

MARSHA V. ROOD, FAICP
216 S. Madison Avenue, #302
Pasadena, C 91101
marsharood@earthlink.net

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TO: City of Pasadena Design Commission

RE: Proposed Hotel @ the SWC of Colorado Boulevard and Madison; 550 – 566 East Colorado

I have been a resident of the Central District for over 20 years and live three (3) blocks from the proposed hotel project. I am in favor of a hotel use with ground floor retail lining the street and the proposed location. As some of you may know, a hotel has been called for in the Playhouse District (now “Playhouse Village”) for over 30 years. However, the design for this proposed hotel is not in conformance with the *Central District Specific Plan’s Design Guidelines for the Private Realm* and is out of step with the vision for the Playhouse Village as a pedestrian-friendly district. I have the following comments:

1. The primary entrance and lobby for the proposed new hotel are located on Converse Alley, not Colorado Blvd. The entrance on Converse Alley is designed to primarily serve cars arriving and leaving the hotel. This unusual floor plan and design do not conform the Intent of the *Central District Specific Plan* which calls for **main entrances to be on the street (not on alleys)** and to the urban setting of the Playhouse Village whose key goal is to enhance the pedestrian experience on Colorado Blvd. and in the Village.

Ref. CD Specific Plan, page 156:

Guidelines BD 5: Demarcate Building Entrances

Intent. “Buildings should offer helpful cues to their access and use. A main lobby entrance to a building serves a different purpose than a storefront entrance to a street level shop. The differences in use should be accentuated in their design. Main entrances that are easily distinguishable provide comfort and ease for the pedestrian searching for their destination. Prominent entrances also add character, identity and interest along the street.”

“BD 5.4 “Accenture the entrance of a building main lobby or interior office space. These main building entrances should be prominent in terms of size, articulation and use of materials.”

2. The *de facto* pedestrian entrance to the hotel on Colorado Blvd. is designed to be through the proposed bar/lounge on the SWC of Colorado and Madison, not an entrance to the main hotel use. The proposed design shows outsized lettering above the bar entrance @ the SWC or Colorado Blvd. and Madison. This makes the bar/lounge the prominent entrance. However, one of the Planning Commission’s Conditions of Approval approved at its meeting of October 27, 2021, is that the *hotel have a prominent entrance on Colorado Blvd.*

3. The small pedestrian entrance on Colorado Blvd. to the west of the bar/lounge has no prominent signage showing that it is entrance to the hotel. Rather, the signage is inside the west entry wall, but no prominent signage to **offer helpful cues to its access and use.** According to the Central District Specific Plan: *“Main entrances that are easily distinguishable provide comfort and ease for the pedestrian searching for their destination.”*

Thank you for considering my comments.
Marsha V. Rood, FAICP