



11/18/2021

By email: cityplanning@clevelandohio.gov

David Bowen, Chairman
City of Cleveland Planning Commission
Cleveland City Hall
601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 501
Cleveland, OH 44114

RE: Downtown/Flats CASE # DF 2021-016, The Sherwin Williams Company Corporate HQ Downtown Cleveland/Jacobs Block & Weston Block

Dear Chairman Bowen:

I am writing on behalf of the Ohio Chapter of the Wildlife Society. Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society and its 15,000 professional and associated members serve to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife biologists and managers to sustain wildlife populations and habitat through science-based management and conservation. The Ohio Chapter of The Wildlife Society is an organization of wildlife professionals throughout the Buckeye State who actively work to study, manage, and conserve wildlife and their habitats.

We urge the Cleveland Planning Commission to request that the Sherwin-Williams Company modify its proposed design for their new headquarters to include bird-safe glass. This small change will not compromise the designers' aesthetic vision, nor will it substantially change the costs of construction. However, by incorporating glass specifically designed to reduce perceived reflectivity, Sherwin-Williams will be taking an important step to making Cleveland a safer city for migratory birds.

Research has documented that light from urban areas affect landscape-scale stopover decisions by migratory birds. The Lake Erie coastline is already an important migratory stopover location, and because of its position on the landscape and bright nighttime skyline, Cleveland attracts millions of migratory birds every year. Reflective glass in urban centers has devastating consequences to migratory birds. Collisions with buildings are a leading cause of bird fatality during migration in North America, and it is estimated that up to 1 billion birds die each year in North America from building collisions.

The gravity of the problem has been recognized by a growing public, including building industry professionals such as architects, developers, glass manufacturers, and landscape designers.

Organizations, such as the National Glass Association, have developed standards and guidelines for bird-friendly glass design strategies. Cities across North America, beginning with Toronto and now including New York City, have enacted mandatory legislation for bird-safe building practices and materials for new construction that have reduced collisions up to 100%. Dr. Daniel Klem, a U.S. ornithologist known for his pioneering research into the mortality of birds due to glass windows, explained: “An obvious prediction, as awareness of the problem and growing solution continue to emerge, is that legislation to protect birds from sheet glass will grow accordingly until it is required everywhere.”

The Cleveland’s Planning Commission Design Guidelines, in 341.07(h) Sustainability provides: “Buildings and properties should be designed and construction to minimize energy consumption and to promote conservation of materials and natural resources.” Birds are valuable natural resources for a number of environmental and economic reasons. They spread seeds, pollinate plants, and also play a vital role in controlling insects and rodents. In addition to the countless ecological benefits, they further boost local economies via birdwatching and ecotourism, for which Cleveland is world-renowned.

Having a creative company like Sherwin-Williams use bird-friendly materials in its headquarters would truly lead to Cleveland becoming a bird-friendly green city and a leader throughout the region and country. Thank you for considering this important matter. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Gabriel Karns
Secretary, Ohio Chapter of The Wildlife Society
The Ohio State University
School of Environment and Natural Resources

x Erin Hazelton – President-Elect
xi Renee Buck – President
xii Catherine Dennison - Treasurer
xiii Grace Dietsch – Past-President

Cc: Jack Bialosky, Chair, City of Cleveland Planning Commission, Downtown/Flats Design Review District
Anthony Santora, Administrator, Downtown/Flats Design Review Committee
Giancarlo Calicchia, Vice Chair, Landmarks Commission
Freddy L Collier, Jr., Director of Planning, City of Cleveland
Ed Rybka, Chief of Regional Development, City of Cleveland
Jason Wood, Chief of Sustainability, City of Cleveland