

**Dennis L. Kern
33 Kensington Road
Berlin, Connecticut 06037**

February 24, 2025

Ms. Michele Malinowski, Chairperson
Historic Preservation Commission
City of New Britain
27 West Main Street
New Britain, CT 06051

Dear Ms. Malinowski:

I am attending the hearing of the Historic Preservation Commission on February 24, 2025 as a parishioner of St. Peter's to object to the condemnation and demolition of St. Peter Church, 98 Franklin Square. I will address the Commission orally as to the historical worth of this church and its extraordinary beauty.

However, I would like to submit my objection in writing so that the weaknesses of the structural engineering report proffered in support of the application for condemnation and/or demolition can be more clearly stated.

Str. Peter's is listed on the National Registry of Historical Places so its demolition is entitled to a close review by this commission.

The basis for the application to condemn and then of course demolish the church is the Redfern structural engineering report dated July 16, 2024. I attach a copy.

My objection to this report follows:

1. The report does not include evidence of the economic infeasibility for rehabilitation or repairs;
2. The report does not document the historical and architectural value of the church. In fact, it errs in stating that the Church was constructed in 1930. The basement area for worship was completed in 1890. The superstructure with its two hundred (200') foot spire adorning its French Gothic architecture was completed in 1900.
3. The report does not explain show demolition would benefit the community.
4. The report shows issues with plaster adornments but does not provide historical photographs to allow a fuller understanding of the church.
5. The Redfern report itself is inadequate to support the condemnation of and/or demolition for the following reasons:

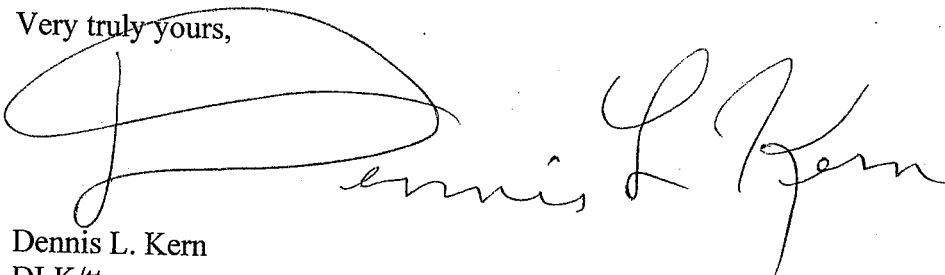
Page Two
February 24, 2025

- a. It is incomplete. No inspection was done of the exterior;
- b. The plaster cracks shown were not all new. Many were present before the Church was closed to services. The plaster itself is one hundred twenty-five years (125) old and is liable to cracking. It is not structural;
- c. To assess structural damage it is necessary to pull out the plaster where cracked to see what conditions, if any, caused the cracks;
- d. The fallen drainpipes had not been re-installed correctly and were never properly hung. This condition goes back several years.
- e. The steeple itself was not examined. A ladder is there. It would have allowed the inspector to check the interior of the steeple thoroughly.
- f. There is little factual basis for the opinion that the lateral load carrying capacity of the tower has been reduced by more than thirty-three (33%) percent. To justify this estimate more evidence is necessary. Many more bricks would need to be exposed by the removal of the plaster in order to assess the lateral load capacity accurately.
- g. The report does not suggest that there is an imminent danger of collapse which might justify the condemnation of the church.

For the reasons above I ask that the Historic Preservation Commission not accept any claim that the structure itself is dangerous to the public and must be demolished without the delays called for in the City ordinances and States statutes.

Thank you for considering my objection to the condemnation and demolition of St. Peter Church.

Very truly yours,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dennis L. Kern". The signature is written over the "Very truly yours," text.

Dennis L. Kern
DLK/tt

Copy: Mandators under canonical appeal