

**Heritage Preservation Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 8**

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Lynn Rein called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Members Present: Ron Dwyer, Lee Nordmeyer, Sam Temple, Cori Weems, Karl Vohs and Vice Chair Lyn Rein

Members Absent: David Sauer

Staff Present: Community & Economic Development Director Deanna Kuennen, Building Official John Rued, City Attorney Scott Riggs, and Administrative Assistant Kari Casper

2. Minutes

A. None.

3. General Heritage Preservation Items

. Citizen Comment Period - None.

4. Design Reviews

A. 633 1st Street SE (Johnston Hall) – Demolition

Kuennen stated that the City had received an application for demolition for Johnston Hall. The demolition request was a result of findings in a recent Conditions Assessment prepared for Allina Health Systems by Meyer Borgman Johnson. Per the report, the deteriorated conditions of the building created concerns about the immediate safety and stability of the bell tower, concluding that immediate action was needed to prevent possible damage to property or persons by a sudden collapse of the tower. The report was reviewed by the Building Official, who also concluded that the current condition of the bell tower creates a hazardous structure, unsafe condition, and an environment that requires immediate abatement per State Statutes (Section 463.15-463.26). Kuennen further explained that since Johnston Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Minnesota State Rules provide that the local heritage preservation commission must review requests for demolition prior to demolition (in whole or part) occurring. The HPC was asked to review the item and act on the requested Certificate of Appropriateness.

Michael Johnston, President of Allina's South Market, addressed the HPC, providing an overview of the situation, how it is affecting patient care, and mitigation steps that the hospital is taking to prevent the loss of buildings or life if the tower were to collapse.

Discussion by the HPC followed. Commissioner Vohs suggested that this issue was before the HPC today because of "demolition by neglect." He also walked through the history of the issues with the tower dating back to 1984, various attempts to fix the tower, and a Legacy Grant that was returned. Vohs suggested that just the tower should be deconstructed, and the rest of the building could remain standing and reused. Others commented on their own frustrations over the situation.

Attorney Scott Riggs spoke stating that the request to look into deconstructing just the tower would constitute a new action/submission since the request before the HPC was a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the entire building.

A motion was made by Karl Vohs to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of Johnston Hall based on the history of the "demolition by neglect and the fact that the condition assessment report only discussed the condition of the tower. The motion was seconded by Sam Temple.

Attorney Riggs then stated that Allina would have 15 days to appeal to the City Council.

Before the vote, Chief Building Official, John Rued then provided his assessment of the building based on the reports, stating that the current condition of the building is deemed hazardous and agreed that there is eminent danger of causing harm.

Vice Chair Rein then requested a vote and the motion carried on a 5/0 vote to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness, with Lyn Rein abstaining (no explanation was given for abstention).

5. Items of Discussion

None.

6. Adjourn

A motion was made by Temple and seconded by Weems to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Kari Casper
Recording Secretary

Others present at the meeting were recorded as follows:

- Sara Caron, 115 8th St NW, Faribault
- Sadie Watts, 735 Green Meadow Court, Northfield
- Kristin McHenry
- Michael Johnston
- Liz Kenney
- Rick Miller
- Ann Vohs
- Suzanne Rook, Faribault Daily News
- Tim Murray, City Administrator
- Peter Waldock, Planning Coordinator