

From: [Matthew Robertson](#)
To: [Historic District Commission \(Staff\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Detroit Waldorf School Petition 5.11.22
Date: Monday, May 9, 2022 7:41:51 PM

Dear Committee Members -

My Name is Matthew Robertson. I moved to the City of Detroit in 1998 and live at 2151 Burns in the Indian Village neighborhood of Detroit. I have lived in Indian Village for 17 years in a home located a block from the Detroit Waldorf School where our children have attended school over the last 10 years. Additionally, I have worked in the commercial construction industry for over 25 years including many notable historic renovation projects in the City of Detroit over the last 10 years.

As a home owner, neighbor, construction professional, parent of DWS school children, and a long time resident of the City I fully support the approval of the permanent structures installed on the school grounds.

I ask the committee to thoughtfully consider the following in support of this item:

- The shelters are professionally designed and sited, built by parent volunteers with quality materials, and are an appropriate addition that integrates into the school's outdoor environment through the use of natural materials and transparency. Not a single tree or shrub was affected by the work, and important view corridors were carefully preserved. The design, placement, and construction of the structures is consistent with all precedent work located on school grounds and does not take away from the historic nature of our neighborhood. The location and presence of the Detroit Waldorf School was a determining factor in my long term investment in our home, the neighborhood and the City.
- The property has always been a school, and like any other school, has always had an active, busy, and child-focused exterior landscape. The property has expanded and changed many times over the years to introduce new play equipment, welcome a larger student body, and fulfill our Detroit-based mission, and has never been frozen in time. In its current state the structures support both long and short term program goals for the Detroit Waldorf School.

- The school takes great care in the maintenance of its exterior landscape, and has slowly transformed the former vacant lots on the east side of Burns into a beautiful enclave called Quietland. Though charming and beloved by our children, this is not a rigidly preserved historic landscape, nor is it either historically or currently a park-like setting, but instead is and will remain an active area for education, growth, and outdoor play. This is important as the use of the land owned by the school fits the character of the school programming while not intruding upon the things that make living in Indian Village special.
- The shelters have been well received in the community and have reflected well upon the school and the Indian Village Historic District both locally and in national media. The move toward the ability to provide learning in an outdoor setting has been extremely successful during the Pandemic (and hopefully beyond) as the school looks toward long term solutions to support growth and demand on enrollment at the school. Additionally, the school and its improved outdoor areas are better able to support many community events, summer camps, as well as its annual role in the Historic Indian Village Home and Garden Tour.

Again, I ask for your support regarding this matter.

Best,

Matthew Robertson
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