

November 11, 2011

Mayor Francis Slay  
City of St. Louis  
1200 Market Street  
St. Louis, MO 63103

Dear Mayor Slay,

In 1989, members of The American Institute of Architects St. Louis Chapter led the efforts to preserve the historic Eames and Young Cupples Station Warehouse complex from threat of demolition.

We value the complex no less today than we did when we fought for its preservation.

The warehouse complex was built with railroad tracks to interior loading docks for rapid transfer of freight and in its time was hailed as revolutionary technology and a superlative example of industrial architecture. The Cupples Warehouse massive original twenty buildings position St. Louis as an international transportation hub.

AIA St. Louis members are concerned about the future of Building No. 7 and news articles about its possible demolition. The protections currently afforded the building by the required process of the Cultural Resources office hearten us as offering possible options to demolition such as stabilization or mothballing.

We ask for a careful review of the cost of stabilization versus the cost of demolition and the loss of another piece of St. Louis history.

Regardless of the fate of Cupples Number 7, we ask that the dialogue begin about the demolition-by-neglect strategy that seems to pervade the inner core of American cities.

We wish to further discuss the responsibility of ownership and stewardship of the built environment. We wish to prevent future decay and abandonment of St. Louis treasures. We wish to rally the resources and means the City of St. Louis might employ to prevent future neglect and then demolition. Should you wish to convene a group regarding this discussion, please advise.

Sincerely,

Michelle C. Swatek  
Executive Director