January 4, 2017

sent via email to james@james46.org
c: tressa@james46.org

Alderman James Cappleman
46th Ward, City of Chicago
4544 North Broadway
Chicago, Illinois 60640

RE: Proposed Zoning Change Request for 1001-1017 West Leland Avenue
(aka. 4654 North Sheridan Road) from B3-3 to B3-5

Dear Alderman Cappleman:

At your request, Truman Square Neighbors (TSN) block club attended an informational meeting on December 12, 2016 with Sarah’s Circle to learn about their proposed development and request for an upzone at the Southwest corner of Sheridan Rd. and Leland Ave. Subsequently, TSN held a vote of residents and business owners within block club boundaries asking if they were “in favor” or “against” this request to upzone 1001-1017 W. Leland Ave. (4654 N. Sheridan Rd.) from B3-3 to B3-5, to allow construction of a 6-story, single-room-occupancy (SRO) and transitional housing women’s shelter.

By a vote of 51 to 12, the residents and business owners of Truman Square are AGAINST supporting this zoning change request. Please consider this letter a strong voice of opposition to this requested zoning change from Truman Square Neighbors block club.

A number of the respondents to our vote also shared optional feedback. All provided comments are copied verbatim below.

- Not happy about losing this beautiful building. Sarah’s Circle is fine, but not at the cost of losing that building.

- Retaining our retail corridor w/in Truman Square is vitally important. Kicking out a 30-year business for additional SRO units is not the correct direction for our neighborhood.

- My no vote has nothing against Sarah’s Circle or their current location and work within Truman Square, but we have a highly disproportionate amount of social services and homeless housing in and around our neighborhood already. This trend of concentrating services need to change by spreading them out more evenly throughout adjacent wards.
• We do not need additional homeless shelters in uptown. They should be relocated into alternate neighborhoods.

• Strongly against this proposal. Please, no more tearing down classic buildings and no more SRO shelters.

• Sarah’s Circle has been a good neighbor to Truman Square in its location at GreenRise ICA. I don’t have any issues with them remaining in Truman Square. What my issue is with this zoning change is the planned destruction of a much-loved vintage building. All the other buildings on that corner are newer. Why are we so eager to destroy our architectural past? It’s part of what sets Uptown apart from other communities. I find it difficult to believe that in all of Uptown, there is no other suitable empty lot or vacant building for sale. While I strongly support Sarah’s Circle and its mission, I must vote against the destruction of this building to accommodate their expansion.

• Why is Uptown tearing down stores and putting housing on main streets?

• More affordable housing is better for Uptown.

• Keep getting rid of retro buildings and soon Uptown will look like a generic suburban community. Very strong No.

• I cannot approve of our retail corridors like Sheridan turning from commercial to residential properties. There is retail space in the building in question that has been used for many years and is still in use. There is available retail space in the building as well. Uptown needs to have robust retail corridors. Put new residential buildings on residential streets and leave our commercial corridors for business purposes. I vote no for this particular location, although I approve of Sarah’s Circle and its successes.

• Sarah’s Circle is for women who are learning new behaviors. I assume Sarah’s Circle wants them in a setting that will help them succeed. THIS IS NOT THAT LOCATION!!! Half a block from McDonald’s with open drug dealing inside and outside the building. Also right across the street from the poorly-run Grasmere Place, with sidewalk sleepers and drug dealers living there. AA says, if you don’t want to slip, stay out of slippery places. This location is a slippery place.

• Uptown should not keep filling up our neighborhood with homeless and at risk housing. Spread it across the city. Let Uptown thrive.

• SC says they want their clients to have easy access to their existing facility at Sheridan and Gunnison. They also said that they can’t afford much in Uptown. Why not look for places in Rogers Park which are more affordable and an easy bus ride down Sheridan? They claim Uptown is too expensive and/or has no other available spaces. There ARE other neighborhoods where they could buy more for less, and where they will have a better selection of properties from which to choose. Win/win, they get more cluck for their buck, and we don’t lose a vintage building.

• So ugly! We’re tearing down a classic building for gray striped siding? Yuck.

• I feel we are overwhelmed with too many social service in Uptown and that it needs to be shared more equally with other areas of the city. I also feel that the existing building needs to be preserved.

• We have enough social services in our ward, we do not need any more.

• I would like to see more retail options on this stretch of Sheridan and around Truman Square.

• This location plays an important anchoring role for the retail corridor of Sheridan Road. Building a new social service agency in this location, in close proximity to many other similar organizations does not further the development of this part of the neighborhood.

• Sorry but we don’t need another generic ugly building in Uptown.

A note about the TSN voting and information distribution process. We shared the meeting announcement on our public Facebook page (www.facebook.com/TrumanSquareNeighbors), followed by comprehensive meeting notes for those unable to attend. Multiple forms of voting were offered and left open for a full 4 days via paper ballot and an online Survey Monkey form.
We asked that only residents who live in Truman Square or who have business therein vote. We asked for confirmation of address so that the vote results would reflect only the opinions of those in our block club area. Voting was open to all residents and business owners, and was not limited to block club members. We disregarded votes from outside of Truman Square and those with no address given. 1 vote was voided due to providing no address.

**Thank you for affording the residents of Truman Square the opportunity to have a voice on this issue and for considering our feedback.**

Sincerely,

Board Members of Truman Square Neighbors Block Club

/s/ James Edward Steinwinder, President
/s/ Michael Garzel, Treasurer