



September 15, 2017

The Honorable Walter Burnett  
27th Ward Alderman  
4 N. Western Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60612

Re: Zoning Change for 113 N. May

Dear Alderman Burnett,

On Monday evening, May 8, 2017, Fred Krol and Anthony Hrusovksy of Sterling Bay, LLC, accompanied by Katie Jahnke Dale of DLA Piper Law, presented plans for the development of the northeast corner of May Street and Washington Boulevard. The property is currently occupied by a two-story commercial building on the north and a parking lot in the southwest corner of the property. The original proposal was for a 19-story (199 feet to the top of parapet) hotel with 220 rooms.

This proposed development will require a zoning change from DX-3 (Downtown Mixed-Used, 2.5 FAR) to DX-5, Planned Development, with a FAR of 5.0. This project would transfer density from two existing two-story buildings on the parcel that will not be modified as part of the proposed work, one of which that has been donated to the city to become a public library. By transferring FAR within the site, this development would not require a Neighborhood Opportunity Bonus contribution.

Representatives of Neighbors of West Loop were present at the July 18 community meeting for this development. Residents voiced concerns for the height of the building, which would tower above adjacent buildings, and the amount of congestion that would be expected by the hotel. The community meeting audience voiced support for underground parking, which would reduce the building's height and make it more commensurate with surrounding buildings like the adjacent Brixton Lofts condo building, the new McDonald's headquarters located one block east, and a new residential building soon to be erected across Washington Boulevard to the south.

On Monday, September 11, 2017, Matt Wylie of Eckenhoff Saunders Architects joined Fred Krol, Rich Klawiter, and other members of the development team to present a modified concept to our committee. The updated design stands 171 ft in height with 200 rooms and a slightly wider (10 ft) setback above the parking podium. The mechanical roof level would be set back on the north side of the building, whereas it was previously closer to Washington Boulevard on the south side of the building. The revised concept also removed a visual contrast in the portion of the building above the parking podium that our committee preferred.



Based on feedback received from residents at our committee meeting and the community meeting, we want to highlight the following primary themes:

- The community is unanimous in its appreciation for Sterling Bay's donation of the two-story structure at 122 N. Aberdeen, their commitment to expend their own resources for renovation of the property, and for your willingness to apply Neighborhood Opportunity Bonus dollars for this important facility. Our committee is additionally pleased to hear that Skidmore Owings & Merrill, the architect of the award-winning Chinatown library, is designing the new library.
- There is strong and consistent concern among the community about the proposed scale of the building. At 171 ft, it would be *twice as large as the adjacent residential Brixton Lofts building* and several stories higher than every other building for several blocks. The proposed scale of the structure is in direct contrast to the draft West Loop Design Guidelines, which direct designers to "avoid abrupt changes in height" between adjacent buildings. Residents have also stated that the hotel as proposed does not fit the location, specifically the full mass of the building on a small corner of the larger lot.

We remain grateful for Sterling Bay's donation of the property at 122 N. Aberdeen and their efforts to renovate the property to house a public library. However, we cannot overlook the community's strong opposition to this proposed hotel building at its current height and location. Based on the inconclusive results of the July 18 community meeting and strong resident opposition to the development as currently proposed, we ask that **this project be deferred from the September Plan Commission meeting so that the revised project concept can be presented in a follow-up Community meeting.**

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Matthew Letourneau  
Chairperson, Development Committee  
NEIGHBORS OF WEST LOOP

cc: Fred Krol, Sterling Bay ([fkrol@sterlingbay.com](mailto:fkrol@sterlingbay.com))  
Neighbors of West Loop Development Committee