

**The American Institute of Architects St. Louis Chapter
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The American Institute of Architects St. Louis Chapter does not support the demolition of the "Del Taco" building on Grand Avenue. Rather, AIA St. Louis supports the retention of the "Del Taco" to be renovated for continued use within the proposed new retail development that must be designed sensitive to the original plan.

Schwarz and Van Hoefen, architects of St. Louis, designed the former gasoline station, plaza and towers as one project, with important singular pieces that come together in a handsome and striking development. We believe that the elimination of "Del Taco" would significantly diminish the Schwarz/Van Hoefen complex.

The architectural community believes that "Del Taco", a small but important structure, is desirable because of its location and iconic shape. In spite of the changes to the building, this small gem fits beautifully in the complex and even in its current state, it delights in its design. It reflects a time of design and construction that uniquely expresses the American optimism towards the future.

In more technical terms, the process of designing this complex of buildings makes this little building, set apart by its concept, a structure that is robust and unique and a visual counterpoint to the tower. "Del Taco" provides a balance to the rest of this strong complex, allowing it to stand out as a landmark.

In terms of function, the building is of very good structural quality and it is clearly flexible in use within the roadway retail category, having been a service station and now a fast food restaurant. This is an ideal candidate for adaptive re-use as it has weathered several adaptive re-uses. Throughout its many years and uses it continues to be held dear by the citizens of St. Louis and such support is heartwarming and wonderful for architects to observe.

The composition of the design focuses on its structural gymnastics that would be inappropriate for a building of a different type in a more ordinary location. It fits well with its function as a landmark for Grand Center and St. Louis University.

AIA St. Louis recognizes that the existing building stock in St. Louis is an important asset to our community heritage and makes St. Louis a unique city. It is not one building that makes a city valuable, but a collection of interesting buildings that together comprise interesting neighborhoods, great boulevards and beautiful cities. "Del Taco" is part of a wonderful collection in a handsome contemporary complex on Grand Avenue and must remain.

The current proposed developer has received Federal and State historic tax credits for his work and is requesting other public funds for the development. Taxpayers therefore must have a right to opine about these projects and the developer must respect the historic nature of the complex.

We must demand the best to have a beautiful, sustainable and accessible St. Louis.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) is the voice of the architectural profession, dedicated to serving its members, advancing their value, and improving the quality of the built environment