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**DISTRICTS 112 AND 113 TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT
NECESSARY TO PRESERVE HISTORIC HOMES WITH TAX FREEZE POLICY CHANGE**



(Highland Park Councilman Tony Blumberg, Landmarks Illinois Director of Advocacy Lisa DiChiera, D113 Assistant Superintendent for Finance Ali Mehanti, NSSD112 Chief Financial Officer Chris Wildman, historic preservation advocate and local community member Lisa Temkin, Landmarks Illinois board member Will Tippens, and Landmarks Illinois President & CEO Bonnie McDonald, standing in front of the beautiful Mary Adams house in Highland Park designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1905. Special thanks to homeowners Bill Levy and Patrick Schwarz.)

Last week, North Shore School District 112 (NSSD112) Chief Financial Officer Chris Wildman and Township High School District 113 Assistant Superintendent for Finance Ali Mehanti joined Landmarks Illinois officials and local community leaders to celebrate the districts' decision to participate in the tax assessment freeze program. The group met in front of the beautiful Mary W. Adams House in Highland Park designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1905. The Adams home is one of several local landmarks beautifully restored using a partial freeze prior to the school districts' participation. Now owners of designated historic homes can take the full benefit of the assessment freeze program with the school districts' participation.

Since its inception in 1993, NSSD112 has filed resolutions requiring the Lake County Clerk to deny requests from residents for historic tax assessment freezes on taxes levied by the school district. In September 2017, NSSD112 reversed course deciding to participate in the program

giving the Lake County Clerk the ability to process requests that maintain the owner's property tax assessment for 8-years after a qualified rehabilitation, lowering the financial commitment necessary to preserve a historic home.

"The history of our shared community is indelible and we see that as a key asset," said NSSD112 Chief Financial Officer, Chris Wildman. "The district's participation in the Historic Tax Freeze Program comes after much thought and study by the NSSD112 administration and Board. We believe that it is the right thing to do to preserve local history. We thank Township High School District 113, Landmarks Illinois, and many community members for their support and consultation in regards to this issue."

The policy change for NSSD 112 follows a similar action taken earlier this year by Township High School District 113, which filed exemption requests in 2015 and 2016. The recent decisions by Districts 112 and 113 put the institutions in the majority of taxing districts in the state. Prior to 2017, Districts 112 and 113 had been among the only three taxing bodies statewide that didn't participate in the tax incentive program, according to Landmarks Illinois.

"The communities we serve have a rich and important history," said Township High School District 113 Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Ali Mehanti. "We want to ensure that we are effectively supporting the preservation of that history through programs like the Historic Tax Freeze, which provides incentives for homeowners who commit to rehabilitating historic residences."

The Historic Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program benefits both the owner-occupant and the community by encouraging the preservation of historic buildings through promotion, recognition, designation and reuse of the property. The program aims to increase the value of the rehabilitated properties returning underutilized structures to the tax rolls while increasing the amount of revitalized housing within a community.

"Landmarks Illinois commends District 112 and 113 for its role in allowing historic homeowners to preserve our communities' unique residential character," said Landmarks Illinois President & CEO Bonnie McDonald. "The Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program is a tool owners of landmarked homes can use when they make a substantial rehabilitation of the property. Thanks to a transparent public process involving local taxing and preservation experts, we are pleased the school districts recognized it could help to improve neighborhoods while having no impact on the funds it has available to educate our children."

To qualify for the program, a property must be a certified historic structure either by listing on the National Register of Historic Places individually or in a district, or by local landmark designation in a community with an approved historic-preservation ordinance. The property must be a single-family, owner-occupied, principal residence, a condominium building, a cooperative building, a residential building with up to six units as long as the building owner resides in a unit; undergo a rehabilitation whose budget exceeds 25 percent of the property's assessor's fair

market value within a 24-month period, and undergo a rehabilitation that meets the Secretary of the Interior's "[Standards for Rehabilitation](#)." for more information visit:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnrhistoric/Preserve/Pages/taxfreeze.aspx>

About North Shore School District 112

The mission of North Shore School District 112, a community partnership committed to a world-class education, is to nurture every child to become an inspired learner, a well-rounded individual and contributing member of a global community by striving for excellence within an environment that fosters innovation, respect, engagement and intellectual inquiry. For more information, visit www.nssd112.org.

About Township High School District 113

Township High School District 113 serves the communities of Highland Park, Deerfield, Bannockburn, Highwood, Riverwoods, and the Town of Fort Sheridan. A total of nearly 3,800 students attend our two highly ranked schools, Highland Park High School and Deerfield High School. Both of our schools feature a wide variety of academic offerings taught by highly qualified staff, as well as numerous extracurricular offerings to meet the needs of students. For more information, visit www.dist113.org.

About Landmarks Illinois

We are people saving places. Landmarks Illinois is a membership-based nonprofit organization serving the people of Illinois. We inspire and empower stakeholders to save places that matter to them by providing free guidance, practical and financial resources and access to strategic partnerships. For more information, visit www.Landmarks.org.

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