

CROWN HYDROELECTRIC POWER RESOLUTION

St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board

Approved November 20, 2017

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Legislature in 1988 created the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone and St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 138.761-766) for the purpose of providing interpretive resources for the public within the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone encircling the Minneapolis central riverfront, an area rich in natural, scenic, recreational and historic elements; and

WHEREAS, The Heritage Board consists of 22 members, including representatives from the City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Hennepin County, Minnesota Historical Society, Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota State Legislature, and Hennepin History Museum; and

WHEREAS, the Heritage Board has funded, guided, and spurred many initiatives and interpretive efforts along the Minneapolis Riverfront; and

WHEREAS, since the creation of the Heritage Zone and Heritage Board, partner members of the Heritage Board and others in the public and private sectors have worked diligently to create a series of destinations within the Heritage Zone for the public to enjoy while learning about Minnesota's past; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Crown Hydroelectric (Crown Hydro) project is located in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District, a National Register Historic District as defined by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior; and

WHEREAS, Crown Hydro was awarded a Renewable Development Grant in November 2001, partly based on factors such as economic development and interpretation of water power; and

WHEREAS, the riverfront redevelopment Crown Hydro was to have spurred has occurred independent of and without any help from that project; and

WHEREAS, interpretation of water power at the Falls has been accomplished by the Minnesota Historical Society at Mill City Museum and tours of the Pillsbury A Mill and Hennepin Island Hydroelectric Plant, and with interpretive panels in Water Power Park and Mill Ruins Park; and

WHEREAS, a small hydroelectric installation at the Falls that may have been a cost-effective renewable energy project in 2001 may no longer be the most cost-effective renewable energy project; and

WHEREAS, the Crown Hydro Project will interfere with other Central Riverfront projects such as Water Works Park, now in the design phase and soon to be under construction, the proposed repurposing of the Upper St. Anthony Lock and Dam as a visitor and interpretive center, and plans for a kayak trail; and

WHEREAS, Crown Hydro lacks the site control to operate its proposed hydroelectric plant; and

WHEREAS, electric generating facilities often are required to be surrounded by elaborate security measures that, in this instance, could restrict visitor access to educational and recreational opportunities on the riverfront that public investment has opened up;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board urges the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to consider the potential harm that the Crown Hydro project could cause for the state-supported interpretive mission of the member organizations of the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board and to use the Renewable Development Grant awarded to Crown Hydro in November 2001 for other more cost-effective projects.

D. Stephen Elliott
Chair