

Resolution

Whereas, Mississippi Code Ann. § 39-7-3 states that it is the “public policy and in the public interest of the State of Mississippi to locate, protect, and preserve” all sites, objects, and buildings of significance; and

Whereas, the Board of Trustees of the Department of Archives and History is charged by law “to determine the location of places of historical interest within the state”; and

Whereas, the Board recognizes Church Street in Port Gibson, Mississippi as one of the most historically significant places of interest in our state; and

Whereas, Port Gibson and Church Street in particular have long been nationally recognized and known as the place which General U.S. Grant during the Civil War spared from destruction as “a place too beautiful to burn,” and

Whereas, Church Street is located within the Market Street-Suburb Saint Mary Historic District and the Chamberlain-Hunt Academy Historic District, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

Whereas, the uniqueness of this historic way is now being jeopardized by a highway construction project proposed by the State Department of Transportation; and

Whereas, it is the duty of this Board to exercise its long recognized authority to aid in the preservation of such historical places in our state; and

Whereas, there are numerous precedents in the past where the Department of Archives and History has acted in similar situations in collaborating with local citizens and local officials to cause the revision of highway construction projects in a way that has assured the preservation of historically significant places. That among those have been the Pocahontas Indian Mound on U.S. Highway 49, the Melrose-Montebello Road Parkway in Natchez, the widening of U.S. Highway 51 in Senatobia, and many others; and

Whereas, the Department of Archives and History and the Department of Transportation have a long established tradition of working harmoniously and cooperatively to accommodate transportation needs at the same time insuring that places of historical importance have not been adversely affected;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board finds that Church Street in Port Gibson is a place of special historical interest and of such importance to the people of Mississippi that its integrity should not be jeopardized or impaired; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board respectfully petitions and requests the Department of Transportation to forego its proposal to permanently route U.S. Highway 61 down Church Street as a part of its future plans for the improvement of that highway;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be delivered to the appropriate officials of the Department of Transportation and to the press.

Adopted the 25th day of July, 2008.



Secretary to the Board of Trustees