

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

www.bostonpreservation.org

June 4, 2021

Lance Campbell
Boston Planning and Development Agency
Boston City Hall
Re: Doyle's Café Project

Dear Mr. Campbell,

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, 103 Corporate Members, and a reach of over 100,000 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 met with the developer to discuss the proposal. At first, it was unclear how much of the original or existing fabric of the building would be retained and restored. The proponent was framing the project as a preservation project, but it seemed that very little of the building was expected to be preserved. We encouraged the proponent to be transparent about their approach—saving the essence of Doyle's as a local gathering place and the physical bar itself, but not much more than that in the fabric of the establishment. At the BPDA community meeting on May 20th, we were pleased that the proponent presented much more clearly that this project will essentially be new construction and explained the justification and benefits of doing so. Most of the comments made by community members at that meeting were supportive of the project, aside from concerns about the number of affordable units.

After much consideration, the Alliance believes that this project will ultimately be an asset to the community. Though Doyle's, as it once was, has already been lost, a local restaurant will recreate the neighborhood hub dynamic of Doyle's where new memories can be made. We feel that the overall massing and design of the new buildings in this project are appropriate and complementary to the neighborhood. Though we generally prefer far more extensive adaptive reuse of existing buildings, we recognize the limited physical assets that remain of the old Doyle's and the challenges to their reuse, and feel that the benefits of this project to the community outweigh the loss of the existing buildings.

The Alliance thanks the proponent, the BPDA, and the community for a robust, constructive dialogue around a historic site beloved by so many.

Thank you,



Greg Galer
Executive Director