

City of Providence
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 284

EFFECTIVE July 18, 2016

WHEREAS, Built in 1898, the Southwest Pavilion was the third building erected in the Rhode Island Hospital complex; and

WHEREAS, The Southwest Pavilion is the most intact surviving piece of the original Rhode Island Hospital and its construction was paid for almost entirely using community funds; and

WHEREAS, The red-brick, T-plan Southwest Pavilion was constructed to serve women and children, with wards for each and a playroom for the latter, and to house the hospital's first pathological laboratory; and

WHEREAS, Intended to match the hospital's original structure, built in 1864 and designed by local architect Alpheus C. Morse, the Southwest Pavilion represents late 19th century institutional architecture and demonstrates the intention of creating a visually integrated campus; and

WHEREAS, With its polychrome-stone drip-mold lintels over the windows, a large semi-duodecagonal-plan copper-clad bay window across its south elevation, and high, horizontally-striped slate hip roof with small dormers, octagonal-plan spired cupola centered on the ridgeline of the south wing, and square-plan peak roof above the west end of the north wing, the Southwest Pavilion is a beautiful example of High Victorian Gothic architecture; and

WHEREAS, The Southwest Pavilion's significance is both historical and architectural, representing Rhode Island Hospital's early steps toward the specialization and physical separation of programmatic activities that characterize modern medical campuses, as such it physically represents an important phase in the hospital's historical development; and

WHEREAS, In 2015, Rhode Island Hospital announced its plan to demolish the Southwest Pavilion despite its important architectural and historical value; and

WHEREAS, The potential demolition of the Southwest Pavilion has brought on an outpouring of support from community members, patients, former and current hospital staff, and many others who feel that it is, as one patient put it, "The heart of the hospital campus"; and

WHEREAS, A petition to stop the demolition of the Southwest Pavilion has garnered more than 1,200 signatures; and

WHEREAS, The Providence Preservation Society (PPS) established a place on its website for people to post their "Community Memories of the Southwest Pavilion" that has pages of testimonials from local residents about the importance of this historic building to our community; and

WHEREAS, Many community groups, along with the Rhode Island School of Design and PPS, have offered numerous times to collaborate with Rhode Island Hospital to find a use for the Southwest Pavilion that is beneficial for both the hospital and the community; and

WHEREAS, There are many examples of modern hospitals successfully embracing their historic fabric for the betterment of their patients and their communities, including Johns Hopkins Hospital, which preserved its original structure as a billing and administrative center, and prominently highlights its reuse in its promotional materials; and

WHEREAS, In a letter dated April 21, 2016, the Executive Director of PPS reiterated that much of the Rhode Island Hospital campus was paid for with community funds and stated, "To demolish [the Southwest Pavilion] without the community's input is an insult to the very people who helped the Hospital become what it is today"; and

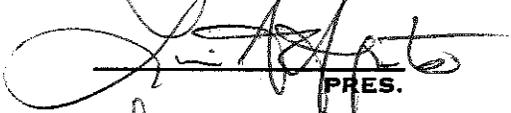
WHEREAS, As the elected representatives of the people of Providence, the City Council has a moral obligation to honor and preserve the landmarks and historically significant structures that connect us to our past and make our city a vibrant, beautiful, and unique place to live.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of the City of Providence does hereby strongly urge Rhode Island Hospital and Lifespan to consider all options and do everything in their power to preserve the historic Southwest Pavilion.

IN CITY COUNCIL

JUL 07 2016

READ AND PASSED


PRES.


CLERK

Effective without the
Mayor's Signature


Lori L. Hagen
City Clerk