

# Preservation Chicago

Citizens advocating for the preservation of Chicago's historic architecture

August 6 2020

Brad Suster

*President*

Commission on Chicago Landmarks

City of Chicago

Jacob Kaplan

*Vice President*

121 N. LaSalle Street

Chicago, Illinois

Debbie Dodge

*Secretary*

Re: Landmark Recommendation for the Schlitz Tied House - 9401 S. Ewing Avenue

Stuart Berman

*Treasurer*

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks,

Preservation Chicago is very pleased to recommend the Schlitz Tied House, located at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue as a Chicago Landmark.

*Board of Directors*

Cathie Bond

Preservation Chicago has worked with owners Mike and Laura Medina, Alderman Susan Garza and DPD-Historic Preservation Staff at the City of Chicago, to encourage both the purchase and designation of this building as a Chicago Landmark. Such a designation and recommendation would join this structure to the other remarkable Schlitz Tied Houses across Chicago and a Schlitz Stable Building, which received Chicago Landmark Designation in the past.

Diane Gonzalez

Joyce Jackson

Jack Spicer

Andrea Reed

Charles Vinz

Joanne Yasus

The building designed by architect Charles Thisslew in 1907, is a wonderful representation of these company-owned tied house buildings, once located in communities across Chicago. Thisslew also designed another Schlitz Tied House on Chicago's North Side at 2159 W. Belmont, which is part of the Schlitz Tied House District of buildings and a former stable. So, there is a precedent for this building to be considered for this honor and designation.

This Schlitz Tied House structure is located in Chicago's East Side Community, adjacent to South Chicago, and in an area of the City, which has few Designated Chicago Landmarks. We therefore highly encourage the designation of this structure, in addition to others, looking to the future, as this community was once part of the industrial might and the heart of the steel industry in Chicago, with has changed so drastically over the past 40 years. With that said, let's further consider additional Designated Landmarks as part of the City's "Invest South/West program," in these Far-South Side communities. We're here to help in such pursuits.

We also would like to have the Commission and DPD Historic Preservation Division consider other tied houses for protection, including a very special 4-story former tied house at 1339 W. Lake Street (near Lake, Loomis and Ogden on the southeast corner). This is a orange-rated building on Chicago's Near West Side, which was facing a potential demolition in 2016, and is thought to be sold in the coming days ahead and potentially demolished in the near future for a large development. It would be wonderful to include such a building and its facades as part of that larger development, and encourage a

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Chicago Landmark Designation of this beautiful structure., either as part of a individual Landmark or a Tied-House District extension.

In closing, we wish to extend special thanks to owners Mike and Laura Medina, Alderman Susan Garza, the Department and the City for supporting and recognizing the Ewing Street Schlitz Tied House as a Designated Chicago Landmark.

Sincerely,

*Ward Miller*

Ward Miller, Executive Director

## Pilsen Landmark Disstrict

Diane Gonzalez <gonzomeno@sbcglobal.net>

Tue 8/4/2020 1:35 PM

To: Dijana Cuvalo <Dijana.Cuvalo@cityofchicago.org>; ccl <ccl@cityofchicago.org>

Cc: Ward Miller Preservation Chicago <wmiller@preservationchicago.org>

[Warning: External email]

Good morning Dijana and Commissioners,

This email is in support of the designation of Pilsen as a Chicago Landmark District. Dijana, could you please pass this message to the commissioners as I'm unable to attend the 8/6 Landmarks Commission zoom meeting.

Pilsen is a fantastic representation of Chicago's growth and history. From its earlier Irish, German, and Eastern European immigrants to today's Mexican community, Pilsen is an excellent example of this city's evolution. Walking around Pilsen one gets a sense of its Bohemian past and its Mexican present. The architecture and the spirit of this vibrant area are unsurpassed and must be preserved.

Please support the designation of Pilsen as a Chicago Landmark District.

Thank you,  
Diane Gonzalez,  
Member, Old Town Triangle Historic District Committee  
Member, Preservation Chicago Board

## Statement on the Pilsen Landmark District

Elizabeth Blasius <elizabeth.blasius@gmail.com>

Wed 8/5/2020 5:59 PM

To: ccl <ccl@cityofchicago.org>; Kandalyn.Haun@cityofchicago.org <Kandalyn.Haun@CityofChicago.org>

[Warning: External email]

Ms. Haun,

I would like to offer the following statement on the proposed Pilsen Landmark District in advance of tomorrow's Commission on Chicago Landmarks meeting:

Preservation actions by the City of Chicago that do not listen to the voices of the community that will be directly affected by those actions are unethical. Chicago is no longer in a position where we can follow the traditional methods of landmarking buildings for their architectural significance, or to prevent demolition, as these methods were put into place before we considered how our decisions as preservationists drove inequity. If passed as-is, the Pilsen Historic District will protect buildings at the cost of the public's trust of how historic preservation serves them. Chicago has the ability to create new laws and ordinances to save buildings that are driven by community input and coordination and we owe it to the people of Pilsen to be innovative in our approach.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth A. Blasius  
Architectural Historian  
Blaservations, Inc.  
2400 North Kedzie Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60647  
(773)814-7845

blaservations.com  
@blaservations

"Focused. I'm a hustler, and my hustle is trying to figure out the best ways to do what I like to do without having to do much else."

-Yasiin Bey (Mos Def)

## Chicago Landmark Designation of Pilsen

tomnizinski@gmail.com <tomnizinski@gmail.com>

Wed 8/5/2020 8:58 PM

To: ccl <ccl@cityofchicago.org>

[Warning: External email]

Dear Chairman Leon,

I am writing to express my support for the Chicago Landmark Designation of Pilsen. Six new luxury apartment or condo buildings have recently been built one block east of us and a fourth is being completed on the block just north of us. This is happening all over the neighborhood and is drastically changing it's character. My wife and I moved to Pilsen in 1996 for its vibrant quality and artistic community. Over the past few years the vibrance has significantly dulled and the artists have moved out because they can no longer afford to live here. If this place continues the neighborhood will soon be unrecognizable.

Sincerely

Tom Nizinski

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*Vice President*

121 N. LaSalle Street

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Debbie Dodge

*Secretary*

Re: Landmark Recommendation for the Pilsen District

Stuart Berman

*Treasurer*

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks,

Preservation Chicago is very pleased to strongly support and recognize the Pilsen District, as a Chicago Landmark.

*Board of Directors*

Cathie Bond

Preservation Chicago acknowledges that preservation and designation of historic structures has at times been challenging, and sometimes not without controversy in our City in the past and even today.

Diane Gonzalez

Joyce Jackson

However, we also recognize the architectural, historical and cultural heritage of such areas as the Pilsen District and its importance to the City of Chicago, and to the residents of the community. This Landmark Designation is critically important and without measures to protect these historic and cultural assets, much of Pilsen will mostly likely be lost, with the community potentially unrecognizable to many of us in the coming years ahead.

Jack Spicer

Andrea Reed

Charles Vinz

Joanne Yasus

To further emphasize the significance of the Pilsen Community and area, it has been on listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 2006 – some 14 years time. We at Preservation Chicago have also been part of efforts to recognize this area as a Chicago Landmark District for more than five years, attending and taking part in various meetings and discussions, at the invitation of both the City and elected officials.

Pilsen is one of Chicago's oldest communities, it is part of an area called the "Lower West Side" of Chicago by our City's land maps and community areas – which in many ways is not too different from "Lower East Side" of New York City. It was and continues to be, "a port of entry" to our City for immigrants. Pilsen in so many ways is "Chicago's Ellis Island," with many immigrant groups over time settling and layering our City's history, along with historic fabric of the community.

In our opinion, a Chicago Landmark Designation of the Pilsen District will present the best possibility of protecting the residents of Pilsen, its history, character, look, spirit and feel, well into the future.

We should also consider programs that could benefit residents and owner-occupied buildings as part of a larger package of incentives for residents, not unlike what the City

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has executed in the past for other Landmark Districts, which may offer various incentives and guidelines. This was perhaps evident in the Fulton Market Innovation District, which overlays various land use plans. Also, such developments as a Community Benefits Agreements, which are being adopted for the Woodlawn Community, in anticipation of the Obama Presidential Center, could also be employed in the Pilsen area if so desired by the community and elected officials. Certainly funds could be distributed to owner-occupied buildings for improvements as part of a City-led pilot program, or via some sort of tax breaks for buildings within Landmark Districts for a limited time period, to encourage exterior repairs to facades and historic features visible from the public right-of-way.

In closing, we at Preservation Chicago are of the opinion, that it is so very important to proceed with a Chicago Landmark Designation of the Pilsen District.

We also want to encourage the Chicago Landmark Designation of several significant religious buildings in the Pilsen community, which appear to be delayed, which Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez has promised the City would Landmark and downzone. Most pressing is the protection and designation of St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, located at 1650 W. 17<sup>th</sup> Street in Pilsen, which has been closed, deconsecrated and mothballed for more than a year, thereby removing the required owner consent for Chicago Landmark Designation.

The recognition of St. Adalbert Church – constructed as the Mother Church of Chicago's Southwest Side Polish Community by architect Henry Schlacks, and now also a shared landmark in the Latinix community, would also be a positive step forward in gaining additional support and trust in the community. As that magnificent church building stands in immediate peril and its protection would send a very positive and meaningful message too, which should not be overlooked.

We've not met anyone in the Pilsen community that does not feel that St. Adalbert is important enough to protect and designate a Chicago Landmark. Such steps in tandem with a designation of the Pilsen District would perhaps gain much broader and additional support for Landmarks in the community.

Thanks so much for your consideration and support of these ideas and requests.

Sincerely,

*Ward Miller*

Ward Miller, Executive Director