



Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh

Give Life to History. SM

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January 31, 2005

Michael Eversmeyer
Chairman
City of Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission
200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Chairman Eversmeyer:

I am writing on behalf of the Young Preservationists Association's board of directors in support of Nathan Hart's nomination of Oakland Square as a city historic district. This nomination is one of the best expressions of our organization's mission: the encouragement of young people in the active participation of historic resources. More importantly, we support the historic significance of Oakland Square and Mr. Hart's rationale for the district nomination.

As one of the earlier middle-class settlements in what is now Central Oakland, the Oakland Square area contains significant and unique architectural forms. Walter C. Kidney in *Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture* comments that the view from the end of North Parkview Avenue (now the 3700 block of Parkview) shows a breathtaking panorama of Oakland's institutions: the Cathedral of Learning, the Carnegie Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, and Phipps Conservatory. Many of the homes are in various states of integrity—nearly all of the buildings have the same essential architecture, but some are missing unique details. We hope that the acceptance of this area as a new historic district will help to encourage residents to protect the remaining architecture and fine details on these homes, as well as promote the vistas from the neighborhood.

Historic preservation also has many economic benefits associated with it, especially when applied to small neighborhoods. Historic districts tend to cause an overall rise in property values and tax revenues, encouragement for rehabilitation, as well as stability for an economically and socially diverse population. Rehabilitations often cost less in the long run than new constructions.

Also of great concern to the residents of Oakland Square is the issue of quality of life. Naming this area as an historic district instills a sense of pride and community over the residents of the area, appropriate for a neighborhood where Clifford Ham (whose narrative forms part of the neighborhood's history) and Mr. Hart write that neighbors cross paths over the park at the community's core. Increased awareness of our history and an incentive to continually improve the community can make life better for all residents of "the Square."

Again, we ask that you please vote to recommend that city council approve Oakland Square as a city historic district. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sean T. Capperis
Board of Directors, Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh