City of Excelsior
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting
Minutes

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER
Chair Caron called the July 22, 2025, Heritage Preservation Commission meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Present: Caron, Gephart, Dahlstrom, Anderson, and Macpherson
Absent: Mark
Also Present: Ali Cameron (Senior Planner), Amy Lucas (Historic Consultant), Chrystal O'Hanlon (City Council Liaison)

    a. Election of Vice Chair

    Chair Caron nominated Commissioner Macpherson as Vice Chair. Commissioner Macpherson accepted.

    Commissioner Gephart motioned to elect Commissioner Macpherson as Vice Chair. Commissioner Anderson seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Macpherson motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Gephart seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

3. CONSENT AGENDA (including review and approval of minutes from previous meeting)

    a. June 24, 2025, Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

    Commissioner Macpherson requested a correction to Item 7E. Chair Caron requested a correction to the first paragraph.

    Commissioner Gephart motioned to approve the June 24, 2025 minutes with noted corrections. Commissioner Macpherson seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

4. CITIZEN REPORTS OR COMMENTS

    a. Quarterly Council Liaison O'Hanlon

    Council Liaison O'Hanlon introduced herself as the new Q3 Liaison from City Council and gave brief updates on the 10 Water Street Preliminary PUD recommendations from City Council on July 21, 2025, and the approval of a work group to assist the HPC.

5. NEW BUSINESS

    a. 173 Second Street, Site Alteration Permit (HPC No. 2025-10)

The city's historic consultant Amy Lucas presented on the item. Ms. Lucas provided background on what had happened with the historic windows and the HPC's previous decision. It was noted that the newest SAP application with a complete set of photos was missing from the packet and would be sent to HPC commissioners after the meeting.

Mitch Day (Applicant): Mr. Day presented on the item, stating that he and his family moved to Excelsior in 2020 and purchased the property in April 2025 with a good understanding of the home's history with the HPC. Mr. Day wanted to acknowledge Resolution 2023-15 that was passed by the HPC and shared his commitment to respecting the requirements.

Chair Caron mentioned that there was a former requirement to paint the window sash and storm white, stating that black paint would not properly showcase the craftsman style of the sashes. Historic consultant Lucas shared that black sashes do not necessarily obscure the style nor visibility from the street.

Chair Caron requested that we provide a clarifying condition in the resolution about why the HPC is allowing the window sash and storm color to be black, even though the HPC had formerly recommended white. The reasons to allow the black color are because it will not obscure the window detail that the HPC was previously concerned about, it better matches the new windows that were replaced on the house, it is potentially reversible in the future, and staff shared their opinion.

Commissioner Gephart motioned to approve the Site Alteration Permit and HPC Resolution 2025-11 with the added condition. Commissioner Dahlstrom seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

b. 345 Water Street, Site Alteration Permit (HPC No. 2025-11)

Staff introduced the item and stated corrections for the SAP application and the resolution language.

Aimee Yanik (Applicant): Ms. Yanik introduced the project to install a projecting sign on behalf of the owner, Chip Ray of Art Rocks, the new tenant at 345 Water Street. Ms. Yanik shared the background of the new retail shop, that it would be an interactive art gallery featuring art related to music, oil and color paintings by renowned and national artists, and it would support artists and first responders. Ms. Yanik also stated that they are aware they are to drill holes in the mortar, not the masonry.

Commissioners inquired about the material of the sign, the reflectivity, and the sign's connection to the bracket. Commissioner Dahlstrom and Chair Caron recommended finding a more suitable bracket connection with the eyelet. Chair Caron reminded the applicant that the city likes the spaces to retain their brackets when the business changes over.

Commissioner Macpherson motioned to approve the Site Alteration Permit and HPC Resolution 2025-10 with staff corrections. Commissioner Anderson seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

c. 305 Water Street Ticket Booth, Site Alteration Permit (HPC No. 2025-12)

Staff introduced the item, the historical significance of the ticket booth, and the extent of need for the solar panel at the ticket booth.

Karen Kertzman (Applicant) and colleague Tom Heimer: Ms. Kertzman and Mr. Heimer introduced the project and the options they had explored for bringing electricity to the ticket booth. They explained that the solar panel would be the most economical and safest option.

Commissioners inquired about alternative placements for the solar panel, whether poles down the rail line had been explored for more sun exposure, and recommended making the solar panel and the wiring as inconspicuous as possible. Commissioners recommended the applicant conduct a trial run to ensure there's adequate sun exposure at the proposed location on the outrigger of the pole next to the structure. Commissioners also recommended making it as safe and inconspicuous as possible, by using a black colored wiring and threading the wire through the existing wire opening in the ticket booth. Commissioners also inquired about the type of framing for attaching it to the outrigger and requested the height of the bottom of the solar panel be mounted at 13 feet high.

Commissioners requested adding conditions to the resolution, namely 1) that the bottom of the solar panel be mounted 13 feet above ground and can be higher at the applicant's discretion; 2) that the applicant is allowed to mount it on the outrigger of the pole; 3) that the wire from the solar panel to the building shall be approved by staff; 4) that the attachment of the panel to the outrigger shall be approved by staff.

Commissioner Gephart moved to approve the Site Alteration Permit and HPC Resolution 2025-10 with the added conditions. Commissioner Macpherson seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

   a. HPC Resolution 2025-12 – Resolution Approving an Amendment to a Site Alteration Permit for garage and front porch at Kalorama Cottage at 262 Lake Street.

   City staff shared that this is the resolution with recommendations and conditions that the HPC had requested staff put together after the previous meeting on June 24, 2025.

   Chair Caron identified formatting and grammatical issues that needed to be edited, and requested that one more clarifying condition be added, stating that the conditions of earlier adopted resolutions are not being waived and remain in effect.

   Commissioner Anderson motioned to approve the HPC Resolution 2025-12 with the corrections and added condition. Commissioner Gephart seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

   a. Next City Council Meeting – August 4, 2025

   b. Next HPC Meeting – August 26, 2025

   c. Sign Ordinance Subcommittee Update

Chair Caron provided an update to the HPC about the two subcommittee meetings that have taken place already, with plans for a third meeting to take place the first week of August.

d. HPC Training Update – August 2025

City staff provided an update that the HPC training shall shift to August or September 2025 based on internal availability and workload. Commissioners shared topics of interest that they would be interested in. Commissioners also agreed to move the training to September 2025 so that all commissioners can attend.

e. Updates

PreserveMN September 10-12, New Ulm MN: Staff provided updates on the scholarship available from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for up to 5 attendees from the HPC, city staff and officials to attend the event. Commissioners Macpherson, Gephart and Dahlstrom nominated themselves for attendance this year. Staff member Cameron to also attend. Commissioner Anderson expressed desire to attend the 2026 event.

Staff provided project updates for 236 Lake Street, 262 Lake Street, and 205 Water Street.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

N/A

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Macpherson motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Gephart seconded. Motion carried 5/0. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ali Cameron, Senior Planner