



P.O. Box 851163
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July 27, 2023

Councilwoman Gabriela Santiago-Romero

Re: Save 3143 Cass Avenue

American Citizens for Justice (ACJ) strongly supports the Detroit City Council's unanimous resolution to hold off razing the building located at 3143 Cass Avenue. Beyond that, ACJ thinks the building should be preserved as it may be considered for repurposing.

The building has undeniable historical significance. It has significance based upon its original build date of 1883. It served as the headquarters of the Chinese Merchants Association in 1963. Other entities had ties to the building, On Leong, Chinese Welfare Council, and American Citizens for Justice. The building was the center of activity for the neighborhood known as the New Chinatown at Cass and Peterboro. The Chinese American community suffered through the urban renewal craze of the early 1960's with the displacement from its original location at Michigan Avenue and Third Avenue

American Citizens for Justice, the Asian American civil rights organization that was founded in March 1983 to seek justice for the baseball bat beating death of Vincent Chin, a 27-year old Chinese American, held its mass meeting on the second floor meeting room. It was at that meeting of local Asian Americans that American Citizens for Justice got its name and elected its first officers. I know about that meeting because I was there and was elected as one of its officers.

A city that allows its historically significant structures to be demolished loses its visible markers of its rich past.

Thank you for leading the way toward recognizing our historic neighborhood sites including 3143 Cass Avenue.

Let me know how American Citizens for Justice can be of help in the effort to understand the significance of 3143 Cass Avenue, and the overall effort toward maintaining rather than demolishing our significant historic buildings.

With Gratitude,

Roland Hwang
President, American Citizens for Justice