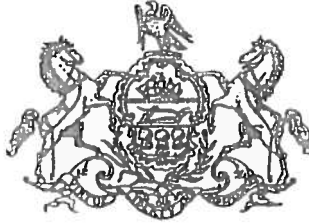


JAKE WHEATLEY, JR., MEMBER
19TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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House of Representatives
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MEMBER

ALLEGHENY COUNTY DELEGATION

March 17, 2010

Mary Conturo
Executive Director
Sports and Exhibition Authority
The Regional Enterprise Tower
425 Sixth Avenue
Suite 2750
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mary

This letter is to express to you the joint position between us, the political leaders serving the Hill District, in the matter of the preservation of the Mellon Arena Building.

We come together in a unified voice declaring our complete opposition to the idea of keeping the Arena standing in its current location. While we understand that you must go through the legal process as it relates to the historical relevance of the building; please understand that by preservation of what amounts to a horrific past in the history of the Hill District with its memories of destroyed homes and displaced residents, a past from which we are still attempting to recover from has no historic value to us, the residents of the Hill.

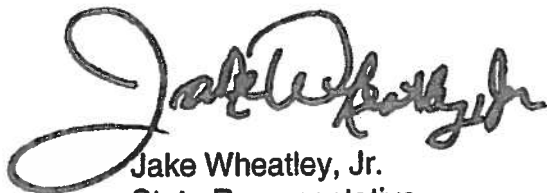
As a matter of clarity, we believe in preserving history that has significance beyond simple representation of physical structures, such as, the New Granada Theater, Ozanam Cultural Center, and the Crawford Grill. These physical structures have meaning to our neighborhood that extends well beyond the architectural beauty or age of the building in their exemplification of the fabric, and have made the Hill District such a distinctive place and historic community. We are indeed preservationists but not just for the sake of preserving structures without the understanding of what the historical impacts such structures have or have had on a community. It is very similar to some who fight to preserve the right to fly the confederate flag on state buildings in the south even when there are clear negative implications to many who would enter those buildings.

Mary Conturo
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Thus, we write to you not only as elected officials who represent the Hill District community but as residents and interested stakeholders. It is clear to community groups like the Hill Consensus Group, and Hill District based development corporations, such as the Hill House Economic Development Corporation, and the Hill CDC as well as our faith based leadership and elected officials who represent this community, that keeping this building on this site is not wanted nor desired. We implore you and all those involved in this decision making process to heed the desires of those who have been, and will continue to be, those most impacted by your decision. For those who find this building worth saving and preserving, we encourage them to find a way to do so in a more suitable location where the reuse of it can have a greater benefit and find a more welcoming community. We, the Hill District residents and leaders, are asking you to start the healing process of past destruction of our neighborhood and reject all attempts to preserve the Mellon Arena building on its current site.

This sentiment is very clearly expressed in the Greater Hill District Development Principles as created by members of the Hill District Consensus Group Community Master Plan Committee, "*Land use and development plans for the Lower Hill will preserve no physical remnant of Civic Arena/Mellon arena and the resulting displacement of 8,000+ Hill Residents and businesses*". There is no doubt as to the overwhelming consensus of this position.

Sincerely,



Jake Wheatley, Jr.
State Representative
19th Legislative District



Daniel R. Lavelle, Jr.
Councilman
6th District