

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

October 19, 2018

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Executive Director

Gregory J. Galer, Ph.D.

Michael Rooney
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201
Re: Motor Mart Garage, 201 Stuart Street, Downtown

Dear Mr. Rooney,

The Boston Preservation Alliance is Boston's primary, non-profit advocacy organization that protects and promotes the use of historic buildings and landscapes in all of the city's neighborhoods. With 41 Organizational Members, 121 Corporate Members, and a reach of 35,000 friends and supporters we represent a diverse constituency advocating for the thoughtful evolution of the city and celebration of its unique character. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on projects that impact the historic character of the city.

The Alliance has reviewed the proposal to redevelop the Motor Mart Garage and we appreciate the one week extension of the comment deadline. We do plan to meet with the proponent soon to discuss the project in more detail and offer additional feedback. The Alliance is unable to support this project at the current time.

The Motor Mart Garage is a prominent historic resource that anchors Park Square. When completed in 1929, it was the largest garage in the world, indicative of the city's transition to motor vehicles that continues to dominate our urban design and culture. Its Art Deco features give the garage a sophisticated presence, especially after a sensitive restoration in 1999 for which the Alliance gave the building our Preservation Achievement Award.

While not opposed to change, even the addition of towers within historic buildings in some instances, the Alliance is concerned about the scale and degree of change proposed at this site based on the information available. The tower addition should not overwhelm the scale of the historic structure or the neighborhood. Alterations to the facade should be done carefully to preserve original materials and design features. New openings at the street level must be more fully justified given their impact on the character of this Art Deco gem.

The Alliance looks forward to further dialogue with the proponent to better understand the proposal and alternatives that have been, and could be, explored.

Thank you,



Greg Galer
Executive Director