

Date: November 8, 2023

To: Detroit Historic Commission

Re: 14901, 14917 & 14927 East Jefferson (AKA The Schaap Center) – Jefferson Chalmers HD – Demolish buildings, construct parking lots and loading access drive for arts center project in Grosse Pointe Park

What makes the Schaap Center worthy of support?

Jefferson-Chalmers residents would like access to more amenities like the arts. The Schaap Center will be in very close proximity and offer the neighborhood access to a broad range of programming. The Schaap has expressed an intent to have affordable programming and opportunities for local artists.

Efforts to develop and promote economic activity along the Jefferson-Chalmers neighborhood business corridor have in the past been hampered. There is low population density north of Jefferson. Population south of Jefferson is denser but limited to several blocks deep north of the Detroit River. It has to-date not been possible to attract major retailers despite the best efforts of community developers. Having a destination attraction like the Schaap Center can increase awareness of the potential for development along the corridor and the increased traffic has the potential to be a catalyst for development.

Recent successful local projects that have been initiated or supported by our Grosse Pointe neighbors have included the Kercheval/Alter murals, the pocket park at Ashland and Jefferson, and the Manistique Artscape south of Jefferson. Imagine the potential for additional partnerships the Schaap Center offers...like the Jazzin' On Jefferson event morphing to Jazzin' and Art on Jefferson.

So could this Grosse Pointe Park Schaap Center project lead to new arts entertainment, arts projects, occupants and visitors along the Jefferson corridor, new jobs? Please don't stand in the way of this potential cultural and economic shot in the arm for our Jefferson-Chalmers neighborhood.

Eleanor Alcala Mercier