

January 30, 2026

Amy Spong
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
50 Sherburne Avenue – Administration Building 203
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Fawkes Auto Complex, 1621-35 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis
National Register of Historic Places Nomination – CLG Comments

Amy Spong,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination for the Fawkes Auto Complex, 1621-35 Hennepin Ave, in Minneapolis. These comments are being submitted by staff of the Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) on behalf of the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission who considered the nomination during a public meeting on January 27, 2026. The public meeting was noticed in *Finance & Commerce* on January 15, 2026, and the meeting agenda was published on January 22, 2026. No public comments were received before or during the public meeting.

The Commission adopted the recommendation presented by CPED staff as outlined in this letter:

The Heritage Preservation Commission **recommends** that the Fawkes Auto Complex meets at least one of the criteria for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and **directs** staff to transmit a letter summarizing their opinion and comments to the State Historic Preservation Officer.

The commission supports the nomination and agrees that the Fawkes Auto Complex has statewide significance under National Register **Criterion A**, in the area(s) of *Commerce* and *Industry* for its contributions during the formative years of the state's automotive industry. The commission also agrees that an appropriate period of significance is from 1911, when the first building was constructed for Fawkes Auto Company, to 1931, when Fawkes sold the property in the fallout of the 1929 stock market crash and ensuing Great Depression. The commission also agrees that the complex retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its historical significance. The commission agrees that the buildings at 1625-35 Hennepin Avenue and the alley are contributing resources and the building at 1621 Hennepin Avenue is a non-contributing resource.

Staff presented the following suggested revisions to the commission, for consideration by the State Historic Preservation Office and the State Review Board as the nomination moves forward:

1. In Section 7, page 20, second line of the description for 1635 Hennepin Avenue: change “tenet address” to “tenant addresses.”
2. In Section 7, page 20, fourth line, change “Fakes” to “Fawkes.”
3. In Section 7, subheadings for the descriptions of each building, consider using the historical address numbers (as shown on the map in Figure B) instead of the parcel addresses. The address “1635 Hennepin Avenue” appears twice, because there are two buildings, which is a little confusing.

4. On Figure B, confirm the build dates as they don't fully align with the dates listed in the descriptions in Section 7. This could be because construction started one year and finished a different year.
5. On Figure B, consider adding the address of 1621 for the non-contributing addition.
6. In Section 8, page 42, there is some incorrect information about the local designation of the Harmon Place Historic District and the property's connection to this historic district. CPED staff spoke with the nomination authors on January 12, 2026, to clarify and review historical records.
 - a. In the first paragraph, revise the statement that the "Fawkes buildings are not officially associated with the historic nomination" because all five buildings do fall within the boundary of the local Harmon Place Historic District. The buildings at 1625-35 Hennepin Avenue are contributing resources and the building at 1621 Hennepin Avenue is a non-contributing resource to the local historic district.
 - b. In the second paragraph, revise the statement that "the Fawkes buildings predate all of the contributing automobile structures within the locally recognized Harmon Place Historic District." Instead, it can be stated that "the Fawkes buildings are among the earliest automobile buildings in the historic district." Per the 2001 local designation study, the Electric Carriage and Battery Company at 1207 Harmon Place was built in 1910-11 and would be the first automotive building in this historic district.
 - c. In the third paragraph, the nomination describes a previous owner's request to exclude the Fawkes buildings from an official survey. This statement suggests the buildings were not surveyed or included in the local historic district, but they were surveyed and included. This paragraph also discusses why the local historic district was not eligible for the National Register. We suggest removing these statements because they seem to be irrelevant to the subject of this nomination. It may be better to focus the narrative on why the Fawkes buildings should be nominated, regardless of the other buildings.

Staff appreciated the thorough nature of the nomination, especially the architectural description as well as the detailed diagrams that highlight the layout and historical uses of the buildings. The commission agreed and did not have additional comments, given that they are already familiar with the property through its local designation status.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require further clarification.

Sincerely,



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Cc: Mayor Jacob Frey, City of Minneapolis
Loring Corners Inc. via Jacob Dommer and Alex Haecker, AWH Architects