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October 6, 2023

(VIA EMAIL)

Forest Preserve District of Kane County Commission  
1996 South Kirk Road, Suite 320  
Geneva, IL 60134

### Re: Barn at Mill Creek Greenway Forest Preserve

Commissioners:

It has come to the attention of Landmarks Illinois that at your October 10 meeting, you will consider a motion to demolish the barn at the Mill Creek Greenway Forest Preserve unless a new use can be determined by March 2024. We object to the proposed demolition of the historic barn, and ask the Forest Preserve District to carefully consider alternatives to demolition.

The dairy barn at Mill Creek dates to the 1920s and reflects the 100 years that dairy drove and dominated Kane County's agricultural abundance and rural life. Moreover, the barn is a publicly owned resource that can be saved for future public benefit.

There are several potential alternatives to moving forward with demolition of this irreplaceable asset. For example, the Forest Preserve intends to construct an archery range, shelter, and restroom at the Mill Creek Forest Preserve. What is the estimated cost to provide those facilities, and could the barn be adaptively reused to house them? Alternatively, if there is no identifiable use by the Forest Preserve District, could more time be allotted to identify a new user? March 2024 is an extremely short window for evaluation. If a longer window were available, the chances of successfully finding a new user would dramatically increase. Thirdly, if no new use can be found at this time, can the building be mothballed until such a time as a new use may present itself in the future?

We offer the assistance of Landmarks Illinois, the statewide nonprofit organization for historic preservation, to explore these alternatives. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Kendra Parzen  
Advocacy Manager