

HPKCC supports Woodlawn Avenue landmarking

The following letter was sent to Alderman Leslie Hairston (5th) and published in the Hyde Park Herald November 30, 2011. A similar letter was sent to Eleanor Gorski , Commissioner of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks.

I write on behalf of the Board of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference to let you know that we have expressed our strong support for the creation of the Woodlawn Avenue Corridor Landmark District to the Chicago Landmarks Commissioner, Eleanor Gorski.

Members of the Conference's Development, Preservation and Zoning Committee are active participants in the community's conversations and negotiations with the university and you about the future of the Woodlawn Avenue Corridor.

We hope that the discussions facilitated by your office to place strong protective language in the planned development amendment will succeed. But we believe a landmark district is needed for ongoing protection and management of change, and that it is desirable in its own right for this historic corridor.

The Conference remains concerned about the possibility of either demolition or unskillful rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of some of the buildings owned by the University of Chicago, as the neighborhood changes and the University continues its expansion to the east of the present main campus.

As you know, many of the houses and apartments were built to house the early faculty of the University, and a pantheon of important Chicago architects are represented. This area has a character all its own, which is treasured not only by residents, but also by those of us who pass through it in the course of our daily lives. To the pedestrian, as to the driver, the area of the Corridor indeed provides the "graceful transition" noted in the text of the community support form, between the campus quadrangles and the residential streets to the east.

The Conference expresses its gratitude to community members who have painstakingly documented the historical and architectural significance of the buildings in the corridor at the website <http://woodlawnaveinjeopardy.org/about>. We strongly encourage Ms. Gorski to approve the establishment of the Woodlawn Avenue Corridor Landmark District.

With best wishes,

Jane Ciacci, President, Hyde Park-Kenwood community Conference, for the Board of Directors.