

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** James Riehl  
**Sent:** Monday, July 15, 2024 10:07 AM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** City Council Meeting 7-15-24/Support Porsche Delaership

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Honorable Members of City Council,

I am writing to voice my opinion of support for the proposed Rusnak Porsche dealership in East Pasadena. I am doing this for several reasons:

- First and foremost, I see this as an economic opportunity for the city which is expected to double the dealership's sales; additional income allows the city to potentially increase services, deal with aging infrastructure, or reduce the tax burden of our residents--all of these are good things.
- The Porsche clubhouse has the potential to increase interest in the city by people from out of town, which will again drive economic activity. This drives people to come into our city and spend money at restaurants and retail establishments.
- There is the opportunity to continue revitalization of the neighborhood. As new businesses come into the area, we as a city have the opportunity to bring in additional development--imagine that complimentary businesses see what is being done across the street and look at the area that is the old El Nido plaza and view that area as a target for redevelopment.

The alternative is this: the council allows a revenue generator to decamp to another city, taking with it the tax revenue and opportunities to go with it. And to what end? To "preserve" an area that needs revitalization because, as the Planning Commission decries, the signage does not fit with the Pasadena way?

I urge the Council to vote with its head and approve the development.

James Riehl

Pasadena, CA



RECEIVED

2024 JUL 15 AM 10:43

CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA

July 15, 2024  
City of Pasadena City Council  
Attn: Tess Varsh  
Hale Building  
175 N. Garfield Ave., 2nd Floor  
Pasadena, CA 91101

Re: Conditional Use Permit #6926: 2915 E. Colorado Blvd.

Dear Members of the City Council,

Pasadena Heritage is encouraged to see a project proposal that preserves the historic Swanson & Peterson Furniture Factory, built in 1929. The building is an excellent example of the Industrial-Daylight Factory type, is associated with two Swedish-born master carpenters and is an important part of the urban fabric of the largely industrial Lamanda Park Specific Plan. Pasadena Heritage still has some reservations about the design of the Colorado Boulevard elevation, but after meeting with Rusnak on multiple occasions, we better understand how some of those choices are driven by grading challenges and strict standards from Porsche's corporate offices.

However, we strongly believe that the project still needs refinement through the Design Commission process and would like to reemphasize some recommendations that we believe would make the project more successful. Pasadena Heritage provided comments on the project to the Planning Commission at the meeting on May 8, 2024.

However, it appears that the project does not incorporate or respond to any of the following comments: Swanson & Peterson Interpretation and Rehabilitation Plan – We believe a successful project will provide adequate interpretation for the historic factory. We ask that signage or a plaque be considered for the building that tells the story of its history. We believe that the building can offer a very unique and desirable experience for Rusnak Porsche customers, and we suggest working with a preservation consultant and interior designer who can really highlight the building's industrial history and tie it to the Porsche brand. The space should really highlight the industrial heritage of both the brand and Pasadena.

We also ask that a condition of approval be included requiring that a rehabilitation plan for the Swanson & Peterson Factory be prepared.

Sunnyslope Façade – The newly proposed loading and parking area along N. Sunnyslope Ave. accomplishes several goals. It provides a building edge, helps transition from the historic industrial building to the new contemporary construction, and also more clearly organizes the parking areas. Better attention must be paid to scaling and

materiality, however, and a better understanding of adjacent context should help. Currently, the building still needs to address a relevant sense of place.

Connection – Better pedestrian connections should be provided on-site. Guests who want to access the Swanson & Peterson portion of the complex should have a clear and accessible path. The same can be said for guests who want to access the trellis artwork. There should be a clearer understanding for customers who will use the site and pathways provided to enhance the shopping or service experience for them.

Trellis Artwork – It is our understanding that the trellis/artwork proposed along Colorado is intended to fulfill the setback requirements Rusnak states are difficult to attain with their building. According to Rusnak, the trellis is also being offered to the community for periodic use/events. We support the proposal for community use, and suggest that a formal agreement be entered into with the city or recorded as a condition of approval.

Additionally, the compromise that the trellis compensate for the easing of the setback requirements implies anchoring the Colorado and Sunnyslope Ave. corner with the trellis. Anchoring this corner is significant to defining the street edges. Porsche's objections are only based upon viewing the building from eastbound traffic on Colorado.

As designed, we believe that the trellis is not compatible to the contextual design relationship with the City, neighborhood, or to the building and it's function/use. There is a way to subtly engage the corner by extending the trellis westward, perhaps at a lower scale or by extending some elements of the design, while maintaining the view of the building.

Landscaping – Due to its close proximity to Eaton Wash, we ask that drought tolerant, native landscaping be employed. This is an important natural corridor that has been degraded due to decades of planning decisions, but it still serves as an important connection for wildlife and pollinators. Special attention should be paid to the southwest corner of the site, which is unresolved and provides an opportunity for more generous landscaping.

Pasadena Heritage would like to thank Rusnak for meeting with us and preserving the Swanson & Peterson building, the Planning Staff for serving as a mediator, and the Planning Commission and City Council for strong guidance and commitment to preservation. We hope our remaining questions will be addressed by the City Council, and will only enhance the Rusnak experience and urban design of the site.

Sincerely,



Erin Simon  
Executive Director  
Pasadena Heritage