



Livable Pasadena

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CITY CLERK

September 16, 2019

City Council

c/o Mark Jomsky

City Clerk

100 North Garfield Ave.

Pasadena, CA 91101

Re: 127-141 North Madison Avenue

Dear Mayor Torneck and City Council:

We were happy to learn that the proposed project at 127-141 North Madison Avenue has undergone meaningful changes by the developer, and that the Planning Department has provided for specific project conditions. We hope that these changes have resulted in a project that is more in harmony with the neighborhood, and which better seeks to protect the adjacent historic resources. Specifically, we understand that the revised project has the same increased FAR and housing units, but the massing, bulk, parking, and setbacks are more in line with what is in the neighborhood. Also, the setbacks of this project now will allow replacement trees to be planted in soil where they can grow to be mature trees that provide a shade canopy. This is potentially a good example of a developer, the City, and the community working together to find a better balance between the desire to develop and provide for housing, while at the same time protecting important historical buildings and green spaces.

Tonight, we are writing to urge the City Council to hold the proposed revised project to a CEQA review. There is no final design for the project. And although the proposed changes seem like good ones, the only way to know if they are sufficient, and if the proposed protections for the historical building are adequate, is to do a CEQA review. Any proposed projects that are to be located adjacent to historic buildings or districts should not qualify for a CEQA exemption. We need to be sure that we have all the facts before we make decisions to approve projects.

Additionally, we agree with Pasadena Heritage that this proposed project should go back to a preliminary design review. The public should be allowed the opportunity to review the proposed changes and to make any comments. Overall for all projects, a design review should happen earlier in our process. This will help ensure more successful project outcomes, both for developers and for the community.

09/16/2019

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