

Community Planning & Economic Development

Crown Roller Mill, 105 Fifth Ave. S.
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**GRAIN BELT MARSHALL STREET SITE
RFP Tour - May 12, 2011
Meeting Minutes**

Jerry LePage of CPED's Housing Development Division opened the tour and introduced other City staff: Kevin Carroll of CPED Business Development, Steve Maki of CPED Engineering, Haila Maze of CPED Planning, Randy de la Pena of City Property Services, and John Smoley of CPED Planning/Preservation & Design. A brief history of the City's past attempts to develop the Marshall Street site (i.e. the Housing Parcel and Office Building) was provided, consisting of an RFP for the entire site in 2000, and separate RFP's for the Office Buildings from 2006-2009. There was also a quick review of the RFP rules that require the posting on CPED's website of all Q & A, as well as the minutes of the May 12th and May 19th tours and the June 7th Pre-proposal meeting.

John Smoley reviewed the history of the entire Grain Belt complex, including its local and national historic designations in the 1980's, and also described some of the important features of the Office Building, and the Housing Parcel, particularly the underground foundation ruins of the 1850 Orth Brewery. He also described briefly the SHPO/HPC historic review processes that will be involved in the development of the Marshall Street site. John's presentation notes are included as Attachment 1.

The following is a list of the questions that were asked on the tour and the answers that were provided by City staff:

Q: Is this property nationally designated?

A: Yes. And this opens up the possibility of significant federal and state historic tax credits

Q: When did the skylights get covered? Could they be uncovered?

A: We don't know for certain, although it was before the 1940's. The roof does not sit directly on top of the skylights, but rather was built on a frame above it, with a space in between. It would be possible to uncover the skylights, though probably not required – details not yet decided. Also likely possible to install lighting between the skylights and roof.

Q: What is the condition of the roof? What are the plans to fix it?

A: The city is evaluating what repairs can be made, based on what is needed and the amount of remaining funds after the completion of repairs to the basement to prevent water infiltration. More details will be forthcoming. Any repairs done will be made by June 30.

Q: When did the internal partitions get added? Do they have to be maintained?

A: This is also unknown, though it is thought some might not be original. Up to the applicant to make the case for their removal. It is likely this will be allowed to some extent.

Q: Has any environmental testing been done?

A: Yes. Results are posted on the website.

Q: Is the building handicapped accessible?

A: To a degree, but more improvements are needed. For instance, the elevator is undersized by current ADA standards and may need to be replaced.

Q: When was the building last occupied?

A: The building has been owned by the City for over 20 years, and was used as office space up until the late 1990's. It has been vacant since then.

Q: What can be done to upgrade the basement area?

A: The basement is secondary in terms of historic value, and many of the materials there are not original. Significant renovations may be appropriate, though historic review will still be needed of what is proposed.

Q: What can be done with the plaza area? Can ruins be exposed as an interpretative exhibit?

A: The Grain Belt Development Objectives (which were approved in 1996 and amended in 2000) require the development of a "Brewery Plaza" along the Marshall Street frontage where the historic Orth Brewery foundation ruins are located, although they do not provide specifics in terms of the size or features of this plaza. No building construction is allowed in this area. Since ruins are 16-36" below ground, improvements for a plaza cannot be done that damage them (e.g. large trees), though this varies by area. The exact extent of the ruins is not finalized – this information will be available in mid-June when the City receives a final archaeological report from its historical consultant. It is possible that some of the ruins could be exposed (or uncovered but protected by glass), but this would need historic review and approval – there has been a difference of opinion about this in the past.

Q: Could historic tax credits be used to make improvements to the ruins area?

A: Typically, these are only available for renovating buildings, so probably not. However, other sources of funding for historic preservation may be available.

Q: Is the amount of parking allocated to the office building (35 spaces) enough?

A: It would be adequate for some uses, but not for others. Refer to the City's zoning code for details regarding use-specific parking requirements. It was suggested that a developer could investigate shared parking arrangements with nearby properties, or accommodate additional (structured) parking as part of the residential development.

The tour ended around 2:00. Jerry LePage reminded tour attendees that there will be another tour on Thursday, May 19th from 2:00-3:30 which will be similar to today's tour. Also, a Pre-proposal meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 7th from 1:00-3:00 at CPED's Crown Mill office, which will be final opportunity in the RFP process to have direct face-to-face communication and Q & A time with City staff.

Historical overview – John Smoley

MOVE TO ADDITION

- An initial rush of construction begun in 1891 resulted in a major brewery complex here, initially known as the Minneapolis Brewing & Malting Company.
- Production began in July 1892. The new complex was capable of producing 300,000 barrels of beer each year.
- In addition to the extant brew house, power station, and wagon shed, the company built a two-story rectangular office building in 1893.
- Cream-colored Milwaukee brick cladding, a course rough-faced Platteville (Wisconsin) limestone foundation, and Mankato dolomite window trim and beltcourses link the building to the Richardsonian Romanesque style of architecture.
- The fledgling corporate giant thrived, producing half a million barrels of beer in 1900.
- By 1910 the company's success prompted a second wave of development, which included a 1 ½ story 85 foot-long addition to the office building.
- Although the architect used identical primary exterior building materials, the addition is distinguished from the original construction by a gabled roof with a leaded-glass skylight, as opposed to the slightly sloped, parapeted flat roof on the original building.
- Here on the interior, much has changed, but beneath the layers you can see historic features in surprisingly good shape – wood floors, tile, wood windows with intact pulleys, tiled floors, safes, a skylight, wood wainscoting, and radiators – for those of you who don't like the dust of forced air heat.
- 1893 – year this building was built – was also year the org shortened its name to the Minneapolis Brewing CO and introduced Golden Grain Belt Old Lager
- Grain Belt referred to the region's preeminence in grain production – an appropriate moniker in the milling capital of the nation. The name caught on quickly.
- Soon early brand names, such as Gilt Edge and London Porter, came to be advertised as “The Golden Grain Belt Beers”
- In 1967 the Mpls Brewing Co officially changed its name to Grain Belt Breweries, Inc. It possessed 30% of the MN beer market and was roughly the 20th largest brewer in the nation.

- The brewery had its ups and downs, surviving prohibition, war-rationing, labor unrest in the 1950s, and major competition from local and national brands.
- But it failed to survive a takeover by a bag manufacturer.
- In 1975 Irwin Jacobs purchased Grain Belt, promising to continue brewery operations.
- He owned the Northwestern Bag Co. but had no experience brewing.
- Within 8 months he'd sold the company to Heileman's out of Lacrosse, which had just bought St Paul's Schmidt Brewery
- The last batch of beer rolled off the production line on Christmas Day 1975.
- Jacobs applied for wrecking permits to demolish the brewery complex and redevelop the riverfront site.
- The City denied the application and designated the complex as a Landmark in 1977
- The City purchased the property in 1989.
- It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.
- Since then the City has worked with local developers and the State Office of Historic Preservation to secure capital, rehabilitate, and reinvigorate portions of the main brewery complex, which now includes architectural offices, Park Board facilities, a public library branch, union office, and artist studios. The office building is the last portion of the complex in need of this treatment.

Historical context – John Smoley

MOVE OUTSIDE OR TO N FACING WINDOWS

- The building exists within a complex of brewery buildings in roughly a four block area.
- The design of new buildings should complement these historic buildings without creating a false sense of history because the buildings are built to look like pre-1928 buildings
- As a locally designated landmark and a recipient of federal and state rehabilitation funds, changes to the building and the lot next door must be reviewed by both the Minneapolis HPC and MN SHPO.
- This process is fairly rapid (over the counter or several days) for minor changes and longer for more significant changes. In return, the city, state, and federal government offer incentives such as transfers of development rights, historic variances (from the standards of the Zoning Code), and generous tax credits for qualified properties (see <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/brochure1.htm> for requirements and further details).
- Stabilization of property values and the creation of methods to hinder out-of-character development within clusters (districts) of historic properties are other benefits of designation. And the state recently developed a historic preservation tax credit too (see <http://www.mnhs.org/shpo/grants/tax.htm>).
- In short, designation is for property owners who genuinely care about their property's historical significance and appearance and want to ensure those features are maintained in perpetuity. If you plan on making extensive changes to the exterior of the building (large additions to areas visible from the public right of way, for example) designation is probably not the optimal choice (though the tax credits and other incentives are enticing).

Archaeological ruins – John Smoley

- One important component of the brewing company complex lies belowground

SHOW MHS photo of brewery

- French immigrant John Orth opened MN's second brewery on this site in 1850, two years after Anthony Yoerg established the states first brewery in St Paul. Orth continued in this business until his death in 1887 at which time his sons, long involved in the company, took over.
- The Minneapolis Brewing and Malting Company officially began in 1890 with the merger of four long-standing local breweries: Germania Brewing, Heinrich Brewing, Norenburg Brewing, and Orth Brewing.
- The companies consolidated to be more competitive in a market increasingly being taken over by international (British) investors, much like the beer market a century later.
- The new company did not need the Orth Brewery's plant, and demolished the buildings.
- An ongoing archaeological survey determined that these ruins are historically significant
- Note general area of site (parking lot to north of office building)
- Historic foundations lie 16"-36" below the surface.
- Preservation fits in well with the brewery square required by the development objectives.
- Sensitive subsurface alterations are permissible.
- A full archaeological report is due mid-June & should include a scaled map to aid in planning subsurface disturbances.
- The Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards (http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/rehab/rehab_standards.htm) are used by both the Minneapolis HPC and MN SHPO. Standard #8 indicates that preservation and mitigation are options. Being that this was the first brewery established in Minneapolis and the 2nd in the state, full data recovery will likely be requested if mitigation is desired.

GRAIN BELT MARSHALL STREET RFP - MAY 12TH SITE TOUR

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