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Dear Citizens of Madison,

The community of Plymouth, Michigan is vibrant and exciting with the historic Penn Theatre serving as an affordable entertainment destination for all. This irreplaceable gem was almost lost 14 years ago when the building sat vacant – its fate uncertain. In 2005, the Friends of the Penn was organized by a group of local residents who were concerned about the future of the Penn Theatre and the impact its closing had on the community. After an arduous campaign, the Friends of the Penn was able to successfully re-open the theatre in 2006 and continue with its preservation, maintenance, and operation. Our town would just not be the same if a three story condominium complex took the place of our beloved theatre.

This past year we welcomed over 55,000 patrons who enjoyed current movies, classic films, school field trips, and concerts of the Michigan Philharmonic. I reflect with sadness on how our community businesses would fare with losing exposure to the number of people that the theatre consistently brings to our town.

When I was contacted by Sandy Kolakowski about the Madison Theater it brought back memories of the Friends of the Penn year-long struggle to acquire the theatre and reopen it as a single screen movie house. It was a challenge but we were able to accomplish our goal and you can too! Even after all these years, not a week goes by that a citizen or local business owner doesn't thank me for the positive impact the Penn Theatre has had on our community. The image of the Penn is used by numerous realtors to help "sell" our community – that says something!

I encourage everyone in your town to support this project. The value that this type of unique business brings to your town is immeasurable. Once it's gone it cannot be replaced. The time is now – I encourage you to attend meetings of your Borough Council, Planning Board and Historic Preservation Commission to let your local government know how important this project is to you and the greater Madison community.

A well run Madison Theater offers so much opportunity for movies, live performance, lecture series, school field trips, meeting space for local non-profit organizations, the possibilities are endless! Local residents can walk to your theater instead of having to drive to the next town for their activities – think about it, once they are in their cars, will they stop in Madison to eat before or after the movie or will they just stop at a place near the theater they visit in the next town? Additionally, the proximity to the train depot provides easy access for people from out of town to visit and will encourage growth in your business district.

I understand the importance of the survival of the local movie theater and its relationship to the success of the local business community. I am here to offer any assistance and advice as you continue on this journey. It's THAT important!!

Best regards,

Ellen Elliott
Executive Director

The Friends of the Penn is an IRS recognized 501(c) (3) non-profit organization working to preserve the historic Penn Theatre in Plymouth, Michigan. This organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, age, handicap, national origin or creed. Donations to Friends of the Penn are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Tax ID # 51-0536795