

Leslie Lynch-Wilson
1308 University Avenue
Lincoln Park, MI 48146
313-598-3137

October 22, 2013

Senator David B. Robertson
Committee Chair
Senate Local Government & Elections Committee
PO Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Senate Bills 21 and 22

Dear Senator Robertson,

Senate Bills 21 and 22 was created due to me and the May 2010 demolition of the National Register-listed Mellus Newspapers Building formerly located at 1661 Fort Street, Lincoln Park. As founder and president of Lincoln Park Preservation Alliance, I fought hard to save this art moderne building by recruiting possible tenants, developers and owners for it. I achieved local, state and national press for the building.

I'd like to tell you the reasons we need the DDA Act revised is so that we do not lose historic properties like the Mellus Newspapers Building. Due to my job, I am unable to come to Lansing tomorrow and testify on behalf of Senate Bills 21 and 22 at the Senate Local Government & Elections Committee meeting.

Michigan DDA's were created to stop property value deterioration, eliminate the causes of property value deterioration and to stimulate economic growth and development in downtown areas. Rehabilitating historic buildings has an economic impact on downtown areas and often serves as catalysts for DDA districts.

Lincoln Park DDA went through Section 106 in 2010 due to the DDA Act and historic properties. The outcome was the MI SHPO recommendations to the Lincoln Park DDA. However, the DDA Act did not have enough teeth to it for the Lincoln Park DDA to heed the advice or recommendation of the MI SHPO.

The outcome was that the demolition of the Mellus Newspapers Building was contrary to the Lincoln Park DDA's goal of to "stop property value deterioration, eliminate the causes of property value deterioration and to stimulate economic growth and development in downtown areas. "

The vacant land sits as an eyesore, next to another eyesore, a DDA owned building. It's been 3.5 years since the Mellus Newspapers Building was demolished. I've been on the Lincoln Park DDA board for a year now. As a board, we've spent the past year talking about how to use the vacant land and DDA owned building adjacent.

Sincerely,

Leslie Lynch-Wilson