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Preserving America's Heritage

June 2, 2015

Ms. Sally Stang
Director
Housing and Community Development Department
310 North Commerce Park Loop
Tucson, AZ 85726

Ref: *Proposed Partial Demolition of the Downtown Motor Hotel
City of Tucson, Arizona*

Dear Ms. Stang:

On May 26, 2015, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) received a request from the Barrio Historico Advisory Board (BHAB) to provide additional clarification regarding our comments dated May 14, 2015. The ACHP is participating in consultation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800).

The ACHP would like to express its concern about the efforts taken by the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation (THPF), the BHAB and the Armory Park Historic District Advisory Board (APHDAB) with regard to the review of this undertaking. Their outreach to the Arizona Department of Housing (DOH) requesting that it revoke the Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) allocated for this undertaking due to the ongoing Section 106 consultation undermines the collaborative nature of historic preservation reviews. Since the undertaking did not seek any benefits as a historic preservation project, it is incorrect for the consulting parties to pursue the revocation of the LIHTC. The Section 106 review is being properly coordinated with all facets of the project schedule. Alternatives to the undertaking must be evaluated on the merits of the background information and discussion with consulting parties. Accordingly, we agree with DOH's findings and conclusions that it is appropriate for this project to retain its LIHTC allocation pending compliance with Section 106.

Secondly, as part of the Section 106 process, the City applied the criteria of adverse effect found at 36 CFR Part 800.5(a)(1) to those historic properties located within the project's Area of Potential Effect. This includes both the Armory Park and Barrio Libre Historic Districts. In its analysis, which utilized extensive information available to the consulting parties on the City's website and meets the ACHP's documentation standards at 36 CFR Part 800.11(e), the City determined that while direct adverse effects would occur to the Armory Park Historic District, the indirect effects to the Barrio Libre Historic District would not adversely affect the character of the Barrio Libre Historic District. The City applied the adverse effect criteria and did not identify any visual intrusions or alterations that would alter the character of the historic district. The SHPO concurred with this finding, which was reached by the City's Historic Preservation Officer. Consequently, we find no basis to object to this determination.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

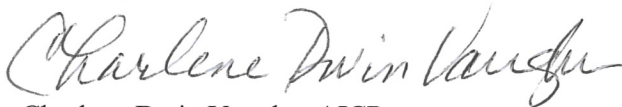
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Through consultation, the City has considered how the project, which will occur in the Armory Park Historic District, may be visible to the adjacent Barrio Libre Historic District. Consulting parties have requested exact parity in the City's review of the undertaking, however the indirect visual effects on the Barrio Libre Historic District will not compromise its integrity. Consulting parties have repeatedly referenced the applicability of the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards for Rehabilitation to this undertaking. It is important to note that when it is concluded that an undertaking will result in an adverse effect, the redevelopment does not need to meet the SOI's Standards. Instead, the City will resolve the adverse effect through mitigation measures negotiated among consulting parties, and contained within an executed Memorandum of Agreement. [36 CFR Part 800.6(b)(2)]

The Section 106 consultation strives to balance the alteration of the Armory Park Historic District with the need to provide affordable housing within the City. It is clear that this project has generated widespread public interest, and the consulting parties and the City must find a balance between affordable housing and historic preservation efforts. While the Section 106 consultation provides an opportunity for consulting parties to consider the project's direct adverse effects, the City will need to address cumulative long-term impacts to the Barrio Libre Historic District as part of its administrative review process.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Ms. Jaime Loichinger at (202) 517-0219 or via email at jloichinger@achp.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charlene Dwin Vaughn".

Charlene Dwin Vaughn, AICP
Assistant Director
Office of Federal Agency Programs
Federal Permitting, Licensing and Assistance Section