

SAN ANTONIO WINERY

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the public

January 5, 2011

Ms. Christine Essel
Chief Executive Officer
Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency
1200 West 7th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Re: Blossom Plaza RFP

Dear Ms. Essel:

We have been made aware of the Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) intentions to develop the Blossom Plaza, the former Little Joe's site, by the recently issued Request for Proposals (RFP). As you know, this site is adjacent to the Riboli-owned Capitol Milling property and, during the previous development attempt, certain commitments were made to foster a blended and compatible development between the two properties. Unfortunately, these commitments are not observed in the current RFP. In addition, the current RFP would foreclose other opportunities to provide meaningful linkages between the Little Joe's site, Capitol Milling and the State Park. We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to ensure that these commitments and opportunities and the inconsistencies noted below are appropriately addressed in the RFP process for any future development at the Little Joe's site.

By way of background, the Riboli Family is a fourth generation active stakeholder of this community, owner/operator of the nearby San Antonio Winery and owns over forty acres in the local area. As you may know, we are currently engaged in negotiations with Metro to co-develop 12 acres north of Capitol Milling to create a mixed-use transit-oriented development over a Metro rail storage yard.

The Riboli Family is, and has always been, committed to the revitalization of urban areas of Los Angeles and supports the mission and objectives of the CRA.

However, the recently issued RFP fails to fully address the historic value of Capitol Milling, its connective development potential or respect the commitments that were made in connection with the previous development approvals. In fact, the new RFP has discrepancies between the Exhibit G, Development Scope Part 1 and the Design Guidelines Part 2, where improved connections to Capitol Milling and State Park are described in Part 1 but delineated otherwise in Part 2 (e.g. Part 1, Proposed Development Scope 3b). The streetscape renderings emphasize the project's College Street frontage as a Cultural Walk/Culture Wall with a 24' wide landscaped sidewalk --- while rendering Spring Street, the only street frontage of Capitol Milling and linkage to the State Park, as a utilitarian multi-modal transit hub with taxis and vanpools----- without any dialogue with our family.

The current RFP should be amended to clarify these discrepancies, honor the commitments that were previously made, and allow for future integration of the adjacent Capitol Milling property and State Park, and guide the proposed development by:

1. *Cultural Plaza.* Allow the Plaza (Gold Line level) to have a future connection to the second level of the Capitol Milling building along the entire property line. The RFP shows a miniscule,

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almost hidden vertical connection with no view corridor to Capitol Milling because of the multi-level Cultural Center. See Exhibit G, Part 2, pages 5, 6, 10.

2. *Cultural Center.* The proposed development turns its back towards Capitol Milling by placing the Cultural Center as a physical barrier on the shared property line. This eliminates any opportunity for an active pedestrian connection or visual corridor from the Plaza or the Gold Line Station ---- to Capitol Milling. This Cultural Center is more aggressive than and exceeds the previous development approvals; the proposed center is now directly adjacent to the Capitol Milling property, whereas the previous development located the building along the College Street frontage, and it has been almost tripled in size to 20,000 sf and increased to *four levels* above the Plaza with a roof deck café with solar trellises. See RFP Exhibit G, Part 2, pages 11, 12.
3. *Pedestrian/Service Vehicle Conflicts.* The RFP makes no mention of the service dock(s) that will be needed to serve this project and will now conflict with the proposed Culture Walk and pedestrian connections. Exhibit G, Part 2, page 4 essentially shows Capitol Milling as land-locked with no access to Spring Street with the planned Transit Hub.
4. *Park Connection.* The RFP should better describe and delineate the critical pedestrian connection from Blossom Plaza and the Gold Line Station along Spring Street towards the Los Angeles Historic State Park entrance. As delineated with the College Street Culture Walk, the Park connection should be an enhanced pedestrian experience. See Exhibit G, Part 2, pages 5, 16.

The CRA has the opportunity and the time to rectify these oversights before the end of the February 4, 2011 Questions/Inquiries period referenced in the RFP. We support the mission and objectives of the CRA and look forward to a meaningful dialogue and collaboration with CRA to correct the issues with the current RFP and ensure that the RFP honors previous commitments, does not foreclose other community connections and provides the greatest benefit to the community.

As stated above, we would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our concerns. You can reach our counsel, Marcos Velayos, at (213) 570-8002 and he will also be following up with you to coordinate a time to meet.

Sincerely;



Steve Riboli
Vice President

SR: smn

cc Councilman Ed Reyes