
FW: March 24 Neighborhood, Planning and Development Committee Testimony: KCU's Smith Hall (CH-PRES-2025-00003)

From Public Testimony <Public.Testimony@kcmo.org>
Date Mon 3/16/2026 9:29 AM
To West, Daliah <Daliah.West@kcmo.org>
Cc Sanders, Monica <Monica.Sanders@kcmo.org>

Please attach as public testimony to the ordinance. Thanks

From: Catherine Satterwhite <CSatterwhite@kansascity.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2026 9:26 AM
To: Public Testimony <Public.Testimony@kcmo.org>
Subject: March 24 Neighborhood, Planning and Development Committee Testimony: KCU's Smith Hall (CH-PRES-2025-00003)

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside the kcmo.org organization. Use caution and examine the sender address before replying or clicking links.

To the Honorable Members of the Neighborhood, Planning and Development Committee, I am writing to respectfully ask that **the Committee vote NO to including Smith Hall on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places**, aligning with the recommendation of the City Plan Commission. Smith Hall is located at 1700 Independence Avenue on the campus of Kansas City University (KCU). The building that will replace Smith Hall allows KCU to invest more in our surrounding neighborhood than if we needed to keep an old building that has passed its usable lifespan. Importantly, a new building will facilitate space critical to the operations of KCU's new Center for Population Health and Equity.

KCU's Center for Population Health and Equity was launched just over two years ago. As Executive Director, I value KCU's deep community connections and am committed to continuing to partner with community organizations to live out KCU's mission to improve the well-being of the communities we serve. We work closely with:

- **Care Beyond the Boulevard** - KCU's collaboration with Care Beyond the Boulevard (CBB) leads directly to expanded patient care. KCU funds a part-time physician and clinical psychologist, both of whom see patients directly and support our KCU student learning. KCU also started the Street Wise Scholar Program with CBB, an award-winning initiative that pairs our KCU students with a CBB client currently experiencing homelessness and associated health challenges. Together, they work to overcome barriers to improving health and well-being. Finally, many of our student clubs volunteer with CBB: the Wilderness Medicine Club, the Public Health Club, the Student Osteopathic Medical Association, and the KCU Stitches Club, to name a few.
- **Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center** - In addition to KCU's growing clinical faculty presence at Sam Rodgers, the Center for Population Health and Equity piloted a Student

Health Advocates program, a collaboration designed to engage students directly with patients who have diabetes to advance Sam Rodgers' work and address social drivers of health. As a result of this pilot, we are expanding the program to engage more KCU students and serve more patients receiving important healthcare services at Sam Rodgers.

- **Della Lamb Community Services** - KCU has a long-time relationship with Della Lamb, our Pendleton Heights neighbor. We have partnered on many service projects over the years. Recently, the Center for Population Health and Equity launched two new collaborations. The first, the Refugee Health Navigator Program, pairs KCU students with Della Lamb clients (under the guidance of Della Lamb staff) to support their health journey, focusing primarily on developing skills to navigate the very-challenging U.S. healthcare system. The second collaboration invites partners to KCU's campus from across the region: KCU hosts Della Lamb's annual Welcoming Day, a celebration of opening our doors to our refugee neighbors.

Further, **Score 1 for Health is KCU's flagship program that has been in existence for over 30 years**, providing health screenings (physical, oral, and vision) to thousands of elementary students annually. In the 2025-2026 academic year, Score 1 is providing screenings to students at 18 elementary schools across Kansas City, MO, in our neighborhood and beyond. Identifying health issues early sets kids up for long-term success. KCU also hosts an annual event on our campus, OneSight, that provides glasses to 700 children across the KC metro area.

These are just a few examples of KCU's commitment to our neighborhood and greater Kansas City. We want to expand what we're able to do, and a new, collaborative space for the Center for Population Health and Equity is an important step in the right direction. While we would be happy to use Smith Hall, the original design/layout and the age of the building make using the building impossible. Please support our efforts to continue to invest in our city by voting NO to adding Smith Hall to the Register of Historic Places.

If I can provide any additional information or answer questions, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration,
Catherine Satterwhite

Catherine Satterwhite, PhD, MSPH, MPH

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR POPULATION HEALTH AND EQUITY

Kansas City	1750 Independence Ave	816-654-7112
University	Kansas City, MO 64106	csatterwhite@kansascity.edu