

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

South Coast District Office  
301 E Ocean Blvd., Suite 300  
Long Beach, CA 90802-4302  
(562) 590-5071



**Th14h**

**5-20-0397 (SVBSM LLC)**

**February 11, 2021**

**CORRESPONDENCE**



**MANI  
BROTHERS**

Agenda Item Th14(h)  
2/11/21 Meeting  
CDP Application No. 5-20-0397  
Joe Mani  
In Support of Project

February 5, 2021

VIA E-MAIL

California Coastal Commission  
South Coast District Office  
301 E. Ocean Blvd. Ste. 300  
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: CDP Application No. 5-20-0397  
1401 Ocean Avenue, 300, Santa Monica

Dear Commissioners:

I am a manager of Mani Brothers Portofino Plaza (DE) LLC, the owner of the property located at 1401 Ocean Avenue, Santa Monica, California ("Property"). The Property is improved with a three-story commercial building ("Building"), which is improved with ground floor restaurants and second and third floor office space. I am writing in support of the above-referenced application.

As you are aware, the third floor and rooftop of the Building are the subject of a Coastal Development Permit application (5-20-0397) filed by SVBSM LLC, which seeks to permit the conversion of the third floor and rooftop areas into a membership restaurant. The purpose of this letter is to express my overwhelming support of Coastal Staff's recommendation of approval for the proposed membership restaurant.

The third floor of the Building is currently leased to (and has historically been occupied by) an office tenant. The current tenant, TrueCar, will terminate its lease for the third floor if the proposed membership-based restaurant use is approved. Although TrueCar still leases the third floor, due to the COVID-19 pandemic they are not actively occupying and using this office space.

**Potential Uses of Third Floor and Rooftop**

I am currently working with two potential tenants for the third floor of the Building. One (the subject of CDP 5-20-0397) would occupy the third floor and rooftop as a membership restaurant. The other tenant would use the third floor as an office.

**MANI BROTHERS REAL ESTATE GROUP**

A. Potential Membership Restaurant Tenant

The membership restaurant is estimated to have about 5,000 members, all of whom are permitted to bring guests. I also understand that space will be made available in the restaurant for nonprofit groups to meet and dine. I also support the proposed restaurant tenant's anti-discrimination and social justice policies.

I believe that the conversion from office to restaurant use is the highest and best use for the third-floor and rooftop areas because it means that more people will have the opportunity to access the beautiful views of the shoreline and Pacific Ocean. This also supports the Coastal Commission's objective to enhance access to the coast by a diverse population.

B. Potential Office Tenant


If the Coastal Commission does not approve the proposed CDP for the membership restaurant, it is my intent to lease the third floor to an office tenant with approximately 40 employees. During this tough economic time, it is difficult to find tenants, and we do not have the luxury of waiting for other alternatives. If the membership restaurant is not approved, we will move forward with the office tenant.

To me, converting the office space into a membership restaurant is a big win for the Coastal Commission because it directly supports the Commission's policy to increase coastal access. The proposed membership restaurant has the potential to provide coastal access and views of the Pacific Ocean to thousands of people, whereas only about 20 people would be able to enjoy such view if the space is leased to an office tenant.

Therefore, I would like to reiterate my support of Coastal Staff's recommendation of approval for the proposed membership restaurant. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach me at the phone number or email address provided on this letter.

Sincerely,

Mani Brothers Portofino Plaza (DE), LLC



Joe Mani  
Manager



February 5, 2021

Steve Hudson, District Director  
California Coastal Commission  
301 E. Ocean Blvd, Suite 300  
Long Beach, CA, 90802

Re: Public Comment on February 2021 Agenda Item Thursday 14h - Application No. 5-20-0397 (SVBSM LLC, Santa Monica)

Dear District Director Hudson and Honorable Coastal Commissioners,

Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. (DTSM) supports conversion of the third floor of the building located at 1401 Ocean Ave. (soon to be vacant office space) to a restaurant with a membership model. The proposed restaurant is a unique and novel use that will develop community and serve as a draw to the neighborhood and the coast.

We understand and share your commitment to enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion in access to the coast and its amenities. The applicant is committed to enacting policies that will foster an inclusive and welcoming environment, including: requiring all members and employees to sign a zero-tolerance discrimination policy; establishing a membership committee to recruit a diverse member base taking into account race, gender, sexual orientation, age, and other factors; discounted membership programs; and charitable use of the restaurant space by local non-profits.

In a period of increasing vacancies, we advocate for exciting, new concepts and interesting uses. The proposed restaurant will create opportunities for members to make connections and build community. It will encourage locals to frequent downtown and the coast — post-pandemic when it is safe to do so.

A restaurant will inherently increase the number of people who have access to stunning views of the Santa Monica Bay, currently only visible to the employees of the present office tenant. In the absence of the proposed restaurant, the property owner will lease the space to another office tenant capable of paying the significant rent, thus barring any enhancements to either coastal access or diversity, equity and inclusion.

We believe this project to be otherwise consistent with the Downtown Community Plan as well as the objectives of the pending Local Coastal Plan.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continued partnership in keeping our coastal downtown vibrant and welcoming for visitors and residents alike.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Rawson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Kathleen Rawson, CEO  
Downtown Santa Monica, Inc.

cc: DTSM, Inc. Board of Directors  
DTSM, Inc. Staff  
David Martin, Director of Community Development  
Jing Yeo, Planning Division Manager