

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

April 25, 2019

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Executive Director

Gregory J. Galer, Ph.D.

Michael Sinatra
Boston Planning and Development Agency
Boston City Hall
Boston, MA 02201
Re: Motor Mart Garage

Dear Mr. Sinatra,

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 40 Organizational Members, 125 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 appreciates the opportunity to provide further comment on the Motor Mart Garage proposal. We have met with the proponent and feel that our concerns have been addressed through the alterations made to the project. The tower now includes more contextual material and less glass, creating a smoother transition from the historic parking garage to the new addition. The number of lobbies has been reduced from two to one, allowing for more public space and vibrancy at the ground level. We are comfortable with the project team's ability to successfully remove, store, and replace the existing panels on the garage to restore the facades after construction.

Though we hesitate to embrace tower additions to historic buildings, like the Motor Mart Garage, we do feel that in this specific situation the proposal is acceptable. The existing façade of the garage is a replica, so we are less concerned about its temporary removal than we would be if it were original fabric. This proposal does not violate shadow laws for the Boston Common and Public Garden as other proposals have. However we echo the concerns of the Friends of the Public Garden and others that any additional shadow on these two historic and treasured parks, especially in the winter, is detrimental and should be avoided if at all possible. Please pursue any additional design modifications that would reduce or eliminate shadows on the parks.

It should be understood that this project should not set precedent for other towers on historic buildings; each site must be evaluated for its unique location and qualities.

Thank you,



Greg Galer
Executive Director

CC:

Rosanne Foley, Boston Landmarks Commission
Elizabeth Stifel, Boston Civic Design Commission
Liz Vizza, Friends of the Public Garden
Tony Fusco, Art Deco Society