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Submitted by Ted Stone
8/29/19

20 August 2019

Louisville Metro Historic Landmark
and Preservation District Commission
444 South Fifth Street
Third Floor
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

Re: Holy Name Complex Local Landmark Designation

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of Preservation Kentucky in support of a local landmark designation for Holy Name Complex at 2914 South Third Street and 2911 South Fourth Street in the South Louisville Neighborhood.

Holy Name has long been considered a landmark in Louisville's South end, second only to Churchill Downs. Holy Name Church, Rectory, Convent and School were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 for their architectural significance and identified as "one of Louisville's finest collections of religious structures."

Holy Name Church was designed in the Romanesque Revival style with brown glazed brick in 1912 by notable Louisville architect J. J. Gaffney, a favorite church architect during the first part of the twentieth century who was known for his extraordinary designs and frequent use of the Byzantine influence, as illustrated in the interior of Holy Name's sanctuary. Designed to complement the church—most likely by Gaffney—Holy Name Rectory was built in 1927. Holy Name Convent, completed in 1938, was designed by architect Thomas J. Nolan, who used orange glazed brick to aesthetically unite the Holy Name Complex. Holy Name School, originally built as the church and school in 1902, was designed by Gaffney in an eclectic Gothic Revival Style.

The architectural merits of Holy Name Complex cannot be overstated. The buildings retain their integrity in design, materials, craftsmanship, location and setting. They are significant in their contribution to Louisville's architectural, social and religious history, and exemplify the aesthetic and architectural heritage of Louisville. The density and continuity of the site's footprint is important, especially as a South Louisville landmark: It is one of the most intact mixed-use blocks in the area and appears much as it did historically.

Holy Name Complex also represents the important role of the Catholic Church in Louisville's history, and their deep roots in both Louisville and Kentucky's heritage. Louisville is the oldest inland diocese in the United States. The early Catholics in Kentucky were a resourceful group of pioneers, dating back to 1775, before Kentucky was admitted into the Union in 1792. Their programs and outreach ministries continue to serve communities across the Commonwealth, and they enjoy a long, venerable tradition with education and academic institutions. A local landmark designation for Louisville's Holy Name Complex is certainly befitting this heritage.

How we protect our historic buildings, prehistoric sites and landscapes is placemaking—the management of our spaces, our inspirations and the assets that make our communities special and contribute to our health, happiness and wellbeing. Placemaking is what makes a community special, authentic and distinctive. Keeping Louisvillians connected to their architectural heritage is critical to the identity of the city, and maintaining the integrity of our historic architecture is paramount to placemaking.

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People want to experience the interesting places that we preserve, but you cannot recreate the place created by historic buildings. Once they are lost, so is a piece of our heritage and the sense of place that distinguishes Louisville.

In economics, it is the differentiated product that receives a monetary premium. If, in the long run, a community wants to attract capital to attract investment, it must differentiate itself from anywhere else. Through historic preservation a community can express its diversity, identity, individuality and the elements that make it different and distinguish it from others.

Louisville has lost far too many historic buildings—most of which could have been preserved and repurposed for new uses. Please do not contribute to the disappearance of Louisville's heritage and deprive residents, tourists and visitors to Louisville the opportunity to experience the treasures, assets and places that we value and that define us.

We respectfully ask that you affirm a local landmark designation for Holy Name Complex, and by doing so acknowledge the importance of and respect for our heritage, and the placemaking that makes Louisville the special community that it is.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Betsy Hatfield", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Elizabeth A. "Betsy" Hatfield
Executive Director