

April 28, 1987

Dear Cambridge City Council Members:

The Historical Commission recommendation to declare the present St. Paul Choir School building a landmark gives us some options in what has become an untenable situation. The present choir school building would be in keeping with the neighborhood architecture if it was renovated. In addition to preserving the choir school the decision to uphold the Historical Commission's recommendations would give everyone a chance to thoughtfully address the issues I will list below.

The development of the St. Paul Choir School site is complicated by several factors which I believe could be resolved by declaring the choir school building a landmark and going back to square one, a new renovation plan that would meet the needs of the church and the community, and input from Cambridge citizens.

The first issue is one of process. The Board of Zoning Appeals voted to grant variances for the new Choir School complex before the Historical Commission decision. In addition, the BZA completely disregarded the recommendations of the Harvard Square Overlay Design Review Committee.

Another issue is the lack of dialogue between the archdiocese, St. Paul's church and residents of the Harvard Square neighborhoods. After badgering the Archdiocese and Father Boles I was invited to three meetings at the rectory. St. Paul Church considered those meetings as communication with the neighborhood, but I had no input.

The linkage to the sale of the DeWolfe Street real estate (rectory and parking lot) is probably the biggest issue. The rectory not only contains apartments and meeting rooms but presently serves as a shelter/soup kitchen for the homeless from 5 to 8 each night. Why sell this building to pay for a center for Harvard students and a less adequate rectory? The parking lot on DeWolfe street has approximately 45 parking places and this off the street parking would be sorely missed by both the parishioners and neighborhood residents.

Please consider voting landmark status for the St. Paul choir school not only to save a nice old building but also to grant the concerned citizens of Cambridge a chance to work out a reasonable plan to meet the church's needs and the needs of its Harvard Square neighbors.

Sincerely,



Mary Jo Litchard

15 Cowperthwaite St. Cambridge

cc: Walter Sullivan, Mayor

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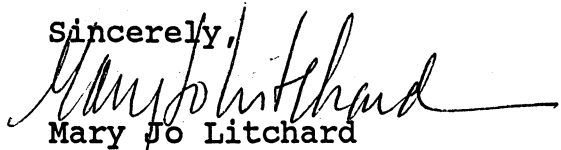
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15 Cowperthwaite St. Cambridge

cc: Walter Sullivan, Mayor

15 Copperthwaite St  
Cambridge, Mass  
02138



Cambridge City Council Members  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, Mass.  
02139

RECEIVED BY  
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK  
April 28, 1987  
1987 MAY -1 PM 12:17

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12.

S-316

Comm. from Mary Jo Litchard Re: proposed landmark designation for the St. Paul Choir School; said comm. in support of same.

In City Council,

May 4, 1987

Referred to Hearing  
Held @ 6 P.M.  
Placed in File