

From: [elias khaliil](#)
To: [Historic District Commission \(Staff\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]DWC Outdoor Classroom Support
Date: Monday, May 9, 2022 11:09:08 AM

To the Detroit Historical Commission,

I am writing this letter to support the permanent approval of Detroit Waldorf Community's outdoor classrooms. As a Detroit resident, former educator, and current Detroit business owner, I can attest to the value of continuity in education for students, the tangible and concrete tie to nature and the surrounding community outside the four walls of an interior classroom, and the added benefit of community use and engagement outside scheduled school hours.

The outdoor classrooms were the result of collective and thoughtful work done by the Detroit Waldorf Community to serve its students in a challenging time. Moving forward, I believe that they can benefit the entire surrounding community.

In light of my passion for quality education, I ask that you consider the aforementioned and these following points:

- *The shelters are professionally designed and sited, built by parent volunteers with quality materials, and are an appropriate addition that integrates into the school's outdoor environment through the use of natural materials and transparency. Not a single tree or shrub was affected by the work, and important view corridors were carefully preserved.*
- *The property has always been a school, and like any other school, has always had an active, busy, and child-focused exterior landscape.*
- *The school takes great care in the maintenance of its exterior landscape, and has slowly transformed the former vacant lots on the east side of Burns into a beautiful enclave called Quietland. Though charming and beloved by our children, this is not a rigidly preserved historic landscape, nor is it either historically or currently a park-like setting, but instead is and will remain an active area for education, growth, and outdoor play.*
- *Waldorf is a school focused on developing children who are deeply connected to the natural world, as such these structures have become central to accomplishing our educational mission*
- *The shelters have been well received in the community and have reflected well upon the school and the Indian Village Historic District both locally and in national media.*
- *The shelters have maintained the school's enrollment, and thus broadened its ability to serve the children of Detroit. The school offers robust accessible tuition programs, in which nearly half its students participate.*
- *The shelters have provided opportunities for community celebration, growth and engagement, through hosting of festivals, plays, day camps, scouting groups, garden tours, art shows, and many other activities that attract Detroiters to the district*

Thank you. I hope you vote for permanent approval of the DWC outdoor classrooms.

Sincerely,

Elias J. Khalil
Owner, La Feria Spanish Tapas Detroit

"Love people and use things,
because the opposite never works"

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