

**BEFORE THE
ZONING COMMISSION
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**APPLICATION FOR DESIGN REVIEW
IN THE
M AND SOUTH CAPITOL STREETS SUB-AREA**

**850 South Capitol Street, SE
SQUARE 695, LOTS 31 & 34**

Prehearing Statement

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Submitted by:

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I. INTRODUCTION

This prehearing statement and accompanying exhibits are submitted on behalf of Square 695 LLC (the “Applicant”) in support of its application to the District of Columbia Zoning Commission for review and approval of a residential development project located at 850 South Capitol Street, SE (Square 695, Lots 31 and 34) (the “Subject Property”). The Subject Property is zoned D-5 and is located in the M and South Capitol Streets Sub-Area.

The subject application was submitted on July 30, 2021, pursuant to the design review provisions of Subtitle I, Section 616.8 and Subtitle I, Chapter 7 of the 2016 Zoning Regulations of the District of Columbia (“ZR16”). The Subject Property is subject to [mandatory] design review by the Zoning Commission due to its location within the M and South Capitol Street Sub-Area. *See* 11-I DCMR §§ 616 and 701.¹

The Subject Property, which contains approximately 118,364 square feet of land area, is located within Square 695, which is bounded by Virginia Avenue, SE to the north, New Jersey Avenue, SE to the east, Eye Street, SE to the south, and South Capitol Street to the west. Of the two lots that comprise the Subject Property, Lot 34 is currently vacant and Lot 31 is currently improved with a car wash use. The Subject Property is within the boundaries of Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC”) 6D07. The public hearing on the application is scheduled for November 4, 2021.

This prehearing statement supplements the Applicant’s prior filings for this case, namely its initial application statement in support filed on July 30, 2021 (Ex. 3), and its response to comments by ANC 6D filed on September 30, 2021 (Ex. 12).

On October 8, 2021, the Applicant submitted a copy of its Comprehensive Transportation Review (“CTR”) to the Zoning Commission in accordance with Subtitle Z § 401.8 of ZR16 (Ex. 13).

¹ The application is not subject to the design review flexibility or standards set forth in 11-X DCMR, Chapter 6. *See* Design Review Applicability at 11-X DCMR § 601.1, stating that “[e]xcept for Subtitle I, this chapter applies to any instance when the Zoning Regulations require Zoning Commission review of any building, structure, or use other than a campus plan” (emphasis added).

II. PROPOSAL

As more thoroughly described in the Applicant’s initial application statement, the project entails construction of a new residential building containing approximately 520 dwelling units, ground-floor and rooftop amenity space, and approximately 272 vehicle parking spaces (the “Project”). The Project will contain approximately 725,380 square feet of gross floor area (“GFA”) (approximately 6.13 floor area ratio (“FAR”)), and have a maximum building height of 130 feet, with an upper-level setback at 110 feet fronting South Capitol Street. At the roof level, the Project will contain two, 20-foot penthouse enclosures that contain amenity space and mechanical space. The roof level will also include outdoor terraces and amenity spaces.

III. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION ON THE APPLICATION

Revised Architectural Plans and Elevations

As summarized below, since submitting the initial application the Applicant has made refinements to the proposed project design, which are reflected in the revised architectural plans and elevations (“Revised Drawings”) attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Upper Level Massing

As shown in the Revised Drawings, the massing at the southern portion of Levels 12 and 13 of the building has been adjusted to increase the depth of the units at those locations and provide greater roof terrace area to be shared by all residents. These adjustments resulted in an increase of approximately 4,480 GFA for the project. Architecturally, the modest changes to the massing at Levels 12 and 13 create additional visual interest along South Capitol Street through a subtle stepping of volumes that recalls, but does not compete with the primary architectural expression at the northwest corner of the building.

Rooftop Terrace Plan

As shown on Sheet 41 of the Revised Drawings, the roof and terrace plan has been revised to provide additional plantings and seating areas to coordinate with the additional roof area created by the above-described Level 12 and 13 massing adjustments.

Material Adjustments

As shown on Sheets 34 and 35 of the Revised Drawings, vertical metal panels that were previously proposed on the west and north façade balconies have been eliminated to improve views.

Ground Floor Activation

As part of informal feedback, OP suggested that the Applicant consider adding a mural, sculpture, or other highly-visible art element within the resident amenity room proposed on the ground-floor of the building. Noting that the location and constraints of the site could present challenges to successful ground-floor retail use, OP expressed support for an artistic element within the ground-floor of the building that adds visual interest to the adjacent public realm. The Applicant regularly incorporates art into its projects, and agrees with OP that a mural, sculpture, or other artistic element within the building's ground-floor amenity room would be a positive addition to the public realm. As such, the Applicant commits to incorporating one or more forms of art (mural, sculpture, etc.) within the ground floor amenity room of the building. The actual type and design of the art within the ground-floor amenity room will be determined by the Applicant and its interior design team at a later date.

Public Dog Park

At the suggestion of ANC 6D as a way to activate the portion of the subject property encumbered by the freeway, the Applicant is proposing a publicly accessible dog park on a portion of the area below the freeway. A plan for the dog park is shown on Sheet 44 of the Revised Drawings. The proposed dog park will contain appropriate surfacing, separate areas for large and small dogs, lighting, water stations, waste/trash collection bins, dog play equipment, and seating for dog owners. Details and precedent images for the proposed dog park are attached as Exhibit B. The dog park will be open to the public daily between sunrise and midnight, and will be maintained daily by the Applicant's building management team. A daily maintenance routine checklist for the proposed dog park is attached as Exhibit C.

LEED Rating

In its initial application, the Applicant submitted a LEED scorecard showing that the project would achieve LEED Silver v4. In response to feedback provided by OP, the Applicant has increased its sustainability commitment from LEED Silver v4 to LEED Gold v4. An updated LEED scorecard is included on Sheet 45 of the Revised Drawings.

V. CONCLUSION

The Applicant respectfully submits this prehearing statement. Together with its initial statement in support, the Applicant believes that the burden of proof applicable to the proposed project under Subtitle I, Section 616.8 and Subtitle I, Chapter 7 of ZR16 has been fully satisfied. As such, the Applicant respectfully requests the Commission to approve the application.