



**Sound Study Peer Review for  
Neighborhood Impact Establishment and  
Outdoor Entertainment Establishment at  
1000-1030 Collins Avenue,  
Miami Beach, Florida  
(Fairwind Hotel)**

**Prepared for:**

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## **1 Introduction**

This report documents a peer review of an acoustic study conducted for the City of Miami Beach related to a request for a Conditional Use Permit for a Neighborhood Impact Establishment and Outdoor Entertainment Establishment at Fairwind Hotel located at 1000-1030 Collins Avenue. The reviewed report, prepared by Edward Dugger + Associates (ED+A) and dated April 8, 2019 describes the proposed operational changes, summarizes results of a site noise survey, and provides conclusions.

## **2 Project Description**

The property consists of four buildings (1000, 1010, 1020, and 1030 Collins Avenue), all containing guestrooms, with frontage along Collins Avenue. Outdoor entertainment is being proposed for the courtyard formed by 1000 (to the south), 1010 (to the west), and 1020 (to the north). At present, there is a distributed sound system within that courtyard as well as on the rooftops of the 1000 and 1010 buildings. The outdoor entertainment component is being proposed between noon and 5 am within the courtyard. According to the report, the existing sound system will be used to support live entertainment, although the nature of that entertainment (nor anticipated instrumentation) was not discussed.

Bordering the site to the east are a parking garage at 1027 Collins Avenue and the Essex House at 1001 Collins Avenue. The latter was noted in the report as having the same hotel use as the Fairwind Hotel. To the north, beyond the hotel property, is a city-owned housing development at 1040 Collins Avenue. To the west there is a museum at 1001 Washington Avenue and a commercial building at 1035 Washington Avenue. To the south is a hotel at 960 Collins Avenue.

## **3 Comments**

The sound study report prepared by ED+A provides a detailed analysis of the environs as well as the results of a detailed long-term ambient noise survey conducted at two locations within the courtyard. Based on what was presented, we agree with several assertions in the report. Primary among these claims is that the guests of the Fairwind Hotel overlooking the courtyard will be more affected by sound created in the courtyard than anyone else in the area. Additionally, residential neighbors at 1040 Collins Avenue are unlikely to be affected (assuming sound levels are kept to a moderate sound level that might also be deemed compatible with the hotel guestrooms bordering the courtyard).

However, the report is largely silent on the nearest property that is likely to be impacted by outdoor entertainment in the Fairwind Hotel courtyard—guests at the Essex Hotel immediately across Collins Avenue. There are several guestrooms in that hotel with direct line of sight to the courtyard which could be negatively impacted. The degree to which those rooms are affected depends on several factors, listed below.

- Existing ambient sound levels at the façade of the Essex Hotel are likely lower than those that were measured in the Fairwind Hotel courtyard. Lower ambient sound levels generally results in greater annoyance from new encroaching sounds.

- Based on Figures 2 through 4 in the ED+A report, sound levels within the Fairwind Hotel courtyard dropped significantly at or before midnight each night. With live entertainment being proposed until 5 am, these levels are very likely to be noticeably increased. This potential increase, and its potential impact on the guestrooms at the Essex House, was not discussed in the report.
- The building envelope design (i.e., most importantly, the guestroom glazing) at the Essex House is not known. This will significantly influence impacts on guests at the hotel.
- All measurements were reported in A-weighted decibels. While A-weighted decibels are ubiquitous in the field of community noise impact, they can be insufficient where low-frequency sound is an issue. For example, if live entertainment in the Fairwind Hotel courtyard were to feature a DJ playing electronic dance music or musicians playing percussion or bass, A-weighted levels would not adequately address potential impact on the nearby neighbors.

#### **4 Conclusions**

While we can find agreement concerning impact on most nearby properties, the report is short on details concerning potential impact on guestrooms with line-of-sight at the Essex House directly across the street. No detail was given on the potential nature of live entertainment at the proposed courtyard or on anticipated associated sound levels (addressing low-frequencies) or the existing acoustic environment at the Essex House. It is easily conceivable that, given loud enough entertainment within the courtyard at Fairwinds Hotel and low enough ambient sound levels in the early-morning hours, sound from the courtyard could be audible at the Essex House façade and, depending on building envelope design, audible within guestrooms.