The 5700 block of Woodlawn Avenue is threatened with great change. The University of Chicago has recently bought five more buildings on the block, and it now owns 12 of the total of 19. Additionally, two buildings it already owned will be repurposed. The University is now seeking to expand its institutional Planned Development zone (PD43), a change that will void the current zoning restrictions and allow the University to develop its properties unilaterally with little community consultation. There is danger of significant damage to the character of Woodlawn Avenue from the demolition or radical disfigurement of irreplaceable historic architecture, the commercialization and institutionalization of the street, and increased traffic and density. All of Woodlawn and University Avenues north to 55th Street -- the Woodlawn Avenue Corridor -- faces the same potential dangers. The only way to protect our historic streetscape is to make the Woodlawn Avenue Corridor an official Chicago City Landmark District now.

Alderman Leslie Hairston has the authority to establish the Woodlawn Avenue Corridor Landmark District. Please email her with your opinion at lhairston@cityofchicago.org. If you would like, please copy the Hyde Park Herald at letters@hpherald.com and info@woodlawnaveinjeopardy.org.

For more information, there is a fully loaded website with historical data for each building in the "Corridor," plus pictures, landmark research and other materials at http://woodlawnaveinjeopardy.org.