

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division

Certificate of Appropriateness
BZH-25981

Date: September 1, 2009

Proposal: Certificate of Appropriateness for a new recessed entryway and handicapped accessible ramp.

Applicant: David Kelly Architects, on behalf of Gamal Hamed

Address of Property: 20 North 4th Street

Project Name: N/A

Contact Person and Phone: David Kelly, 952-922-2220

Planning Staff and Phone: Chris Vrchota, 612-673-5467

Date Application Deemed Complete: August 10, 2009

Publication Date: August 25, 2009

Public Hearing: September 1, 2009

Appeal Period Expiration: September 11, 2009

Ward: Ward 7

Neighborhood Organization: Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Organization

Concurrent Review: N/A

Attachments: Attachment A: Materials submitted by CPED staff –

- 350' map
- North Loop Warehouse District Map
- Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines

Attachment B: Materials submitted by Applicant –

- Notification letter to Council Member
- Notification letter to Neighborhood organization
- Application form submitted July 2, 2009
- Architectural drawings and specifications
- Project Description by Applicant (Dated June 30, 2009)
- Additional Information from Applicant (Dated July 24, 2009)

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**Corner of 1st Avenue N and 4th Street N, looking East from 1st Avenue N, Circa 1905
(Subject property circled)**

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**Subject Property (Circled), Present Day (Looking West)
Photo submitted by Applicant**

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CLASSIFICATION:	
Local Historic District	North Loop Warehouse Historic District
Period of Significance	1865-1930
Criteria of significance	Architecture, Commerce
Date of local designation	1978
Applicable Design Guidelines	Warehouse District Design Guidelines Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Current name	20 N 4 th Street
Historic Name	"Commercial Building"
Current Address	20 North 4 th Street
Historic Address	20 North 4 th Street
Original Construction Date	Built: 1902 Significant Alterations: 1906- Alterations 1934- Alterations to 1 st Floor 1946- Replace Loading Dock 1970- Replace Window Sills 1984- Exterior Work to 1 st Floor
Original Contractor	C.F. Haglin
Original Architect	Long & Long
Historic Use	Commercial
Current Use	Commercial
Proposed Use	Commercial

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BACKGROUND:

This three-story simple commercial brick building features window openings with stone sills and flat segmented arches. A flat projecting cornice with a dental course caps the facade. The original storefront has been altered. (Source: National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.)

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL:

The applicant is proposing to reconstruct the entryway to the building to allow for handicapped accessibility. The applicant is proposing a recessed entryway, with a 6'6" ramp leading up to a 5 foot deep landing, which would be shared with an existing egress stairwell from the second floor. A new door would be provided to the convenience store proposed to occupy the space on the first floor. A second door would lead to an existing interior stairwell to the second floor.

Please note that the original application included material for new signs for the building. The applicant has changed the proposed signage so that it meets the requirements of the Preservation Ordinance, and it will be reviewed administratively. It is no longer part of the requested Certificate of Appropriateness.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment had been received by the time of publication.

CETIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Certificate of Appropriateness for a new recessed entryway and handicapped accessible ramp.

Findings as required by the Minneapolis Preservation Code:

The Planning Division of the Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Department has analyzed the application based on the findings required by the Minneapolis Preservation Ordinance. Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

(1) *The alteration is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark or historic district was designated.*

The alteration is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark or historic district was designated.

The North Loop Warehouse District is significant due to its collection of 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture and its representation of late 19th and early 20th century commerce. The applicant is proposing a new handicapped accessible entryway to allow a building originally constructed for commercial use to be used in that manner again while meeting current accessibility requirements.

The original entryway has already been replaced (due to the sometimes ambiguous language used on building permits in the past, the exact date of the replacement is not known). The applicant is proposing to recess the entryway, providing windows on both sides, while leaving the existing storefront windows in tact. This would not impact the architecture of the building significantly more than the other alterations that have already been made.

(2) *The alteration is compatible with and supports the interior and/or exterior designation in which the property was designated.*

The alteration is compatible with and supports the interior and/or exterior designation in which the property was designated.

The subject property is part of the North Loop Warehouse District, which is significant due to its collection of 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture and its representation of late 19th and early 20th century commerce. The building was originally constructed as a commercial site and the current proposal aims to bring the building up to modern accessibility standards and return it to a commercial use. The proposed changes would not have a significant impact on the already modified architectural design of the structure, and would strengthen the ties to the commercial past of the building and district.

(3) *The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the landmark or historic district for which the district was designated.*

Both the City of Minneapolis' Heritage Preservation Regulations and the National Register of Historic Places identify integrity as the authenticity of historic properties and recognize seven aspects that define a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Based upon the evidence provided below, the proposed work would not impair the integrity of the contributing resource.

Location: The Applicant is not proposing to change the location of the structure, thus the project will not impair the landmark's integrity of location.

Design: The Applicant is proposing to replace the existing non-original entryway with a new recessed entryway and handicapped ramp. The historic photo on page 2 of this report shows that this building did originally have a recessed entryway. The historic photo is not detailed enough to reveal the exact design, though it was likely shallower than the currently proposed design. The applicant is not proposing any other changes to the design of the building. The changes will not impair the landmark's integrity of design.

Setting: The Applicant is not proposing any changes to the massing or location of structures on the site. The proposed project would not impair the landmark's integrity of setting.

Materials: The Applicant is proposing to replace the existing non-original entryway with a new recessed entryway and handicapped ramp. The existing materials that would be removed are non-original to the building. The Applicant is proposing to construct a concrete ramp to match the sidewalk in front of the building. The sides of the new recessed entryway would feature windows surrounded by painted wood panels. The proposed work would not impair the contributing resource's integrity of materials.

Workmanship: The original entryway and storefront has been replaced. The proposed recessed entryway would not impact any other features of the building. The work would not impair the integrity workmanship.

Feeling: The Applicant is proposing to replace the existing non-original entryway. None of the other features of the building would be impacted by the change. The project will not impair the property's integrity of feeling.

Association: The proposed recessed entryway and handicapped accessible ramp would allow the building to be returned to its original commercial use, strengthening its association with commercial development in the district. The work would only impact the existing non-original entryway and would not impact the buildings association with late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture. The project will not impair the property's integrity of association.

- (4) *The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the applicable design guidelines adopted by the commission.***

The relevant design guidelines for this project are the Warehouse District Design Guidelines, adopted by the Heritage Preservation Commission in 1978. (See Appendix A-3-10.) The applicable section of these guidelines is Section II (Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Buildings), subsection 2 (Storefronts). Points B and C apply to this project.

B. Modifications to entries shall be permitted as required for the adaptive reuse of the buildings. Modifications shall be constructed with materials to match original storefronts.

This point allows for the modification of the entryway for reuse of a building, which is what the Applicant is proposing. The applicant is proposing to construct a concrete accessible ramp which would match the adjoining sidewalk. The walls of the entryway would be wood panels painted to match the building with windows set into them. The proposal meets this guideline.

C. Handicap accessibility shall be done within the building where ramping with guard rails is required on street facades. Appropriate modifications to the façade will be permitted for on-grade access.

The Applicant is proposing to construct a ramp that is exposed to the street rather than being done internally. This does not meet the requirements of this guideline.

The Applicant has proposed this design to provide both handicapped accessible entry to the building as well as a required egress point from the second story of the building, using the landing at the top of the ramp for both purposes. Internal ramping would require an additional 5 foot landing at the entryway and push the egress landing and ramp further into the interior of the building. (See Appendix B-13-16 for detailed information from the Applicant on how the final design was decided upon.) However, the applicant has not demonstrated that interior ramping could not be achieved by making other modifications (realigning stairways, etc...)

While the Applicant is not proposing a completely new storefront, it should also be noted that point D of this section, which outlines the guidelines for the construction of new storefronts, encourages the use of recessed entry doors.

- (5) *The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the recommendations contained in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.***

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The Guidelines for windows in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are most applicable to the proposed project.

In regard to making changes to historic properties to accommodate accessibility, The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend the following: "Identifying the historic building's character defining spaces, features, and finishes so that accessibility code-required work will not result in their damage or loss" and "Complying with barrier-free access requirements, in such a manner that character-defining spaces, features, and finishes are preserved."

Character defining features of the subject property include its size, scale and window pattern. The original entryway and storefront have been replaced. The proposed changes would not impact the defining features of the building, because it would not required changes to the size or scale of the structure or the window pattern. The proposed changes meet the above recommendations from the Secretary of the Interior' Standards for Rehabilitation.

Additionally, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend: "Providing barrier-free access that promotes independence for the disabled person to the highest degree practicable, while preserving significant historic features; Designing new or additional means of access that are compatible with the historic building and its setting, and; Designing new or additional means of access that are compatible with the historic building and its setting."

The proposed ramp and altered entrance would comply with the standard for providing barrier-free access that promotes independence for the disabled person to the highest degree practicable, while preserving significant historic features. The existing entryway is not original and the new entry would not require the removal or alteration of historic features of the building.

The proposed new entry would likely not comply fully with the guideline of "designing new or additional means of access that are compatible with the historic building and its setting." While other structures in the Warehouse District features recessed entryways, and photographic evidence suggests this building originally had a recessed entryway, it is unlikely that any structures in the district featured an entryway recessed as deeply as the one being proposed by the Applicant.

- (6) *The certificate of appropriateness conforms to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable preservation policies in small area plans adopted by the city council.***

The certificate of appropriateness conforms to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and is consistent with the applicable preservation policies in small area plans adopted by the city council.

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The proposal does not conform with the CPTED polices in the comprehensive plan. There are serious concerns with the safety of the recessed entryway.

The comprehensive plan encourages the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). The purpose of CPTED is to enhance public safety through site design that encourages eyes on the street, provides a high level of visibility and limits opportunities for loitering, graffiti and other public nuisances or safety threats. The extreme degree to which the entryway is recessed creates an attractive location for overnight sheltering or out of view illegal activities. The Applicant has proposed to include an overhead light in the recessed entryway to improve visibility.

Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings that alterations are proposed in a manner that demonstrates that the applicant has made adequate consideration of the following documents and regulations:

- (7) ***Adequate consideration of the description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which designation of the landmark or historic district was based.***

The North Loop Warehouse District is significant due to its collection of 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture and its representation of late 19th and early 20th century commerce. The applicant is proposing a new handicapped accessible entryway to allow a building originally constructed for commercial use to be used in that manner again while meeting current accessibility requirements. The applicant has cited the Secretary of the Interior's Standards guideline which calls for the use of existing entryways, rather than the creation of new ones, as justification for the proposed reconstruction of the main entry.

- (8) ***Where applicable, Adequate consideration of Title 20 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Zoning Code, Chapter 530, Site Plan Review.***

The applicant is proposing a new recessed entryway to provide handicapped access that is being required by Minneapolis Development Review.

Chapter 530.260 of the Minneapolis Code calls for the use of best practices to increase surveillance and visibility- implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Section 1 states:

"Natural Surveillance and Visibility. Design the site, landscaping, and buildings to promote natural observation and maximize the opportunities for people to observe adjacent spaces and public sidewalks."

The proposed recessed entryway would likely not meet this design element.

- (9) ***The typology of treatments delineated in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the associated guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, reconstructing, and restoring historic buildings.***

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The proposed work falls under the scope of rehabilitation. The proposed accessibility ramp and recessed entrance would be in compliance with the locally adopted design guidelines and would comply with most, but not all of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Before approving a certificate of appropriateness that involves alterations to a property within an historic district, the commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

(10) The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued significance and integrity of all contributing properties in the historic district based on the period of significance for which the district was designated.

The North Loop Warehouse District is significant due to its collection of 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture and its representation of late 19th and early 20th century commerce. The Applicant is proposing to construct a new recessed entry with a handicapped accessible ramp. These changes would not have an impact on the significance or integrity of any of the other buildings in the district, though allowing this type of severely recessed entryway could establish a prescient for future applications. The changes would allow the building to increase its contribution to the district by re-establishing its connection to the significance of commerce within the district.

(11) Granting the certificate of appropriateness will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not negatively alter the essential character of the historic district.

Granting the certificate of appropriateness will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not negatively alter the essential character of the historic district. The existing storefront and entryway are non-original. Recessed entryways are found throughout the Warehouse District. The changes would not have a significant impact on the character of the Warehouse District.

(12) The certificate of appropriateness will not be injurious to the significance and integrity of other resources in the historic district and will not impede the normal and orderly preservation of surrounding resources as allowed by regulations in the preservation ordinance.

The certificate of appropriateness will not be injurious to the significance and integrity of other resources in the historic district and will not impede the normal and orderly preservation of surrounding resources as allowed by regulations in the preservation ordinance. The overall changes to the exterior appearance of the property would be minor and would not have an impact on the neighboring buildings or the district as a whole.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

CPED-Planning staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission **adopt** staff findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness to for a new recessed entryway and handicapped accessible ramp with the following condition(s):

1. CPED-Planning reviews and approves final site plan, floor plans, and elevations.
2. All workmanship must be completed in conformance with the Secretary of Interior Standards, see: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>
3. The Applicant shall obtain all other necessary City approvals prior to the commencement of work.

Attachment A: Submitted by CPED staff

Attachment B: Materials submitted by Applicant

Attachment C: Materials submitted by other parties