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Anguiano, Dora

From: Josh Allen
Sent: Tuesday, June 12, 2012 6:02 PM
To: 'Dave Sullivan'; dchimenti@austin.rr.com; vskirk@att.net; 'Mandy Dealey'; dave.anderson.07@gmail.com; mnrghatfield@yahoo.com; alfonsohernandez@gmail.com; commjms@sbcglobal.net; donna.plancom@gmail.com
Cc: Anguiano, Dora; Guernsey, Greg; 'Jerry'; Richard Suttle; Lynn Ann Carley; Patterson, Clark
Subject: Item C1 - JW Marriott Rezoning - C14-2012-0048

Chairman Sullivan and Members of the Planning Commission:

For the reasons expressed below, the Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association (DANA) board voted June 11 to voice its objection to the revision of CURE zoning for the J.W. Marriott. As currently proposed the site plan includes two (2) drive cuts and the primary pickup and drop-off driveway on Second Street. We believe a better solution could and should be found. For instance, separating the main pedestrian entrance from the vehicle entrance, locating the pickup and drop-off drive onto Brazos or below grade in the parking area. Either of these suggested solutions would remove impediments to pedestrian entry and exit onto Second Street, provide enhanced opportunities for pedestrian interaction with retail facilities within the J.W. Marriott and facilitate an uninterrupted pedestrian experience along Second Street, consistent with the Downtown Austin Plan (DAP).

Amendment 43 of the DAP, as adopted December 8, 2011, states in pertinent part: "... porte-cocheres should be allowed only ... on Downtown Mixed Use Streets (See map p81)... In no event should a drop-off or porte-cochere interfere with provision of a generous and continuous pedestrian path..." Brazos is designated a Downtown Mixed Use Street. Both Congress and Second are designated as Pedestrian Oriented Streets. A significant element of the DAP is to make Second Street the major pedestrian connector between the Convention Center and Seaholm. The City of Austin has spent millions of tax dollars in planning, designing and implementing its stated intention to make Second Street a pedestrian-oriented street. The currently proposed drive cuts and driveway along Second would force pedestrians to cross two (2) significant breaks in the pedestrian path along Second Street.

DANA favors the J.W. Marriott development. It recognizes the need for and potential contributions to this City of a world class convention hotel and facilities. We also applaud the changes they have made to embrace Congress Avenue as pedestrian-oriented street. While their adjustments have improved the treatment of Second Street, we urge them to take it one more step to comply with the Downtown Austin Plan for Second Street. After all, a world class facility, which we have no doubt the JW Marriot will be, should provide world class solutions that contribute to Austin's DAP and walkability and of downtown.

Sincerely,

Josh Allen
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