
Ordinance No. 250871 - Public Testimony

From Jason Carrigan <jlc64111@gmail.com>

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To Clerk <Clerk@KCMO.org>

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October 13, 2025

Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee
Kansas City, Missouri City Hall
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

Re: Ordinance Number: 250871 (Norman School Historic District)
Letter of Support for the Norman School Historic District

Members of the Committee,

I purchased the house at 3620 Jefferson in the Valentine Neighborhood 3 years ago with the intention of restoring it to its original historic beauty. This home was built in 1905 by the Roanoke Homes Company. At the time of the sale, it had been vacant for several years and was in a distressed and dilapidated state. I chose to invest and renovate this home in the Valentine neighborhood because of the beautiful historic shirtwaist and prairie style homes and the vibrancy and diversity of the neighborhood.

However, I was alarmed and disheartened last year at the abrupt demolition of 23 plus homes in Valentine, many of which were recently occupied but had suffered from decades of neglected maintenance. Just last week 4 additional structures were demolished. Three of these were behind our property, and the fourth was half a block up the street from us. The company that has engaged in this ongoing practice has never developed or built on any of their vacant lots except for the one behind their headquarters, which was built in a modern Spanish style and not at all in keeping with the overall character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Large swaths of our neighborhood north of 35th street have already been destroyed. I am speaking out in an effort to preserve what remains of our neighborhood and its historic diversity and integrity. Ongoing property neglect, demolitions and vacant lots not only diminish and compromise the fabric and integrity of the neighborhood, but also contributes to reduced property values, crime and urban blight at a time when we have a shortage of affordable housing and need robust well-planned development.

I strongly support new development that will add affordable housing, that is aligned with the historic style and flavor of existing homes, and that can add interest and investment in the long-standing, unique, and once vibrant Valentine neighborhood. I believe that a defining characteristic of this neighborhood is its historic architecture and believe that historic designation will allow neighborhood input so that any improvement or development preserves its original historic character.

Thank you for allowing me to provide this input into this important decision.

Respectfully,

James Carrigan