

**Martha Heimberg**  
**1523 Abrams Road**  
**Dallas TX 75214**  
[marthahome@aol.com](mailto:marthahome@aol.com)

October 2, 2015

To: Dallas Board of Adjustments

Re: Aldredge House on Swiss Avenue

I love the Aldredge House for many reasons. I have lived in East Dallas for nearly forty years, on Swiss Avenue and in Junius Heights Historic District in an even older house. I am vice president of the Junius Heights Historic District Neighborhood Association, and chair its Beautification and Development Committee. I have taught college English in Dallas for nearly 40 years. For over 30 years I have written about theater, the performing arts and historic preservation for newspapers and magazines, including metroplex major dailies, *D Magazine*, *Texas Monthly* and the *Texas Observer*. I won a Dallas Historical Society Griffin Award for my historic preservation writing, and it's one of my proudest accolades.

All this is by way of qualifying my attachment to the Aldredge House, and my hope that it can be kept intact for future generations of Dallasites.

I was an undergraduate at SMU in the 60s when I spent a summer break in a rented apartment on Gaston Avenue, then the hip spot for college students and young singles to live. I wandered around the neighborhood and discovered the mansions on Swiss Avenue behind me, many in disrepair and showing signs of neglect. One amazing mansion stood out as magnificent and intact – like a Great Gatsby set. A decade later when I moved with my husband and young children to Swiss Avenue I figured out that the grand house I saw many years before was the Aldredge House. Dallas is a small town when you live in the inner city.

As we all worked to create a historic district on Swiss and Bryan Parkway in the early 70s, we constantly pointed to the beautiful Aldredge mansion as an icon of an era. It was intact, well maintained, and was bequeathed to the loving care of the doctors' wives that kept it immaculate, when many wonderful historic homes on Swiss were crumbling from the foundations and rotting at the eaves.

My then (and still) tennis partner, Barbara Bradfield, was president of the Medical Society at that time, and her delight and joy in working on and within the Aldredge house was palpable. I felt lucky to have a partner with a great topspin lob and an equal sense of historic responsibility.

I helped originate the first Swiss Avenue Home Tour, and continue to work as a docent in the spring tour, as I work in the Junius Heights Home Tour in the fall. The Aldredge House is open for all tours, so that the thousands of people who flock to the popular Swiss Mother's Day Tour can see what an old-fashioned kitchen, bathroom, and other rooms looked like when furnished in period furniture and fashion. Amazing! Most of us put in modern kitchens when we move into an old house, since the kitchens back then were just rooms with appliances and no "built-ins." This is a real historic treat for guests.

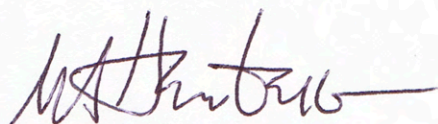
I am requesting that you grant the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance the continued use of the house as a public venue for weddings and other such family events. It means so much to East Dallas residents, and stands as a valued monument to another day and different styles of housekeeping for young



homeowners. This virtual museum would be lost if it becomes a single-family residence because what makes it unique would be lost.

Please consider the past, the present, and the future of our neighborhood and city as you proceed on this matter,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Martha Heimberg', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martha Heimberg