



October 12, 2012

Submitted by email

Hon. Ed Reyes, Chair, PLUM Committee
Hon. José Huizar
Hon. Mitch Englander
Office of the City Clerk, c/o Ms. Sharon Gin
Attn: PLUM Committee
200 North Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Email: sharon.gin@lacity.org

Re: CPC 2008-4953-DA, Century Plaza Mixed-Use Development

Dear Chairman Reyes and Councilmembers:

On behalf of the Los Angeles Conservancy, we are pleased to support the Century Plaza Mixed-Use Development that preserves the Century Plaza Hotel as the centerpiece of the new project. The Los Angeles Conservancy is the largest local historic preservation organization in the United States, with over 6,500 members. Established in 1978, the Conservancy works to preserve and revitalize the significant architectural heritage of Los Angeles through advocacy and education. The Conservancy's all-volunteer Modern Committee has been at the forefront of preserving mid-century architecture since its inception in 1984.

When the initial Century Plaza Development project was announced in late 2008 calling for the demolition of the Century Plaza Hotel, the Conservancy embarked on a wide-ranging advocacy effort to raise awareness about the significance of the hotel and find preservation solutions that retain the hotel while meeting the goals of the applicant, Next Century Associates. At the request of Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz, extensive discussions followed in late 2009 with Next Century Associates' project team, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Conservancy.

Since its opening in 1966, the Century Plaza has served as a premiere hotel for celebrities, politicians, and world dignitaries, as well as hosting countless conferences and events for Angelenos and visitors alike. It was built as the centerpiece of Century City, a "city within a city" that heralded a bold new approach to urban design. The 19-story building (sixteen above grade and three below ground) was designed by renowned architect Minoru Yamasaki (1912-1986), who would later design New York's World Trade Center twin towers (1974-2001) and the twin Century Plaza Towers (1975) across Avenue of the Stars from the hotel. With its sweeping shape and formal expression, the Century Plaza Hotel

strongly conveys the postwar optimism of the 1960s, and it helped fuel the development of Century City as a world-class destination in the ensuing decades.

The Conservancy's primary goal from the beginning was to ensure that any development project retained the hotel's eligibility for designation as a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument and for the California Register of Historic Resources. As proposed, we believe the preferred project achieves this goal. The hotel will retain most of its character-defining features while allowing it to meet the requirements of new uses. New construction on Avenue of the Stars will not obscure the highly visible and important view of the hotel from the street. A treatment protocol will also guide the rehabilitation and ensure that preservation standards are followed.

In September 2010, at the request of Councilmember Paul Koretz, the Cultural Heritage Commission reviewed the preservation components of the project. The commission determined that the Century Plaza Hotel would retain its eligibility for Historic-Cultural Monument designation after the proposed work is completed.

The Conservancy commends Next Century Associates for their willingness to work with the preservation community and for their vision in embracing a project that includes the preservation of the Century Plaza Hotel. We look forward to working with the project team in applying the treatment protocol to the rehabilitation of the hotel. Once completed, we hope the success of this collaborative process with Next Century Associates can become a model for future preservation projects.

Please feel free to contact me at (213) 430-4205 or ldishman@laconservancy.org should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Dishman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linda Dishman
Executive Director

cc: The Honorable Paul Koretz, Council District 5
National Trust for Historic Preservation, Western Regional Office
City of Los Angeles, Office of Historic Resources