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February 8, 2019

Mr. Wayne Kardatzke, Chair
La Grange Plan Commission
La Grange Village Hall
53 S. La Grange Rd.
La Grange, IL 60525

*RE: Proposed development project to replace Jackson Square Mall building,
112 E. Burlington, PC Case #247*

Dear Mr. Kardatzke and Members of the Plan Commission,

We understand the Commission will review a 50-unit condominium project proposed for the site of the Jackson Square Mall located at 112 E. Burlington. Built in 1903 and altered in the 1920s, this distinctive Art Deco-style commercial property was originally built as a piano storage building. It is located in the downtown La Grange National Register of Historic Places Historic District designated in 1979.

In the January 8, 2019 Plan Commission agenda packet, it is noted in section F. "No Destruction of Significant Features: The proposed use and development will not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of any natural, scenic or historic feature of significant importance." This is false, as unfortunately the current proposal calls for demolition, which would result in the loss of a truly distinctive downtown building that could never be recreated today. This section also does not acknowledge the existing National Register Historic District in which the building is located.

We encourage the commission to defer action on this matter and to urge the owner to seek professionals with experience in adaptive use, especially of this building type, in order to evaluate its condition and reuse potential. The preferred outcome would be the opportunity for this historic building to be rehabilitated and incorporated into the proposed residential development plan with new construction on the adjacent property. The Illinois State Historic Preservation Office can work with the developer on which historic

incentives would be most applicable to his plan with a qualified rehabilitation and reuse.

Landmarks Illinois is the state's only not-for-profit organization that focuses on promoting and preserving significant architectural and historic resources. Our staff of professionals and board members who specialize in architecture, historic preservation, construction and planning would be happy to offer expertise as well.

Again, we urge the Commission to defer action on this proposed development and ask the owner to undertake further evaluation on potential reuse rather than demolition of this irreplaceable historic building.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lisa DiChiera
Director of Advocacy

Cc:

Charity Jones, Community Development Director

Heather Valone, Village Planner

Anthony Rubano, State Historic Preservation Office-IDNR