

Mary Lou Terrien

From: Carole Lamantia <carolelamantia@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2016 1:25 PM
To: Mary Lou Terrien
Subject: HB5232 Historic Districts

Dear Ms. Terrien:

I ask that you please see that my comments reach the members of the committee considering this issue tomorrow at noon. Thank you!

This bill can only do great harm to the fabric of our society and will further deplete important landmarks state-wide that represent our history and culture. It will be of use only to those who will benefit financially from the destruction of our heritage. I understand it is sponsored at the behest of a lobbyist and a few wealthy developers. These few people don't need any help from the government or the people to continue to accrue millions of dollars. To allow them to destroy our historic buildings and districts throughout the state for their own personal gain is immoral and outrageous, and it certainly would not be for the public good.

I am a resident of the Brush Park Historic District in Detroit and am writing to urge the defeat of this bill. This bill would seriously weaken the protections afforded to Michigan's historic districts under PA 169 of 1970, the Historic Districts Act. Through Detroit's worst times, some of its historic districts (Indian Village, Palmer Woods, Boston-Edison, etc.) remained the most viable residential areas of the city. These areas remained desirable due to the history they preserved for us and future generations.

Local historic preservation ordinances are the only tool available to Michigan communities to protect their historic places. Proposed changes place the long-term protection of community heritage in the hands of short-term owners whose only concern is profit.

Historic preservation is an important component of economic development. The "owner consent" provisions of AB-5232 rescind a constitutional power from Michigan municipalities and give it to property owners. It's like making local signage, zoning rules, or setback rules, or fence rules optional.

Historic Preservation is a long game. Owner consent provisions are short-sighted. In Brush Park, there is currently much speculation going on by developers and opportunists due to the development of the Red Wings arena in the area. Without historic designation, which in itself is no guarantee of preservation, I can only imagine how much more of Detroit's history could be lost.

The preservation of our heritage and its economic benefits are of great importance and should not be sold out for short-term gain for a few.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carole Lamantia
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