



historic urban neighborhoods
of INDIANAPOLIS

September 22, 2025

Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
200 East Washington Street
Suite 1842
Indianapolis, IN 46204

RE: 2025-COA-351(HC)

Dear Commissioners:

HUNI stands firm in joining the Holy Cross Neighborhood in opposing the demolition of the Church of the Holy Cross complex (a.k.a. “Holy Cross Church”), located at 125 N. Oriental Street.

We support the decision made by the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (later upheld and adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Commission) that determined the Church, Rectory, Gymnasium, and School Building to be of historic and architectural significance and designated them as historic areas.

HUNI respects the time and effort the archdiocese has spent investigating the needs of the building. We simply disagree that its salvation is impossible. Moreover, the lack of transparency or engagement with either the surrounding neighborhoods or groups like Indiana Landmarks, who work tirelessly to find creative solutions to these situations, is disappointing.

One needn’t look far—within one mile, Indianapolis is home to several creative adaptive reuses of churches, including:

- The former Holiness Church at 719 E. St. Clair St. is now home to IF Theatre, a preeminent performing arts organization and producer of the annual IndyFringe Festival.
- The former Fletcher Place United Methodist Church, a grand brick Gothic Revival built in 1874, has been fully restored inside and out and now houses several condominiums.
- The former Trinity Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, a once-anchor and partial namesake for the Holy Rosary-Danish Church Historic District built in 1872, will soon be reopened and reimagined into the Lille Bonne, a self-described “community living room”—aiming to bring about a truly unique space centered around community.
- The former St. Joseph Church at 540 N. College Ave., a Catholic church and another brick Gothic Revival constructed in 1880, serves as a successful restaurant. Even after the congregation officially shut its doors, this church served various community needs.

The point is clear and simple: preserving historically significant structures—even dilapidated ones—is far from impossible. Designers and developers, when inspired and challenged, can achieve amazing results.

We dispute the archdiocese’s claims that, were preservation possible, they would have pursued it. They have demonstrated an absolute reluctance to allow any reuse of the property as-is. The truth appears, that it’s not that a buyer or developer can’t be found, it’s that they simply don’t want to find one.

Instead, HUNI urges the preservation of these historic structures so they may live to tell their stories to future generations.

Tom Abeel
President

