

Evan Mai and Diliانا Daskalova  
1682 Bagley, Corktown, Detroit, MI  
Ddhirt@vt.edu

Re: Opposition of the demolition of all or portions of building on the site of 1551 Church St. Detroit, MI

March 10, 2021

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose the demolition of all or portions of the building on the site of 1551 Church St, the former Red Arrow Soda factory building (currently Downtown Self Storage).

The developer of "Michigan and Church" proposes to construct a new multistory parking structure to accommodate new residents and visitors to the upcoming mixed-use development. While I support the "Michigan and Church" development including the proposal to construct a parking garage to accommodate new traffic, I strongly oppose the plan to demolish the historic Red Arrow building to make way for the parking structure. The Red Arrow Soda factory building was constructed in 1894 and has therefore been a part of the historic Corktown neighborhood for over one hundred years. The building stands sound to this day as evidenced by the fact that it still serves a commercial function. Contemporary buildings are typically built to last for 30 - 50 years. I am inclined to believe that the existing building will outlast any new construction that is proposed in its place.

Meanwhile, there are numerous vacant lots in the near vicinity which can be utilized for the construction of a new and frankly, soulless parking structure. Therefore, I cannot fathom a reason for the city to allow the removal of this historic building to make way for parking, thereby continuing the unfortunate legacy of this practice in Detroit proper. Furthermore, this move very directly plays into the destruction of Corktown's historic character. As a Corktown homeowner and longtime resident, I strongly urge you to reconsider this move and to either redirect or redesign the proposed garage to preserve the existing building. Perhaps it would be possible to build taller or to utilize one of the many vacant lots in the immediate vicinity.

I very much hope that the city and the developer can come together to devise a creative solution to this problem. Please know that this important decision will ultimately either weaken or strengthen the tradition of preserving our historic neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration,

Diliana Daskalova