



January 24, 2023

To the Members of the Independent Redistricting Commission:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my testimony.

I am a longtime resident of White Plains and currently serve on the White Plains Common Council. Council members represent the entire city, not particular sections, so we are very familiar with the many vibrant neighborhoods in our community, and the neighborhood associations that draw residents together.

Two of the most active neighborhood associations in White Plains represent Prospect Park and the Highlands. I understand the current proposal would divide these neighborhoods between two Assembly districts. I feel strongly that this would be a great disservice to the residents, who work as a neighborhood group on issues affecting them, and rely on the clarity of having a single Assembly member represent them.

I would further argue that keeping these neighborhoods in the 88th AD makes more sense. White Plains has more in common with the southeast section of Westchester, including its nearest sister city, New Rochelle (and even the village of Scarsdale which was once a part of White Plains), than with the more rural villages to its north and west.

I know you are all trying hard to do the right thing, and none of you would identify with the cruel disdain of Robert Moses, whose municipal projects wantonly destroyed neighborhoods. But it does serve as a cautionary tale. Our neighborhoods are the vital organs that allow our municipal communities to thrive. Please do not take a scalpel to them.

Respectfully,
Victoria Free Presser
Member, White Plains Common Council
Chair, Mayor's Youth Board