

September 11, 2023

Dear esteemed Members of the City Council, Kansas City, Missouri,

Since public testimony regarding **Ordinance 230705** will not be permissible, I would like to take this opportunity to discuss, in writing, my position on the proposed plan for rezoning that will allow for new, high-rise construction, specifically at 4526 Warwick Boulevard.

As I am sure you are aware, the George B. Richards' residence and carriage house sited on the original .9-acre site, is the work of the prominent architectural firm of Root and Siemens. Given its architectural significance there should be no doubt among anyone that the estate represents one of the more extraordinary residences in the Southmoreland Neighborhood. Richards, by the way, was the President of Richards and Conover, a Kansas City hardware company. Established in 1857 and reigning as the "hardware company that ruled them all", operated in Kansas City until 2000.

Beyond the unmistakable architectural significance of the residence itself, it's important to also consider its place along Kansas City's Cultural Corridor which is rooted in a distinguished context that helps to define not only the overall development of Kansas City but also the cultural landscape tied to the design philosophy of the City Beautiful Movement. The City Beautiful Movement, a concept championed in Kansas City by August R. Meyer, George E. Kessler and William Rockhill Nelson, helped frame the greater urban environment in which the Richard's home is grounded. Losing the home, not to mention the rolling site on which it is set, would have a direct, immediate and negative impact on the surrounding historic neighborhood, its distinguished framework, and the Cultural Corridor of Kansas City. Allowing this type of development would also set precedent for the future.

Lastly, we must consider the potential impact of a potential large-scale development immediately adjacent to Warwick Boulevard. Planned by William Rockhill Nelson with George E. Kessler, Warwick Boulevard exhibits Kessler's standard design elements where the trees form a pleasurable small-scaled avenue throughout the neighborhood. Like Southmoreland Park, which it borders, Warwick has exceptional significance in the areas of landscape architecture and community planning and maintains distinction and prominence in the historic neighborhood in which it anchors.

Together, the Richards' residence and Warwick Boulevard must be recognized as key components of the Cultural Corridor of Kansas City which helped to define and shape this extraordinary urban place of built and natural beauty. Taking these points into consideration, I urge you to designate the George B. Richards' home a Kansas City landmark.

Respectfully,



Cydney E. Millstein, Hon. AIA

See also: KCMO Resolution 220083 dated January 27, 2022, honoring Ms. Millstein on her retirement.