

17-R-95

A RESOLUTION

Denying an Application for a Certificate of Special Merit
for Demolition of the Structure at
912-918 Clark Street

WHEREAS, Commonwealth Edison Company, as owner and leaseholder of the structure at 912-918 Clark Street ("subject property"), Northwestern University, as the landowner, and Research Park, Inc., collectively, "the Applicant", applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness pursuant to Section 2-9-8 of the Evanston Historic Preservation Ordinance ("the Ordinance"), Title 2, Chapter 9 of the Evanston City Code of 1979, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the Evanston Preservation Commission held a public hearing, pursuant to proper notice on September 20, 1994, and denied the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant then applied for a Certificate of Special Merit ("CSM"), pursuant to Section 2-9-11 of the Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, public hearings on the application for CSM were held by the Planning and Development Committee, pursuant to proper notice on November 14, 1994, December 10, 1994, February 6, 1995, and March 20, 1995; and

WHEREAS, the City Council considered the application; and

WHEREAS, the subject property was designed by Hermann von Holst, an architect associated with Frank Lloyd Wright; and

WHEREAS, the subject property was constructed in 1907, with an addition in 1912; and

WHEREAS, the subject property has been designated as an Evanston landmark by the City Council and it was included in the 1972 Illinois Historic Structures Survey; and

WHEREAS, the Northlight Theater is an Evanston-based theater group which has expressed an interest in adaptively reusing the subject property as a theater; and

WHEREAS, such adaptive reuse is in the best interest of the citizens of Evanston,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EVANSTON, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS:

SECTION 1: That the City Council hereby finds pursuant to section 2-9-11(B) of the Ordinance, that although the subject property is located in the Downtown II section of the Central Business District of the City's Comprehensive General Plan ("Plan"), that although development of the subject property would enhance the economic vitality of the Downtown II section, that although demolition of the subject structure will make the site available for high-density development, and will enhance marketing of lot 15 in the Research Park, that nevertheless:

- a) the Applicant has no immediate development plans for the subject property;
- b) that, from 1985 to the present, the Applicant has had no offers to develop the subject property;
- c) that retention of the subject structure will provide significant cultural, social, and civic benefits, in that this potential adaptive reuse of the subject structure as a theater and performing arts center, is significant to the community and particularly desirable at the location proposed, and would

encourage street-level use in an area in which it is lacking, will enhance the vitality of the area by attracting pedestrians after office hours, will encourage an existing community-based theatrical organization to stay in Evanston, and the encouragement of cultural activities is consistent with the Plan for the Central Business District.

SECTION 2: That pursuant to section 2-9-11(C) of the Ordinance, the City Council finds that inasmuch as the Applicant has no proposed project for the subject property, the showing required by this section cannot be made.

SECTION 3: That the application of Commonwealth Edison, Northwestern University and Research Park, Inc., pursuant to Section 2-9-11 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance for a CSM for the structure at 912-918 Clark Street is denied, inasmuch as the potential contribution from the adaptive re-use of the subject structure as a theater and performing arts center to the civic, cultural and economic vitality of the City as a whole and to the Downtown II area outweighs the benefits to the general welfare and development of the Downtown II area derived from demolition of the subject structure.

SECTION 4: That denial of the CSM is based upon conditions now existing, i.e., representations at the public hearing that Northlight Theater can raise the necessary capital to develop the subject structure. Upon a showing of substantial change in circumstances, the Applicant may re-apply for a CSM.

SECTION 5: This Resolution shall be in full force and effect following its passage and approval in the manner required by law.


Mayor

ATTEST:

Justin Davis
City Clerk

Adopted: *March 27*, 1995

