

February 26, 2021

Mikayla Schmidt  
City Planner  
City of Northfield  
801 Washington St.  
Northfield, MN 55057

RE: Local designation of the Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific Railway Depot, 204 3<sup>rd</sup> Street West,  
SHPO Referral Number 2021-0990

Dear Ms. Schmidt,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above referenced local designation. It has been reviewed pursuant to Minnesota Statute §471.193, subd. 6., and Section 8.5.7 (3) (a) of the City of Northfield Code of Ordinances.

The Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific Railway (C M StP & P) Depot is a one-story, red brick building that stands on a concrete foundation faced with limestone above which is a limestone water table. Double hung one-over-one sash windows, most with original limestone sills and lintels, pierce the walls throughout the building. The steeply pitched flared hipped roof with a wide overhang is supported by massive decorative mortise and tenon brackets. The Depot interior contains a mixture of historic materials along with new, compatible features including maple flooring, baseboards, plaster walls and wainscoting.

Constructed in 1888, the Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific Railway Depot is the only building remaining in Northfield that illustrates the history and importance of the railroad in the city. The C M StP & P Depot played a pivotal role in Northfield's transportation history and remains a distinctive symbol and reminder of the importance of the railroad industry. Thousands of Northfield residents depended on passenger rail service, and for generations of college students from Carlton and St. Olaf who traveled to and from Northfield, the C M StP & P Depot became a gateway to the future.

The Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific Railway Depot formerly stood a short distance south of its current location, and in 1980 it was designated as a local landmark. By 2015 it was threatened with demolition, so in early 2016 the Depot was moved 250 feet north to a new permanent site. The new site is very similar to its original site and the building is oriented similarly toward the railroad tracks in the same area which historically served as the focal point for railroad activity. After the move, Save the Northfield Depot, a local nonprofit organization, meticulously rehabilitated the Depot by reconstructing the station master bay, reopening doors that had been infilled, replicating missing brackets, and restoring the interior, among other things.

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MINNESOTA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

50 Sherburne Avenue ■ Administration Building 203 ■ Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155 ■ 651-201-3287

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The Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific Railway Depot is historically significant as a representation of the importance of the rail system in the growth and development of Northfield. Despite being moved, this significant association has been retained in its new location. For these reasons, we concur that the Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific Railway Depot is a good candidate for local designation under Criterion A.

If you have any questions regarding our assessment of this property, please contact me at 651.201.3291 or [michael.koop@state.mn.us](mailto:michael.koop@state.mn.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Koop". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "K" and a trailing flourish.

Michael Koop  
State Historic Preservation Office

cc: Barbara Evans, HPC Chair