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PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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December 16, 2014

Members of the Florida Building Commission & Accessibility Advisory Council
c/o Mary-Kathryn Smith
Office of Codes & Standard, Florida Department of Community Affairs
2555 Shumard Oaks Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

RE: 2940 Collins Avenue – Royal Polo Hotel

Dear Ms. Smith and Members of the Commission and Council:

I am writing in reference to the above noted structure, and the request for accessibility waivers. Constructed in 1935 and designed by architect Martin Luther Hampton, the subject structure is an excellent example of the Art Deco style of architecture, is designated 'Contributing' in the Miami Beach Historic Properties Database, and is located within the Collins Waterfront Local Historic District as well as the National Register Collins Waterfront Historic District.

The subject structure retains an extraordinary degree of historic and architectural integrity and is representative of the rich diversity of architectural styles that have evolved within the City's Historic Districts. The current proposal to retain, preserve and restore this building is essential to the future understanding of the development of architecture in Miami Beach.

The subject structure is a qualified historic building under the federal ADA regulations, the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and Chapter 11 of the Florida Building Code. The requested waivers pertaining to the original historic elevators, vertical accessibility to the first floor and vertical accessibility to the roof level are critical to the restoration plan for the building. In order to accommodate vertical accessibility to the first floor within the original lobby, substantial demolition and modifications to the historic public interior space would be required. Such an intervention would irreparably harm the very significant exterior design, scale and massing of the subject structure.

The Planning Department, on behalf of the Historic Preservation Board, strongly supports the subject waiver requests. If you have any questions relative to the historic significance of the existing structure, or you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Debbie Tackett
Preservation & Design Manager

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