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December 18, 2020

Jennifer Buddenborg
Senior City Planner
Community Planning and Development
City and County of Denver
201 W. Colfax Ave., Dept. 205
Denver, CO 80202

RE: Support for 7th Ave. Historic District Extension

Ms. Buddenborg,

Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods (CHUN) is pleased to announce its support for the *Fuller, Wise, Heese, et al* application to establish an historic district immediately adjacent to—or just East of—existing portions of the 7th Avenue Historic District in Denver.

As Denver's largest, oldest neighborhood organization, CHUN's mission is to *preserve the past, improve the present, and plan for the future of greater Capitol Hill*. Great cities are built through affordable housing, smart land use and zoning, community enhancements, volunteerism and civic engagement, diversity and inclusivity, and preserving historic architecture and our rich history.

CHUN supports the application for Historic District Landmark Designation, with the specific geographic boundaries of Steele Street to the center of the alley east of Steele Street from 6th Avenue to 8th Avenue, and adjacent to align with the current 7th Avenue Historic District application based on the following factors:

- The house on the north end of the 600 block and the house on the south end of 700 block are excluded from this application as they are already included in the East 7th Avenue Historic District.
- The current 7th Avenue Historic District resulted in a line arbitrarily drawn down the middle of Steele Street and the east side of the street was excluded. The residences on the east side of Steele Street reflect the same characteristics as those directly across the street which are included in the East 7th Avenue Historic District.
- CHUN believes that the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission should consider both sides of the block as historically and architecturally compatible.
- The east side of the 600 and 700 block of Steele Street meets the criteria for historical significance because it provides continuity of the East 7th Avenue Historic District which was designated based on its character, interest, and value, as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or nation.

The CHUN Board believes the merits of this application are compelling and they meet the historic district application criteria. Yet, we recommend an additional, very important next step in this process.

- Instead of the generic *7th Avenue Historic District B*, we think this district should reflect our rich history and bare the name of someone whose legacy continues in the neighborhood—**former resident, pioneer, and community leader, Judge Raymond Jones.**
- 780 Steele Street became the residence of Judge Raymond Jones. Jones’ arrival represented the diversity that is essential to the life of the current neighborhood. Judge Jones’ career and lasting impact in our city is extraordinary.
- *The Raymond Jones Historic District* would acknowledge the lasting accomplishments of Colorado’s first African American Appellate Judge in Colorado and serve as a permanent reminder of the discrimination that Judge Jones faced when trying to purchase this home in this neighborhood. **Naming this district in his honor is the right thing to do.**

On Thursday, December 17, 2020, the Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods Board of Directors held a regularly scheduled board meeting. Bruce Caughey & Kevin Kelly, as co-chairs of the CHUN History Matters Committee, moved to support this application and issue a letter of support; the motion was seconded by James LaRue. The full board of directors voted in the following manner:

- Votes favoring the motion: 19
- Votes opposing the motion: 0
- Votes abstaining from taking a position: 3

Founded in 1969, Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods is both a registered neighborhood organization and a private, Colorado nonprofit corporation representing the interests of Capitol Hill as well as the greater Denver community. We are dedicated to advancing the perspectives of Denver residents who live or work within our geographic boundaries through our scope of work, growing impact and programs, and steadfast commitment to creating a more inclusive community.

We urge responsible City leaders—including members of the Denver City Council, the Denver Landmark Commission, and elsewhere—to approve this application and honor the life and legacy of Judge Raymond Jones.

Sincerely,



Travis Leiker, MPA
President



Kevin Kelly
Co-Chair, History Matters Cmte.



Bruce Caughey
Co-Chair, History Matters Cmte.

Enc. Biography of Judge Raymond Jones

JUDGE RAYMOND JONES

A Pueblo native, Raymond Jones has contributed much to Denver and Colorado. In 1988, Raymond Jones became the first African American appellate judge in Colorado. He has worked in Denver specializing in construction law, arbitration and litigation in addition to his 32 years as a judge. Jones is a former visiting professor of political science at Colorado College, Denver District Court judge, assistant professor at Metro State University, and an active award-winning community volunteer.

In a *Denver Post* story published January 2012, Davidson writes, “In 1965, at the height of the American civil-rights movement, Raymond Dean Jones was a sophomore at Colorado College, majoring in political science. When news of the three Selma to Montgomery marches reached him, Jones stuffed a change of clothes into a bag, stuck out his thumb and hitchhiked to Alabama to take part. It turned out to be a life changing experience for the Pueblo native, the sixth of nine children who after receiving a law degree from Harvard embarked on a career that included 15 ½ years spent as a judge on the Colorado Court of Appeals.”



“After those marches, I knew there’d be no way I would ever tolerate injustice,” Jones declared at the 22nd annual presentation of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award.”