



May 30, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Fenway Civic Association (FCA) and its membership, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for renewal of the Fenway Cultural District designation.

FCA is an all-volunteer organization working since 1961 to promote a vital, livable neighborhood in the Fenway. We were active participants in and supporters of the designation of the Fenway as a Cultural District and believe in its reflection of the unique and important cultural resources that exist within our community and the vitality they provide to visitors and residents alike. Our board members serve on the Fenway Cultural District Committee, and have been active participants in arts planning in our neighborhood.

In 2011, as part of the Massachusetts Cultural Council legislative initiative to designate Cultural Districts across the Commonwealth, Fenway Alliance, in partnership with the Fenway Cultural District Committee, sought and was awarded designation for the Fenway Cultural District.

The vision for the District was accompanied by a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which contained an ambitious 5-year plan for the district to:

- Create a highly respected 'brand' through the promotion of the Fenway as an exciting cultural destination, using media to build awareness of the District; providing opportunities for artists, businesses, and institutions, and creating cultural programming through creative partnerships.
- Increase the beauty and vitality of the District by enhancing access, encouraging collaboration in creation of vibrant urban spaces, and continuing to work on enhancing green spaces and linkages in the Emerald Necklace parks system.
- Provide opportunities for artists and institutions to contribute to and benefit from the creative economy through the promotion of their art.

Over this period, the Fenway Alliance and the District have made significant progress towards these goals, increasing the visibility of the neighborhood as an arts and creative leader in the city and building engagement across stakeholders.

Through successful leadership, the District worked with City leaders and regional arts organizations in 2016 to save the Huntington Theater, a highly valued arts resource for both both performers and visitors. Cultural District work has also yielded an exciting partnership with Futurecity, poised to collaborate on projects that will enhance the creative economy of the Fenway.

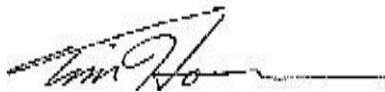
Continued work on the Avenue of the Arts has been accompanied by recently developed design guidelines that allow a template for bridging private and public realm, supporting the cultural identity of the District while enhancing the City's goals for access and inclusivity. The District's continued work on improving integration of cultural facilities with improved street conditions has been reflected in recent improvements to the Symphony Streetscape Project spanning the Boston Symphony Orchestra building and Horticultural Hall, as well as enhanced public realm plans for the New England Conservatory and Wentworth Institute of Technology.

The District continues to enhance collaboration and support for artists and arts access. The annual Fenway Alliance *Opening Our Doors* event continues to grow, drawing arts leaders, local participation and citywide attendance. Public art projects have tripled since Cultural District designation, resulting in both temporary and permanent public art across the neighborhood, and more importantly, bringing arts to previously underserved and unexplored locations—from road underpasses to passive parks, including installations within the Emerald Necklace. A recently opened community center has benefitted from collaborations with area artists to launch a first-ever neighborhood Open Studio event.

We hope to see the Cultural District continue to serve its most needed heroes—the individual arts organizations that may not be afforded the attention of its larger cousins. Kaji Aso Studio provides a unique opportunity in the city to engage in and observe Japanese arts—from sumi painting to flower arranging and tea ceremony. Their needs as a small nonprofit studio would be greatly benefitted by the recognition and support of their local cultural champions. We hope to witness the preservation of our architectural treasures, such as the Johnson Memorial Gates, designed by famed architect Guy Lowell, and predating the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. And we continue to advocate for the collaborative nature of art and cultural planning—the engagement of the community in the shared goals for the Fenway's creative vision. We believe that this engagement will enhance the Fenway Cultural District, and enhance its success as a District that offers a rich and unique experience shaped by both its cultural leaders and a rich and diverse constituency.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Horn", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Tim Horn, President
Fenway Civic Association