

# ArtsAlliance

**Board of Directors**

**Chair**

**Lynne Friman**  
Envisions Design

**Vice Chair**

**Leslie Sobel**  
Milan Art Center

**Treasurer & Secretary**

**David Esau**  
Cornerstone Design

**Executive Director**

**Debra Polich**

**Britany Affolter-Caine**

Ann Arbor SPARK

**Donald Harrison**

Independent Film Maker

**Michael L. Henry**

James Crawford Elks Lodge #322

**Mary Kerr**

Ann Arbor Area Convention and  
Visitors Bureau

**Melissa Milton-Pung**

Washtenaw County Government

July 12, 2012

Mayor Hieftje & City Council  
City of Ann Arbor  
301 E. Huron St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Re: 415 W. Washington

Dear Mayor Hieftje & City Council members:

We are writing to support the proposal to have the City provide funding for some early phase studies (*as noted in Mr. Charles Bultman's letter of April 6, 2012*) to determine the costs and potential opportunities of renovating the City-owned building at 415 W. Washington as an arts and cultural facility.

With the encouragement of the Mayor, The Arts Alliance invested much time and effort over the last two years to study the 415 W. Washington site and its potential use as an arts and cultural venue. In our final report made to Council this past May, we recommended that these early phase studies were necessary. Research conducted by a grant-writer, identified by the Mayor and funded by an anonymous source, did not produce plausible grantmaking prospects for these types of studies at this early phase of the project.

Our report supports Mr. Bultman's point that most of the costs to conduct such studies would be incurred by the City regardless of whether the site is repurposed or the building demolished. Site environmental studies and a topographic survey will be needed for the planned greenway park whether the building is present or not. A hazardous materials survey would certainly be needed for demolition, and architectural and structural surveys may be required by the Historic District Commission prior to demolition, if it comes to that.

Whatever happens, however—and based on our experience with the site – we believe Mr. Bultman's proposal for City funding of studies is an appropriate and necessary way to move forward with decisions about the future of this City-owned facility.

The Arts Alliance is very supportive of the City's efforts to invest in and support arts and cultural initiatives such as the Percent for Art program, and in that vein, is also supportive of the City's goal of having 415 W. Washington redeveloped as an arts and cultural center.

Sincerely,



Lynne Friman  
Chair



David Esau  
415 Project Chair



Debra Polich  
Executive Director