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Public Comments Not Uploaded Council File 21-0119

1 message

Susan Winsberg <susanwinsberg@sbcglobal.net>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 12:02 AM

Reply-To: clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org

To: "clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org" <clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org>

Please include this letter in the record for Council File 21-0119

Dear PLUM committee members,

Please designate TAIX restaurant as a Cultural Historic Monument in its entirety -- not as a piecemeal salvage. TAIX is an important part of the community. It is not a sign, a bar and a menu. It is the building itself -- the destination, the old-world meeting place where we feel the uniqueness and ambience of Los Angeles's history and culture.

Below is a detailed explanation of the importance of this and reasoning behind its necessity.

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION (CHC) RECOMMENDED THE TAIX BUILDING BE DESIGNATED
On January 26, 2021 the CHC unanimously voted to designate the TAIX building under criteria 1, which recognized the restaurant's significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic and social history of this community. Taix provides an extraordinary example of the Continental Dining experience, a popular trend from the 1960's. For more than 60 years at this location, Taix has been a destination, a gathering spot, a neighborhood refuge and a place of celebration for locals and visitors alike. Taix is more than a building, it is more than a bar and a couple of signs. Taix has been recognized as an irreplaceable and invaluable asset to our community.

ABUSE AND MISUSE OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ORDINANCE & SPIRIT OF PRESERVATION

Normally, PLUM takes an up-or-down vote, and an HCM nomination is either supported or rejected. Yet here, against the Cultural Heritage Commissioners' recommendation and findings, Mitch O'Farrell has proposed a dangerous and far-reaching "amendment" which aims to designate three salvage items (a wooden bar top and two exterior signs) from the existing building as a Historic Cultural Monument, claiming he is preserving a historic resource. This unprecedented and outrageous "amendment" requests that this Committee eviscerate our HCM nomination and destroy the very resource it seeks to preserve. This subversive concept manipulates the Cultural Heritage Ordinance in a way that claims the historic resource is being preserved, when in fact this "amendment" will demolish Taix. This is clearly deviant from the intent of the law, reducing the designation to the salvaging of remnants in a recycling yard. If approved, Mitch's "amendment" sets a destructive new standard; it will send a message to developers that they can expect our City Council to expedite their project, avoid environmental review and more easily gain approval to demolish our historic resources. Mitch's "amendment" weakens the law which governs the conservation of our City's historic resources; it is an attack against every preservation effort in the City of LA.

THERE IS NO ORDINANCE OR CRITERIA TO ESTABLISH A "LEGACY BUSINESS" IN LOS ANGELES

This "amendment" alleges to preserve Mitch O'Farrell's self-proclaimed "Legacy Business status" for Taix. However, the City of Los Angeles has no existing process or program in place where a "legacy business" could be nominated, let alone designated. The City does not have an ordinance, a commission, or any other criteria that would provide for a "legacy business" designation, as acknowledged by the Cultural

Heritage Commissioners themselves at the 12/7/2020 hearing. Therefore, Councilmember O'Farrell's amendment, which seeks a legacy business designation, has no foundation within the laws of the City.

THIS DOES NOT HAVE TO BE AN "EITHER/OR" SITUATION

Through creative design and compromise, there is a way to preserve Taix and still develop the property. Viable and vibrant options have been presented to the developers, who have experience with adaptive reuse and were receptive to our ideas. Mitch O'Farrell's "amendment" gives them the easy way out, but with cooperation and a few open minds, it's highly feasible that the Taix building can be incorporated through meaningful preservation and continued use, where the old and new work together in a thoughtful, compatible design that can be celebrated by all.

THE CITY HAS ACKNOWLEDGED TAIX AS A HISTORIC RESOURCE

Taix French Restaurant is significant as one of the oldest and most enduring businesses in Los Angeles. Taix has been noted as being eligible for HCM listing by Survey LA, the groundbreaking citywide historic resources survey which serves as the Planning Department's primary tool for identifying, recording, and evaluating historic properties in Los Angeles. Two years ago, the LA Conservancy commissioned a report on the Taix building by Historic Resources Group which concurs with the Survey LA recommendation. The importance of Taix cannot be overstated, it is an undeniable fixture in the community and one of the oldest and most unique restaurants in Los Angeles. A Councilmember's election into office is not an authorization to destroy decades of collaborative preservation efforts that have taken place between the public and the Councilmembers who previously represented their communities.

Thank you,
Susan Winsberg
Los Angeles, CA



Armando Bencomo <armando.bencomo@lacity.org>

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1 message

James Dastoli <james.dastoli@gmail.com>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 9:19 AM

Reply-To: clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org

To: clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org, gilbert.cedillo@lacity.org, debby.kim@lacity.org, councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org, Lisa Hansen <lisa.hansen@lacity.org>, councilmember.rodriquez@lacity.org, christine.jerian@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, solomon.rivera@lacity.org, councilmember.lee@lacity.org, hannah.lee@lacity.org

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Dear Councilmembers,

I ask that you support the HCM designation for Taix French Restaurant as the Cultural Heritage Commission recommended, without the amendments that were submitted by Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell. These amendments are in conflict with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and set a dangerous precedent for weakening the Historic Cultural Monument ordinance. I would rather see the nomination rejected outright, than to recognize salvage as preservation.

I would also like to stress that preserving the Taix building does not mean that this parcel cannot also have new development. Preservationists and developers can cooperate to find design solutions that please both sides. Please do the right thing at Tuesday's hearing.