

EDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
5358 N. Ashland Ave.  
Chicago IL 60640

May 23, 2007

Alderman Mary Ann Smith  
5533 N. Broadway  
Chicago IL 60640

Dear Mary Ann:

This is reference to the house at 5416 N. Winthrop and in response to the email I received from Marge Britton on May 4, 2007.

We believe there is still a way to save this house and thus preserve the unique block of four houses in a row in John L. Cochran's. It is a solution suggested by one of our members, LeRoy Blommaert, several years ago. The solution is to extend the TIF to include the 5400 block of Winthrop. We understand that the TIF already covers the west side of the 5300 block of Winthrop. Extending it to include one more block would not be a major extension. Once the property at 5416 Winthrop is included in the TIF, the city can acquire the property through eminent domain, pay the current owner the "fair market value" of the property then sell it to a developer at a reduced price under terms that would require the rehabilitation of the house and a donation of an easement to the city that would ensure its preservation in the future. TIF fund would in effect subsidize the preservation of the house by making rehabilitation feasible. The expenditure of \$500,000 for preservation work on the Uptown Theatre, done at your request, has already established the precedent that TIF funds can be used for historic preservation.

We also believe that the "fair market value" should take into account the negative impact that the owner's neglect of the house has had on the community.

Rehab of the house need not, in our view, require a full historic restoration. Rather, only the façade needs to be restored. A rear addition would be perfectly acceptable. A good example of preservation that takes into account economic realities is the rehab that Thom Greene did on the Francis Posner house at 1305 Rosedale, where the house was expanded to the rear and the façade restored.

Kathy Gemperle remembers speaking with Doug Fraser when he was Executive Director of the Edgewater Community Council about this proposal. Her recollection of their conversations is that Doug spoke with a TIF official and that he told Doug that such a proposal was not out of the question.

We would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience whether you will expand the TIF to include the 5400 block of Winthrop so that this solution can be implemented.

Finally, we understand that EBNA's membership over four years ago took a position against teardown of this property, and any others as well in the Edgewater Beach neighborhood, and that there has been no subsequent vote by the EBNA membership to reverse this position.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Mayian  
President  
For the Board of Directors of  
the Edgewater Historical  
Society

Cc: Marge Britton  
Doug Fraser  
Kathy Gemperle  
LeRoy Blommaert  
Thom Greene

Edgewater Community Council  
Edgewater Beach Neighbors Association

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