

From: Joanie Walbert
To: [PRC](#)
Subject: 3033991-LU, 2224 2nd Ave
Date: Friday, January 10, 2020 5:04:39 PM

CAUTION: External Email

To Joseph Hurley concerning the project at 2224 2nd Avenue,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this project. I'd like to begin by reiterating what I am sure is already on the record, that this portion of "the block" is crushingly and devastatingly important to the people who live on it, frequent it, socialize on it, perform in and attend music shows on it, work on it, participate in pinball leagues on it...and the list goes on and on. This precise cluster of storefronts means more to this community than I could ever fully know or express myself. This community has become a home away from home and a group of friends and partners that I did not imagine I would have when I moved to Seattle. I know that the blood runs thick in this community. This was proven to me first-hand when, as a new Seattle transplant five years ago, this community stood ground with me as I filed a protection order against someone in this community who was trying to hurt me and hurt someone else on the block. To me, that was a testament to how this community has created its own their own strong family network. It's something I can speak to because I've seen it, but I could never speak to it as someone who has grown up on the block, or as someone who has been here for decades could. I have seen and I continue to see how this stretch of establishments is a living room--truly--for the Belltown community. I know that to my deepest core, and for this reason, I would like to convey to you and your colleagues at SDCI how important this is, how this stretch really is the last place that this community has to call home. I think it's almost impossible to understand unless you've seen it first-hand, and I personally have not known another precedent that rivals this place. "The Block" is truly the last place for the Belltown community, and all design decisions need to reflect this.

With that having been said, I have reviewed the Design Guidance documents for this project. I read that the design team has been in touch with the owners of Crocodile, Shorty's, Rocco's, and perhaps others, and I read that there were discussions regarding keeping the current tenants in the new building once completed. I would like to add a vote in favor of that movement and a vote in favor of however we can make that possible for all the reasons mentioned above. I would also like to comment on the ground floor plans in the three options I saw.

The Design Guidance package speaks to having retail space that is long and narrow in keeping with the formats of the current businesses. I do not see this executed in the plans. In every plan, the ground floor is split in half from street to alley. The retail storefronts on 2nd do not continue all the way to the back alley as they do currently. Instead, a handful of residential units are jammed in the back of the building, depressed against the alley. This design move does not speak to maintaining the hierarchy of the retail spaces as they are currently, but it sacrifices them at the cost of five seriously unideal living units that are depressed below a back alley. Please, in the name of trying a little more earnestly to preserve the block, as the design team claims, please make the recommendation to eliminate the ground-level residential units and extend the retail spaces all the way through the building. This is the only architectural comment I have, and I think it is an important one.

Thank you sincerely for your time, and for what I'm sure is an earnest review of this very

sensitive and important part of our Seattle home.

Best Regards,

Joanie Walbert