



April 22, 2021

Alderman Brendan Reilly  
121 N LaSalle- Room 200  
City Hall  
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: 150 E Ontario Proposed Development

Dear Alderman Reilly,

Thank you for providing the Streeterville community with the opportunity to participate in a presentation by the Development Team for the proposed RIU hotel development at 150 E Ontario Street. In addition to the community presentation, members of a sub-committee of SOAR's Land Use and Development Task Force met on March 15, 2021 with the development team.

In attendance from SOAR were:

Deborah Gershbein, Judy Aiello Fantus, Gail Spreen,  
Joel Brosk, Stephen DiPadua, Michel Darcy, Adam Flickinger, Malek Abdulsamad

In attendance from the development team were:

Prime Development Group- Mike Reschke and Jeff Breaden  
Lucien LaGrange Architects-Lucien Lagrange and My-Nga Lam  
Traffic Engineer- Peter Lemmon  
Attorney-Jack George

### **Project Description**

The proposed project, a 388 key hotel by RIU Hotel and Resorts, a Spanish hotel chain and TIU, a Spanish tourist company, will be 345 feet and the construction materials will be precast concrete, architectural concrete and granite. There will be a small coffee shop. The hotel will not have parking, valet service or a ballroom.

SOAR is pleased that two respected firms, Prime Development and Lucien LaGrange Studio are committed to bringing an international hotel to Streeterville that will address a long vacant site in the neighborhood.

### **Comments**

### **Project Strengths**

Use of the long vacant site near Michigan Avenue is a positive

**Streeterville Organization of Active Residents**

The development team would like to start construction by the end of this year and is self-financed, however is dependent on PD approval and permitting.

Due to the fact that the hotel will have no parking garage or valet services when completed, it will not add congestion to Ontario Street.

The hotel will offer indoor trash accommodations.

CDOT will not allow an off street pull-over lane which can cause disruption to the pedestrian experience.

The developer is putting in approximately \$3 million dollars into the City's Opportunity Fund. Part of this funding contributes 10% to the Local Impact Fund and 10% to Adopt-a-Landmark Fund. A significant portion of this should be used to improve Streeterville and the Magnificent Mile. SOAR would like to propose options for use of this funding.

The hotel will add to the City of Chicago's economy by positioning itself as an international destination for travelers, will add service jobs for local workers and pay incremental taxes to the city in the form of property, sales, and business taxes.

### **Project Concerns**

There are concerns about the lack of a side setback to the east, which is another hotel that has windows on the west side of the building. Again, a taller more elegant design would accommodate this option.

We would like to see a more articulated front façade so that the mass is broken.

There is concern that the narrow alley access for the loading dock may be too difficult and that the trucks will not use it and will use Ontario St instead or just park in the alley. This will add to the already congestion of Ontario Street.

Plans show a wall between loading bays, which may make the effectiveness even more problematic.

We would like to see more activation at the sidewalk area with a full service signature restaurant. There is room for outdoor seating which will activate the street.

Repositioning of the lobby and interior stair would result in more activity closer to the façade to bring "eyes on the street" and would result in bringing more light onto the street as well.

Larger planters along with additional landscaping would give trees a chance to grow larger. Any additional greening of Ontario Street would be beneficial.

SOAR is very concerned about the traffic pattern during construction and probable congestion due to construction traffic on Ontario. We recommend that the Development team provide the City and the Alderman's office and SOAR with a proposed construction traffic plan and delivery schedule and that it is enforced.

We strongly recommend that a traffic aide be positioned at Ontario and St Clair Streets to keep streets clear as this is part of the emergency traffic route to the hospitals.

SOAR would appreciate the opportunity to be involved earlier in the project review process as this project has been under review for several years without the opportunity for SOAR'S review and input. Modifications have been made without the benefit of community discussion and input. At a minimum, we would like to further review the loading areas and traffic patterns, and suggest more landscaping and interior lobby changes as requested in our concerns.

Finally, we are aware of the development team's obligation to contribute to the City's Opportunity Fund. We respectfully request that a portion of these funds remain in Streeterville, where the impact of this project will be felt by our residents. Revenue from the Opportunity Fund could be used for Ogden Plaza or traffic aides on Ontario St, There may also be opportunities for the development team to participate in the City's Adopt a Landmark program.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review the project for Streeterville. We look forward to working with you and the development team as this project progresses through the entitlement and construction process.

Sincerely,

Deborah Gershbein and the Board of Directors