

Communication from Public

Name: Kim Cooper & Richard Schave

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Council File No: 22-0899

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmember Hutt, Your district is home to one of the most remarkable living landmarks in Los Angeles, the Olympic Oak presented to gold medalist Cornelius Johnson at the 1936 Berlin Games. The tree, and the home where Johnson lived and trained, are under consideration to become a protected Historic Cultural Monument. But it is now more than six months since the Cultural Heritage Commission voted unanimously to recommend designation, and there has still been no scheduled PLUM Committee hearing. Meanwhile, the tree continues to suffer from neglect and the likely severing of roots when the other Johnson family home to the north was demolished for a large new building. Also, last month the property was listed on the MLS as a "fixer," with no mention of the special tree and the suggestion that an ADU could be built in its place. On Saturday, February 18, 2023, the tree and home were featured on the national CBS Saturday Morning program, as a feel-good story for Black History Month. Isn't this the perfect time to schedule the PLUM hearing and then on to full City Council to formally designate 1156 South Hobart Boulevard / Cornelius Johnson Residence and Olympic Oak as an Historic-Cultural Monument? Once declared a landmark, we believe it will be easier for a preservation minded owner to come on board to save the tree and reactivate the home as the living history they represent. To learn more about the current status of the tree, and the concerns of esteemed environmental horticulturist Dr. Don Hodel, please see our preservation advocacy page at <http://www.esotouric.com/olympicoak> Sincerely yours, Kim Cooper & Richard Schave Esotouric