

Good evening Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners and Staff,

My name is Steve Glassman, a Fort Lauderdale resident, and I'm speaking on behalf of the Broward Trust for Historic Preservation where I serve as Vice-President. We are enthusiastically in support of this project.

More than nine years ago, the Broward Trust for Historic Preservation (BTHP) and the Central Beach Alliance (CBA) began working cooperatively in seeking city historic designation for this site and we were successful in 2004. These two organizations also worked closely with the previous owner of the site before supporting the last approved site plan in 2007. During those years, I served as the president of the CBA and while I remain an active member, I am not speaking on behalf of that organization.

For too long, this important site has been an eyesore on the beach. Much good work these past many years went into achieving the historic designation with the hopes of partnering that with responsible restoration and development. Unfortunately, the prior developer was not able to carry out the plans that so many of us worked so hard for, but now we have a second chance. The

preservation community is excited, the City's Historic Preservation Board granted all COAs, and the neighborhood shares that enthusiasm. The project that is before you today is one that went through many revisions as the developer worked with both preservationists and neighborhood residents in arriving at this proposal even before taking it to DRC. That type of communication and respect is refreshing and too often not found in Fort Lauderdale today.

From a historic preservation perspective, the previous site plan did a good job of respecting the present structure and the wonderful beach history of that parcel, but the new site plan you are considering is even better because so many uses of the historic Escape Hotel are now returned: original use as a hotel, maintains the pool in the same place, retains all breezeways, and restores the restaurant/bar/lounge area for the public. The developer is preserving a historic structure which is only two stories and yet covers nearly 60% of the rather large (and most efficient part of the) site; this leaves an odd-shaped parcel of land for the rest of the redevelopment.

What makes this site plan unique for the beach (and elsewhere) is the fact that the developers own the entire block with no immediate neighbors. The streets provide

ample setbacks and allow for the new residential tower to be built at the SE corner; it is pushed furthest away from the NBRA and closer to the W Hotel which is 23 stories. Because the historic preservation occupies nearly two-thirds of the site, the residential tower of modest height is necessary for the income it will provide. Wide sidewalks and significant landscaping provide even more of a buffer that will encourage pedestrian activity and hopefully lead to further streetscape improvements that will make the north beach village a more walkable community.

Thank you for your consideration in favor of this project; it deserves unanimous approval from you just as it received from P&Z.

Thank you.