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July 7, 2021

Board of Adjustment
301 W. 2nd Street
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Case Number: C15-2021-0075 - 813 Park Blvd.

Dear Members,

Preservation Austin exists to empower Austinites to shape a more inclusive, resilient, and meaningful community culture through preservation. We write today to respectfully support the owner's request for a variance to rehabilitate an existing two-story historic garage structure as a second dwelling unit at 813 Park Blvd. The owner is bringing the building up to current code and rehabilitating what has been a vacant property since the 1980s. This historically significant property has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and should be maintained and preserved.

The property was originally built in 1929 for Tom Miller, former mayor and influential citizen of Austin who championed some of the city's most significant public works projects during the New Deal era, including Santa Rita Courts, the first federal housing project in the U.S., recreational facilities like Hancock Golf Course, Municipal Golf Course, and Deep Eddy, and Mueller Airport and Bergstrom Air Force Base. The home was subsequently owned by Emma Long, the first woman elected to Austin City Council and an early advocate for desegregation and fair housing for African American and Mexican American Austinites.

The style of the home is representative of the Tudor Revival style. Both the main house and garage have steeply pitched rooflines and distinctive patterned brickwork which visually tie the main house and garage together. Removing a portion of the historic fabric of the garage would damage the integrity and character of the building.

The rehabilitation of this existing building as a dwelling would promote density in a central neighborhood, a value outlined as a development priority. This also aligns with Preservation Austin's ongoing priority to advocate for city policy that promotes better preservation outcomes for our city.

City staff is faced with myriad situations through the unique scenarios that are a part of each project. This section of the code provides no language specific to existing historic buildings and makes it unnecessarily difficult to reuse this structure - reuse which would enhance density in a sustainable manner. Further, this request does not impair the spirit of the code or the purpose of the regulations of the zoning district. Reuse of the building avoids waste of resources and materials that would go directly into the landfill.

We believe this property is well suited to serve as an example of best practices in promoting neighborhood density and managing historic resources. Preservation Austin encourages the Board of

Adjustment to grant this variance to permit the use of the historic garage and maintain the existing floor plate that is 50SF over that allowed by code.

Thank you for your service to the community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clayton Bullock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clayton Bullock, President