

RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the mission and purpose of the Historic Landmark Commission is to support the preservation of historic buildings in the City of Austin, as it strives to protect important elements of the City's built and cultural history, and

WHEREAS, the Historic Landmark Commission has a long record of showcasing to the public the importance of historic preservation in Austin, by officially designating historic structures to be preserved to educate the general public about the City's rich cultural and built history, and

WHEREAS, the Historic Landmark Commission, under its approved Bylaws, has the authority to advise the Austin City Council on matters relating to historic preservation, and has the authority to recommend amendments to the City Code relating to historic preservation, and

WHEREAS, the Dessau Lutheran Church at 13300 North Dessau Road, a City landmark worthy of continued preservation due to its age and history, is currently endangered by encroaching development, and

WHEREAS, the Dessau Lutheran Church Cemetery Association, as owner of the church building, is unable to continue maintaining and protecting the church in years to come, and, after years of diligently exploring options to preserve the structure in its current location, has by a membership vote overwhelmingly supported its relocation to nearby to the Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms living history museum where it can be appropriately preserved, restored and interpreted to properly showcase its history to a wide public audience that not possible in its current location, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors of the Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms Foundation that oversees the museum, has voted to accept the church, and to raise the required funds to relocate and properly restore it, where the more than 60,000 museum visitors each year, including thousands of school children, can view and appreciate it, and be educated by its diverse, multi-cultural history, and

WHEREAS, the Certificates of Appropriateness Review Committee of the Historic Landmark Committee, has reviewed and supported the relocation of the church to the Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms in June 2019, to save it from certain destruction, and

WHEREAS, the project has been stalled for months by the pending imposition of exorbitant City permitting fees that have made the project unfeasible and mandated that it be restored to modern City commercial code requirements that would destroy the historical character and fabric of the landmark church, and

WHEREAS, this delay has allowed further deterioration of the church and is now contributing to its continued and hastening endangerment at its current location,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN: The Austin City Council should direct the City Manager to direct City departments to waive and forgive all permitting fees for this important preservation project, and to waive all pertinent Code requirements for the restoration of the building, along with related development ordinances designed to cover modern development and construction, so that its original appearance and fabric can be maintained and preserved as a notable historic artifact open for public education, to satisfy and comply with the City's longstanding policies of supporting and encouraging the preservation of important historical buildings that highlight the City's rich and diverse history.

ADOPTED: February 24, 2020

ATTEST: Emily Reed, Chair Historic
Landmark Commission