Re: 1001-1017 West Leland Avenue (aka 4654 North Sheridan Road)

Dear Alderman Cappleman:

I write to you today on behalf of the Chicago Art Deco Society to stress the importance of preserving 1001-1017 West Leland Avenue.

I was thrilled to learn of City Council’s recent designation of Uptown Square as a landmark district. The district showcases highly-stylized, mixed-use buildings with elaborate, Art Deco terra cotta façades. I’m dazzled whenever I visit the district, and I’m grateful that conscientious developers have invested in preserving the fabric and history of the Uptown community.

But the amazing terra cotta Art Deco façades are not only found within the newly-designated district; they are found all over Uptown. And although many older buildings have been demolished in favor of newer, denser buildings, some with features that were celebrated and lauded in the Uptown Square District’s remain. The building at 1001-1017 West Leland Avenue is a wonderful example of subtle Art Deco design and ornamentation, and it is the only remaining historical building at the intersection of Leland and Sheridan. The building serves dual purposes: it tells the overall story of Uptown, and is ideally situated and constructed to support the Sheridan Road retail corridor.

It is my understanding that discussions are underway to re-zone and redevelop the corner into a seven-story building, and raze the existing structure. Although I’ve heard murmurs of the developer considering a design that would pay homage to the current façade with new materials, such a design would entirely miss the point of preservation. The Art Deco Society would support development plans that would include the improvement and preservation of 1001-1017 West Leland Avenue, but plans seeking to completely destroy this historical building should be thoughtfully considered but ultimately rejected.
Thank you, Alderman Cappleman, for your consideration of our position. Should you need any further information, we would be happy to provide it to you.

Sincerely,

Amy E. Keller  
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Director of Preservation Advocacy  
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