

City of Milwaukee
Zoning, Neighborhoods, and Development Committee
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

9/17/18

Alderman Rainey,

I am writing you today in support of resolution item 180168, Permanent Historic Designation for the Harris Pharmacy building at the corner of Historic Layton Boulevard and Greenfield Avenues. I am the Silver City property owner who filed the initial application to designate this building. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the hearing as I am participating in a three-day workshop in Chicago this week. Notification for the meeting was sent on Wednesday, September 12 at 4:52 p.m. Due to the short notice I was unable to reschedule without financial repercussions. My friend and fellow Silver City resident, Darren Allumiér will be present to read my testimony at the hearing.

I have lived at 30th and Greenfield in the Silver City neighborhood for the last six years. One of the things that drew me to the neighborhood is its history. I was surprised when I heard that the Notre Dame Middle School was going to demolish an historic building in the heart of the neighborhood. I was not alone.

I am in favor of the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendation to designate the Harris Pharmacy building as historic for the following reasons:

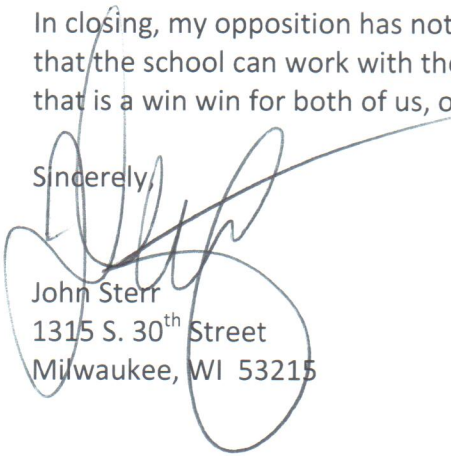
- It is designated as a contributing building on both the National and State Registers of Historic Places for Historic Layton Boulevard. Demolition of the Harris Pharmacy Building would put this designation at risk, and the historic tax credits and neighborhood assets that go along with it.
- Neighborhoods have to leverage their assets to address the issues they face. Our historic designation is a unique and valuable asset that we need to continue building upon to attract future home owners and visitors to our area. Tearing down our assets will not improve our neighborhood nor adequately address the issues we face.
- Tearing down a corner building goes counter to good urban design and planning. One of the issues we face is speeding traffic. Most every block has a speed bump or two. The city is planning to install the first one on my block this year, assessing every home owner on the block to pay for it. Tearing down a building that calms traffic at one of our busiest intersections goes counter to addressing this issue.
- The building is in great shape. Demolition is not warranted on the condition of the building. The roof, tuck pointing, and ornamental details are all in tact. Broken windows

have only been an issue recently, since the building has been vacated by the new owners.

- The building is an important commercial building that gives opportunity to local entrepreneurs. The building has been continuously occupied throughout its history. Most recently Flip'n Styles, a popular barber shop operated there. They have since moved to Walker's point when the building was vacated.
- To date there has been no public meeting or outreach by the school to the neighborhood regarding their plans. Many neighbors are still unaware that demolition is even being considered.

In closing, my opposition has nothing to do with the Norte Dame Middle School. It is my hope that the school can work with the neighborhood to find a use for the Harris Pharmacy Building that is a win win for both of us, or at the very least return it to active use.

Sincerely,



John Sterr
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