



Champaign Unit 4 School District  
703 South New Street  
Champaign, IL 61820  
217-531-0252

Emily Schmit,  
Director of Communications & Community Relations  
[schmitem@u4sd.org](mailto:schmitem@u4sd.org)  
[\(217\) 531-0252](tel:2175310252)

## Press Release

**DATE:** November 2, 2017

**TOPIC:** Champaign Unit 4 School District Board of Education approves filing of written protest against nominations for landmark designation

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. -- The Champaign Unit 4 Board of Education has approved the filing of written protests against applications submitted by the Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County (PACA) to nominate for Landmark Designation properties that the District has acquired to facilitate the expansion of the Central High School campus (500 W. Church St., 603 W. Church St., and 606 W. Church St.).

In 2016, through a very public and transparent process, the Board of Education worked with District and community stakeholders to develop a plan for addressing anticipated growth in student enrollment at Central High School while responding to community feedback to keep the school centrally located. It quickly became clear through this process that the acquisition and clearing of certain properties would be necessary to accomplish these objectives. Accordingly, the Board engaged these property owners and others with an interest in these properties, including members of PACA, in this discussion.

Subsequently, in November 2016, voters overwhelmingly approved a bond referendum authorizing the District to proceed with over \$200 million in new construction and renovation projects at several District sites. The largest project is the renovation and expansion of the Central High School campus, budgeted at \$87.1 million.

In filing these protests, the Board of Education has established that the designation of these properties as local landmarks would significantly impede the District's ability to provide adequate facilities and educational programming for Central High School students and would run in opposition to the clear voice of District voters.

“We owe it to the community to fulfill our promise to expand Central,” Board President Chris Kloepfel said. “From the beginning, we have been open and honest about the challenges of keeping Central in the center of the community. We worked closely with the public to find a solution that would work, and we truly listened to what the community wanted and needed. We will remain focused on moving forward with these critically important projects.”

The City of Champaign Historic Preservation Commission is scheduled to consider the nomination at its meeting on November 2. If the Historic Preservation Commission nominates the properties, the review would then proceed to the City of Champaign Plan Commission and, potentially, the Champaign City Council for a final decision on the nomination.

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