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Landmarks Society to Mayor: plan to raze HSBC building "short-sighted, financially irresponsible"

By WKTV News
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UTICA, N.Y. (WKTV) - The Landmarks Society of Greater Utica has unanimously passed a resolution strongly opposing any such demolition of the former HSBC building in Downtown Utica, calling the plan "short-sighted" and "financially irresponsible," according to a letter sent by the Society to Mayor David Roefaro.

The letter, signed by Society Board President Michael J. Bosak, at the Landmarks Society's

June 1 Board meeting, they discussed at length the city's expressed intent to purchase and raze the former HSBC building for the purpose of constructing an expansion of the existing parking lot currently at the west end of the property.

The board informed the mayor via the letter that the board strongly opposes any such demolition of the building, which they consider historically significant to the heart of the city's downtown district.

"The loss of such a significant structure for the sake of a few additional parking spaces is short-sighted and totally opposite of smart urban development," Bosak states in the letter. "This is a monumentally important and visually impressive building that helps to define the urban fabric that makes Utica a unique and appealing city; it is a true 'modern landmark'."

Bosak said that the board feels that with the proper efforts to halt further deterioration and to clean-up the current interior issues that the property can be successfully marketed and become a tax-generating structure again, and for the foreseeable future.

"I cannot over-emphasize the negative mood of this board as it relates to this ill-conceived proposal," Bosak said. "We cannot support this effort. additionally, we believe the spending of well in excess of \$700,000 to acquire and raze the building, exclusive of parking lot construction costs, is financially irresponsible, particularly as it does nothing to address where the true need for parking lies, several blocks to the east. Furthermore, there are a significant number of our membership and many others who feel the same way."

The Board has requested that the mayor remove this option for consideration and pursue all those



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responsible "for allowing this part of the city's heritage to get to this point." Bosak added that the board feels all the city's efforts should be redirected at stabilizing the building for true sustainable economic development for the future.

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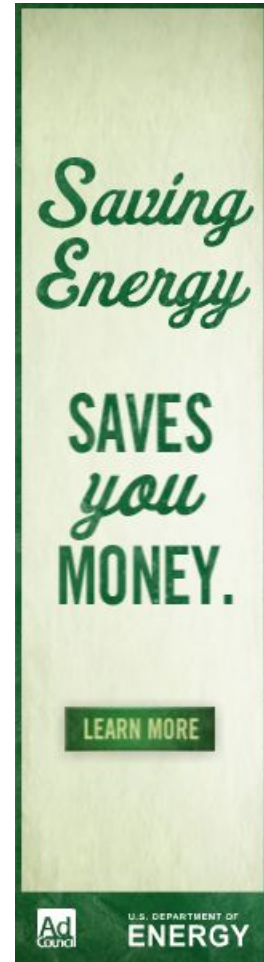
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