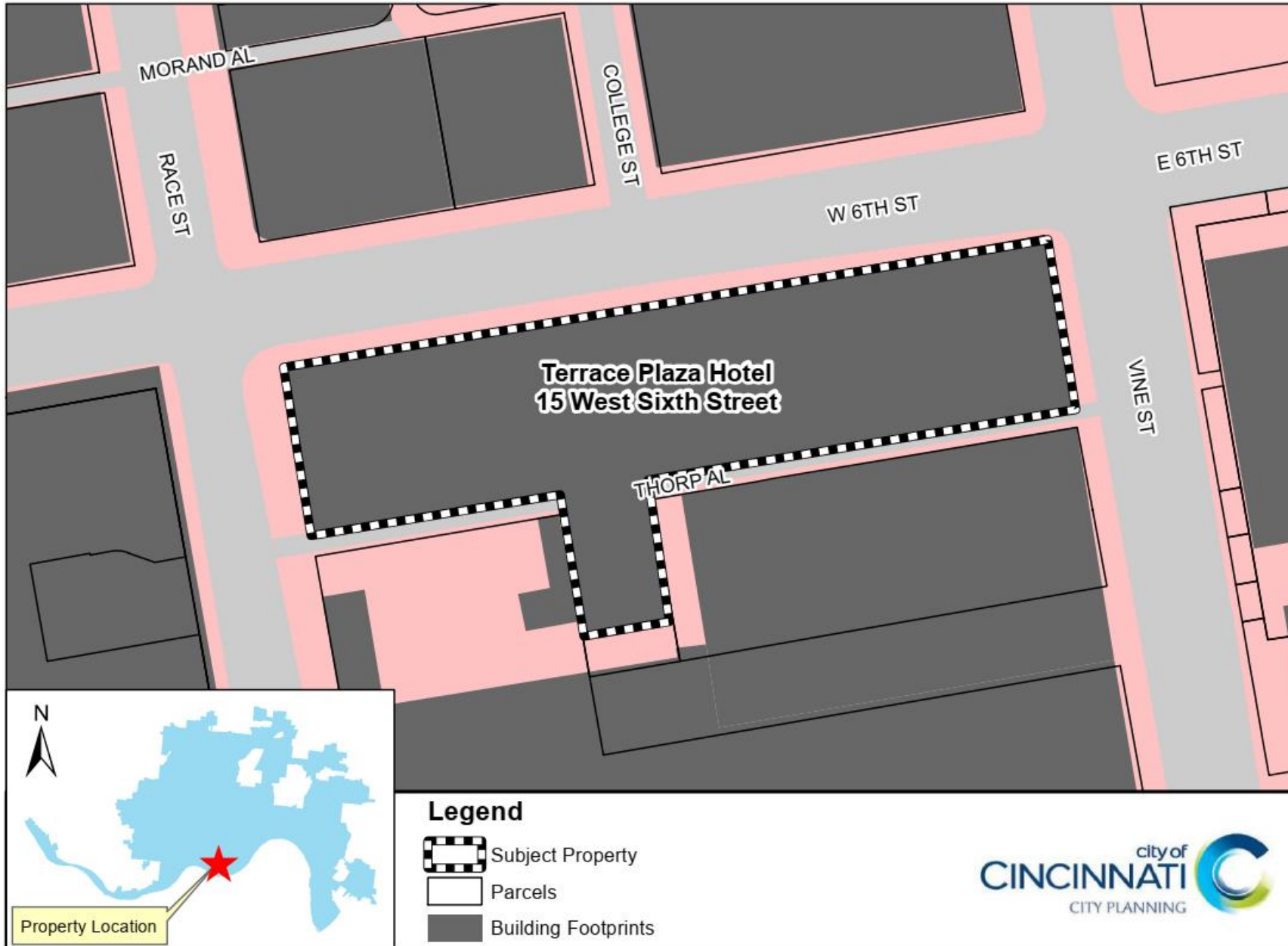




**PROPOSED LOCAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF  
THE TERRACE PLAZA HOTEL  
15 W. 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**

Equitable Growth and Housing Committee |  
May 24, 2022

# Proposed Local Historic Landmark in Downtown





phil armstrong











Pictures by Ezra Stroller and Phil Armstrong





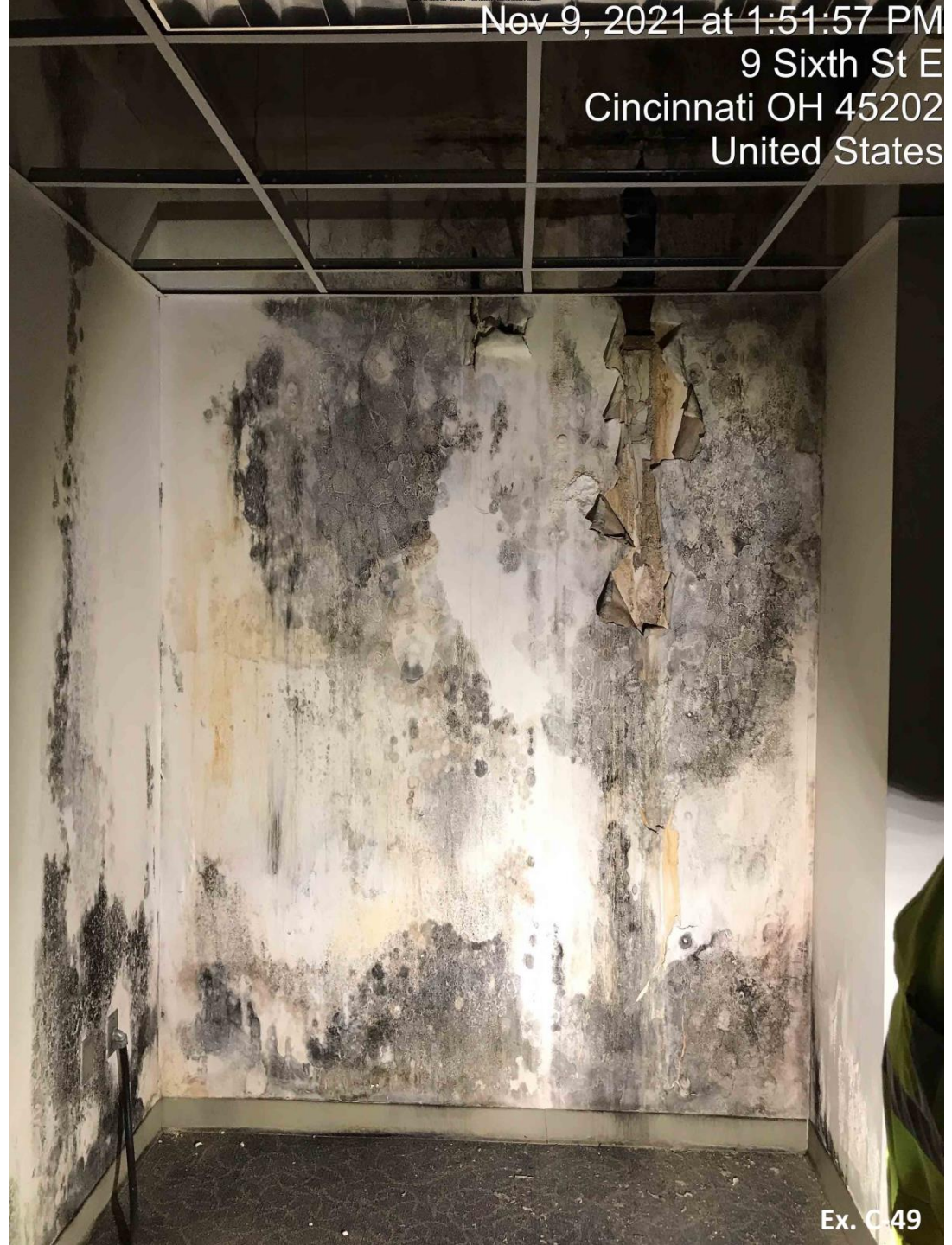
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United States



Ex. C-17

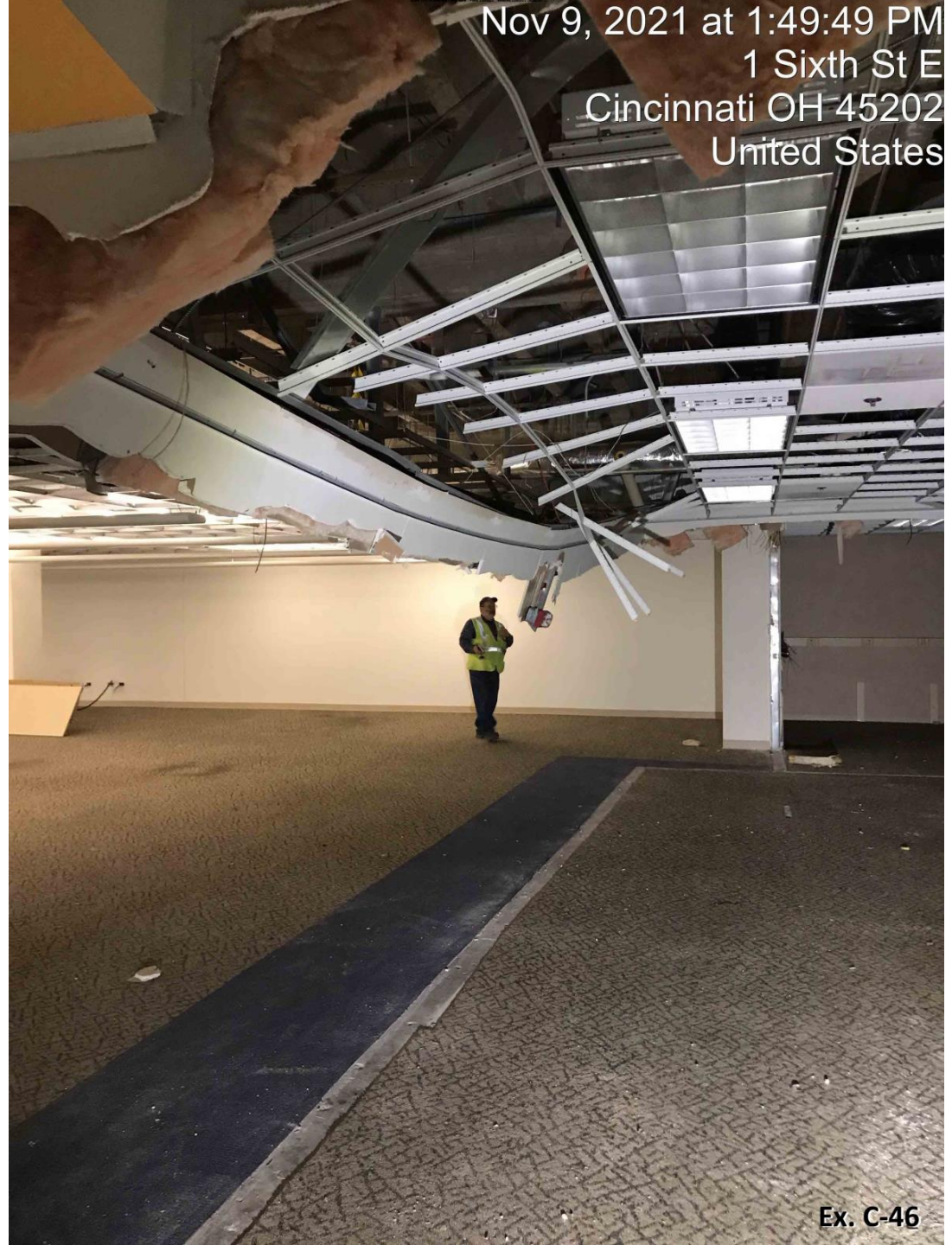


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Cincinnati OH 45202  
United States



Ex. C-49

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Cincinnati OH 45202  
United States



Ex. C-46

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9 Sixth St E  
Cincinnati OH 45202  
United States



Ex. C-48

# BACKGROUND

- February 2019 - then Councilmember David Mann - submitted designation application
- Property recommended for approval of landmark designation by Historic Conservation Board (HCB) on February 25, 2019
- Applicant then requested hold item - did not proceed to next steps in City process
- Application sunset - December 2021

# BACKGROUND

- Current owner: Cincinnati Terrace Associates, LLC, Ezra Unger
- Applicant: Cincinnati Preservation Association (CPA) - application for Local Historic Landmark submitted February 2022
- Building - located between Race and Vine Street on the south side of West 6<sup>th</sup> Street in the Central Business District
- Current property owner - opposed - not participating in the process

# BACKGROUND

- Application same as 2019 - different applicant
- March 28, 2022, HCB voted 5 to 1 - recommend Local Historic Landmark designation to City Planning Commission (CPC) and City Council



# BACKGROUND

- Building - built 1948
- Terrace Plaza Hotel closed 2008
- Has been primarily vacant since then
- Currently three retail tenants on first floor
- Current owner - foreclosed on - property in bankruptcy court
- Any dates for auction tentatively scheduled late May - June

# BUILDING CONDITIONS

- Building stripped of interior features - internal equipment - historic finishes
- Roof leaking, ceilings collapsed, mold
- Exterior building materials have fallen on sidewalk
- Building continues to deteriorate
- Art Dahlberg, Director of the Department of Buildings and Inspections, will explain further

# PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

- There have been various development projects looked at over the years for this building
- Dan Bower, Deputy Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development, will explain further

# PUBLIC COMMENT

- Joint public staff conference held March 17, 2022
- Applicant, preservationists, representative of potential buyer - in attendance
- All attendee's supportive of designation except potential buyer
- Buyer wants guidelines revised to provide more flexibility - alter brick wall, install new window openings, alter existing window openings
- Buyer asked applicant for additional time, applicant chose to proceed with designation process

# HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

- CPC duty approve or disapprove designation - forward decision along with guidelines to City Council
- CPC should consider historic significance, the planning considerations, and appropriateness of guidelines

# HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Chapter 1435-07-1 (a) - Cincinnati Municipal Code - CPC must make findings before Local Landmark designation can be proposed - at least one of the following:

1. Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or
2. Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction , or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or (**architectural history**)
4. That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory. (archeology)

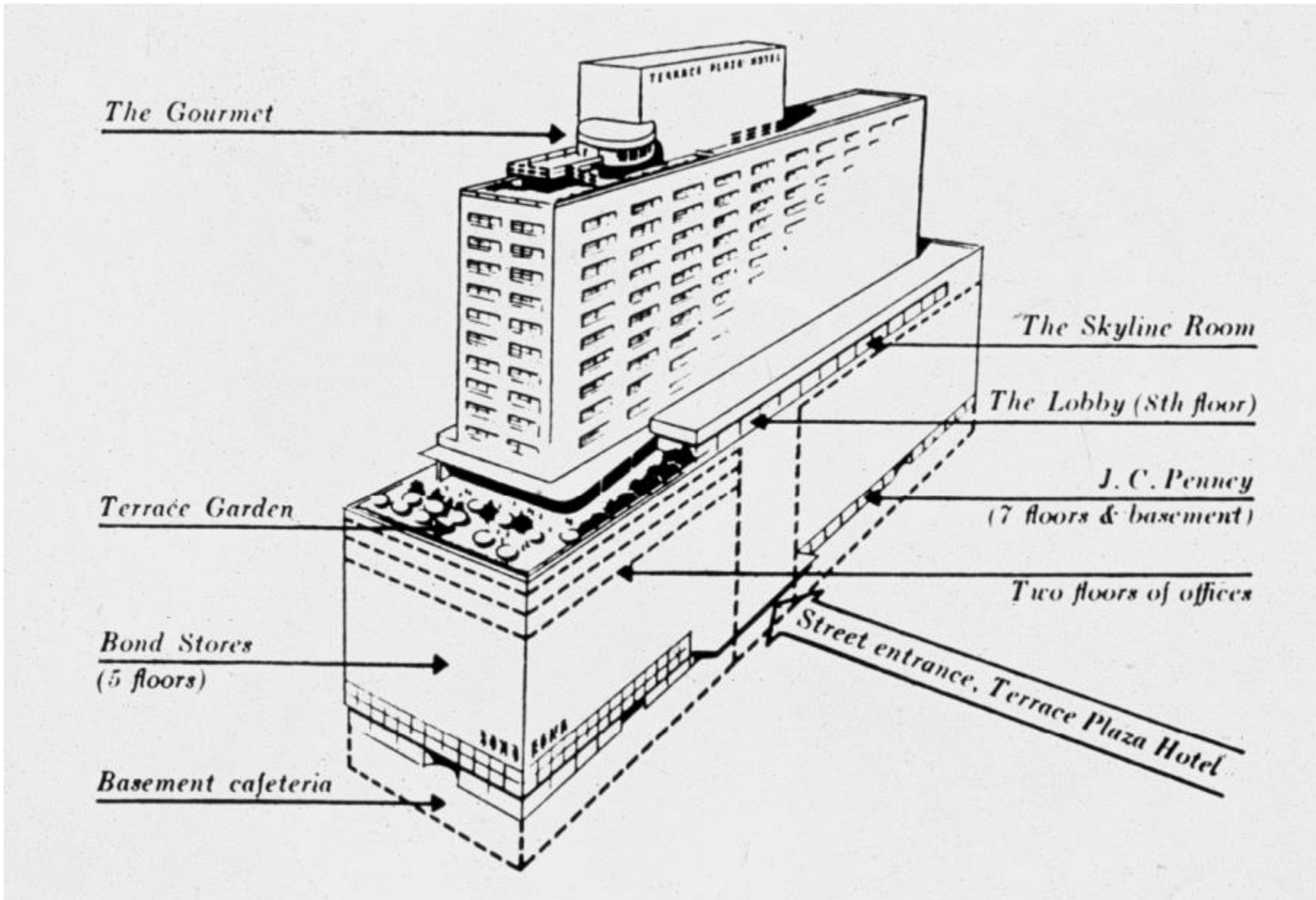
# HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

- Historic Designation Report - describes the building, it's history and significance, and why it's eligible for designation
- Terrace Plaza nominated under Criterion 3 (architectural significance)
- The building is early example of International-Style, Modernist, mixed-use skyscraper
- Designed by noted architectural firm - Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill (SOM)
- Lead designer - Natalie de Blois - rare to have female architect in 1940s

# HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

- Building - early example of mixed-use complex - hotel, department stores, restaurants, office space, and apartments
- Designation Report (Attachment B) elaborates on the building's historical significance and the hotel's firsts
- Building listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 21, 2017
- Staff finds the building meets the criteria and is architecturally significant





# CPC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

When making such a decision the CPC shall consider the following factors:

- The relationship of the proposed designation to the comprehensive plans of the city and of the community in which the proposed Historic Landmark is located; and
  - Designation **consistent** with *Plan Cincinnati* “*preserve our natural and built environment*”

*If landmarked and guidelines used in rehabilitation - architecturally significant building is preserved*

# CPC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

When making such a decision the CPC shall consider the following factors:

- The relationship of the proposed designation to the comprehensive plans of the city and of the community in which the proposed Historic Landmark is located; and
  - Designation - **not consistent** with *Plan Cincinnati* with Goal “*Foster a climate conducive to growth, investment, stability, and opportunity*”

*Proposed guidelines will inhibit adaptive reuse by limiting alterations making the project economically infeasible*

# CPC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

When making such a decision the CPC shall consider the following factors:

- The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding areas and economic development plans of the city; and
  - Attachment F (DCED memo) - describes several past development scenarios over years, all requiring extensive City subsidy and all economically infeasible
  - Attempts to meet the guidelines - prohibitively expensive

# CPC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

When making such a decision the CPC shall consider the following factors:

- Such other planning and historic preservation considerations as may be relevant to the proposed designation.
  - *Cincinnati 2000 Plan (1986) identifies Terrace Plaza block - Office-Retail-Hotel Core  
6<sup>th</sup> Street - link between Entertainment uses between Vine and Walnut and Convention  
super-block between Elm and Central  
This block plays critical role in Central Business District*
  - *Landmarking makes reuse difficult - hinders revitalization - this area of downtown*

# PROPOSED GUIDELINES

According to 1435-07-2-C - *Adoption of Conservation Guidelines* of the Zoning Code - designation proposed - City Council must adopt conservation guidelines

- Guidelines shall: promote conservation, redevelopment, use of building, consider effect designation on economic, social characteristics of affected area and impact on budget of the city
- As mentioned above guidelines will not promote redevelopment of building leaving building in distress, disrepair - negatively impacting safety and welfare of this area of downtown

# CONSISTENCY WITH *PLAN CINCINNATI 2012*

As mentioned in Planning Considerations designation is consistent with *Plan Cincinnati (2012)* in some areas and not consistent in other areas:

- Consistent - preserves a historically significant building
- Inconsistent- proposed historic guidelines would:
  - inhibit adaptive reuse
  - not allow for needed alterations
  - blighted building sits vacant - not creating a stable environment for downtown Cincinnati

# CONCLUSIONS

- It has been established -Terrace Plaza Hotel is a significant historic resource as an early example - Modernist building
- City's goal is see building preserved and revitalized, put into productive use
- However, having ability to make necessary alterations - crucial to redevelopment of property
- If designated with the proposed guidelines - concern revitalization would be delayed or denied expediting the building's disrepair



# RECOMMENDATION

The City Planning Commission recommends that City Council take the following action:

**DISAPPROVE** the proposed Local Historic Landmark designation of the Terrace Plaza Hotel at 15 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street in the Central Business District.