

## **ORDINANCE NO. 1075**

### **AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA DESIGNATING A LOCAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION SITE**

#### **THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTHFIELD DOES ORDAIN THAT:**

**SECTION 1. Preamble / Recitals.** The following recitals are made a part hereof.

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield (City) has a significant number of historic resources throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, the Northfield City Council has declared as a matter of public policy that the preservation, protection, perpetuation, promotion and use of areas, places, buildings, structures, lands, districts and other objects having a special historical, community, or aesthetic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of health, prosperity, safety and welfare in the community; and

WHEREAS, Northfield City Code, Chapter 34, Section 8.5.7, provides the process for the City, from time to time, in determining that certain places, buildings, structures, properties, or district areas or properties within the community are of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, landscaping, and culture and those locations should be subject to additional review as it relates to the Land Development Code as heritage preservation sites; and

WHEREAS, the property proposed for heritage preservation site designation is known as Central Park located at 421 4<sup>th</sup> St. E., and such location is depicted and legally described on Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, in considering an application for site designation, in addition to the following approval criteria in Northfield City Code, Section 8.5.7(C), the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) may also refer to the applicable Secretary of the Interior standards, and current procedure as recommended by the State Historic Preservation Office when determining if a site should qualify as a heritage preservation site:

- (1) That the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, landscaping, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; or
- (2) That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- (3) That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- (4) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

- (5) That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or
- (6) That have a unique location or singular physical characteristics representing established and familiar aspects of a view, vista, site, area or district in the city; and

WHEREAS, prior to designating a proposed Heritage Preservation Site, the HPC shall forward information concerning the proposed designation to the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MN SHPO) for comment within 60 days; and

WHEREAS, MN SHPO was notified of the review of Central Park as a local Heritage Preservation Site on November 12, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the MN SHPO provided a response letter on December 3, 2024, and based on the reasoning in their letter, they "...concur that Central Park is an ideal candidate for local designation" and;

WHEREAS, the Heritage Preservation Commission adopted a resolution recommending to City Council that Central Park be designated a local heritage preservation site at their January 6, 2025 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board approved a motion recommending to City Council that Central Park be designated a local heritage preservation site at their January 22, 2025 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the properly noticed public hearing of this ordinance for the consideration of Central Park as a local heritage preservation site was held before the City Council on April 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby finds that the property described in Exhibit A, Central Park, has historic and cultural significance and further hereby adopts as its findings for such designation the analysis as contained in the City staff report and attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit B.

**SECTION 2. Designation.** Central Park located at 421 4<sup>th</sup> St. E., as depicted and legally described in Exhibit A is hereby designated as a Local Heritage Preservation Site.

**SECTION 3. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall take effect thirty days after its publication.

Passed by the City Council of the City of Northfield, Minnesota, this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2025.

ATTEST

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

VOTE:      \_\_\_\_ ZWEIFEL \_\_\_\_ BEUMER \_\_\_\_ DAHLEN \_\_\_\_ HOLMES  
             \_\_\_\_ NESS \_\_\_\_ PETERSON WHITE \_\_\_\_ SOKUP

First Reading:	04/01/2025
Second Reading:	04/15/2025
Published:	04/23/2025

## EXHIBIT A

### **Legal Description and Depiction of Designated Local Heritage Preservation Site**

Public Square, Original Town Plat of Northfield, Rice County, Minnesota.

Parcel ID: 2231375065

421 4<sup>th</sup> St. E.



## **EXHIBIT B**

### **Findings**

#### **Review and Decision by the City Council:**

The City Council shall review and make a decision on a Heritage Preservation Site application in accordance with Section 8.4.7, Type 4 Review Procedure (Planning Commission or Heritage Preservation Commission Recommendation and City Council Decision).

Prior to making a decision, the City Council may request a review and recommendation by the Planning Commission for the designation's conformance with the comprehensive plan. The City Council shall adopt findings in support of any decision to designate a Heritage Preservation Site in the form of an ordinance. The applicants, City of Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission, have included several documents as part of their application with detailed evidence to support the designation as a local heritage preservation site and is attached as part of Exhibit B.

#### **Approval Criteria:**

Northfield's criteria for local heritage preservation site designation mimic that of the National Register evaluation with two additional criteria, #1 and #6. All of the following criteria shall be considered in the review of Heritage Preservation Site designation applications:

- (1) That the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, landscaping, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; or

#### **Finding:**

Central Park possesses integrity of design, setting, feeling, and association, and is significant to local culture as a characteristic feature of Northfield from the time of its founding and the earliest neighborhood. It retains features of its earliest designs including diagonal crosswalks that meet in the center, rows of trees around the perimeter, a circular central feature, and the generally open, flexible programming that allows it to function as a public square consistent with John North's intentions when it was donated.

- (2) That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or [National Register Evaluation Criteria A]

#### **Finding:**

Central Park has made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Northfield's history. The site was included in the original 1855 town plat and designated as a Public Square for purposes of free passage or of ornamentation and improvement as grounds of pleasure, amusement, recreation, or health. The original surveyor, Caleb W. Iddings, also placed a stone at each corner of the Public Square to make future measurements from, and to establish the original street grid. The status of the park has been central to several

court cases, including a Minnesota Supreme Court case that reaffirmed the status of the park as held in trust by the City and aided in preserving its historic configuration.

- (3) That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or [National Register Evaluation Criteria B]

*Finding:*

The park was included in the original plat of the city as established by John North, at the founding of Northfield. In addition to founding Northfield, Mr. North was involved in the framing of the state of Minnesota's constitution and the founding of the University of Minnesota.

- (4) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or [National Register Evaluation Criteria C]

*Not Applicable*

- (5) That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or [National Register Evaluation Criteria D]

*Not Applicable*

- (6) That have a unique location or singular physical characteristics representing established and familiar aspects of a view, vista, site, area or district in the city.

*Finding:*

Central Park's location is unique and exclusive to the public square established in the original plat and has continued in that use, uninterrupted, through to the present day. It is surrounded by some of the earliest houses built in Northfield and located two blocks east of the historic business district. The park retains many of its character-defining features including two diagonal walks that cross in the center of the park, a central, circular area at the center, rows of shade trees along the streets, and the park-like landscaping of mowed turf combined with ornamental plantings, and shade trees. The park predates most of the homes in the neighborhood and is therefore a defining feature of the earliest neighborhood in the City.

*Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan*

The designation of Central Park as a local Heritage Preservation Site conforms with the 2008 Comprehensive Plan including:

Parks and Recreation Objective 2 - Provide residents with parks and natural areas for recreational uses, protection of the natural environment, and visual/physical buffering of land development as a means to maintain the sense of place, ambiance, appearance, and history of the community.