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**HERITAGE PRESERVATION APPLICATION SUMMARY**

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*Property Location:* 2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy  
*Project Name:* Demolition of a Historic Resource  
*Prepared By:* John Smoley, Ph.D., Senior City Planner, (612) 673-2830  
*Applicant:* HGA  
*Project Contact:* Joan Soranno  
*Ward:* 7  
*Neighborhood:* Kenwood  
*Request:* To demolish more than 60% of the residence at 2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy in the Kenwood Neighborhood.

*Required Applications:*

<b>Demolition of Historic Resource</b>	To demolish more than 60% of the residence at 2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy in the Kenwood Neighborhood
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**HISTORIC PROPERTY INFORMATION**

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<b>Current Name</b>	Pohlad Residence
<b>Historic Name</b>	Stewart Residence
<b>Historic Address</b>	2424 West Lake of the Isles Blvd
<b>Original Construction Date</b>	1929-1930
<b>Original Architect</b>	Carl A. Gage
<b>Original Builder</b>	Eugene J. Kayser
<b>Historic Use</b>	Single family residence
<b>Current Use</b>	Single family residence
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Single family residence

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**CLASSIFICATION**

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<b>Local Historic District</b>	Potential Lake of the Isles Historic District
<b>Period of Significance</b>	1886-1941
<b>Criteria of Significance</b>	(2) The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.

Date Application Deemed Complete	January 14, 2022	Date Extension Letter Sent	n/a
End of 60-Day Decision Period	March 15, 2022	End of 120-Day Decision Period	May 14, 2022

	<p>(3) The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity.</p> <p>(5) The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.</p> <p>(6) The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.</p>
<b>Date of Local Designation</b>	n/a
<b>Date of National Register Listing</b>	n/a
<b>Applicable Design Guidelines</b>	n/a

## SUMMARY

**BACKGROUND.** On January 14, 2022, the Applicant submitted a Demolition of a Historic Resource application for the subject property.

The subject property was designed by master architect Carl Gage and constructed by Eugene Kayser in 1929 and 1930 for grain trader James R. Stewart and his wife Ila M. Stewart (nee Welch). The Stewarts chose a prominent piece of undeveloped land on a point along the western shore of Lake of the Isles. The subject property is a 2.5-story Tudor Revival style single family residence that faces the west side of Lake of the Isles, between West 24th Street and Russell Avenue South. The stucco-clad dwelling is laid out in an irregular plan with a slate-clad cross gable roof bearing two brick chimneys and a brick elevator overrun. A hip-roofed wing extends northward from the center of the residence on the rear where a nonhistoric garage constructed in 1984 connects perpendicular to the end of the residence.

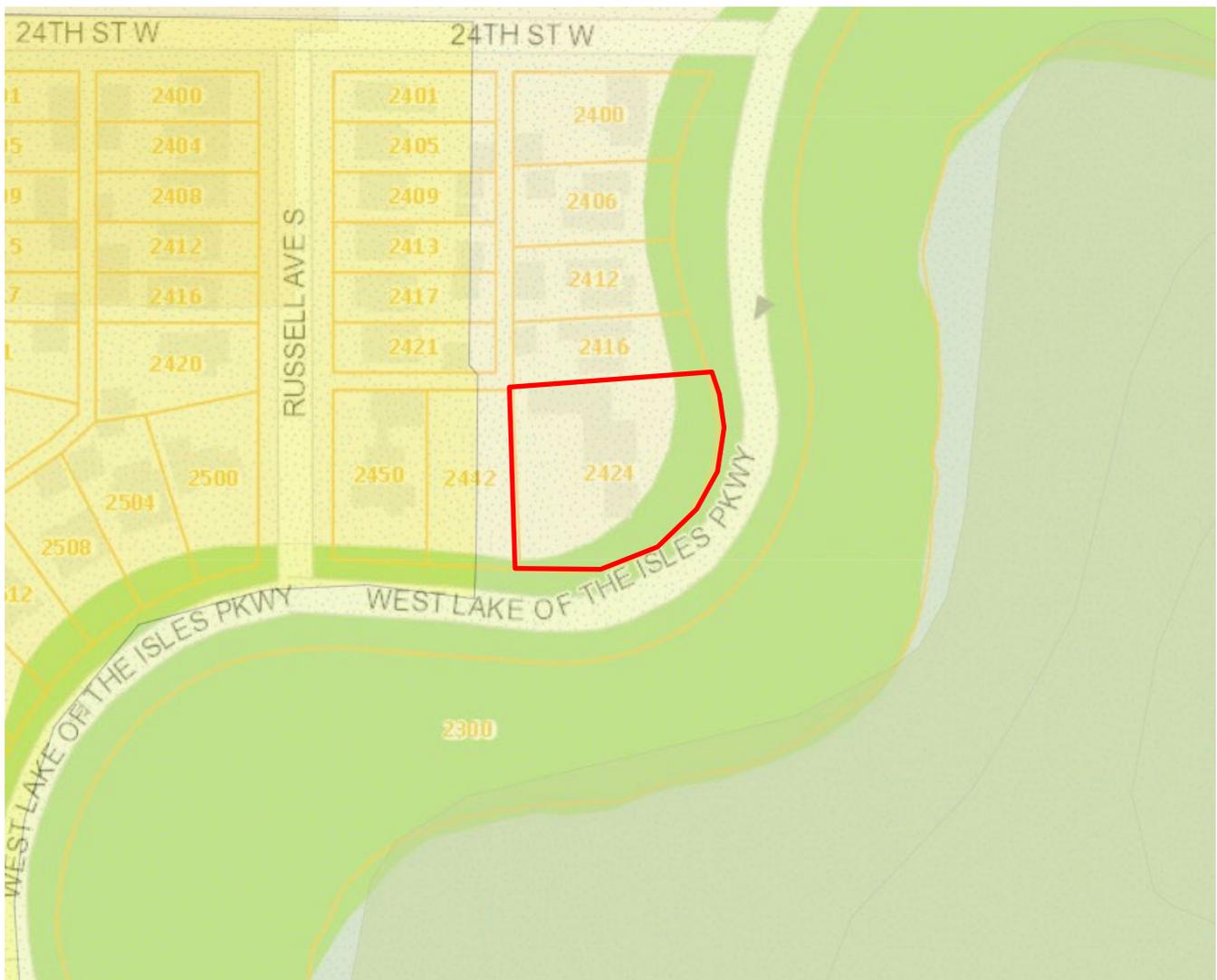
An original one-story gable-roofed sunroom extends off the southern end of the residence. A 1936 rear-facing hipped-roof dormer sunroom addition projects from the half-story. Designed by Larson and McLaren, this addition is considered historic. Brown brick accents appear on gables, quoined window surrounds, sills, chimneys, the nonhistoric garage, and a flat-roofed one-story nonhistoric 1999 kitchen addition at the rear of the building.

Archaeological evidence uncovered in 1999 indicates that Native Americans frequented this area thousands of years before dairyman Thomas Halloran began using the land for farming in the late 1800s. Between 1885 and 1887 the Minneapolis Park Board acquired land around the lake for a planned parkway. Efforts to dredge and fill adjacent areas described as swampy and mosquito-filled continued until 1911. Construction of channels from Lake of the Isles to both Cedar Lake and Bde Maka Ska occurred at this time as well. These public projects likely lead to later development in the area. Not until 1907 was the land on which this property lies subdivided as the Kenilworth Addition to Minneapolis plat.

The subject property lies within the potential Lake of the Isles Historic District: one of the fifty-five potential historic districts identified over roughly a decade's worth of reconnaissance-level surveys conducted by the City beginning in 2001. The eligibility of this potential historic district for local designation has been affirmed by every study of the area conducted over the past four decades. In April 1984 Muriel Nord of the City's Heritage Preservation Commission nominated the Lake of the Isles Historic District for designation as a City of Minneapolis Historic District and for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed district consisted of the Lake of the Isles; the 116 residences and one church surrounding the lake; four structures (three bridges and one fountain); the parkway around the lake; and the Kenilworth lagoon and park land immediately west of the lake. The proposed district was not listed in the National Register, nor was the district locally designated, but the study deemed the subject property a pivotal building: one of the sixteen most historically or architecturally significant properties in the district. In 1999 a Hess, Roise and Company report, *Historical Assessment: Lake of the Isles and Kenwood Park*, deemed the district, to include the houses facing the parkway, eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, though this report did not conduct an intensive-level evaluation of each of those

residences. In Mead and Hunt's July 2006 *Historic Resources Inventory Portions of Calhoun-Isles Area, City of Minneapolis* the evaluators conducted a reconnaissance survey of the subject property and its surroundings. The evaluators recommended 2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy be deemed contributing to the potential Lake of the Isles Historic District. In 2014, Mead & Hunt completed the report "Phase I/Phase II Architecture History Investigation for the Proposed Southwest Light Rail Transit Project, Hennepin County, Minnesota," for the Metropolitan Council. The report deemed the Lake of the Isles Historic District eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The subject property also lies immediately adjacent to a portion of the Grand Rounds, the linear parkway that circles the City of Minneapolis. In the National Register of Historic Places nomination of the Grand Rounds as a nationally significant historic district, the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred in the determination that residences were not a part of this National Register-eligible historic district. Demolitions of properties immediately adjacent to the district would likely have a visual effect on this National Register-eligible district, however.

The most recent evaluation of the subject property was commissioned by the applicant and conducted by a historic consultant, Landscape Research (Attachment 2). In her report, Amy M. Lucas evaluated the subject property's eligibility for designation as a Landmark, and not part of the potential Lake of the Isles Historic District. She deemed the property eligible for designation as an individual Landmark under criteria 2, 4, and 6 for the property's associations with prominent grain trader James Stewart; architect Carl Gage; and the Tudor Revival



style of architecture. She rated the property's integrity very high, determining that it retained all seven aspects of integrity.

**APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL.** The applicant proposes to remodel the existing single family residence for use as a more accessible single family residence with a more open floor plan, newer garage, and wider driveway. Specifically, the owners intend to:

1. Demolish the original, one-stall garage and the nonhistoric, 1984 four-car garage addition, with a laundry room and a new elevator in place of an original elevator;
2. Raise the grade in the northwest area of the lot to construct a new garage at the same level as the main floor of the house;
3. Relocate the driveway to enter the lot from the southwest corner instead of the eastern side through the historic porte cochere with arched opening;
4. Replace the historic porte cochere's arched opening with a large, arched window in matching proportions and a similar location;
5. Demolish the northern wing and rear half of the home, replacing it with new building segments with larger footprints, open floor plans, accessible floors, and a more modern kitchen;
6. Add new integrated ornamental metal window boxes at both the existing house and at new punched openings on the second floor, to match the original design;
7. Replace all existing windows, most of which are historic, true divided light windows, according to the report submitted by the applicant, with energy efficient insulated windows with a simulated division of lights; and
8. Replace doors with new doors bearing insulated glazing with a simulated division of lights.

The extent of this work is so great that it meets the City's definition of demolition, defined by the Heritage Preservation Regulations as, "The act of moving or razing a building including the removal or enclosure of sixty (60) percent or more of the structure." In such instances, the Zoning Code treats these properties as new buildings that are required to comply with all current codes. As a result, the proposed remodel will require other land use applications, including an administrative site plan review and five variances through the Board of Adjustment, provided the applicant's plans do not change. Although the Heritage Preservation Regulations definition of demolition does not consider interior features, substantial changes are being made to the interior of the subject property. The remodel is intended to make the existing home more accessible and more energy efficient, though single family residences are not required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and historic properties are not required to comply with the 2015 Minnesota Energy Code.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS.** Staff has received three letters in support of this project from the Kenwood Neighborhood Organization and two neighbors of the subject property. Any additional correspondence received prior to the public meeting will be forwarded on to the Heritage Preservation Commission for consideration.

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## ANALYSIS

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### DEMOLITION OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development has analyzed the application for the demolition of more than 60% of the residence at 2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy based on the following findings:

**SIGNIFICANCE**

2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy is eligible for local designation as a landmark under criteria 2, 3, 4, and 6.

**Criterion #1: The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.**

The subject property is not known to have been the site of significant historical events. The property earned only minor mention in the *Star Tribune* and its predecessors, mostly related to minor social pages news.

**Criterion #2: The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.**

The house at 2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy is significant under criterion 2 for its association with prominent grain trader James R. Stewart, who had the residence built in 1929-1930 and who lived in the house with his wife Ila for the remainder of their lives. Stewart was born in Canada before immigrating to North Dakota at a young age. He credits his philanthropy later in life, directed toward less fortunate youth, to a challenging upbringing in his early years, though he proved highly adept at financing, constructing, and utilizing grain elevators and shipment terminals.

**Criterion #3: The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity.**

The subject property is associated with distinctive elements of neighborhood identity, making it significant under criterion 3. It is a single family residence on the shore of Lake of the Isles, arguably the city's most prestigious lake, fronting on Lake of the Isles Pkwy, arguably the city's most prestigious drive. The Kenwood neighborhood is known for its historic, single family homes on the chain of lakes, the source of the City of Lakes' nickname, created after the rise and fall of the Mill City's preeminence in lumber and flour milling at the Falls of St. Anthony. Of all Minneapolis neighborhoods, Kenwood is arguably the most defined by lakes, bordered on two sides by lakes (Cedar to the west, Lake of the Isles to the east), with a lake channel (Kenilworth Lagoon) on its southern border. While the neighborhood is replete with single family residences, this residence was designed by a master architect for a significant Minneapolitan and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style. This significance was recognized in the 1984 City of Minneapolis designation study of the Lake of the Isles potential historic district, which named the Stewart residence one of the 16 most pivotal properties in the district.

**Criterion #4: The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.**

The residence is significant under criterion 4 for representing the distinctive characteristics of the Tudor Revival style of architecture. This cross-gabled house possesses a high-pitched, prominent front-facing gable; stucco cladding; massive chimneys; tall and narrow windows in multiple groups with multi-pane glazing; and a front entrance with a masonry surround; all characteristic traits of Tudor Revival residences.

**Criterion #5: The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.**

The property does not exemplify a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail, and therefore is not significant under criterion 5. Simple, commonplace landscaping in the form of trees, shrubs, and grass exists onsite. A lone maple near the rear property line appears to be the only tree that may date to the potential historic district's period of significance. The majority of shrubs are evergreen and arranged in simple lines designed to provide screening along property lines. Other shrubs are planted against the residence as simple accents.

**Criterion #6: The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.**

The subject property is significant under criterion 6 for exemplifying the works of master architect Carl A. Gage. Carl Alexander Gage began his career as a designer in Minneapolis' Flour City Ornamental Iron Company, whose wrought and cast iron decorate such buildings as the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago and the John Adams Building in Washington, D.C. After several years there, Gage became an architect, working in the firms of Thomas Holyoke,

Ernest Kennedy, Edwin Hewitt, Bertrand & Chamberlain, and finally Tyrie and Chapman before establishing his own practice. Gage is best known for designing upscale houses in Minneapolis, especially in the Tudor Revival style of architecture, such as the Goodfellow residence (now the Bakken Museum); 5013 and 5017 Belmont Ave S; and 3430 and 3520 West Bde Maka Ska Blvd. One of Gage's commissions, the Sigma Kappa Sorority house at 521 12th Ave SE, has been designated as a contributing resource in the City of Minneapolis' University of Minnesota Greek Letter Chapter House Historic District.

**Criterion #7: The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.**

The property has not yielded, nor is it likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. Records available at the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office indicate that no archeological sites have been identified on the subject property. The Lake of the Isles has been subject to archaeological surveys in the past, most notably in 1999 when *Four Islands at Lake of the Isles: a Reconnaissance Survey* was conducted by Archaeological Resource Services for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Though the study focused upon what were historically four islands in the lake, it provided context on changes to the lake itself.

The property is not likely to yield information important in prehistory. The subject property is located along the western shore of Lake of the Isles. Pre-contact bodies of water generally served as sources of water, food, and transportation, thus areas in close proximity, generally within five hundred feet or less, to such sites have a higher than average potential to include archeological evidence of pre-contact humans. Nevertheless, Lake of the Isles was subject to extensive dredging and shaping, to include the construction of a road around the lake which the subject property fronts upon. Better remaining sites in the immediate vicinity likely exist. The 1999 survey recommended intensive level survey of all four islands, noting their likely eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to their association with significant pre-contact history. Cloud Man's village, a former Native American settlement on the east bank of Bde Maka Ska, to the southeast of the subject property, also presents a more likely, and more significant, source of pre-contact information.

The subject property is not likely to yield information important to history. No buildings existed onsite prior to this home's construction in 1929 and 1930. The dwelling was connected to the sewer system at its construction. Other archaeological sources of information such as sheet refuse, trash pits, and builder's trenches may still be present on the lot. However, given the relatively short period of time the dwelling was under construction, it is unlikely that these historical archeological deposits would reveal important information.

For these reasons, CPED staff finds that the property is not eligible for designation as a Landmark under criterion 7.

**INTEGRITY**

The Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Title 23, Heritage Preservation, Chapter 599 Heritage Preservation Regulations recognizes a property's integrity through seven aspects or qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The subject property does retain the integrity required to be a Landmark.

Staff agrees with the applicant's analysis that the residence in question retains all seven aspects of integrity. The Tudor Revival design of Carl A. Gage maintains its proportion and ornamentation. Alterations occurred at the rear of the residence, where they are least visible from the public right-of-way, helping to ensure the property retains integrity of design. Original stucco, slate, brick and stone materials remain intact on the vast majority of the home, despite the loss of some materials to rear additions, and the early twentieth-century workmanship used to produce and assemble these materials remains quite evident, ensuring the property retains integrity of materials and workmanship. The home has never been moved, ensuring it retains integrity of location. The neighborhood remains mostly single family residences set around one of Minneapolis' premiere lakes, ensuring the residence's integrity of setting remains intact. The property's original use as a single family residence remains unchanged, and it continues to evoke the feeling of an early twentieth-century residence.

## DESTRUCTION OF A HISTORIC RESOURCE

*(1) The destruction is necessary to correct an unsafe or dangerous condition on the property; or*

**Staff Comment:** CPED finds that the demolition is not necessary to correct an unsafe or dangerous condition. The applicant has not identified any unsafe or dangerous conditions on the property.

*(2) That there are no reasonable alternatives to the destruction. In determining whether reasonable alternatives exist, the commission shall consider, but not be limited to:*

- 1. The significance of the property;*
- 2. The integrity of the property; and*
- 3. The economic value or usefulness of the existing structure, including its current use, costs of renovation and feasible alternative uses.*

**Staff Comment:** CPED finds that there are reasonable alternatives to the demolition.

### SIGNIFICANCE:

Both staff and the applicant's historical consultant recommend the property as eligible for local designation under Criteria 2, 4, and 6, as noted in the "Significance" section above.

### INTEGRITY:

Both staff and the applicant's historical consultant agree that the subject property not only retains the integrity to communicate this historical significance, the residence retains all seven aspects of integrity, as noted in the "Integrity" section above.

### ECONOMIC VALUE OR USEFULNESS OF THE STRUCTURE:

The application states that the economic value and usefulness of the existing structure is significantly impaired by the lack of an at-grade entrance to the house; a stairway separating the second floor's bedrooms in the main home from the recreation/bonus room area above the garage wing; and the size and layout of rooms and circulation paths on both floors not being consistent with Universal Design principles and not meeting the needs of most contemporary urban homeowners, particularly by not being entirely accessible to persons of all abilities. Staff disagrees with this assessment. The home retains considerable value, having been purchased 'as-is' for 3.65 million dollars in May 2021. Furthermore, the vast majority of existing low-density residences have some steps, and extremely few have an elevator to improve accessibility, which this home historically had and currently possesses. While the remodel will ostensibly do much to make the home accessible, plans indicate exterior stairways will remain on all four sides of the building.

The application also states that the house has experienced six changes in ownership since it was sold by the Stewart heirs in 1991 and has not gained value through the sales and renovations. Staff would point out that, although the applicant's report does not identify the home's sale price during a nationwide recession in 1991, its most recent sale price is more than twice its 1998 sale price.

The applicant also cites vehicular circulation problems, noting that the existing driveway opens from West Lake of the Isles Parkway at the northeast corner of the lot and runs past a projecting bay window and through a porte-cochere too small to allow for the safe passage of vehicles. The port cochere measures 8'-11" wide and between 7'-2½" to 7'-8 ½" high. Staff would point out that the applicant has received approval from the Minneapolis Park Board to relocate the curb cut to the south side of the lot, eliminating the need to drive through the port cochere, which actually provides more room for vehicles than the drive aisle of a standard two-car garage door. Typically, 7' in height and 16' in width, standard two-car garage doors provide 8' of width per vehicle and 7' of vertical clearance, which is also the common clearance provided in parking garages.

**CURRENT USE:**

The existing and proposed uses of the subject property are the same. The applicant is currently using the building as a single family residence and intends to do so after the proposed 60% demolition and remodel.

**COSTS OF RENOVATION:**

The applicant has not provided estimated costs of renovation, but plans indicate that nearly 70% of the existing 3.65 million dollar home would be demolished and rebuilt even bigger than it currently is.

**FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE USES:**

The subject property is zoned for a variety of low-density residential uses, but the applicant seeks no change of use. The applicant is currently using the property as a single family residence and has confirmed their intent to do so in the future.

**FINDINGS**

1. The subject property is eligible for designation as an individual Landmark under criteria 2, 3, 4, and 6 of Chapter 599.210.
2. The subject property retains all seven aspects of integrity.
3. No unsafe or dangerous conditions exist on the property.
4. There are reasonable alternatives to the demolition considering the significance, integrity, and economic value or usefulness of the existing structure.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission adopt staff findings for the application by HGA for the property located at 2424 West Lake of the Isles Pkwy:

**A. Demolition of Historic Resource.**

Recommended motion: The Heritage Preservation Commission **denies** the demolition of historic resource application, **establishes** interim protection, and **directs** the Planning Director to prepare or cause to be prepared a designation study of the property.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Oblique aerial photo
2. Eligibility study submitted by applicant
3. Written description and findings submitted by applicant
4. Current photos of the property
5. Aerial images for context
6. Site Plans
7. Building Elevations - Existing & Proposed
8. Proposed Renderings
9. Building Floor Plans - Existing & Proposed
10. Public comments