



Landmarks Illinois Statement

Regarding SP1. Discussion regarding responses received through Request for Expression of Interest (REI) #23-47 and authorization to draft and issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the adaptive use and rehabilitation of 2603 Sheridan Road, commonly known as the Harley Clarke Mansion.

January 22, 2024

Kendra Parzen Advocacy Manager, Landmarks Illinois

Good evening, Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council. My name is Kendra Parzen, and I am advocacy manager for Landmarks Illinois. My organization is glad to have supported Evanston city staff in the development of the REI for 2603 Sheridan Road that resulted in the responses shared with you in advance of this meeting. The REI process has generated valuable information about viable reuse opportunities for the Harley Clarke mansion and has demonstrated that there is a sufficient level of interest at this time to proceed with an RFP. Given the strength of responses to the REI, I am confident that the RFP can identify the new user that is the right fit for the Harley Clarke Mansion.

Without taking up too much of the Council's time this evening, I would like to voice my support for staff's recommendations for the RFP. I would particularly like to call attention to recommendation #2 to emphasize the importance of the property's integrity of setting and significant landscape. Given Council's previous conversation with the Jens Jensen Gardens in Evanston and the many REI responses that include Jens Jensen Gardens as a potential partner, I would also like to encourage that the RFP specifically identify Jens Jensen

Gardens as a desirable partner. I would also like to encourage the Council at this juncture to remain open to strategic disposition of the property as a potential ownership model and to allow respondents the space through the RFP process to demonstrate how that model may make the most sense for Harley Clarke and for Evanston.

I encourage the Council to authorize staff to move forward with the RFP to secure the future of this irreplaceable Evanston resource. I and Landmarks Illinois remain available to assist city staff and officials throughout the process. Thank you.