



## SOUTHERN BERKSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund Grant Program  
Massachusetts Cultural Council  
10 St. James Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Boston, MA 02116-3803


To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, I am writing in support of a request from Saint James Place for a capital grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund Grant Program for funds to be used in the structural repairs of the former St. James Episcopal church in Great Barrington. The repair and reuse of this important historic building by a group committed to making it a community asset dedicated to culture and the arts, is extremely important to our town.

As there appears to be a growing pattern of church closings across the country, it is encouraging to have a non profit organization interested in repurposing this distinctive building, prominently located at the convergence of two historic districts of our town. Saint James Place developed at a critical point when the parish had seriously considered demolishing the church and parish house as its only alternative. The purchase of the buildings, with a clear intent to create a center for culture and the arts in the center of town, will attract visitors and residents to the downtown area, significantly contributing to the continued economic health and vitality of Great Barrington.

We are happy to support Saint James Place in its efforts, and applaud their innovation in providing the opportunity for a number of our valued community based arts groups to have a quality space to call home in the heart of what will become our downtown "Arts district".

Yours truly,



Betsy Andrus

Executive Director

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