

May 27, 2016

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Anthony Hood, Chairman
D.C. Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: The Washington Flower Center Review of Project at 1611-1625 Eckington Place and 1500 Harry Thomas Way, NE (“Property”); ZC Case No. 15-15 PUD Application

Dear Chairman Hood and DC Zoning Commissioners:

On behalf of Paul Investment Company LLLP, the owner and operator of the Flower Center located at 1615 Eckington Place, NE, we hereby submit this letter discussing the Flower Center’s inclusion in the above-referenced project.

We have been in discussions with JBG/Boundary 1500 Harry Thomas Way, L.L.C. and JBG/Boundary Eckington Place, L.L.C. (collectively, the “Applicant”) regarding a possible relocation in the project at the Property since the Applicant originally proposed its concept. The Applicant has engaged with us throughout the planning process and provided ample opportunity for us to remain on the Property in the future. During these discussions, we have studied the site and multiple possible reconfigurations to allow for our business to be located in the proposed project. Unfortunately, none of these options are satisfactory for a variety of reasons.

We operate as a wholesale distributor that sells cut flowers, floral supplies and plants to florists in the District of Columbia and throughout the Metropolitan area. As a result, we require a large amount of square footage, used primarily for the processing and distribution of a broad variety and significant volume of floral product. It is not our desire to incorporate a retail, customer-facing element to our space. We are also not interested in a smaller distribution facility within the project in order to maintain a foothold at this location. We simply do not have the staff or operations to support such elements.

We also note that our business requires trucks of significant size to regularly service our needs. We would introduce frequent 18-wheeler trucks to the site, if we continued to operate at the Property, which would not be ideal for the neighborhood in which the Property is located. Also, in order to accommodate the size and volume of these trucks, the project site plan would require significant reconfiguration that would likely have outsized adverse effects on the planned site traffic flow and the pedestrian activity in and around the project.

Perhaps most importantly, our business would be required to relocate or temporarily cease operation during the project construction period. On the other hand, our current approach to relocate will allow us to maximize our business continuity and begin permanent operations at the new site immediately.

We should also note that we are the current owners of a portion of the Property and are under contract to sell the Property to the Applicant. We are not being forced out of the Property but rather are electing to move our operations to another location more conducive to our current underlying business requirements.

We appreciate the Commission's request that the Applicant look further into including our business in its project going forward and indeed have considered all options, but we do not believe that locating on site would be in the best interest of our business or the redevelopment of the Property. As such, we would like to note our support for the above-referenced application.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the record and the kind words about our presence and history at this location from the Chairman during the May 12th hearing. Please do not hesitate to contact us for additional information.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Investment Company LLLP


Dennis I. Paul, General Partner