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October 30, 2023

Ms. Katie Pereny  
Secretary of the Historic District Study Committee  
City of Mackinac Island  
7358 Market Street  
Mackinac Island, Michigan 49757

Re: East End Mission Historic District (Proposed)

Dear Ms. Pereny:

As a strong proponent of historic preservation, adaptive reuse and community development, please allow me to lend my support for the proposed East End Mission Historic District. Mackinac Island is one of our nation's most important historic places. I'm certain of that, having written a fairly lengthy poem about the Island's history that was included, along with many other works, in "Beneath the Lilac Canopy, Mackinac Island in Poetry."

Historic districts provide a much needed touchstone to those who will succeed us. By honoring our past, and preserving it, we help secure our loved one's future. When I first came to Mackinac Island in 1978 it truly was "somewhere in time." It was before the ubiquity of TVs in every restaurant & bar and smart phones in every pocket. In fact, there were just a handful of payphones on the Island, and I distinctly remember searching long and hard for a newspaper. One could visit the Island and completely disengage from the world. And so, we did.

I remember visiting the Island on Labor Day weekend 1983. Senator Scoop Jackson of Washington State died unexpectedly, shortly after giving a news conference during which he condemned the Soviet Union for shooting down Korean Airlines Flight 007. What a difference a few days makes. I didn't learn about either event until after leaving the Island. That's how isolated Mackinac Island once was. Of course, that is no longer the case.

For at least two decades, the island has been subject to intense pressure from various parties to over develop and/or poorly develop the island for their own self interests. It's unfortunate that some people are far more concerned about making as much money, as fast as possible, regardless of how their plans impact the Island.

Ms. Pereny, the citizens of Mackinac Island are stewards of one of nation's most consequential and historic places. As you and your fellow citizens chart your community's future, please consider that there are possibly tens, perhaps even hundreds of thousands of us, who deeply care about preserving Mackinac Island's past, thereby securing its future. Historic Preservation is an extremely effective and viable tool for meeting that goal.

Sincerely,

*Edward English*

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