

Fw: Support for landmark designation Halsted-Willow Group July 12

ccl <ccl@cityofchicago.org>

Wed 7/7/2021 2:24 PM

To: Daniel Klaiber <Daniel.Klaiber@cityofchicago.org>

From: Anne Moore <am@annemoore.net>**Sent:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 6:51 PM**To:** ccl <ccl@cityofchicago.org>**Subject:** Support for landmark designation Halsted-Willow Group July 12

[Warning: External email]

Ernest Wong
Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Chairman Wong,

I'm writing in support of landmark designation for the Halsted-Willow Group, a collection of well-preserved and -documented 19th century mixed-use buildings in Lincoln Park. These buildings form a handsome gateway to residential neighborhoods to the east and west, and to the landmarked Armitage Halsted District (2003) a few blocks north.

The masonry and glass buildings at Halsted-Willow have been a place for street-level commerce, with apartment living overhead, for more than 100 years. This is a vibrant corner. I support landmarking of these 19th century buildings because they are desirable and functional in the 21st century. It's a corner that signals the past while serving the present.

Small-scale historic structures within the Armitage Halsted District (and Southport Corridor) have been embraced by independent and national retailers for decades. The Halsted-Willow Group is part of the same.

Sincerely,

Anne Moore,
Chair
Lincoln Central Assoc. zoning & planning committee

Proposed Landmark Designation Pursuant to §2-120-670 through §2-120-680 of the Municipal Code
HALSTED-WILLOW GROUP WARDS 2 & 43 1726-1808 North Halsted Street (evens), 1727-1733
North Halsted Street (odds), 800-812 West Willow Street (evens), and 745-813 West Willow Street
(odds)

Monday, July 12, 2021

1:00 p.m. www.chicago.gov/ccl Commissioner Tiara Hughes

ANNE MOORE

CHICAGO JOURNALIST
WWW.ANNEMOORE.NET
REVIEWS OF BOOKS, TRAVEL, DINING, LIFE
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July 7, 2021

(SENT VIA EMAIL)

Commissioner Tiara Hughes, Hearing Officer
Commission on Chicago Landmarks
Attention: Dan Klaiber

*RE: Proposed Landmark Designation for the Halsted and Willow Group – Public Hearing,
July 12, 2021*

Dear Commissioner Hughes,

Landmarks Illinois is in full support of the proposed Chicago Landmark designation of the Halsted and Willow Group.

In 2013, Landmarks Illinois was first alerted to a development proposal that would have demolished 1800 N. Halsted, built as a store and flat building in 1883, at the northwest corner of Halsted and Willow. At that point, LI embarked on a collaborative, multi-year advocacy effort with Lincoln Central Association and Ranch Triangle, with the support of Alderwoman Michele Smith, to protect what the local community organizations recognized as a largely intact, late-nineteenth century group of commercial buildings that serve as a visual gateway to the Sheffield neighborhood. We placed the grouping of buildings on our *Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois* list in 2014. Miraculously, this group of four 1880s buildings on prominent corners not only survived urban renewal of the 1960s and 70s, but subsequently the large-scale development project that threatened this visually cohesive commercial intersection.

In 2015, with Alderwoman Smith, the local community groups and DPD staff planner Matt Crawford, we began to assess the landmark eligibility of the intersection. Noted architectural historian Terry Tatum agreed the collection of buildings qualified for Chicago Landmark designation and agreed to prepare a designation report. LI provided grant funds to Lincoln Central to match funds from Lincoln Central, Ranch Triangle and the alderwoman's office for preparation of the designation report, which was approved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks for preliminary designation in 2020. We greatly thank the community groups and Alderwoman Smith for their hard work and perseverance to see this important group of buildings protected and Alderman Hopkins and Historic Preservation Division staff for their support.

While 1800 N. Halsted is the best known of the grouping from two long-time businesses located there, the Black Duck restaurant from 2000-2014 and from 1914-1949 the Schulien's Tavern (a gathering place for noted Chicagoans and magicians), all of the buildings in the proposed designation have exceptional architectural integrity and craftsmanship that could not be replicated today. We commend Laramar, who later took ownership of 1800 and 1732 N. Halsted, and Dan Allen – former owner of Black Duck and now the Willow Room, who took special care in renovating his restaurant space – and all the building owners in the proposed district for preserving the integrity of these irreplaceable buildings. Landmark designation will protect their investments and ensure that this rare collection of intact 1880s commercial buildings remain as an important visual gateway for the community.

Sincerely,

Lisa DiChiera
Director of Advocacy

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July 8, 2021

VIA E-MAIL

City of Chicago
Commission on Chicago Landmarks
City Hall, Room 1000
121 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60602
ccl@cityofchicago.org

Re: *Halsted Willow Group (the "Group")*

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

As a Chicagoan of 52 years and 27-year resident of Ranch Triangle and Lincoln Central, I write in support of the proposed designation. I am glad to say I have played a role, however minor, in the proposal itself. In 2014, while pursuing coursework in Historic Preservation at the School of the Art Institute, I commenced a research project on the 1800 N. Halsted building at the suggestion of Landmarks Illinois, in an effort to increase awareness of the significance of the building and its colorful past. At that time, the historic "Hammerstroem Hall" was threatened with demolition. Terry Tatum, my instructor at SAIC, steered me to various source material, along with sources in the Historic Preservation Division of DPD. It was then that I also connected with the folks at Ranch and Lincoln Central, who were also attempting to save 1800. In conjunction with the neighborhood associations and Landmarks Illinois, we made our best case for preservation and proved successful – in the short term at least. I was fortunate that certain of my initial research was used and expanded by students at Loyola University, as part of their own seminar work, and later by Terry, who drafted the instant designation report for CCL to include the Group as a whole. Accordingly, I like to think I was "there at the creation."

I urge you to approve the designation for the following reasons:

Architecture provides a sense of place unlike any art form. I believe the Group serves as the gateway to an all-too-rapidly disappearing historic Lincoln Park – a now-fading sense of place. The Group accordingly merits preservation, particularly considering what's been lost, even in just the last decade or so, in the area surrounding the subject. For example, since the time I lived at Willow and Howe in the late 1990s, virtually all the Victorian era buildings on the streets just east of Halsted and Willow (Burling, Orchard, Howe) have been demolished. We are losing that sense of place, and the area's National Register status, as you know, provides no true protection. Indeed,

other than the Group, the neighborhood to its east is almost entirely unrecognizable. In residents' thirst for more and more square footage, few new Chicagoans have opted for restoration of the historic fabric in the area around the Group, instead choosing the wrecking ball. Regrettably, so much has now been lost there remains little left to save. The Group, however, can and should be saved. After all, it was the historic nature and beauty of the Group itself that attracted many residents to this neighborhood in the first place. That alone deserves protection.

More broadly, I suggest that the Group should be approved as a significant example of a vanishing type of historic intersection in the City as a whole, not just in Lincoln Park. My dad was a deputy district chief on the Chicago Fire Department. As young boys, my brothers and I loved playing a memory game where we'd recite Chicago's street names, from north to south and east to west, for dad – "just like they'd do at the firehouse." We also loved to take drives around the North Side to confirm what we'd memorized. After all these years, I have a near-photographic recall of many of Chicago's intersections.

As a result, I don't necessarily need Google Maps or another source to reinforce the fact the Group represents one of the last intact historic commercial intersections in all of Chicago. Examples abound. To cite a few (to the best of my knowledge and recollection), there simply are no other Victorian era commercial intersections on all of Halsted from downtown south to Lakeview. The same holds true for Sheffield, as well as Lincoln from where it begins at Wells to Lakeview. There are *no* vintage buildings *whatsoever* on Clark Street from Germania Place to River North. In short, the Group is exceptional in this regard and merits landmark status for this reason as well. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,

/s/

John J. Tully, Jr.



55 East Monroe Street
37th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603

312 346 7500 main
312 580 2201 fax
thompsoncoburn.co

Bernard I. Citron
312 580 2209 direct
bcitron@thompsoncoburn.com

Via Electronic Mail: (dcuvalo@cityofchicago.org)

Dijana Cuvalo
First Deputy Commissioner
Historic Preservation Division
Department of Planning and Development
121 N. LaSalle Room 1000
Chicago Illinois 60602

Re: Designation of the Halsted-Willow Group as a Chicago Landmark
1727 N. Halsted

Dear Commissioner Cuvalo:

On behalf of the owners of 1727 N. Halsted we are repeating our objection to the inclusion of 1727 N. Halsted as part of the Halsted-Willow Group Landmark District.

Specifically, the principal elevation of the building was significantly modified in the past from its original appearance. This alone should be the reason for the building to not be included within the proposed District. Inclusion within the proposed District will not cause the owner to restoration of the elevation to its original form. Unfortunately, the owner's concern is that any future work on the Halsted elevation will require conformance with original design. This requirement will have a negative impact on the ability to ultimately re-tenant the ground floor. This will increase the cost of any construction with no corresponding benefit conferred upon the owner.

Unfortunately, that is the concern over the designation of Historic Districts. Individual buildings are included within the proposed districts with no commensurate benefit for the property owners of these buildings.. The Class L tax abatement only applies if significant renovation is required for the building (which in this instance is not required). There are few if any other incentives available to property owners of buildings within a Historic District. The fact remains that inclusion of individual buildings within proposed Historic District imposes a burden on property owners without any corresponding benefits (except in limited circumstances).

The only building within the proposed District that is potentially subject to redevelopment is the 1727 building. The other buildings are part of an existing Planned Development that

July 6, 2021
Page 2

allows the City to control any possible redevelopment of those parcels. The burden of the proposed District therefore almost entirely falls on the owner of the 1727 building. We therefore continue to object to the formation of the Halsted-Willow Landmark District.

Very truly yours,

Thompson Coburn



Bernard I. Citron
BIC/dd

Cc: Linda Lang (lynlangpac57@gmail.com)
Daniel Klaiber (Daniel.Klaiber@cityofchicago.org)

10200160.2

July 5, 2021

Dear Dijana and Landmark Commissioners:

Learning that the Halsted-Willow gateway is scheduled for a public hearing on July 12, 2021, I unfortunately can not join you. But I express my support for designating these buildings a Chicago Landmark District. The four buildings possess historic and architectural integrity as was confirmed in the CCL staff presentation December 3, 2020 when preliminary designation was approved.

If there is any confusion that landmarking would decrease a neighborhood's values, may I point to the neighboring Old Town Triangle Historic District where I've been a resident since 1974. On the contrary landmarking increases a neighborhood's worth. We have not seen a decrease in property values due to landmarking which occurred many years ago in 1977. People find the history and architecture of this neighborhood as charming, important, and irreplaceable as they do the Willow-Halsted Gateway.

Chicago author Joseph Gustaitis wrote in *Chicago Transformed: World War I and the Windy City*:

In 1900 Germans constituted by far the largest ethnic group in Chicago; visitors to the heart of the German district at Halsted and North Avenues might think they were in Frankfurt.

The Halsted-Willow Gateway is but a block north. Although it would not be mistaken for Frankfurt today, these 1880's intact buildings initially owned and occupied by German immigrants continue to foster a strong sense of pride and interest in the neighborhood.

Chicago is a city of neighborhoods. How fortunate that this intersection's structures have survived mostly unaltered. Please vote to approve the Halsted-Willow designation which will keep this piece of Chicago history intact.

Thank you,

Diane Gonzalez,
Old Town Triangle Historic District resident
Preservation Chicago board member

Cc: Deidre Graziano, Member, Zoning Committee, Lincoln Central Association
Michele Smith, Alderman 43rd Ward
Lisa De Chiera, Director of Advocacy, Landmarks Illinois
Ward Miller, Executive Director, Preservation Chicago
Zac Bleicher, Old Town Triangle Historic District Committee Chair

BRIAN HOPKINS
ALDERMAN, 2ND WARD
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July 12, 2021

Maurice D. Cox
Commissioner, Department of Planning and Development
121 N. LaSalle St., 10th Floor
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: Halsted/Willow Proposed Landmark District

Dear Commissioner Cox,

I am writing you to voice my support for the proposed landmark district at Halsted and Willow, two of which fall in the 2nd Ward.

According to Preservation Chicago, "Each of the four structures is a finely crafted building, from the Frank Niesen Building, housing 'Vinci restaurant' at 1730-1732 N. Halsted, constructed in 1889, to the twin buildings—Zuber Building and Gespitz's Drug Store Building, 1727-1729 N. Halsted, both circa 1880. Also, Hammerstrom's Hall/Schulien's Building, (1800 N. Halsted) was built as a combination storefront, apartment and social hall, and dating to 1883." Furthermore, 1800 N. Halsted had multiple historic uses including a German tavern and social hall on the second floor. It is recognized as the birthplace of "Chicago-style" magic, created at legendary restaurant Shulien's, which occupied the site from 1886 to 1956. Bosnian immigrants settled in the area in the post-World War II years, and the public hall in the 1800 North Halsted building became a Muslim Religious Cultural Home and Bosnian American Cultural Center.

These buildings are both beautiful and important to the history of our city. Landmarking them so that they are preserved for the future is a very worthy endeavor.

Should you have additional questions about this matter, please contact the 2nd Ward Service Office, at (312) 643-2299.

Sincerely,

Alderman Brian Hopkins
2nd Ward

July 12, 2021

Commission on Chicago Landmarks

City of Chicago

Chicago City Hall

121 N. LaSalle Street

Chicago, Illinois 60603

Re: The proposed Preliminary Willow-Halsted Landmark District, Chicago

Dear Commissioner Hughes and Members of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks,

We at Preservation Chicago, fully support the Chicago Landmark Designation of the Willow-Halsted District of four buildings, located at 1727-1729, 1733, 1730-1732 and 1800 N. Halsted Street, Chicago.

These four structures tell a visual story and history of the development of buildings along the Halsted Street commercial corridor in the Lincoln Park Community. It's also a history relating to the German-American community on Chicago's North Side, and gives some insight into Lincoln Park's history during the last decades of the 19th century.

Each of the four structures is a finely crafted building, from the Frank Niesen Building, housing "Vinci restaurant" at 1730-1732 N. Halsted, constructed in 1889, to the twin buildings—Zuber Building and Gespitz's Drug Store Building/1727-1729 N. Halsted Building, both circa 1880. Also, Hammerstrom's Hall/Schulien's Building, built as a combination storefront, apartment and social hall, and dating to 1883. These buildings situated at the corner of Willow and Halsted Streets are remarkable in character, define a gateway to the commercial district that lays beyond and the Armitage-Halsted District, also Landmarked to the north.

Urban Renewal efforts of the 1960s and 1970s, left much of the commercial streets to the south of this site—near the Yondorf Hall Building/Sam's Liquors (now a Designated Chicago Landmark) Building, vacant of structures—with huge empty parcels. And it's difficult to believe that not too long ago, this immediate area near North Avenue and Clybourn Avenue was sort of "a tenderloin district," which had suffered from disinvestment and heavy-handed land clearance policies, demolishing vast swaths of historic buildings.

These four buildings also represent a new vision to the greater Lincoln Park Community, where commercial buildings and the community experienced/underwent a renaissance. When this was occurring, it was one of the few bright sparks at the time—encouraging a reuse of historic commercial

buildings, versus demolition. While that may have been underway in the Old town Triangle District, it was a fairly new idea for commercial structures in this vicinity at the time.

It is also said that John Baird, of the Baird & Warner family and real estate firm, also a long serving member of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, personally saw something special in these defining masonry corner anchor buildings. Noting that interest, these structures were integrated into a larger plan, which included new construction as well. However, John Baird's reuse ideas were visionary for the time and contributed greatly to the reestablishment of the immediate commercial area as a destination for restaurants, theaters—both the Steppenwolf and Royal George Theatres, as well as a place for the community and neighbors to gather.

On a personal note, my very own paternal great-grandparents and grandmother lived and grew-up in this area, owned a business at 907 W. Armitage in what is now the Armitage-Halsted Landmark District. They worshiped nearby at St. Michael's Church in Old Town, while my own children, now adults, once attended the nearby Newberry Math & Science Academy/elementary school, a short block to the east of this intersection. So, on so many various levels I've personally observed this community over the decades, watched it change ethnically over time from German-American to Latinx, and then transform to a very diverse community of great investment and change.

These four structures are fine quality buildings and will be a fine addition to our Chicago neighborhood Landmarks across Chicago and we are proud to have worked with community members, and our preservation partners, including Landmarks Illinois for more than five years towards this goal and outcome.

Special thanks are in order to Deidre Graziano, Diane Levin, Diane Gonzalez, Allan Mellis, nearby community organizations, Alderwoman Michelle Smith, 43rd Ward, Alderman Brian Hopkins, 2nd Ward, along with their Staff, and R. Terry Tatum, who worked with so many community members over time and prepared this Preliminary Landmarks Report.

We at Preservation Chicago fully support the designation of these buildings, located at the corner of Willow and Halsted Streets, as a Designated Chicago Landmark District.

Sincerely,

Ward Miller

Ward Miller, Executive Director

Preservation Chicago

cc: CCL@CityofChicago.org, Dijana Cuvalo, DPD, Historic Preservation Division; Alderman Michelle Smith, Alderman of the 43rd Ward; Alderman Brian Hopkins, Alderman of the 2nd Ward; Deirdre Graziano, Lincoln Central Association; Diane Levin, Ranch Triangle Association, Diane Gonzalez, Old Town Historical District Committee; Lisa DiChiera, Landmarks Illinois; Bonnie McDonald, Landmarks Illinois; Ted Wroblewski, Sheffield Neighbors; Allan Mellis, Lincoln Park Community Leader, Joana Zaidan, 43rd Ward, John Geahan, 2nd Ward, Kandilyn Hahn, DPD, Historic Preservation Division.