



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 21, 2022

**Statement by Historic Kansas City
Demolition at the intersection of 31st and Main**

Historic Kansas City has learned that the Jeserich building, 3041-45 Main, built in 1888, and Lutfi's Fried Fish, 3035-37 Main, built in 1905, identified by a KC Streetcar federal study as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, are scheduled to be demolished beginning Wednesday, April 20th. These historic resources tell a unique and important story, define the development history of the community, and provide tangible reminders of the past that create a unique sense of place.

Listed on Historic Kansas City's "Most Endangered Places List" since 2019, these historic structures are located at the corner of 31st and Main, where a half-dozen properties were acquired by an entity controlled by 31 Main LLC C/O Price Management Co. In 2016, Price Brothers, associated with this group, razed the Green Gables apartment buildings designed by architect Nelle Peters west of the Country Club Plaza over the objection of HKC and the community. That site remains vacant.

Historic Kansas City has been in contact with the Union Hill Neighborhood, who over the past weekend learned of the planned demolition. At this point, scant information is available. The developer, 31 Main LLC C/O Price Management Co, has not met with the neighborhood to discuss the demolition or any plans for redevelopment on the site. The Union Hill neighborhood supports future development and improvements in the area of 31st and Main, but would like to see as much of the original corner preserved as possible, especially the Jeserich Building which ties in with the predominantly Victorian aesthetic of the adjacent residential area. Incorporating any portion of the original building into any future project would lend authenticity to any newer development and visually connect the neighborhood better to its future streetcar stop.

Although the Main Street Corridor is under the jurisdiction of the Main Street Special Character Overlay District, that status does not include demolition review. Kansas City ordinances do not currently allow pre-demolition review for most historic structures. Snap demolitions proceed with little more than an application filed with the City and a quick counter review. How can an historic building be slated for demolition without any warning or a meaningful review?

The Main Street corridor has lost many historic buildings and many that are left are threatened. The City has no ordinance protection for any significant and meaningful review of snap demolitions of most historic buildings. This building is not protected by listing on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places.

Land assemblage and speculative development is underway, with various developers purchasing large swaths of commercial blocks on Main Street. As the corridor continues to be developed there will be more pressure on the remaining historic buildings to be demolished to make way for large-scale development projects. Developers have now snapped up strategic corners at four of the six streetcar stops between downtown and the Country Club Plaza: 31st, 39th, 45th streets and Armour Blvd.

"In addition to individual properties, Historic Kansas City works with historic neighborhoods to help them preserve the history and character that is important to them. We believe the residents of the Union Hill neighborhood deserve to have input into such an important decision affecting their neighborhood and that demolition should not move forward until they have been given a chance to meet with the developer and understand plans," said Greg Allen, President, Historic Kansas City.

Is any historic building in this city safe when destruction so readily occurs? The historic and scenic assets of the city must be protected and warrant better.

###



**Jeserich Building
3041 - 45 Main**

- Built 1888
- Standard Plumbing and Heating
- Corner drug store
- Tower Lounge



3035 -37 Main

- Built 1905
- John Ward Hardware
- Southgate Hotel
- Lutfi's Fried Fish

