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Chair and Members of the Historic Preservation Board  
City of Miami Beach  
1700 Convention Center Drive  
Miami Beach, FL 33139

**RE: Versailles – modifications to the previously approved COA for additional details related to the lobby of the Versailles; HPB22-0548.**

Dear Mr. Mooney,

Our firm represents 3425 Collins, LLC ("Owner" or "Applicant") the owner of the parcel of land located at 3425 Collins Avenue (the "Property"), which is improved with the Versailles Hotel, a contributing historic structure in the Collins Waterfront Historic District.

### **History of Approvals**

On January 12, 2021, the Historic Presentation Board ("Board") reviewed and approved a COA for modifications to the contributing Versailles Building (HPB20-0389) ("Versailles Approval"); on February 9, 2021, the Board approved a COA for the approval of the redesigned new detached ground level tower addition (HPB20-0430) ("Aman Approval") (collectively the "Proposed Project"). Thereafter the board approved the design of the landscaping and hardscaping (HPB20-0441) and additional details related to the basement (HPB21-0451) in May of 2021.

### **Current Application**

The scope of this application consists of additional information regarding the interior design of the new lobby of the Versailles building ("Application"). Condition I(C)(1)(h) of the consolidated order for the Proposed Project requires a final submittal to the Board for: "***The interior design, including but not limited to materials, finishes and lighting elements of the new lobby of the Versailles building, as shown in the plans dated February 10, 2020....***" Please find enclosed materials to fulfill this request, including updated plans and renderings detailing the design elements of the lobby as described in detail below.

### **The District**

The redevelopment of the Property is the last piece of the larger Faena District, stretching in part from 32nd Street to 35th Street. The District includes the neighboring Faena Hotel (formerly the Saxony and also a Roy France designed building), the Faena House condominium (designed by Sir Norman Foster and Brandon Haw), the Casa Faena (formerly the Claridge), the Faena Parking

Garage, the Bazaar (the historically replicated Atlantic Beach Hotel and another Roy France building), and the Forum (designed by Rem Koolhaas of the Office of Metropolitan Architecture).

The Proposed Project is being developed -- by Aman Resorts/OKO Group in partnership with Owner -- as the last element of the Faena District. The Proposed Project will continue the pattern that has made the District a special place for residents and visitors alike — the preservation of important and invaluable historic buildings while injecting new life into the historic buildings.

### **Proposed Design of the Lobby of the Versailles**

The Versailles was designed by Roy F. France in 1940 in the Art Deco-style, as one of the three landmark hotels to open that year. The hotel opened in 1941 for seasonal occupancy, and in 1955, Roy F. France and his son designed an addition to the hotel, which was distinct from the original design. The Versailles quickly became one of the epicenters of Miami's social scene in the following decades.

The proposed design of the lobby is a contemporary reinterpretation of the original design, which will honor and revive some of the original 1940s features, designed by Roy France, including the restoration of the historic columns. This design proposal from Denniston was produced and designed following meticulous research, which culminated in an interior design that is respectful not only to the Art Deco Movement in Miami Beach and to Roy F. France's vision, but also to the Aman culture, which will bring the Versailles back as a landmark in the district.



***Historic Columns.*** As part of the design for the Versailles, the existing historical columns will be restored, including the blue color of the existing capitals. To honor and emphasize the four (4) historic columns designed by Roy France, the central space of the lobby will be highlighted with a lowered and recessed ceiling, which will also delineate between the other elements of more contemporary interpretation and design.

**Lobby and Terrace Floors.** Applicant is proposing a terrazzo floor in the lobby and front terrace, which was typical of the times, with a darker patterned marble design. Patterns such as tone-on-tone, black-and-white checkered flooring, or cube patterns with optical illusion designs, were often used in Art Deco buildings. The admiration towards the modernity of the machine, and the design qualities of machine-made objects, can be seen in the use of patterns of relative simplicity, symmetry and in the repetition of elements.

PROPOSED FLOOR FINISHES



The historic photograph of the exterior front terrace shows that the original floor of the exterior terrace area contained a rectangular pattern with inlays, surrounded by

a border. The current proposal of the floor is a contemporary interpretation reincorporating a rectangular pattern. The exterior terrace floor will also incorporate a border (see Sheet A-204) to honor the historic pattern in the outdoor area.

**Art Deco screens, counters and furniture.** In Art Deco and Streamline buildings or pieces, surfaces and details were often smooth and polished, with little to no ornamentation, using gold or silver color metal, as well as rounded corners on the edges. Such elements have been incorporated into the proposed design through the screens, counters and furniture elements. The elements proposed are a contemporary interpretation of Art Deco patterns. The use of screens in front of the lobby walls allows for large white and plain surfaces to breathe, with a simplicity that was very common during this Depression Era of Art Deco in Miami Beach. Original Art Deco furniture designs adapted to the form, with smoother surfaces and curved forms. Applicant's proposal brings the same smoothness and curves with a modern twist and comfort.



**Historical Display.** In the Versailles lobby, there will be an elegant display of curated photographic records, along with a historical analysis and a written description of the history and evolution of the original building and its changes over time.

### **Sea Level Rise Criteria**

In order to ensure that the Project is resilient in light of the effects of sea level rise, the sea level rise and resiliency review criteria from Section 133-50 of the LDRs is addressed below:

- 1) **A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.**  
The historic tower's interior consists only of the concrete shell. All concrete removed during reconstruction will be separated from its reinforcement steel and both the concrete & steel will be sent to recycling plants.
- 2) **Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.**  
All existing historic windows will be replaced with hurricane proof impact windows with identical configuration.
- 3) **Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.**  
Sliding glass doors and operable windows where possible have been proposed in all hotel guestrooms.
- 4) **Resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native, or Florida-friendly plants) shall be provided, in accordance with chapter 126 of the city Code.**  
Resilient landscaping has been provided (see HPB20-0441).
- 5) **The project applicant shall consider the adopted sea level rise projections in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Action Plan, as may be revised from time-to-time by the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact. The applicant shall also specifically study the land elevation of the subject property and the elevation of surrounding properties.**  
The existing hotel structure is above the base flood elevation and cannot be raised due to its historic design.
- 6) **The ground floor, driveways, and garage ramping for new construction shall be adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-way and adjacent land, and shall provide sufficient height and space to ensure that the entry ways and exits can be modified to accommodate a higher street height of up to three additional feet in height.**  
All ramps will be able to absorb the additional 3 feet in height based on the current street elevation of Collins Avenue.
- 7) **As applicable to all new construction, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation. All redevelopment projects shall, whenever practicable and economically reasonable, include the relocation of all critical mechanical and electrical systems to a location above base flood elevation.**

All critical mechanical and electrical equipment will be located between 1 and 2 feet above base flood elevation with the exception of the FPL vault, which will be located at grade elevation as required by FPL.

**8) Existing buildings shall, wherever reasonably feasible and economically appropriate, be elevated up to base flood elevation, plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard.**

The existing building is located above the base flood elevation but it cannot be raised up to the freeboard due to its historic designation.

**9) When habitable space is located below the base flood elevation plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard, wet or dry flood proofing systems will be provided in accordance with Chapter of 54 of the City Code.**

All proposed construction located below BFE will be dry flood proof construction up to the BFE plus freeboard. All entrances to the basement located below BFE plus freeboard will be protected with flood panels or gates.

**10) As applicable to all new construction, stormwater retention systems shall be provided.**

The project's Stormwater Management System will be designed to meet the requirements for on-site retention for the State of Florida Department Of Environmental Protection, the City of Miami Beach and the State of Florida Department of Transportation.

**11) Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials shall be utilized.**

Cool pavement materials have been utilized.

**12) The design of each project shall minimize the potential for heat island effects on-site.**

The project's parking is located below grade, eliminating parking lots which contribute to the heat island effect. Hardscape areas will be limited. Landscaped areas will be planted with green lawns, bushes and trees for shade.

For the aforementioned reasons we respectfully request your favorable review of the Application and we look forward to working with your staff and presenting the project to the Historic Preservation Board.

Sincerely,



Neisen O. Kasdin