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January 7, 2019

Members of East Franklinton Review Board
111 N. Front Street, 3rd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-9030

Dear Review Board Members:

I am writing to respectfully ask you to say no to demolition of the 1912 West Side Spiritualist Church at 79 McDowell St. in Franklinton. This architecturally and historically significant structure withstood the Great 1913 Flood and represents the resilience and strength of the neighborhood. We believe the building should be the centerpiece of a signature design for affordable housing or other redevelopment.

Columbus Landmarks issued a petition on December 21, 2018 that received 480 signatures and 175 thoughtful comments in support of saving the church and encouraging all parties involved to consider adaptive reuse vs. demolition. People care about this building – they understand its value and its challenges. They also appreciate the abundant creativity in Franklinton that stems from authenticity.

Please say no to demolition of 79 McDowell St. We are confident there is a better solution and we pledge to be constructive and helpful in finding one. The building is not only physical evidence of Franklinton in an earlier heyday, but the potential catalyst for something truly inspiring and uniquely Columbus. We will never have a piece of architecture like this to work with again. Once it is gone, it is gone forever.

Attached is a brief history of the building and the petition comments for review. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this issue and thank you for serving on this Board, helping to shape the city for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Becky West
Executive Director

cc: Belkis Schoenhals, Senior Planner, City of Columbus

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