

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Request for Proposals
for
A Reuse Study and Plan for
Cavalry Barracks, Cavalry Stable and Ordnance Building
in the Historic Fort Snelling Complex
200 Tower Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55111**

October, 2007

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Minnesota Historical Society (Society) intends to conduct a Reuse Study and Plan for four buildings adjacent to the Visitor Center at Historic Fort Snelling. This study is part of a larger project that is being planned to replace the current visitor center and redesign the landscape in the area that visitors use to reach the historic fort.

TIME PERIOD

The project period is from November 1, 2007 through February 29, 2008.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

The Principal Investigator must prove previous satisfactory experience in conducting a Reuse Study in accordance with the process outlined in *A Primer for Historic Properties Reuse Teams in Minnesota*. The publication is available from the Minnesota Historical Society State Historic Preservation Office (651-259-3450) or at <http://www.mnhs.org/shpo/planning/primer.pdf>. The project must be under the direction of personnel who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Standards for historian, architectural historian, or historical architect.

Furthermore, it is expected that the successful proposal will include a team to support the Principal Investigator's work, with skills to include, but not be limited to, real estate and marketing specialists that can ensure that the final plan will lead to a satisfactory and viable reuse of the structures. (Is this necessary given the recent Saussen rulings? Better to ask for state office or state regulations expertise?)

BACKGROUND

Fort Snelling was established at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers in the early nineteenth century, and expanded several times during its history. The buildings of this study are representatives of those later expansions. The ordnance storehouse (Building 22) was constructed in 1878 during the Department of Dakota period, while the cavalry barracks (Buildings 17 & 18) and the cavalry stable (Building 30) were built in 1904 in an expansion period following the Spanish-American War.

These four buildings are all that remain of ten post-Civil War buildings constructed along the edge of the river bluff West of the frontier fort. The cavalry barracks stand empty, the other two are underutilized, and all show signs of significant and progressive deterioration. These buildings have a profound influence on the site due to both their physical prominence and proximity to the Historic Fort. Consequently, their current state of disrepair casts a shadow over the experience and memory of every visitor. The preservation and stabilization of these significant buildings will therefore be critical to the revitalization of this National Historic Landmark site.

Much of Fort Snelling, including these buildings, was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1960—the first in the state of Minnesota, and a recognition of the essential role the site has played in Minnesota and United States History. Upon transfer of the site from the federal government to the state of Minnesota, the frontier fort and these outbuildings were given to the care of the Minnesota Historical Society for the creation of a historic site to be open to the public.

The buildings and surrounding area for this proposed reuse study have been greatly influenced by this recent use as a public historic site. An early master plan for the site called for the demolition of Buildings 17 & 18, but by the time that action would have been possible, preservation standards had changed. Building 22 was significantly altered with the construction of a visitor center in 1980—the two buildings are conjoined, with Building 22 now serving as loading dock and shops for the current visitor center. Building 30 was once one of four stables, but its companions were demolished to make way for a parking area for the 1980 center, leaving Building 30 isolated at the fringe of the site.

This recent history has created a challenging situation for each of the buildings. Each is awkwardly situated for the current campus use. Current plans for a new visitor center will mitigate the worst of these problems, and the project also proposes extensive exterior restoration of the historic structures to bring them back to their original appearance. But it will remain a challenge to create a coherent whole to the new visitor entrance, with compatible uses in each of the buildings. A fresh look is needed at these buildings to determine how they can be a functional, attractive amenity to the site.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

New Visitor Center at Fort Snelling: Documentation for Consultation (2007). Found at http://www.mnhs.org/places/sites/hfs/revitalization/fortsnelling_106.pdf

[Study done for Youth Hostels in 1990s? \(Tom, can you find this and verify whether relevant?\)](#)

[Any HABS or HAER documents? \(I have a vague notion that a Bob Mack class may have attempted this for 17 or 18?\)](#)

[Any exploratory plans or reports by HGA or CDG that a reuse team could use for background or to disabuse them of certain reuse ideas?](#)

SCOPE OF WORK

This Request For Proposal (RFP) seeks to identify a team led by a qualified Principal Investigator who would assume overall responsibility for administering and managing the Reuse Study.

The purpose of the study is to define and evaluate options regarding the four structures mentioned above, and present these options with supporting information and documentation to the Society. As previously referenced, the Reuse Study must be conducted in accordance with the process outlined in *A Primer for Historic Properties Reuse Teams In Minnesota*.

Major work elements for the Principal Investigator/Reuse Team are:

1. Building from the team members identified in the proposal, work with Society staff to identify other potential experts that could assist in successfully completing the project. It is expected that Society program staff member and a staff representative of the State Historic Preservation Office will serve as members of the team.
2. Coordinate the work of the Reuse Study Team members.
3. Research the history and visual documentation of the structures and their uses; fill in any documentary gaps that are identified that would assist in understanding reuse options.
4. Collect and analyze information related to the physical condition of the structures and costs that relate to their stabilization and rehabilitation.
5. Identify individuals, businesses, state agencies or associations that could be interviewed, and arrange dates and times of the interviews.
6. Develop reuse alternatives for the three buildings, taking into account the complex overlay of jurisdictions and protections for the buildings, including, but not limited to, the following: federal, state, and local historic status; educational/interpretive contexts; the Society's short- and long-range plans for the property; state and federal planning, zoning and fiduciary requirements or regulations; special constituency and community interests documented through interviews; and economic/financial implications.
7. Evaluate the economic and preservation merits of the reuse alternatives.
8. Define the most viable options for the buildings.
9. Prepare a preliminary draft report of the Reuse Team findings and recommendations. The distribution and review of the draft report will be determined in part by individuals and entities that are interviewed earlier in the process, but may include the following: Minnesota Historical Society, the State Historic Preservation Office, the National Park Service, the Friends of Fort Snelling, *other?*. The Principal Investigator will assume preparation, mailing and general distribution costs of the draft report.
10. Prepare a revised final report using information gathered by the Principal Investigator and the Reuse Study Team. The final report should include the following:
 - a. An introduction and summary section that outlines the purpose of the study alternative reuse scenarios, description of the Reuse Study Team process, a short biography of Reuse Study Team members, a site description, and a chronology and historical overview of the property's significance.

- b. An issues section that explains the design, political and economic factors that affect the various reuse scenarios.
- c. A financial and market analysis section that details expected costs of rehabilitating the property and the income it can be expected to generate. Again, is this relevant given the “tainted” bond fund status, or should it be worded in a different way?
- d. A recommendation and action plan that identifies the issues surrounding the property. The plan should also state the actions required by various public and private organizations as to the reuse recommendations of the study.

EXPECTED PRODUCTS

The Principal Investigator will prepare and submit a preliminary draft report (distribution referenced above).

The Principal Investigator will prepare 50 copies of the revised final report and one copy suitable for duplication. Copies will be distributed to the State Historic Preservation Office, the National Park Service, the Minnesota Historical Society, and others designated. The Principal Investigator will assume all costs of printing, mailing, and distributing the final report.

All work on this project must meet the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation," particularly the "Standards for Historic Preservation Projects."

REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

On submission of invoices from the Principal Investigator, payments will be made at completion of the following phases:

Phase 1: Collect and analyze information related to the physical condition of the structures and costs that relate to their stabilization and rehabilitation.

Phase 2: Conduct interviews with interested parties and develop reuse alternatives.

Phase 3: Completion of the preliminary draft report.

Phase 4: Completion of the revised final report.

Invoices must be submitted to the Society’s designated representative, Tom Pfannenstiel, Site Manager of Historic Fort Snelling and Sibley House Historic Site. The Society’s payment terms are net 30 days. See below.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

A qualifying proposal must contain the following:

1. Resume demonstrating how the Principal Investigator meets the applicable professional qualification standards, including previous experience in conducting a Reuse Study in accordance with the process outlined in *A Primer for Historic Properties Reuse Teams In Minnesota*.
2. Resumes of other team members who provide the necessary expertise for successful project completion.
3. Narrative project proposal, including an implementation schedule. The project must be completed by **March 1, 2008**. This seems like a reasonable time if we keep things clipping along, but is it sufficient for legislative purposes? It would not deliver the report in time for the opening gavel, but probably in time for hearings, I'm guessing.
4. Dollar bid including a line item breakdown of the proposed budget. Personal compensation for mileage and lodging may not exceed maximums allowed under federal regulations.
5. Any other information deemed helpful in demonstrating the proposer's ability to successfully complete the project.

For the Washburn Study, we neglected to require a pre-bid meeting on site that included a tour of the buildings. In retrospect, I think this would have been helpful. While it may add a few days to the project timeline (perhaps), I think it would be worth it here. Thoughts?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Direct any inquiries to Tom Pfannenstiel, Site Manager, Historic Fort Snelling, 200 Tower Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55111; telephone: 612-725-2430; e-mail: tom.pfannenstiel@mnhs.org.

While I am willing and able to see the reuse project through to completion (if that is indeed the request!), it would make sense to have a contact name affiliated with the site in question—a more logical connection for prospective proposers, and more convenient if there are any on-site questions to be answered. But if you disagree, we can put my name here (and above) instead.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE

All proposals, mailed or hand delivered (no facsimiles accepted), must be submitted to:

Kathryn Ludwig
Contracting Officer
Minnesota Historical Society
345 Kellogg Boulevard West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

All proposals must be received by the above individual no later than 2 p.m. Local Time on Thursday, October 25, 2007. Please clearly mark on the outside envelope "Fort Snelling Buildings Reuse Study."

The Society reserves the right to waive any irregularities or to reject any or all proposals if deemed in the best interests of the project.