Petition Delivery — Community Voices on William Way's Future

To: William Way LGBT Community Center, Board of Directors
From: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, on behalf of 1,445 petition signers
Date: September 1, 2026
Re: Tell William Way: Give the Community a Voice Before Demolishing LGBTQ+ History

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Dear Members of the William Way Board,

We are delivering this petition to formally share the concerns of **1,445 people** who have signed in support of giving the community a meaningful voice before William Way's historic building is demolished. These signers represent more than public support for preserving an old building. Instead, many have longstanding ties to William Way and have been active members of the community for years.

The petition's request is straightforward: Before an irreversible decision is made, give the people who have a connection to William Way and the long history of Philadelphia's LGBTQ+ movement a meaningful opportunity to be heard.

William Way's home of 30 years represents more than a building. It has served as a place where LGBTQ+ Philadelphians have gathered, found support and services, built community, and connected across generations. As one petition signer commented, “Our gay youth and elders still need spaces like WWCC.”

We recognize that William Way must plan for its future to meet the community's evolving needs. The petition therefore asks for time, transparency, meaningful community involvement, and serious consideration of preservation and adaptive-reuse alternatives before demolition proceeds.

Petition signers ask William Way to:

1. Pause any irreversible actions toward demolition until meaningful public engagement has occurred.
2. Publicly evaluate adaptive reuse alternatives, including options that would expand programs and services while retaining the historic building.
3. Hold public community meetings before final decisions are made, giving stakeholders genuine opportunities to ask questions, offer ideas, and influence the project's direction.
4. Commit to preserving and interpreting the history and legacy of the William Way LGBT+ Community Center, regardless of the project's outcome.

The supporter comments and geographic data enclosed with this letter demonstrate both the breadth of local concern and the personal significance of this place to members of the community.

We respectfully ask the Board to receive this petition not simply as a collection of signatures, but as a request to slow down, pause, and listen to the voices of deeply invested community stakeholders before making a decision that cannot be undone.

Supporter Voices

A representative sample of comments left by signers is included below.

> *"The purpose of the William Way Community Center is to bring our gay community together. I often think of it as a welcoming place for folks seeking support, acceptance and connection. As nice as the lobby of the John Anderson apartments is, it does not have the welcoming quality that WWCC has. Our gay youth and elders still need spaces like WWCC. I hope it can be preserved."*
>
> — Colin

> *"There is more than simple nostalgia in wanting to reevaluate before acting irrevocably."*
>
> — Robert

> *"I support and encourage preserving our city's history and cultural diversity."*
>
> — Wendy

Signature & Constituent Counts

As of September 1, 2026, the petition gathered 1,445 verified signatures. Of these, 75% of all signatures appear local, listing a ZIP code within Greater Philadelphia (Philadelphia City; Bucks, Chester, Montgomery, and Delaware Counties; Camden County; and Wilmington, DE). The remaining signers come from farther afield, reflecting William Way's importance beyond the region.

Where Local Supporters Live

Supporters who appear local based on ZIP code break down as follows across the Greater Philadelphia region:

Area	Signatures	Distinct ZIP codes
Philadelphia (city)	736	48
PA Suburbs (Bucks, Chester, Montgomery, Delaware Co.)	238	88
South Jersey (Camden Co.)	88	42
Delaware (Wilmington area)	26	14

The table below shows the 16 individual ZIP codes with the highest signature counts (of 192 ZIP codes represented across the region). All fall within the city of Philadelphia.

ZIP Code	Neighborhood	Signatures
19147	Bella Vista / Queen Village / South Philadelphia	70
19143	Kingsessing / Cedar Park (West Philadelphia)	43
19146	Point Breeze / Graduate Hospital	39
19107	Washington Square West / Chinatown	34
19103	Rittenhouse / Center City	33
19148	South Philadelphia	33
19130	Fairmount / Art Museum / Spring Garden	31
19128	Roxborough / Manayunk	28
19145	South Philadelphia (Girard Estate)	28
19104	University City / Spruce Hill / Powelton Village	27
19106	Old City / Society Hill	26
19119	Mt. Airy	25
19120	Olney	21
19124	Frankford	21
19121	Brewerytown	19
19134	Kensington / Port Richmond	19

About This Packet

This public-facing packet summarizes the petition and its geographic support without publishing the individual signature roster. The complete signature list was delivered formally to William Way leadership. The figures above are based on the Change.org petition export on September 1, 2026.