



August 25, 2021

**Design Review Committee**

Orange City Hall  
300 E Chapman Ave  
Orange, CA 92866  
c/o Marissa Moshier

Sent Via Email

Re: 204 W. Chapman - Finney's Restaurant

Chair Fox and Committee Members -

My twin brother and I own Finney's Crafthouse & Kitchen Restaurant group and we are very excited to be opening a new location in the City of Orange. Unfortunately, I will miss the hearing next Wednesday, September 1, 2021 as I am traveling overseas with my daughter for her freshmen year of college. Because I am not able to attend in person and speak at the hearing, I wanted to address the committee formally by sending you this letter to help explain WHY we love this location and to explain some of the important aspects of the design that will make our business a success.

We absolutely love the community and the location, just off of the Circle and are excited to be serving you all in the very near future. Our restaurant focus has been and continues to be based around authentic cuisine with an extensive menu filled with creative starters, salads, flatbreads, burgers and more. We pride ourselves in great food, craft beer & cocktails and amazing atmosphere. When searching out new locations, we look for authenticity, community and historic structures that align with our image and product and we found that here at the corner of Chapman and Olive in Orange. Several of our most recent and successful restaurants have been in historic structures and we appreciate the value in maintaining these buildings heading into the future.

When we first met Al Ricci, the building owner, we appreciated the history that he has in Orange. He walked us around the town and showed us the many buildings that he and his group had purchased and rehabilitated and developed over the years. He gave us a history of Orange that would not be found on Wikipedia and we were immediately drawn to the structure at 204 W. Orange as it seemed to fit our "brand" perfectly and had a quality to it that you just don't find in today's shopping center developments. Its proximity to the Circle was also a very important aspect as well as the numerous historic structures that are in close proximity. Many of these structures have been transformed over the years into newer food and/or retail establishments which is our goal here. Finney's partnership with the building owner will invest nearly \$3M into rehabilitating and repurposing this historic structure. Between the structural retrofitting, the new windows and roof, we should help it last another 100 years or more. It is our collective goal to respect the history of the building, but to also breathe new life into it and give it a new purpose.

Our business model succeeds for a number of reasons, but first and foremost it is our visibility and connection to the passersby. All of our locations have high "visibility" aspects that invite people into the restaurants. With large patios, operable windows and a connection to the street, we strive to create an atmosphere that people want to come into and explore. We have directed our design team to create that here in Orange and they have. The way the floor plan has been laid out, helps activate Olive street and create a stronger visual connection to people venturing down Chapman from the Circle. We want to attract them to our "corner" and invite them in. As the

pedestrian gets closer to the corner, the Olive Street facade opens up and creates a more inviting presence. In addition, there is a City parking lot behind us on Olive (where I park when I come to Orange) and we want people to see the patio as they head toward Chapman and experience the interior of our restaurant along Olive as they head toward the front door.

We and our team have positioned the bar in such a way that it is visible from both Chapman and Olive with the intent to grab people on both sides whenever possible. If we could push the building back 56 feet and put the patio in the front, we certainly would, but we all agree that is not feasible and would not be consistent with the current semi-urban in this area. Therefore, it is important to the economic viability of our establishment that we be allowed to create as much visibility into and through the exterior walls to the happenings inside. This is especially important with the addition of the roll up door facing the patio. This connection from the front door to the patio is critical to how our customers experience the space and are connected to the outdoors. Given the large area in the back, we want our patrons to feel the openness and the roll up door provides that visual and physical connection that helps blur the lines between the interior and exterior. We have spent a great deal of time studying and assessing how to do this while still maintaining the inherent qualities that make this structure unique.

I would like to personally request that you, as a Committee, support our design and economic approach that we will present to you next week on September 1st, 2021. Our design team has worked very hard with Marissa Moshier, City Historian; with our Historian Kasey Conley and with us and the building owner to put forth a thoughtful and aesthetically pleasing approach to not only respecting the historic structure, but also creating a sense of place as it transforms from an Antique Store to a new eating establishment. This new era for the building will certainly protect it for many years to come and help ensure that its historic scale is maintained within the adjacent structures and streetscape.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for the work you do on the Committee. We all know that this is a sometimes thankless volunteer position, but one that is important for the community. Finney's is looking forward to joining the many wonderful restaurants in the vicinity and serving you and the community for many years to come.

Respectfully,



Brad Finefrock

Head of Development

**Finney's Crafthouse & Kitchen**

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