



July 18, 2019

To Alameda Planning Department,

We are writing to extend our support for the 96 room Park Street Hotel (Holiday Inn Express) project. We have lived in Alameda for the last 20 years and purchased the building at 2424 Lincoln Avenue, where we have operated Speisekammer for 17 years. As residents, business owners and property owners we can see this project will bring many benefits to our city. Esthetics, business traffic, jobs and taxes.

The 1800 block of Park Street is lacking, and the esthetic of Park Street as one drives in from Oakland would improve significantly by having a beautiful new hotel. Along with the other new buildings, the North section of Park Street will regain some vitality and appeal.

Alameda's business owners will gain new customers. The hotel will not have a restaurant. The restaurants and shops in the neighborhood will have additional foot traffic-Something currently lacking at the North end of Park Street. The hotel guests will likely also visit other parts of the island, such as the Hornet, Webster Street, the beach, restaurants, and our many breweries, wineries and other attractions.

Additionally, Alamedans will benefit from the new taxes and jobs the hotel will bring. There will be jobs in both construction and hospitality. The hotel will provide the city with a Transient Occupancy Tax that will be more than \$500,000 per year. This money will help pay for municipal services. Along with the projected additional sales tax collected from having more people shop and eat in Alameda.

We hope you approve this project.
Respectfully,

Cindy Johnson Kahl & Peter Kahl,
Speisekammer Restaurant

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July 21, 2019

(By electronic transmission)
Planning Board
City of Alameda
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Subject: 1825 Park Street (Item 7-A on Planning Board's 7-22-19 agenda)

Dear Boardmembers:

The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS) would like to thank the project team for incorporating several of the recommendations submitted in our January 27, 2019 letter. In addition, extending the pilasters to ground level is a significant improvement from the previous submittal.

Although the staff report notes that the "design has been revised to minimize Streamline Moderne features", and that "the new design has elements that resemble a Contemporary architectural style", the design is still predominately Streamline Moderne. The AAPS comments below are therefore based on Streamline Moderne as the main architectural vocabulary.

The staff report also notes that the changes are "consistent with the City Council direction to use a Contemporary design approach". However, that was not really the Council direction. The Council resolution approved on April 2, 2019 (attached) instead states "A high-quality design, such as a classical architectural style with a brick façade, or a modern architectural style that includes glass and steel elements, is more appropriate for the site" but that "if significantly improved, the streamline moderne architectural style could be appropriate if the quality of the proposed design were less stark and nondescript".

During Council discussion at its March 19, 2019 meeting, references were made by Councilmembers to the Alameda Marketplace building and the nearby Walgreens as appropriate examples of "classical (or traditional) architectural style with a brick façade" and by the Mayor to the recently completed building at 1926 Park Street as a good example of modern or contemporary style.

Although some aspects of the design have been improved, it still needs work and some clarifications. We have the following specific comments:

1. **Redesign the upper floor windows and ventilation louvers to a symmetrical configuration.** It is good that most of the upper floor windows are now proposed as openable, consisting of an openable casement sash next to a fixed sash. However, the casement sash is 3'-6" wide while the

fixed sash is 4'-6" wide, creating an awkward asymmetrical configuration. **The sash widths should instead be equal.** The asymmetry is reinforced by a horizontal muntin above the casement sash while no corresponding muntin is provided for the fixed sash. To address this, **extend the casement's horizontal muntin along the top of the fixed sash.** Consider adding one or two horizontal muntins on both sash below the proposed casement sash muntin to help reinforce the streamlined look and make the overall design less "nondescript". Consider changing the fixed sash to casement to further strengthen the symmetry and so that both halves of the windows are openable.

The ventilation louvers below the upper floor windows are now proposed to be located only under the casement sash with spandrel glazing under the fixed sash, which will further emphasize the asymmetrical composition. **The same visual treatment should be used under both sash to maintain uniformity.**

Natural aluminum or steel sash for the upper floor windows, rather than the proposed vinyl, would be more consistent with the Streamlined Moderne architecture.

2. **Use large slabs for the granite wainscot.** The size of the granite "tiles" for the wainscot at the building base is not indicated. The wainscot should consist of granite slabs that extend the full height of the wainscot and are at least 4 feet long to give a solid, high-quality look along this very important pedestrian frontage. Describing the granite as "tiles" suggests a smaller module, perhaps the common 12" x 12" tiles which have a relatively insubstantial, nonstructural appearance.
3. **Provide a solid bulkhead under the storefront windows rather than glass bottom panels.** The storefronts will have glass bottom panels. A solid bulkhead would provide more design interest and a more substantial look. The bulkhead material need not be as high as the granite wainscot (perhaps only 18"-24") and could be a different material than the granite, perhaps glazed tile. Stucco should be avoided, since its design interest along this important pedestrian frontage would be minimal.
4. **The color of the "anodized aluminum storefront window system" shown on Sheet 11 is not clear.** It appears to be "natural" aluminum, which would be good and consistent with the Streamline Moderne look. Please confirm that natural aluminum will be used. (Note: The renderings imply a darker color, perhaps bronze anodized aluminum.)
5. **Restore the previous fin configuration.** Truncating the top of the vertical fin is unfortunate, since the fin is a key architectural element and gives the building less of a "nondescript" quality. The original fin configuration should be restored. Although the City Council resolution states that "the fin on the side of the building" and various other elements "are not consistent with the predominant architectural style found in the North Park Street Gateway District", neither the Mayor or Council members on March 19, 2019 mentioned the fin specifically as a problematic element.
6. **Consider relocating the sign (or at least the "H") to both sides of the fin.** An additional sign is being proposed for the Park Street side at the Clement Avenue corner. The previous design only had the "H" logo on the vertical fin, while the current design has no graphics on the fin. Relocating the Park Street sign or at least the "H" to the fin will add architectural interest and enhance sign visibility.

7. **Sign illumination.** The sign illumination method is not indicated. We recommend either direct (spot lit), exposed tubular neon or “halo” illumination. The “night” rendering suggests halo illumination. However, exposed tubular neon could look very elegant and would be most consistent with the streamlined architecture.
8. **Restore south wall pilaster.** The deletion of the pilaster on the south wall is unfortunate. It should be reinstated. Any artwork could still be applied to the wall surfaces on both sides of the pilaster and perhaps be architectural in character, using trompe l'oeil or similar techniques.
9. **Clarify the location of the decorative entry tile.** The staff report states that the “decorative entry tile” shown on Sheet 11 will be used for the floor of the main recessed entry at the street corner. This would be a very attractive feature, but we do not see the location of this material indicated on any of the plan sheets. The decorative tile location should be included on the plans, perhaps the ground floor plan on Sheet 1 or Detail 1 on Sheet 17.
10. **Colors.** The revised color scheme may be overly subdued. More vibrant colors, at least for accents, should be considered so the building looks less “nondescript”. The blue color shown on the rendering for the fin appears darker than the blue used elsewhere. Are these two different colors? What color is proposed for the upper floor window sash and louvers? The Sheet 11 color board does not indicate these colors.
11. **The street trees along Park Street should be modified to improve consistency with Alameda’s Master Street Tree Plan, as amended for Park Street in 2012.** Although the proposed Brisbane Box (*Lophostemon confertus*) street trees are used elsewhere on Park Street, the amended Master Plan called for them to be used only at intersections with alternating Silver Lindens (*Tilia tomentosa*) and Red Maples (*Acer rubrum*) elsewhere. We therefore recommend that the two southern trees along Park Street be changed to Silver Linden and Red Maple, resulting in three species along the Park Street frontage.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me at (510) 523-0411 or cbuckleyAICP@att.net if you would like to discuss these comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher Buckley, Chair
Preservation Action Committee
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society

Attachment: 4-2-19 City Council Resolution

cc: Mayor and City Council (by electronic transmission)
Andrew Thomas, Allen Tai, and Linda Barrera (by electronic transmission)
Downtown Alameda Business District (by electronic transmission)
AAPS Board and Preservation Action Committee (by electronic transmission)

CITY OF ALAMEDA RESOLUTION NO. _____

DENYING THE APPEAL FILED BY TY HUDSON ON BEHALF OF UNITE HERE LOCAL 2850 AND REMANDING THE DESIGN REVIEW FOR A 96-ROOM HOTEL WITH 62 PARKING SPACES AT 1825 PARK STREET (PLN17-0538) FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY THE PLANNING BOARD

WHEREAS, Paul Patel for Ganesha LLC submitted an application requesting a Design Review and Parking Reduction approval to construct a new 96-room four-story hotel with 62 parking stalls located on approximately 0.74 acres, as case number PLN17-0538 ("project"); and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2018, the Planning Board held a study session on the project and provided comments on the proposed design and parking demand study; and

WHEREAS, on January 28, 2019, the Planning Board conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the project and approved the Design Review and Parking Reduction for PLN17-0538, subject to findings and conditions of approval; and

WHEREAS, on February 6, 2019, appellant Ty Hudson on behalf of UNITE HERE Local 2850 filed a timely appeal of the Planning Board's decision to approve the project ("the Hudson appeal"); and

WHEREAS, after giving due notice to the appellant, the applicant, all interested parties, and the public, the appeal came before the City Council on March 19, 2019 as a de novo hearing; and

WHEREAS, the appellant, the applicant, supporters of the application, those opposed to the application and interested neutral parties were given ample opportunity to participate in the public hearing by submittal of oral and/or written comments; and

WHEREAS, the public hearing on the appeal was closed by the City Council on March 19, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the City Council was supportive of the hotel use on the site but not on the design and therefore directed staff to return to it a resolution denying the appeal and remanding the Design Review to the Planning Board for further consideration consistent with the City Council direction; and

WHEREAS, the City Council was in favor of the parking reduction, but made a motion (approved 4-1) recommending that the Planning Board consider modifying the Carpool Ride Share Services Condition of Approval; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council, having independently heard, considered and weighed all the evidence in the record presented on

behalf of all parties and being fully informed of the application, the Planning Board's decision, and the appeal, finds:

1. The Hudson appeal is denied, based in part on the March 19, 2019 City Council staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.
2. For reasons independently considered by the City Council that were not raised in the Hudson appeal, and as described in more detail below, the City Council is not able to affirm the Planning Board's findings that the project design is compatible with the site's surroundings and prominent location at a major gateway to the City, and remands the Design Review to the Planning Board for further consideration.
3. Although the Planning Board correctly approved the Parking Reduction application because the project adequately meets the criteria and requirements of AMC 30-7, the City Council recommends modification of Condition of Approval 5 (Carpool Ride Share Services) to align with the City's climate goals and designate a safe drop-off location for TNCs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in further support of the City Council's decision to remand the Design Review, the City Council rejects the discussion, findings and conclusions regarding the Design Review application in the March 26, 2018 Planning Board staff report and the January 28, 2019 Planning Board staff report, and instead, hereby finds by substantial evidence that the Design Review criteria in AMC 30-37.5 were not satisfied, therefore the City Council is not able to approve the Design Review. The required findings that cannot be made are shown in **bold type**; the explanation as to why the City Council finds that these findings cannot be made is shown in *italics*.

(b) The proposed design is appropriate for the site, is compatible with adjacent or neighboring buildings or surroundings, and promotes harmonious transitions in scale and character in areas between different designated land uses;

The proposed overall building design is in the streamline moderne architectural style, and is not characteristic of adjacent or neighboring buildings on this section of Park Street north of Lincoln Avenue. A high quality design, such as a classical architectural style with a brick façade, or a modern architectural style that includes glass and steel elements, is more appropriate for the site, which is located in the historic downtown gateway corridor, and would better fit into the fabric of Park Street. If significantly improved, the streamline moderne architectural style could be appropriate if the quality of the proposed design were less stark and nondescript. The proposed design and building colors do not promote harmonious transitions in scale and character due to their abruptness to the streetscape. The proposed design does not adequately facilitate a harmonious pedestrian oriented experience, promote commercial vitality, or signal that public areas are available for public use.

(c) The proposed design of the structure(s) and exterior materials and landscaping are visually compatible with the surrounding development, and design elements have been incorporated to ensure the compatibility of the structure with the character and uses of adjacent development.

The building's exterior materials, architectural elements, and building colors are not visually compatible with the surrounding development. The proposed design elements of the structure, including the fin on the side of the building and exterior materials such as the light earth tone colors and stucco material, are not consistent with the predominant architectural style found in the North Park Street Gateway District; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that elements of the project that are approved are categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15332 (in-fill development projects), and elements of the project that are remanded will be subject to CEQA review at the time the Planning Board takes further action. The City Council hereby incorporates by reference the CEQA findings included in Planning Board Resolution No. PB-19-02 as if fully set forth herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the record before this Council relating to this project application and appeal includes, without limitation, the following:

1. The application, including all accompanying maps and papers;
2. All plans submitted by the applicant and its representatives;
3. The Petition for Appeal and all accompanying statements and materials;
4. All final staff reports, final decision letters, and other final documentation and information produced by or on behalf of the City, including without limitation all related/supporting final materials, and all final notices relating to the application and attendant hearings;
5. All oral and written evidence received by the Planning Board and City Council during the public hearings on the application and appeals; and all written evidence received by relevant City staff before and during the public hearings on the application and appeal; and
6. All matters of common knowledge and all official enactments and acts of the City, such as (a) the General Plan; (b) the Alameda Municipal Code; (c) all applicable State and federal laws, rules and regulations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the custodians and locations of the documents or other materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which the City Council's decision is based are located at the Office of the City Clerk located at 2263 Santa Clara Avenue, Room 380, Alameda, CA 94501; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the recitals contained in this Resolution are true and correct and are an integral part of the City Council's decision.

* * * * *

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly adopted and passed by the Council of the City of Alameda in a regular meeting assembled on the 2nd day of April 2019, by the following vote to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

IN WITNESS, WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said City this 3rd day of April 2019.

Lara Weisiger, City Clerk
City of Alameda

Approved as to Form:

Michael H. Roush, Interim City Attorney
City of Alameda