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Thursday, August 18, 2011

Lexington Fayette Urban County Government
Planning Commission Members
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Dear Planning Commission Members:

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation was incorporated in 1955 and, since the time of its formation, has endeavored to promote the public recognition and preservation of buildings, structures, neighborhoods, districts, areas and objects which form the foundation of the Bluegrass region's historic fabric.

In the spirit of our founding and continued work in and around the Bluegrass Region we offer this letter of support in the matter related to Helm Place. You have before you a request for a text change to conditionally allow a historic house museum in an agricultural zone. Due to the vast history of Helm Place as a physical building, its inhabitants, and its contents, we believe this to be of great national significance.

Helm Place is one of two Local Landmarks, sharing the designation with only the St. Paul A.M.E. Church at 251 North Upper, both receiving their designation in 1990 and 1991 respectively.

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation operates two house museums with the Hunt-Morgan House at Second and Mill Streets and the Senator John Pope Villa, designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe and located on Grosvenor. We believe we act as excellent stewards of our property and collections and believe the Kentucky Mansions Preservation Foundation, Inc. represents the same standards of care and stewardship for its property. Acquiring Helm Place will add significantly to its educational capability.

The gift of Helm Place to the Kentucky Mansions Preservation Foundation, Inc. is a special gift and you have a rare opportunity to provide the world with access to this important historical treasure. The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation urges passage of the text amendment allowing a historic house museum in an agricultural zone.

Sincerely,

Sheila Omer Ferrell, Executive Director

cc: BGT Board