

## Tenants proposals call for upgrade of Evanston's Noyes arts center

No one tenant would have more than 16 percent of the space, the tenant mix would be balanced between visual and performing artists, and the city-owned Noyes Cultural Arts Center would be renovated befitting its status as an arts center under recommendations to go to a city committee today.

Members of the Evanston Arts Council and Noyes Tenants Association laid out the recommendations for future maintenance and administration of the city-run Noyes Cultural Art Center, located at 927 Noyes St., in a memo to the City Council's Human Services Committee.

The committee is expected to discuss the proposals at its meeting starting at 7:30 p.m., to be held in the second floor city council chambers of the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Ave.

Among the proposals:

- The façade and exterior should be enhanced to make the city-owned building look “more like an art center.”
- “As an Evanston tax-supported facility, preference should be given to Evanston residents and organizations. Rental rates should reflect a residential (lower) and non-residential (higher) rate.”

At the same time, community service plans – a condition of tenants in exchange for the lower market rates – must serve the Evanston community.

- Cultural diversity should be a factor in selection from the applicant pool. As a group, NCAC (Noyes Cultural Arts Center) tenants will strive to represent the demographic diversity of the Evanston population.

- Tenants who maintain long-term leases will be able to do so as long as their leases, community service agreements, public access and general upkeep are in good standing.

The recommendations make up the first comprehensive proposal for how the groups view the future operation of the center, 927 Noyes St., since council members' decision last year, pulling back from giving the Piven Theatre Workshop a \$2.2 million loan to allow the group to substantially expand its footprint at the center.

At the time, some tenants raised protest over what they perceived as a one-sided deal with Piven.

A number of recommendations mirror concerns first raised by Piven Theatre officials about the deteriorated condition of the building.

Piven was proposing to put \$3.5 million into the onetime school building's needed repairs and renovations.

In the tenants and Arts Council preamble to the memo, the groups noted that: “The mission of the Noyes Cultural Arts Center is to make the arts a vital component of the fabric of daily life for all Evanstonians. The NCAC supports the creation and presentation of innovative work in a mix of artistic disciplines by offering subsidized studios, office, exhibit and rehearsal spaces and multi-venue theatre space. Resident artists are individuals and arts organizations who serve the diverse audiences of Evanston, the North Shore and metropolitan Chicago. Artists must meet critical standards of artistic excellence and offer Evanston community service, through which Evanston residents gain access to high-quality arts programming.”

Read More [News](#)

