



Monday, May 18, 2020

Board of Education Building Demolition

Position Statement

Historic Kansas City sadly acknowledges the intended demolition of the stately Board of Education Building located at 311 E. 12th St. by Copaken Brooks.

The Board of Education Building has been vacant since the KCMUSD moved offices to its current location. Before it was owned by the school district, the building served as the Kansas City Public Library's main branch. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and designed by Edward W. Tanner & Associates, this building is an outstanding example of the Modern Movement: International Style - specifically the influence of Miesian design.

Recent changes to the federal and Missouri historic tax credit programs contributed to thwart several renovation proposals. The historic structure would be demolished in connection with a proposal at 13th and Grand, which thus far remains a proposal.

Historic Kansas City recognizes the need for Downtown to evolve and adapt to a changing set of office, retail, and economic circumstances. Circumstances may be changing dramatically even at the present moment. We are not adverse to development but want it to proceed in a manner that reflects the historic and scenic nature of the Civic Mall plan, that includes the three iconic art deco designed buildings, City Hall, Municipal Court and County Courthouse. One of Downtown's strongest cultural attributes.

Whatever the future holds for this site, any infill development proposal must be compatible with the Civic Mall plan. Further the colorful historic glass mosaic tile murals should be preserved in consultation with the Kansas City Municipal Art Commission.

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