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CALIFORNIA



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DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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December 6, 2021

Re: Memorialization of *Cooper Do-nuts* Site - 215 S. Main Street

Dear Councilmember De León:

At a special public meeting on December 6, 2021, the Board of Directors of the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council ("DLANC") voted to provide the following comments below:

The City of Los Angeles has a rich history connected to the LGBTQIA+ civil rights movement. At the request of the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning Office of Historic Resources, a Citywide Historic Context Statement on LGBTQ history was commissioned then published in September 2014 which contained several sites of historical importance to the LGBTQIA+ community including *Cooper Do-nuts*.

The City of Los Angeles has taken significant steps to preserve this history, especially in Council District 13, as seen with the Historic-Cultural Monument designation of the Black Cat Bar (HCM 939) in Silverlake which was also included in the Planning Departments survey. A plaque at the corner of Hollywood Blvd. and McCadden Place marks the origination of the nation's very first gay pride parade on June 28, 1970 - one year after the Stonewall Riots in New York.

The first known instance in the LGBTQIA+ community of gender-transgressive persons resisting arbitrary police arrest occurred at *Cooper's Do-nuts* at 215 S. Main Street in Downtown LA in May of 1959. The customers throw their coffee and food at the arresting officers driving them from the shop. This minor but significant rebellion transpired ten years prior to the better-known rebellion at the Stonewall Inn in New York City in 1969 and seven years prior to a similar occurrence at Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco in 1966. 60 years after the *Cooper Do-nuts riot*, on August 23, 2019, three transgender women were attacked at Las Perlas bar located near 2nd and Main Streets only steps away from the original location of *Cooper Do-nuts*. This event which went viral on social media around the world underscores the fact that much still needs to be done to recognize issues specific to the transgender community.

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council therefore asks Councilmember Kevin de León to consider memorializing the significance of the *Cooper's Do-nuts* site at 215 S. Main Street in either of the following manners:

- Submit a motion for the City Council to initiate the consideration of the original site of Cooper Donuts at 215 S. Main Street, using a historic feature from the site such as a streetlight or terrazzo tile, as a City Historic-Cultural Monument under the procedures of Section 22.171.10 of the Administrative Code, and instruct the Planning Department to prepare the Historic-Cultural Monument Application for review and consideration by the Cultural Heritage Commission.
- Consider memorializing an adjacent street lamp near the site, in a treatment similar to that of the Jonathan Gold memorial at Grand Central Market, with paint using the LGBTQ Pride rainbow colors, a historic sign, and LED colored lighting
- Consider a ground surface treatment, on the public right-of-way, adjacent to the site, with a memorial through the placement of a plaque, paint, bas-relief, and other interventions to recognize the significance of the adjacent site
- Submit a motion for the City Council to designate the intersection of 2nd & Main Streets as *Cooper's Do-nuts Square*, and instruct the Department of Transportation to fabricate and install permanent ceremonial signs to this effect at this location, in consultation with Council District 14 and DLANC
 - As part of an intersection designation process, consider potentially activating the crosswalk with paint, using the LGBTQ Pride rainbow colors,

Sincerely,



Claudia Oliveira
President,
DLANC



Tony Hoover,
Treasurer,
DLANC

CC: Office of Historic Resources, Department of City Planning (via email)
Cultural Heritage Commission (via email)
Transgender Advisory Council, Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department (via email)
Los Angeles Neighborhood Council LGBTQ+ Alliance (via email)