Sound Study Peer Review for the Proposed Neighborhood Impact Establishment at 1 Lincoln Road, Miami Beach, Florida (PB 0616-0037)

Prepared for:

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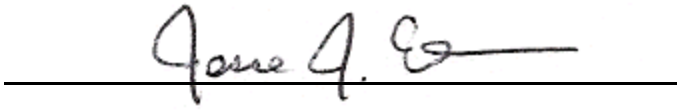

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1 Introduction

This report documents a peer review of a noise impact study conducted for the City of Miami Beach related to a request for a Conditional Use Permit being submitted for a Neighborhood Impact Establishment being proposed for 1 Lincoln Road. The noise impact study specifically addresses potential noise impacts due to music within the Tatel Restaurant upon the exterior along Collins Avenue and upon interior spaces within the Ritz-Carlton Hotel where the restaurant is located. The reviewed report, prepared by The Audio Bug and dated June 20, 2016, describes the environs, summarizes results of various sound level measurements made, and describes various sound isolation recommendations.

2 Project Description

The restaurant is located within the Ritz-Carlton Hotel located at 1669 Collins Avenue. Although the report is unclear on some details, it appears that the west side of the venue is along Collins Avenue whereas the other sides of the venue are immediately adjacent to interior Ritz-Carlton spaces. The venue is slated to host DJs, live entertainment, and pre-recorded background music. A distributed sound system is being planned for the space, although the report does not state explicitly that any visiting DJs or live bands will be required to use it.

3 Comments

The sound study report prepared by The Audio Bug specifically addresses sound transmission to the exterior along Collins Avenue as well as to a south corridor and the hotel lobby to the east. While it appears that these adjacencies were considered quantitatively, the report lacks some context and details which would be beneficial in assessing potential sound transmission issues.

3.1 Lack of Context With Respect to Adjacencies

While a floor plan of the space is included within the report, there is little context for where this venue is located in its environs. It is assumed that the porte cochere is on Collins Avenue, at or near the intersection at Lincoln Road, but this is not made clear. Furthermore, aside from reference to a corridor to the south and the hotel lobby to the east, there is no indication of what spaces surround the restaurant. Plans showing the venue within the larger context of the hotel would help to paint a clearer picture of potential sound transmission issues. This applies to any spaces that may be above the venue, as well.

3.2 Unknown Nature of Acoustic Measurements

The report states that sound level measurements were made at the site in 2010 but little detail is given with respect to what these measurements comprised. The report states that sound transmission measurements were made with a sound source located within the venue. This would seem to imply that the source was pink noise (as this is what is commonly used in standardized sound transmission tests). This is not clearly established in the report. Confusion arises when looking at the two graphs on pages 3 and 4 of the

report which show A and C weighted sound levels within the lobby during a sound transmission test. Given that the level fluctuates as a function of time, it would appear that the source within the venue was not a constant signal (e.g., pink noise) but, rather, a varying source (e.g., music). Furthermore, levels in this graph indicate very high maximum levels of 95.5 dBA and 96.0 dBC within the lobby. These are *very* high receiver room levels which would indicate either a *very* loud source within the venue (likely in excess of 110 dBA), very poor existing sound isolation, or, likely, a combination of both.

A secondary question that arises, given the fact that these tests were conducted some six years ago, is whether anything about the space or the partitions have changed in the interim.

3.3 Ambiguity Related to Architectural and Sound System Recommendations

As an appendix to the sound study, there is a report to Telesco Construction Company dated June 14, 2016. This report presents two “temporary construction sound proofing” walls (one of which, while exhibiting an STC of 54, provides low sound transmission values of under 20 decibels at low frequencies under 100 hertz). These walls only appear to be mentioned on the plan on page 5. However, their purpose is not revealed and why they are temporary is not discussed. Additionally, while the plan on page 5 does show such a “temporary” wall at the south corridor, the double door between the venue and corridor, which would likely be the weak link for sound transmission, is not addressed.

The report discusses glazing recommendations, including a recommendation to add a laminated pane to the east wall to achieve an STC of approximately 53 which, according to the report, will “eliminate any potential impact on the Ritz-Carlton lobby.” However, there is no evidence, in the form of anticipated venue sound levels, to back up this claim. While an STC 53 partition is not insignificant, where source sound levels are high and background sound levels in a receiving room are low, there is no guarantee that such a wall will be sufficient.

To the point on anticipated sound levels within the venue, a proposed loudspeaker layout is given in the report. However, no study or indication of potential sound levels within the space are offered. Thus any assessments on potential impacts to adjacent spaces cannot be made.

4 Conclusions

The sound study report prepared by The Audio Bug provides valuable information but lacks the information necessary from which one can draw a conclusion that there will be no impact upon adjacent areas. Recommendations concerning architectural modifications and sound system layout are given but no quantitative evidence is presented that allows one to conclude that there will be no impact on adjacent areas. Our contention is not that there will definitely be negative impacts but, rather, it is that we have no basis for saying there will not be. For example, the distributed sound system could always be limited in output such that the recommended architectural modifications would be sufficient to ensure adjacent areas are not impacted. However, the onus would then be on the sound system designer, installer, and operator to ensure such a condition.