

New bar in Palm Springs to mix classic drinks



Skip Descant, The Desert Sun 6:37 p.m. PDT May 13, 2016



(Photo: Crystal Chatham, The Desert Sun)

If you've been dreaming of sipping libations popular to the 1800s, turn-of-the-century or even from the daring days of Prohibition, welcome to Truss & Twine, a new bar and restaurant in development in Palm Springs.

"We're working on classic cocktails. And that's sort of broken down by era," explained Michael Beckman, owner of the new spot, who also operates Workshop Kitchen + Bar.

The new restaurant is planned for a Palm Canyon Drive shop space in the historic El Paseo Building in the Uptown Design District in the shop formerly home to the Christopher Anthony retail store, (which moved across the street several months ago.)

Beckman who has previous experience re-imaging historic places for new purposes was also the recipient of a 2015 James Beard Award for Outstanding Restaurant Design in partnership with design firm SOMA and designer Michel Abboud.

The Palm Springs City Council voted to approve a building modification that would allow Beckman to install a new accordion glass door to take the place of an existing door. In an earlier meeting several weeks ago with the city's Historic Site Preservation Board, preservationists halted the project by opposing the door.



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Photo courtesy of Palm Springs Historical Society Tony Burke in front of his art gallery at the El Paseo Building, circa 1930. (Photo: Palm Springs Historical Society)

Since the El Paseo Building is a Class I Historic Site, modifications to it require the approval of the city's Historic Site Preservation Board, which voted down the accordion door, known as a "NanaWall." The City Council overrode that decision.

NanaWall is to replace the current door and fit into an existing opening.

"We're simply changing out one door for another," said City Councilman J.R. Roberts. "And we're changing out a door that is not historic to this building. So I don't see it as a big issue."

"I'm so hesitant to override the HSPB," said Mayor Robert Moon.

"I don't think the average person is going to notice the change," he added.



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Courtesy of Workshop Kitchen + Bar A 25-foot communal concrete table bisects the long dining hall in Workshop. A 25-foot communal cement table bisects bisecting the long dining hall in Workshop Kitchen + Bar. Wwners Joseph Mourani and Michael Beckman designed the restaurant, inside a cathedral-height Spanish Revival style El Paseo building, with floor to ceiling cement ácellsâ along either wall that provide private booth seating. Courtesy of Workshop Kitchen + Bar (Photo: David A. Lee)

Gary Johns, who chairs the Historic Site Preservation Board, called the change “a major opening to the entire front of the building.”

“I think it’s with good reason that this is the first time that the Historic Site Preservation Board has denied a modification to this building,” said Johns as he recalled 10 modifications at the El Paseo Building approved over the last several years.

Truss & Twine, which has an anticipated opening date this fall, will also serve “small plates,” with a focus on the foods from this region. The space will be organized around a large central bar surrounded by casual banquette seating on either side.

“So, more casual than workshop, more of a bar concept, but also with full-service, small plates dining,” Beckman said.

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