

April 5, 2022

Commission on Chicago Landmarks  
c/o Chairman Ernest Wong  
City of Chicago  
Chicago City Hall  
121 N. LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

RE: Paseo Baricua Gateway Flags

Dear Chairman Wong and Commissioners:

We are grateful for the opportunity to support the Landmark nomination for the Paseo Baricua Gateways Flags on Division Street.

The Puerto Rican flags that stand proudly on either side of Division Street mark a commercial corridor that has undergone some tremendous revival thanks in part to the effort to install these flags as a demonstration of pride from and for the Puerto Rican community – lifting up Puerto Rican heritage and culture as well.

These 55-foot-tall flags are a monumental gateway to a community of people who are too often underrepresented. We are proud to be a part of a city that honors its rich and diverse history, and we are excited to see this Landmark nomination moving forward.

Thank you as always for the great work you do. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is any way we can support this important work.

Sincerely,



Mary Lu Seidel  
Director of Community Engagement

April 5, 2022

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Re: Monumental Baptist Church, 729 East Oakwood Boulevard

Dear Chairman Wong and Members of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks,

Preservation Chicago is happy to further voice our unequivocal support for the preliminary landmark recommendation of Patton, Fisher & Miller's Monumental Baptist Church at 729 East Oakwood Boulevard. This incredible Bronzeville structure is easily one of the finest designs by the accomplished firm of Patton, Fisher & Miller, both as a collective group and as the different configurations these architects formed in the years preceding and following the existence of this firm.

A phenomenal example of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Romanesque Revivalism, Monumental Baptist Church is true to its name, thanks to robust masonry, massively-scaled architectural features, and a gigantic central lantern tower that dominates the structure's profile. The lantern tower, in particular, is the church's most significant architectural aspect, thanks to its size relative to the building, its rarity in Chicago, and its popularity as a design feature stemming from its use by renowned architect, Henry Hobson Richardson. It is an incredibly well-executed building, which should come as no surprise when you consider the principal architects behind the design of the church: Normand Smith Patton, Reynolds Fisher, and Grant Miller.

Together and separately, these three architects are responsible for an incredible array of Chicago architecture and American architecture, overall. Patton & Fisher's beautiful work on IIT'S Main Building and Machinery Hall has been recognized with Chicago Landmark designations, while Patton & Miller designed over 100 Carnegie Libraries across the nation, many of which have been honored with a spot on the National Register of Historic Places. The architectural and historical value of Patton, Fisher & Miller's designs is unquestionable, and Monumental Baptist Church stands undeniably as one of their greatest accomplishments.

Coupled with the church's status as a Bronzeville architectural masterwork, the church's history of Civil Rights activism also makes it clear that Chicago Landmark designation is the perfect way to ensure Monumental Baptist's existence well into the future while also commemorating the rich history of this site.

Thank you to everyone involved, including the Commission on Chicago Landmarks and the Department of Planning & Development, for bringing Monumental Baptist Church to this stage of the landmarking process. We are looking forward to the eventual confirmation of Monumental Baptist Church as an officially designated Chicago Landmark.

Sincerely,

Max Chavez, Director of Research & Special Projects

Preservation Chicago

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RE: Emmett Till and Mamie Till Mobley House Adopt-a-Landmark Grant

Dear Chairman Wong and Commissioners:

We write this letter in enthusiastic support of the Adopt-a-Landmark grant application by Blacks in Green™ to support its plans to restore the Till and Till Mobley house into a museum and interpretation center.

Emmett Till's story resounds around the world – one of childhood innocence, the conflicts between North and South, and the heinous nature of lynchings. The world saw what lynching looked like when Mamie Till Mobley chose to have an open-casket visitation for her only child.

This home tells the story of Emmett's life, death, and the commitment Mamie Till Mobley made to tell the world what happened to her son. Our nation has not yet healed from the savagery of racism, but Blacks in Green™ is working to create a space where important conversations can be had, stories can be told, Black history can be elevated, and our city can grow in its awareness of each other's history and work toward the peace and forgiveness that Mamie Till Mobley worked the rest of her years for. Peace and forgiveness and justice.

The Till family story weaves into the story of the Great Migration, with Mamie's mother and father traveling to the Chicago area to escape the Jim Crow South. Great Migration stories can also be a part of the Emmett Till and Mamie Till Mobley House.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this grant opportunity. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mary Lu Seidel  
Director of Community Engagement