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VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL

March 11, 2024

Deborah Tackett
Historic Preservation & Architecture Officer
City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

RE: **HPB24-0607** – Final Submittal Letter of Intent for *Preliminary Evaluation and Recommendation* for New Restaurant at 1657 Michigan Ave a/k/a 947 Lincoln Road

Dear Ms. Tackett:

This law firm represents The HWood Group (the "Applicant") as the operator of the proposed new "The Nice Guy" restaurant to be located at 1657 Michigan Avenue a/k/a 947 Lincoln Road (the "Property"), in the City of Miami Beach (the "City"). This letter serves as the required letter of intent for a Preliminary Evaluation and Recommendation for certain design features and the loading service at the Property.

Description of the Property. The Property consists of a single lot on the north side of Lincoln Road and the east side of Michigan Avenue. The Property is approximately 7,500 square feet in size and is within the CD-3 Commercial High Intensity zoning district. The Property is identified as a Contributing structure in the Miami Beach Historic Properties database, having been built in 1924 by William F. Brown in the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture. The one and two-story structure lies within the Flamingo Park Local Historic District. The Property features a long frontage along Michigan Avenue, and a short frontage along Lincoln Road.

Description of the Project. The Applicant seeks a favorable Preliminary Evaluation and Recommendation in connection with its proposed use of the Property for a location of The Nice Guy restaurant and bar, which is a popular, stylish and intimate dining establishment, featuring curated mid-century American decor and cuisine. The Applicant already operates a successful The Nice Guy location in Los Angeles. The Applicant will operate a restaurant with 358 total seats, including 96 booth seats, as well as table and bar seating (the "Project"). The restaurant will be entered via the existing doorway facing the corner of Lincoln Road and Michigan Avenue, with the proposed The Nice Guy restaurant occupying the entire building. A loading entrance is located along the middle of the building on Michigan Avenue, as well as a smaller entrance on the north end of the building, also facing Michigan Avenue. Finally, the Project will maintain extensive glazing along Lincoln Road, allowing for visibility into The Nice Guy establishment, and activating the corner of Lincoln Road and Michigan Avenue.

Preliminary Evaluation and Recommendation Requests. This Application is narrowly tailored to two distinct issues: (a) the appropriateness of the proposed cypress paneling for the windows along Michigan Avenue; and (b) the appropriateness of an on-street loading waiver for commercial loading to serve the site along Michigan Avenue.

Window Coverings. For the western elevation of the building along Michigan Avenue, the Applicant proposes to leave the existing windows in place, but will fabricate custom removable cypress paneling that will be used to cover these windows to provide privacy for patrons within The Nice Guy restaurant and bar. This configuration will: provide the necessary shading and privacy required for The Nice Guy restaurant layout and operations; serve as a stylistic tie-in and homage to the existing cypress panel ceiling in the contributing building; and allow the exterior of the building to be free from structural modifications since the panels will be removable, all of which will maintain and enhance the architectural integrity of one of the earliest remaining buildings along Lincoln Road.

On-Street Loading Waiver. In order to accommodate these operations, the Applicant further requests a Preliminary Evaluation and Recommendation on the issue of a proposed on-street loading waiver for loading on Michigan Avenue. The contributing site currently provides no loading space or sufficient area to incorporate safe loading to the rear of the property. The existing structures were constructed to the outer edges of the lot. The Property is within a locally designated historic district and is classified as contributing. Therefore, pursuant to Section 130-101, the Applicant is proposing to feature commercial loading spaces on-street. This is a typical condition for the north-south streets that cross Lincoln Road and feature on-street loading (such as on Jefferson

and Meridian Avenues). The subject location already has signage for a freight loading zone on Michigan Avenue (allowing for commercial vehicles in excess of 10,000 pounds).

The Nice Guy Venue and Operator's Experience. As noted, The Nice Guy already operates a successful location in Los Angeles. In fact, the Applicant owns and operates several successful restaurants across the county and Miami-Dade County. For example, Delilah Miami is located on Brickell Key Drive on the waterfront and in the heart of the vibrant Brickell business district. The sumptuous interior finishes in Delilah Miami illustrate that the Applicant spares no expense to deliver a high-end and unique atmosphere for the benefit of its patrons, as well as nearby businesses and residents.

As further example of the Applicant's prior success and favorable impact on its neighbors, the Applicant's property at 401 N La Cienega Boulevard in Los Angeles not only delivered a fantastic venue, but actually helped to revitalize an area that had been in decline. Before The Nice Guy location, the stretch of La Cienega between Beverly Blvd. and Santa Monica Blvd. was perceived as undesirable for many businesses, particularly those within the restaurant sector. Since the inception of The Nice Guy in 2014, a noteworthy transformation has occurred, breathing new vitality into the area, and fostering a collection of esteemed restaurant concepts, including Catch Steak, EPLP, Aburiya Raku, Caviar Kaspa, Koi, and others.

Moreover, the HWood Group as an operator brings a deep record of success with multiple successful restaurant venues, including The Nice Guy, Bootsy Bellows, and Harriet's. These successful venues are located in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Miami, Dubai, Toronto and Nashville. Additional dining experiences within the HWood portfolio include Didi (Vietnamese) in Los Angeles, and Sant'Olina (Mediterranean) located within the Beverly Hills Hilton. The HWood Group has the financial strength and established operational proficiency to operate unique and popular successful restaurants all over the United States and beyond, and will no doubt repeat that same success here.

Conclusion. The proposed The Nice Guy restaurant venue will bring a sophisticated dining destination to the corner of Lincoln Road and Michigan Avenue by way of a gentle and thoughtful renovation of the existing contributing structure. Accordingly, we respectfully request your favorable review and recommendation with respect to our request for a Preliminary Evaluation and Recommendation for the proposed cypress paneling window coverings along the Michigan Avenue elevation, as well as the proposed on-street loading waiver along Michigan Avenue. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Michael Larkin

cc: Paul C. Savage, Esq.