candor and unanimously approved Rofidal to become the Board Chairman.

Member Rehkamp Larson moved to nominate Laura Benson to the office of vice chairman. Member Blemaster seconded the nomination. Member Benson accepted the nomination. Board members unanimously approved Member Benson's for the office of vice chairman.

### **III. COUNTRY CLUB DISTRICT :**

#### **A. Open House – February 25th**

Board members Benson, Rubin, Kojetin and Scherer represented the HPB at the Open House of February 25<sup>th</sup>, where the results of the research and possible changes to the district's Plan of Treatment were presented. Members Rubin and Benson shared their favorable reflections.

Member Blemaster expressed her regrets for being unable to attend however stated that she was impressed with the favorable emails the Board had received from the neighborhood.

Member Rehkamp Larson also appreciated the email comments, pointing out that she saw a call for clarity and specificity in the revised plan.

Chairman Rofidal agreed that the email messages received from the open house attendees provided good specifics.

#### **B. Survey Progress Report - February**

Consultant Vogel was not in attendance, but provided the following progress report summarizing the project work carried out during the month of February:

I continued to review and organize the survey data so that it can be integrated into the planning process. The evaluation of individual properties was completed and a comprehensive inventory of all contributing and noncontributing properties is forthcoming—probably in April.

A considerable effort was made to prepare for the district open house on February 25 and the upcoming HPB and Planning Commission meetings scheduled for March 11 and 26, respectively. I will not be present at the HPB meeting but will attend the Planning Commission to present a summary of the survey results.

### **C. Revisions to Plan of Treatment**

Chairman Rofidal recognized that there were members of the community present that may wish to speak on this item, and suggested that the public testimony be taken prior to the Board discussion.

#### **Public Comment:**

##### **Joe Sullivan – 4504 Casco Avenue**

Mr. Sullivan stated that he understood the historic designation of the district but, emphasized a concern for basic property rights. He opined that with the HPB controlling new construction, if a property owner chose to tear down his home, he should be allowed to do so.

##### **Dan Dulas – 4609 Casco Avenue**

Mr. Dulas stated that the reason the district has the heritage landmark designation is due to the historic architecture of the homes and the manner in which it was built. If a homebuyer feels that the homes in the district don't fit their lifestyle, or are ugly, perhaps the historic Country Club District is not the right neighborhood for them. Mr. Dulas concluded that he understood that not every home in the district is historic; therefore he would like to see some constraints on which homes would qualify to be torn down.

##### **Bruce Christensen – 4515 Browndale Avenue**

Mr. Christensen stated that he thought it was dangerous to remove homes in the district. He encouraged the consideration of a peer review system, pointing out that the current process was unsustainable. He further opined that a homebuyer in the district should not have a free right to build whatever they want at the expense of the neighbors.

##### **Cheryl Dulas – 4609 Casco Avenue**

Ms. Dulas thanked the Board for the work on the revised Plan of Treatment, stating that the work thus far demonstrates a significantly stronger plan.

Chairman Rofidal thanked those who spoke for their comments. Member Rehkamp Larson moved to close the item for public comment. Member Ferrara seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

#### **Board Discussion:**

Chairman Rofidal suggested that since a majority of the revised Plan of Treatment prepared by Consultant Vogel does not include substantial changes,

but rather clarifications, the Board should address those issues where change is proposed. All agreed that was a good idea.

**Item #4 – Revised definition of “demolition”**

Proposed language –

For purposes of design review and compliance with City Code §850.20 subd. 10, “demolition” shall mean the physical alteration of a historic building that requires a city permit and where (a) 50% or more of the surface area of all exterior walls, in the aggregate, are removed; or (b) 50% or more of the principal roof structure is removed, changing its shape, pitch, or height; or (c) a front porch, side porch, vestibule, attached garage, or porte-cochere is removed or destroyed. This demolition does not include removal of existing siding, roofing, trim, fascia, soffit, eave moldings, **dormers**, chimneys, windows, and doors.

**Certificates of Appropriateness are not required for demolition, in whole or in part, of non-historic buildings; however, Certificates of Appropriateness are required for any new construction in the district.**

Board members agreed that the demolition definition was very important to the Plan of Treatment. Discussion ensued regarding whether it was wise to have separate regulations for historic and non- historic resources. The consensus opinion was that they should not be treated differently; Member Ferrara then suggested removing the second paragraph from the demolition definition which states that “A COA would not be required for a non-historic building.” Board members agreed that would be a good idea.

Member Rehkamp Larson suggested that under item c) which cites the elements of a home that if removed would be considered demolition; dormers should be included to the listing. As proposed dormers are not included. She pointed out that a dormer is structural to a home much like a porch, vestibule or porte-cochere. Whereas those items not included in the definition of demolition i.e. roofing, trim, fascia, soffit fall within the classification of routine maintenance for a home. Discussion ensued regarding the suggestion – opinions varied, thus members requested a vote. Member Rehkamp Larson made the motion to move “dormers” into the classification of elements, if removed would be classified as demolition. Member Benson seconded the motion. Members Benson, Fukuda, Rehkamp Larson and Rofidal voted aye. Member Ferrara voted nay. Member Blemaster abstained. The motion carried.

Revised language –

For purposes of design review and compliance with City Code §850.20 subd. 10, demolition shall mean the physical alteration of a building that requires a city permit and where:

- (a) 50% or more of the surface area of all exterior walls, in the aggregate, are removed; or

- (b) 50% or more of the principal roof structure is removed, changing its shape, pitch, or height; or
  - (c) A front porch, side porch, vestibule, dormer, attached garage, or porte-cochere is removed or destroyed.
- This demolition does not include removal of existing siding, roofing, trim, fascia, soffit, eave moldings, chimneys, windows, and doors.

**Item #5 – When a COA for demolition would be approved**

Proposed language

No Certificate of Appropriateness will be approved for the demolition, in whole or in part, of any heritage preservation resource in the district unless the applicant can show that the subject property no longer contributes to the historical significance of the district. For design review purposes, the terms “heritage preservation resource” and “historic building” refer to any building, site, structure, or object that has been so designated by the Heritage Preservation Board on the basis of its historic associations or historic architectural qualities which add to the significance of the district as a whole. Heritage preservation resources may lack individual distinction but must possess historic significance and integrity of those features necessary to convey their heritage preservation value. An updated inventory of heritage preservation resources in the Country Club District will be compiled by the Heritage Preservation Board and maintained by the City Planner.

Following a brief discussion, Board members agreed that the consultant’s recommendation that “The plan of treatment should give priority to restricting teardowns to non-historic properties” should be added to this paragraph as the second sentence.

**Item #8 – Detached garages a)**

Discussion ensued regarding whether the Plan of Treatment should discourage front facing attached garages. Member Blemaster felt strongly that such garages should be prohibited. Upon the request for a vote, Member Rofidal moved to add that “front facing attached garages are discouraged.” Member Blemaster seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Discussion ensued regarding the 18 foot maximum height above grade established for detached garages. All agreed that they would prefer using the same percentage concept for the height of the garage as is used for the home, i.e. “The roofline should have a maximum height within 10% of the average height of existing detached garages on adjacent lots, or the average of the block.”

A general discussion ensued regarding layout for the plan. Member Ferrara pointed out that she would prefer organizing the plan with topic headings rather

then numbers, to assist the reader in finding information. All agreed that would an excellent idea. Planner Repya agreed to organize the plan by labeling paragraphs.

Chairman Rofidal than made a motion for the Board to accept the draft Plan of Treatment as revised. Member Ferrara seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

**IV. 2008 GOALS & OBJECTIVES:** Continued until April Meeting

**V. ANNUAL MN PRESERVATION CONFERENCE:** September 19-20, 2008  
Northfield, MN

Member Fukuda departed the meeting.

**VI. CONCERN OF RESIDENTS: Traffic Calming in Country Club District**

**Bruce Christensen – 4515 Browndale Avenue**

Mr. Christensen explained that he represented a group of neighbors from the Country Club District who are challenging the traffic calming and streetscape changes approved for their neighborhood.

Mr. Christensen reviewed the reasons his group was opposed to the plan. He pointed out that he felt the HPB was complicit in the approval of the project and asked that the Board rescind the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project.

Chairman Rofidal explained that the Certificate of Appropriateness for the improvements to the infrastructure in the Country Club District was approved at the November meeting of the Board. Because the ten day appeal period passed with no appeals received, the Board's decision stands. That being the case, the Board can not rescind the Certificate of Appropriateness. He added that because the HPB is advisory to the City Council, the Council would need to direct the Board to reevaluate the project.

**William Horn – 4511 Browndale Avenue**

Mr. Horn opined that the subject traffic calming measures are addressing the concerns of a handful of residents and going against the will of the community.

**H.L. Saylor – 4900 Bruce Avenue**

Mr. Saylor stated that he supported a petition being circulated opposing the traffic calming measures in the district. He stated that due to a heavy work schedule, he was unaware of the situation and expressed concerns that the proposed traffic calming measures will cause problems for emergency vehicles and snow plows.

**Ralph Tully – 4619 Bruce Avenue**

Mr. Tully expressed his opinion that a vast majority of the residents in the Country Club District don't agree with the traffic calming measures that have been approved. He urged the Board to support the cause of those opposing the plan.

**Joe Sullivan – 4504 Casco Avenue**

Mr. Sullivan explained that he too supported the petition opposing the traffic calming measures; and warned that changing traffic patterns will redirect traffic flow to areas of the district which previously had no problems.

**BOARD MEMBERS RESPONSES:**

**Member Ferrara**

Member Ferrara explained that the traffic plan was presented as part of the utility project in the district. The HPB did not weigh in on whether or not the improvements were appropriate, rather how the improvements would impact the historic integrity of the neighborhood.

**Member Rehkamp Larson**

Member Rehkamp Larson stated that the changes proposed in the traffic section of the project were brought to the HPB as part of the requirements set out from the NE Traffic Study. The HPB was not given a choice as to whether the specific elements of the plan (i.e. speed humps, paved crosswalks, chokers, etc.) were appropriate in the district. The charge of the Board was to address how the changes would impact the district from an historic standpoint.

**Member Benson**

Member Benson agreed that the HPB was not asked to weigh in as to whether or not the proposed traffic calming measures were appropriate in the district; rather the Engineering Department's consultant wanted the HPB's advice on how the changes could be implemented with the least impact on the historic streetscapes.

**Member Blemaster**

Member Blemaster observed that a coalition of concerned residents have been researching the traffic situation in the district for many years. In 2005, this group made a presentation to the City Council in which they defined the need for traffic calming measures and asked that before the streets were upgraded without taking their concerns into consideration, that a study be done. The NE Traffic Study identified the traffic problems in the district and the project that was approved is a result of that research.

**Member Rofidal**

Addressing the comment that there was inadequate notification of this project, Member Rofidal recited the list of notifications and meetings which took place from 2005 until approval of the project in 2007.

**Board Discussion**

Board members understood that they were not in a position to rescind the Certificate of Appropriateness that was approved for the traffic calming measures in the district. However, several members suggested that the Board submit a statement to the City Council explaining the rationale for approving the COA. Chairman Rofidal cautioned that a statement from the Heritage Preservation Board might not be appropriate at this time.

Following a brief discussion, Member Rehkamp Larson moved that the HPB submit a letter to the City Council explaining that the COA for the traffic calming measures was approved with the understanding that the measures were required by the NE Traffic Study which had been approved by the City Council. Member Ferrara seconded the motion. Members Rehkamp Larson and Ferrara voted aye. Members Benson and Blemaster voted nay. Chairman Rofidal abstained. The motion was defeated.

Chairman Rofidal pointed out that while the Board will not be submitting a letter to the City Council regarding this issue, board members do have to right to express their opinions to the Council if they so choose.

VII. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

VIII. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** April 8, 2008

IX. **ADJOURNMENT** 10:25 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
*Joyce Repya*