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*Executive Director*

May 13, 2009

The Honorable Will Wynn  
 Mayor Pro Tem McCracken and Council Members  
 City of Austin  
 Sent via e-mail

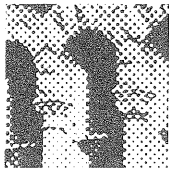
**Re: Dietrich-Hamilton House**

Dear Mayor Wynn and Council Members:

Regarding: Agenda Item 19:

"Approve a resolution to adopt a Substantial Amendment to the City's

- (1) Fiscal Years 2004-2009 Consolidated Plan; (2) Annual Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2008-2009, required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and (3) the Texas Local Government Code Chapter 373, Community Development 2008-2009 program. Approval of the Substantial Amendment will allow the City of Austin to administer grant funds made available to the City of Austin from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Community Development Commission reviewed and made recommendations to the City Council on additional stimulus funds at their April 14, 2009 and May 12, 2009 meetings. The draft HPRP recommendations were presented to the Austin City Council Public Health & Human Services Subcommittee on April 21, 2009."



HERITAGE  
 SOCIETY OF  
 AUSTIN

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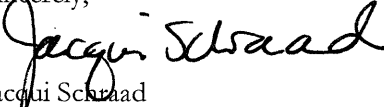
The Heritage Society of Austin strongly supports Council taking advantage of the availability of federal stimulus funds contemplated in this resolution to allocate \$500,000 in additional funds for the restoration of the Dietrich-Hamilton House at 912 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street and for construction of additional space on the site for the African American Cultural Heritage Facility. We previously supported inclusion of that project in the City of Austin's 2006 bond package, which was subsequently approved by the voters, with the House and the Facility as the signature aspects of the cultural package.

The Dietrich-Hamilton House was the first home to be purchased by freed slaves in Travis County. The City's African American Resource Advisory Commission has unanimously recommended that this structure be preserved and restored, and utilized as part of a larger development that would include various civic and cultural uses.

As you know, the City's African American Quality of Life Initiative, an ongoing effort initiated in 2005, noted the lack of recognized historical sites relating to Austin's significant African American population, and recommended that the City more prominently acknowledge and promote this history. We believe the restoration of the Dietrich-Hamilton House would be an important step in meeting the stated objectives of the Initiative, and the broader preservation goals of the community.

The Heritage Society of Austin strongly urges the use of these funds for the restoration of the Dietrich-Hamilton House, preserving it as a link to the past, while incorporating it into a facility dedicated to a positive future.

Sincerely,

  
 Jacqui Schraad  
 Executive Director

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