

May 7, 2020

Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee
220 East Wells Street
Room 301-B
Milwaukee, WI 53202

1100 S. 5th Street, Ste. 319
Milwaukee, WI 53204
P: 414.220.0530

RE: Jefferson Street Historic District

Dear Ald. Perez and Members of the Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance in support of the permanent historic designation of the Jefferson Street Historic District (“District”), consisting of six properties located on the west side of North Jefferson Street between East Mason and East Wells streets. The buildings located within the proposed District are notable as they represent a wide range of architectural styles within a relatively small geographic footprint. There are few blocks downtown that still possess both the architectural quality and variety of the District while remaining largely unaltered. The Watts Building, designed by one of Milwaukee’s foremost architects, Herbert Tullgren, is one of the city’s finest examples of the Mediterranean Revival-style architecture and notable for its generous use of ornate terra cotta. The other buildings within the District are notable in their own right and together create a cohesive, unique, and inviting destination.

According to a 2016 study by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, older neighborhoods with a mixture of small, mixed-age buildings have significantly higher Walk Score rankings and Transit Score ratings than neighborhoods with large, new buildings. These neighborhoods were also found to be more conducive to small and local businesses and tend to attract a more diverse mix of residents from different age groups.

Milwaukee is fortunate to have a downtown that still retains a large stock of historic buildings. The buildings in this District offer qualities that could not easily be replicated today and have served a thriving retail corridor for the better part of a century. Permanently designating these buildings as historic will ensure that they will remain viable and retain their architectural integrity for the next century.

Respectfully,



Peter Zanghi
President
Milwaukee Preservation Alliance