

September 17, 2019

Alderman Michele Smith
2523 N. Halstead Street
Chicago, Illinois 60614

Dear Alderman Smith:

Thank you for convening last week's Francis Parker Neighbors meeting where we were able to directly engage with the school's representatives on their efforts to purchase two buildings on Belden Avenue. We truly value your continued commitment to engender better relationships between the school and its neighbors.

As a follow-up, East Lincoln Park Neighbors (ELPN) is formally submitting 1,100 signed petitions requesting that you, our elected city representative, commit to preserving the residential nature of East Lincoln Park. We are asking you publicly to stand against Parker expanding its footprint (tax free) by evicting people from their homes and tearing down residential buildings. To date, you have supported the city-wide initiative for raising the threshold for condominium de-conversions from 75% to 85%. You have also been a leader in decrying the secretive and unseemly Lincoln Yards process. For these stances, we applaud you.

We now ask that you stand with your constituents in opposing Parker's expansion on Belden Avenue. A public statement to the community as well as the planning and zoning authorities that you will oppose Parker in any expansion onto Belden Avenue would send a strong signal that the interests of the neighborhood's residents come first.

Our petition is about more than just Parker's actions on Belden Avenue. The petition outlines concerns that 43rd Ward voters, the broader Chicago community, and, indeed, many visitors to our city share. All 1,100 petitioners call on you to:

- Preserve the residential composition of our community,
- Preserve the historic, vintage aesthetic of the neighborhood,
- Preserve properties in Chicago's tax base.

We hope that these petitions demonstrate the community's support for your continued advocacy for the interests of ordinary people over those of connected, wealthy institutions and insiders. We look forward to continue working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

East Lincoln Park Neighbors