

Neighborhood Planning & Preservation

1527 Highlands Ave. P.O. Box 4731 Louisville, KY 40204

November 29, 2016

Attn: Madonna Flood

Chair, Planning/Zoning, Land Design and Development Committee

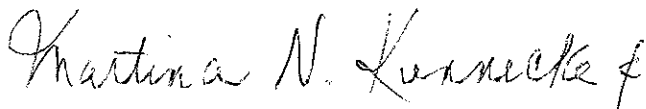
Re: ID 16-1584 Landmarks Commission Designation of 2833 Tremont Drive,
Aka Powell-Smith House (Kalorama), as a Local Landmark.

NPP SUPPORTS allowing the Landmark Commission's decision to landmark 2833 Tremont to stand. The purpose of historic designation is to protect older structures from those whose personal interests outweigh their respect for the larger community and its historic assets. Consequently, historic valuations are not determined by one's personal interpretation of what is historically or architecturally significant—but by an expert panel exercising a process informed by professional standards, technical criteria and data.

Utilizing these tools, the Landmarks Commission voted unanimously to landmark 2833 Tremont—the former home of Bishop Benjamin Bosworth Smith, who laid the cornerstone of the Episcopalian faith in the Kentucky wilderness. It is unfortunate that the petitioners choose to belittle this history or the research that has established credible linkages to the frontier expansion, African American history and early education in the region.

Given the simple age of the home and its proximity to other historic structures including Farmington, the petitioners' claim they were unaware that it might be historic is simply not credible. For months before the Commission hearings, they rejected any efforts to help them either restore the property economically or sell the property. Since the home was Landmarked, they have gutted the interior, left windows open and damaged historic elements in the process. This level of stewardship is troubling, and like their efforts to overturn this designation, seems geared towards circumventing the process designed to protect Louisville's historic fabric and our collective heritage from people who do not understand or respect the depth and scope of our history.

If their claims of economic hardships are genuine, there are still pathways available to them. We urge the petitioners to recognize they still have options, which would protect this historic structure and demonstrate a respect for their neighbors and our history. ***Meanwhile, we urge this committee and the Metro Council to uphold the ruling of the Louisville Landmark's Commission.***



Respectfully,

Martina Nichols Kunnecke, President

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