

HPB21-0457 12/13/21

HPB meeting

Exhibit D

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AA #26000962

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to: Alfredo J. Gonzalez Esq.  
333 SE 2nd Avenue #4400  
Miami FL 33131

re: Response to Opposition Rebuttal Report  
for the:  
Ritz Carlton DiLido Hotel @ One Lincoln Road and  
Sagamore Hotel @ 1671 Collins Avenue

I have read the Rebuttal Report on behalf of the National Hotel as prepared by Steven Avdakov, R.A. and Heritage Architectural Associates regarding the Certificate of Appropriateness for HPB application HPB21-0457 for the DiLido and Sagamore Hotels.

I have the following comments:

1. The Rebuttal Report contends that the construction of a 200' tall tower would not comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard #9 and should thus be denied. However the Report fails to acknowledge and include several existing conditions of the Historic District and subsequent legislations enacted over the years by the City of Miami Beach regarding this district - which have updated the local requirements for construction within this particular neighborhood of the Ocean Drive / Collins Avenue Historic District.

#### EXISTING CONDITIONS

Surrounding the Ritz Carlton Dilido and Sagamore Hotels are existing tall buildings that pre-date their current tower proposal. These include the following buildings:

W Hotel - 184'

Setai Hotel - 2001 Collins Avenue - 2001 - 385'

Shore Club - 1901 Collins Avenue - 1998 - 225'

1800 Collins Avenue Condominiums - 205'

Raleigh Residences Tower - 1775 Collins Avenue - 200' (in construction)

Ritz Plaza aka SLS Hotel - 1701 Collins Avenue - 1940 - 204'

Delano Hotel - 1685 Collins Avenue - 1947 - 150'

Decoplage Condominiums - 100 Lincoln Road - 183'

Loews Hotel - 1601 Collins Avenue - 1996 - 272'

Royal Palm Crown Plaza Hotel - 1545 Collins Avenue - 1998 - 182'

2. This Rebuttal Report maintains that the proposed 200' tower to be located behind the Sagamore Hotel would be out of scale with its surroundings. To this - this author would ask - what about the nine buildings listed above? They were approved for construction at various points in time and have long been contributing buildings to the Historic District.

3. It needs be noted that this part of the Ocean Drive / Collins Avenue Historic District was historically never intended to be all of a low scale. The 1939 photograph below shows the newly built high-rise hotels along this section of Collins Avenue when Miami Beach was already being touted as the City of Skyscraper Hotels. Note also that these skyscraper hotels of 1939 replaced former oceanfront mansions along the coast, since Collins Avenue was originally developed as a residential avenue.



4. The historic photo above does not even show the grandest and one of the largest of Miami Beach skyscraper Hotels - the Roney Plaza Hotel - constructed even earlier in 1925 further north on Collins Avenue and now sadly demolished. The 'Roney' was the original model for this succession of oceanfront tower hotels later built. From the very beginnings of commercial hotel development in the District these skyscraper hotels were always a major part of the equation.

5. The Rebuttal Report fails to acknowledge many of these tall buildings - including the Decoplage Condominium directly across Lincoln Road from the DiLido. Since even before the creation of the Historic District in 1986 and its subsequent expansion in 1992, and subsequently - the City of Miami Beach has permitted these larger buildings in the Historic District along the east side Collins Avenue.

6. This report also does not mention the futuristic top floors of the Ritz Carlton DiLido clad in black glass and its relationship(s) to the Historic District. I remember the controversy and discussions when this was originally proposed. However this has since evolved to become an accepted part of the skyline. It shows the wonderful evolution of the District into the 21st century.

7. In a more perfect world it may have been satisfying for some to retain the consistency of the two and three story buildings which comprise so much of the District west of Collins Avenue. However - as has been stated previously - the blocks east of Collins have been built-out with skyscraper hotels long before the District was created.

8. Although these tall buildings may not align exactly with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings - the City of Miami Beach has consistently worked throughout the years to maintain the built integrity of the Historic District - while permitting selected new larger buildings for existing businesses within this Skyscraper Hotel district. Thus the City has repeatedly updated building requirements in the District.

9. The City has long recognized that a neighborhood - especially an historic neighborhood - must grow and change through the years in order to remain viable as an integral part of the City. And as stated previously - tall buildings have always been a part of this part of the neighborhood.

10. In 2019 the Miami Beach City Commission permitted the maximum building height for additions on lots of 115,000 square feet or greater to be increased to 200 feet for RM-3 zoned oceanfront properties between 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets within the Ocean Drive / Collins Avenue Historic District. The approved Raleigh Tower is the first tower approved under this new ordinance with the Ritz Carlton DiLido / Sagamore being the second tower proposed per the new ordinance.

11. Many of the renderings presented in the Rebuttal Report repeatedly utilize a distorted view with a very close vantage point looking at the proposed tower - which tends to make the tower seem even taller than will actually exist.

12. The placement of the tower to the easternmost portion of the property prevents the new tower from becoming an intrusive visual element in the historic relationship of the historic buildings as viewed from Collins Avenue. The present siting of the tower is very sensitive to the historic view of these buildings. Siting of the tower further westward certainly becomes a very delicate balance between protection of the view from Collins Avenue and consideration of the view from the beach walk.

13. I would venture to say that practically every oceanfront hotel in Miami Beach was originally designed in response to the tropical light and the views of the ocean. Unfortunately the views and the shadowing and the access to tropical light are not protected elements in the City.

14. Regarding the shadowing - I will leave this discussion to Kobi Karp and his team of Architects for the tower. My understanding from our discussions is that due to the required setbacks along the north side of Lincoln Road that the tower is not able to be moved any closer.

15. In reviewing the 1992 CMB Expanded District Designation Report it is quite evident that this Report pre-dates any accepted terminology and/or understanding of mid-20th-century-modern architecture in Miami Beach or MiMo. Thus the report refers to everything in the 1930's and 1940's as Art Deco architecture - even while elaborating on different sub-styles such as Streamline Moderne. Architecture after WWII is referred to as 'The International Style.'

16. It was around the year 2000 that the moniker of 'MiMo' architecture was coined by Randall Robinson and Terri D'Amico as part of the efforts of the Miami Beach Urban Arts Committee to educate the public about Mid-20th-Century-Modern architecture.

17. And even with this failure to recognize the mid - century style in the years prior - MiMo skyscraper hotels in the District such as the Shore Club, Nautilus, Shelborne (west tower), Marseilles, Grossinger's Beach (aka SLS), Delano, National, Sagamore and DiLido Hotels - among many others - were all constructed in those MiMo years after WWII and are recognized today as integral parts of the Ocean Beach / Collins Avenue Historic District - including the earlier skyscraper hotels constructed prior to World War II despite their respective heights.

18. This Historic District has always remained highly representative of different periods in Miami Beach's history. These periods reflect the changing economic conditions of the City and the evolution of the local community. Development in this Historic District has always been ongoing - and reflects the greater City of Miami Beach.

#### CONCLUSION:

19. One of the general characteristics of an Historic District states that: *"A District is important as a unified entity, even if composed of a wide variety of resources."* This part of the Ocean Beach / Collins Avenue Historic District has never been a static entity and has always contained this wide variety of resources, building types and architectural styles that reflect the growth and evolution present through the generations - and now leading into the 21st century. This evolution is an integral part of the district's identity.

20. Even Carl and Jane Fisher originally recognized the importance of this neighborhood when they built their first home 'The Shadows' next to the beach at the south side of Lincoln Road - on the site of the present day Decoplage.

21. The district's identity is derived from this interrelationship of resources, which convey a visual sense of the evolution of the overall historic environment. And the majority of these components of the District definitely add to its historic character and integrity.

22. This report concludes that the proposed new Ritz Carlton DiLido / Sagamore tower will not be out of scale with its surroundings and the buildings already existing and should be approved.

The view below is of the skyscraper hotels along the east side of Collins Avenue - and includes the approved Raleigh Tower and the proposed Ritz Carlton DiLido / Sagamore Tower.



Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Arthur J. Marcus'.

Arthur J. Marcus Architect P.A.

cc: Kobi Karp, Mathieu Picard