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June 13, 2008

Via Email and U.S. Mail

Craig Ewing
Director of Planning
City of Palm Springs
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92263

Re: Town and Country Plaza Alternative for Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan

Dear Mr. Ewing:

Per your request, and on behalf of the Palm Springs Modern Committee and Friends of the Town and Country Center, we are providing additional information on our proposed Town and Country Plaza Alternative (T&CC Plaza Alternative), which should be considered as a modification of the proposed Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan (the "Plan").

The T&CC Plaza Alternative is identical to the proposed Plan except for Blocks K1 and K2, the current location of the historically significant Town and Country Center. The Town and Country Center consists of three buildings: A, B and C. The proposed Plan would demolish all three of the buildings that make up the Town and Country Center, whereas the T&CC Plaza Alternative calls for adaptive reuse of Buildings A and B, and integration of these important resources into the Palm Springs Central Business District. The T&CC Plaza Alternative would include a large plaza, open to Palm Canyon Drive, where Building C is currently located in Block K2, along with a new outdoor restaurant building (Building D) on the south side of the newly created plaza.

Designer Marshall Roath will be providing you with more details of the layout of the T&CC Plaza Alternative. The intent of this letter is to address how the T&CC Plaza Alternative would achieve the City's goals for the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan. We have identified the City's main goals for the Plan to be:

- provide high quality commercial, retail, high density residential and resort development to stimulate economic opportunity in the downtown;
- establish a pedestrian friendly downtown with a connection between the Palm Springs Art Museum and the Spa Casino and Convention Center to the east;

- enhance views of the Palm Springs Art Museum with a balanced counterpart on the east side of the site;
- and complement and enhance the distinctive, eclectic townscape character of Palm Springs.

The incorporation of the T&CC Plaza Alternative into the Specific Plan allows the Plan to meet all of these goals.

First, the T&CC Plaza Alternative would provide high quality retail and commercial uses in Block K1 and K2 in Buildings B and D and on the ground floor of Building A, including restaurants and retail shops. The upper level of Building A in Block K1 would consist of residential apartments. The hotel tower proposed in the Plan at the northeast corner of Block K1 would still be included in the T&CC Plaza Alternative. The remaining blocks of the proposed Plan would be unchanged and would include additional commercial and retail development, as well as high density residential and resort uses. In addition to the economic stimulus provided by the rest of the Plan, this alternative would increase the profitability of the remaining buildings at the Town and Country Center by opening the plaza in front of it to North Palm Canyon Drive. This would increase the visibility of the Center for shoppers and other pedestrians, thus attracting more customers to the Center.

In addition to the large plaza area open to North Palm Canyon Drive, the T&CC Plaza Alternative also includes a wide meandering pedestrian path from North Palm Canyon Drive that connects to Indian Canyon Drive between Buildings A and B, and on the south side of Building B. This achieves the goals of an interconnected, pedestrian friendly downtown.

Views of the Palm Springs Art Museum also would be enhanced under the T&CC Plaza Alternative. The demolition of the Desert Fashion Plaza is still included in this alternative and thus the area in front of the Museum would be opened, providing better views of this important and historically significant building. The then more visible Museum would be located on the west side of the Plan area with two large plazas connecting it to the also historically significant Town and Country Center on the east side. The T&CC Plaza Alternative would allow the Plan area to be balanced on each end with buildings that are important to the City's rich architectural history.

Finally, the preservation of Buildings A and B in the Town and Country Center provided by the T&CC Plaza Alternative accomplishes the goal that the Plan should enhance Palm Springs' distinctive and eclectic architecture. The City's own historic resources survey found the Town and Country Center to be a "rare and exceptional example of the Late Moderne style" by master architects Paul R. Williams and A. Quincy

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Jones that meets the level of significance necessary for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The modern style of architecture exemplified by the Center is central to the City's mid-century architectural heritage and is so important to the City's tourist industry. The Center represents the very type of distinctive and eclectic architecture the City seeks to enhance and complement with the Plan. Thus, the adaptive reuse of the Center's Buildings A and B provided by the T&CC Plaza Alternative would clearly meet the final goal as well.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Amy Minter
Attorney at Law

Cc: Palm Springs City Council
James Thompson, Palm Springs City Clerk
Douglas Holland, Palm Springs City Attorney
Palm Springs Modern Committee
Friends of the Town and Country Center