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July 15, 2005

Ms. Carol Mitten, Chairperson
D.C. Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

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D.C. OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
2005 JUL 15 PM 4:02

RE: Zoning Commission Case No. 04-37
Eastgate Senior Apartments PUD
Request to Reopen the Record

Dear Ms. Mitten:

The Applicant in the above-referenced case requests that the Zoning Commission reopen the record to admit this letter and attached statement that relate to one aspect of the Commission's Proposed Action taken on July 11, 2005. This aspect relates solely to the Commission's decision to require Pre-Cast concrete rather than EIFS for a decorative band around the building nine feet above grade. The extra cost of using Pre-Cast is approximately $118,000, which is substantial for a subsidized building for occupancy by low-income seniors.

The attached statement by the architect sets forth the functional and design rationale for the plans as proposed with EIFS and related information including cost. We hope the Commission will agree to allow the Applicant to substitute EIFS for Pre-Cast for the referenced band around the building..

Normally, the Applicant might submit this request for the September meeting of the Zoning Commission. However, in this matter there is a serious time constraint regarding the subsidy funds. The D.C. Housing Authority ("DCHA") will be providing one-third, $3.7 million, of the financing for the Eastgate Senior Development. Tax-exempt bonds issued by the DC Housing Finance Agency and four percent Tax Credits will provide the remaining funding. The DCHA funds will be made available from a special U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") program, Replacement Housing Factor ("RHF") Funds. This fund is made available to DCHA specifically to increase the availability of low-income housing. However, the RHF funds have a statutory sunset of October 1, 2005, by which time the funds must either be expended or be recaptured by HUD. HUD requires that a closing occur before the funds can be expended.

ZONING COMMISSION
CASE No. 04-37
EXHIBIT No. 39

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.04-37
EXHIBIT NO.39

Because the RHF funds comprise a significant portion of the $11.6 million total development costs needed, it is imperative that we meet this deadline and not lose these funds or the project might not be able to proceed. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Commission render a decision by the end of July. This will enable DCHA to get the other financing in place and close by September 30th.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
ARNOLD & PORTER LLP

Cynthia A. Giordano

Nathan W. Gross, AICP

Enclosure

Cc: Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7A
(Via Hand Delivery on July 15, 2005)

Office of Planning
(Via Facsimile on July 15, 2005)

GRIMM+
PARKER
ARCHITECTS

- What is EIFS (Exterior Insulating Finish System)
  EIFS consists of a polymer-based laminate that is wet-applied, in two coats, to a rigid insulation board that is fastened to the wall with adhesive, mechanical fasteners, or both. Polymer based (PB) systems are the most common. Installation of EIFS consists of a basecoat, applied to mesh covered polystyrene insulation board and then a finish coat that has unlimited color possibilities and multiple texture choices.

  EIFS is a popular product with design and construction professionals due to its light weight and design flexibility – it can be molded into many different shapes, has multiple color and texture options and most importantly EIFS outstanding ability to resist the elements.

- Comparison between EIFS and Precast Concrete
  1. Pre-cast concrete weighs approximately 144 lbs./cubic foot, EIFS weighs approximately 3 lbs. / cubic foot. Additional structural support (steel angles) required for Pre-cast concrete installation is not required for EIFS.
  2. Concrete absorbs moisture readily. Spalling of concrete is the loss of surface material in patches of varying size. It occurs when reinforcing bars corrode (from contact with moisture), thus creating high stresses within the concrete. As a result, chunks of concrete pop off from the surface. Similar damage can occur when water absorbed by porous aggregates freezes.
     EIFS finish coatings of acrylic polymer chemistry provide a protective and reliable shield against the elements and water intrusion. If any moisture does penetrate, the rigid polystyrene insulation board does not react with moisture and remains stable thus the surface finish remains intact.
  3. Pre-cast concrete can stain from corrosion of reinforcing bars, acid rain and general pollutants in the air. It can be difficult and costly to repair concrete staining – especially if it is from internal causes.
     EIFS can also stain from environmental factors, but repairs to EIFS can be accomplished easily and relatively inexpensively by cleaning and/or recoating of the affected areas.
  4. The Pre-cast concrete band pieces would not be manufactured in large pieces to reduce weight for installation. This would require a large number of vertical joints along the building face, thus increasing the possibility of water intrusion through these joints into the supporting wall assembly behind.
     EIFS is lightweight and can span longer lengths before a joint is required thus minimizing the chance of water intrusion and joint assemblies.

- Economic Impact
  The benefit of using EIFS band vs. a Pre-cast concrete band on the building is two-fold:
  1. EIFS does not require any additional structural support (steel angles) due to its lightweight compared to Pre-cast concrete bands. The construction funds that would be spent on additional support for Pre-cast can be channeled to more significant areas of the building.
  2. EIFS cost per Lineal Foot is significantly less than Pre-cast concrete. Use of an EIFS band vs. a Pre-cast concrete band will save this project approximately $118,000.00 in material and labor costs alone.

In summary, the use of EIFS for this project is appropriate. It is being used as a small (1'-0" +/- deep) decorative band around the building, located at 9'-0" +/- above grade so that it will not be exposed to damage from people or lawn maintenance equipment. It is lightweight for easy installation without additional structural framing and because of it's height above grade on the building will have the look of pre-cast concrete or stone.

Sincerely,
Grimm + Parker Architects

Bruce Mongrain, AIA
Project Manager
BM/ao J:\docs\2004-docs\20435\EIFS vs Pre-cast letter_7-14-05.doc