



September 10, 2023

David Emerling

Industry Collaborations Director

930 Kinnear Rd, Columbus, OH 43212

248-877-4718 Mobile

emerling.4@osu.edu

RE: Future of the 103-year-old Roosevelt Elementary School in Keego Harbor

DEAR DAVID,

Thank you for discussing Roosevelt School with me last week. I agree the building is a valuable historic resource in the heart of your community. According to the SME report from July 1, 2022, the building seems to be in excellent condition. If the school district no longer needs the building, it should be sold to a developer for adaptive reuse. As you know, a national housing shortage directly affects Michigan, and buildings like the Roosevelt School are in high demand for housing conversion.

To summarize my qualifications, I am an architect licensed in Michigan and Ohio. I have 26 years of experience in historic preservation and adaptive reuse. My work includes projects for the National Park Service and preparing the National Register of Historic Places nominations for individual sites and districts. I am currently on the Adrian Historic District Commission.

The school board has a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers to justify demolition. However, they have not provided evidence of structural failure, hazardous materials abatement, or demolition costs. They also have not provided construction and maintenance costs for the football fields they would like to replace the school.

The school board should provide the following documents so the taxpayers of Keego Harbor can look at the actual costs of demolishing and replacing Roosevelt School:

1. If the school board is concerned about the structural integrity of the building, they need to hire a forensic structural engineer for a complete evaluation. SME, a firm that provides this service, has already indicated the building is in good condition.

2. Environmental Reports. Given the building's age, there is a near certainty it contains lead paint and asbestos, among other hazardous materials. Pre-demolition work required a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment with Pre-Renovation ACM Inspection and Lead Based Paint Testing, followed by a quote to abate hazardous materials. The testing and abatement quote should include the soil outside the building. SME provides the testing services.
3. A quote for the building demolition and site-clearing.
4. An appraisal of the building in its existing condition to determine fair market value and as renovated to its "best and highest" use.
5. Evidence of earnest attempts to sell the building to a developer. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation assists communities with obsolete buildings to develop a Request for Quote from potential developers. It offers a variety of incentives to assist with renovation costs.
6. Documentation of the proposed construction and maintenance costs of the new football facilities.

When the community can better weigh the costs of demolishing and replacing Roosevelt School against those for selling and adaptively reusing this historic building, they can better defend keeping this important reminder of their history.

Please call me with other questions you may have.

Sincerely,



BREND RIGDON

Executive Director

313 E. César E. Chávez Avenue
Lansing, Michigan 48906
Phone 517-371-8080
Fax 517-371-9090
Email info@mhpn.org