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October 6, 2017

VIA IZIS AND HAND DELIVERY

Anthony Hood, Chairman  
District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 200-S  
Washington, DC 20001

**Re: Z.C. Case No. 16-29 – Columbian Quarter - Application by Poplar Point RBBR, LLC (the “Applicant”) for Approval of a First-Stage Planned Unit Development and Zoning Map Amendment for Lots 97, 1025-1031, 1036, and 1037 in Square 5860 and Lot 91 in Square 5861 (the “Property”) – Supplemental Submission**

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Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

On February 27, 2017, the Zoning Commission set down the above-referenced case for a public hearing. On July 5, 2017, the Applicant submitted an initial statement, illustrations, views and plans and other supplemental pages (the “**Pre-Hearing Submission**”). This submission supplements the Pre-Hearing Submission.

**I. Updates to Project Design**

The Applicant has continued to work with the community and government agencies regarding the rezoning of the Property to the MU-9 zone and development of a mixed use project containing residential, office, and retail uses across 5 buildings (collectively, the “**Project**”). Since the initial Pre-Hearing Submission, the Applicant has continued to refine the design of the Project. A set of revised illustrations, views and plans is attached as Exhibit A (“**Revised Plans**”).

**A. Building Updates**

The Applicant has taken significant steps in updating the Project to incorporate greater setbacks and massing articulation to create a more pedestrian-friendly Project. As detailed in the initial Pre-Hearing Submission, the Applicant has removed the glass “wall” at the top of the office buildings, eliminating the visual impact of the extra height. The Applicant has also incorporated setbacks at the upper levels of the residential buildings to decrease the height, massing and bulk perception of the buildings. The Applicant has also removed some architectural embellishments

on the roof that created the appearance of taller, more dominating buildings. Finally, the Applicant has reduced the number of projecting balconies and bay windows and instead introduced inset balconies for more interesting articulations in the facades of the residential buildings to provide a more nuanced Project.

### B. Building Connections

As previously stated in the initial Pre-Hearing Submission, the Applicant has redesigned the bridge between the two residential buildings significantly, as shown on page 23 of the Revised Plans. First, the Applicant has raised the bottom of the bridge to a height of 37.5 feet, an increase of 18.5 feet. This increase provides a better view shed down the private street to the Anacostia Park and River. Second, the Applicant has truly made the bridge a meaningful connection, by providing a six-story connection between the residential buildings, not only providing residential pedestrian access, but including residential units within the bridge. The bridge is a focal point and true part of the overall residential portion of the Project.

The Applicant has redesigned the bridge between buildings D and E on the south side of Howard Road to remove the bridge connection between the first through fourth floors, as shown on pages 20-24 of the Revised Plans. The bottom of the bridge between buildings D and E will now be approximately 41 feet in height, as shown on page 32 of the Revised Plans. This 41 foot high space will complement the bridge connection between the two residential buildings described above and create a clearer line of sight to the Anacostia Park and River. In addition to the alteration of the bridge between buildings D and E, modifications to the Project's square footage will result in an overall FAR of 9.04, a slight increase from the previously proposed FAR of 9.00.

### C. Improving the Streetscape

The Applicant is continuing to refine the streetscape design of the Project in conjunction with the District Department of Transportation (“**DDOT**”) and other government agencies. First, the Applicant has relocated the westernmost curb cut along Howard Road 30' further away from the intersection to prevent vehicular conflicts, as encouraged by DDOT.

The Applicant continues to design the streetscape of the Project to anticipate future development. While the streetscape serves the Project, it opens the door for future development in the Poplar Point area, which is encouraged by OP and is anticipated in NPS's 2017 Anacostia Park Management Plan and Anacostia Waterfront Initiative Plan.

Based upon the September 19, 2017 meeting with the Office of Planning, the Applicant has also altered the allocation of space along the private street to remove 7 feet of parking and increase the width of the pedestrian realm on both sides of the private street from 12 feet each to 15.5 feet each.

## II. Updates to Zoning Flexibility Requested

Based on the feedback from OP and from the Commission, the Applicant is removing its request for flexibility (1) to vary the locations of the office and residential components of the Project; and (2) for the residential buildings, to provide above-ground parking within the building's core.

However, the Applicant continues to request flexibility to (1) vary the phasing anticipated for the Project; (2) vary interim uses at the Property while the other phases of the Project are being finalized; and (3) adjust parking downwards if needed to meet market demand, but not below the minimum required by the Zoning Regulations.

The Office of Planning requested additional information regarding the interim uses at the Project. Currently, there is one anticipated use along Howard Road SE until the Project is fully developed.

#### South Capitol Street Corridor Project – Construction Office, Parking, Storage and Staging

The Applicant is currently in discussions with the recently awarded South Capitol Bridgebuilders Contractor (the “**Contractor**”) for the South Capitol Street Corridor Project concerning parking, storage and staging interim uses located along the 600-900 block of Howard Road SE. The Contractor has leased a construction office which will be co-working space for DDOT, the Contractor and sub-contractors at 700 Howard Road SE, which sits on the proposed Project Building B site. The interim uses for storage, staging and parking will be potentially on different 600-900 Howard Road parcels. DDOT and the general contractor anticipate occupying the land for a 4-year period from 2017 to 2021. In addition to the interim storage, staging, and parking on the Property, the Property currently hosts interim urban farming, which includes honeybees, and has already produced honey.

### **III. Community Outreach**

The Applicant has engaged in numerous community outreach efforts, including city agency meetings, ANC meetings, Council Member meetings and meetings with individual community groups regarding the Project since the Zoning Commission set the case down for public hearing.

The Applicant continues to collaborate, communicate and convene with various DC agencies and regional authorities, agencies, and non-profits. The Applicant convened at the Office of Planning on April 28, 2017 to participate in the interagency meeting with various DC government agencies and regional authorities. The interagency meeting included the Office of Planning (OP), District Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) and Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA). Prior to the inter-agency meeting, the Applicant met with OP, DDOT and WMATA on the PUD application. The Applicant met with WMATA staff at their office on March 27 and May 5, 2017 as well as on March 17, 2017 to walk the existing site conditions, discuss conceptual design options and outline the basic agreement terms and conditions for the Anacostia Metrorail station.

More recently, the Applicant met with various DC agencies, including OP, DOEE and DDOT. The Applicant convened at OP on September 19, 2017 to present the latest changes to the Project, including Building D and E's courtyard plaza, the building connection on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor and central service loading, and vehicle only entrance relocation to the west. On September 19, the Applicant also met with DDOT to discuss comments on the draft transportation plan conclusions and recommendations, WMATA Metro station improvements and the proposed multi-modal site and neighborhood circulation improvements. On September 18, 2017, the Applicant and DDOT met to coordinate the design, and construction phases of the Project and South Capitol Corridor Project.

In 2017, the Applicant partnered with the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) on the participation, planning and implementation of the Ward 8 Works Program. As one of the largest real estate and community developers in Ward 8, the Applicant is taking an active role in participating on the Ward 8 Works Program's Orange Core Team. Through a series of planning meetings in the summer and fall of 2017, the Applicant will be updating DMPED and participants on specific Ward 8 Works development and construction projects, hiring timelines and the types of jobs that will be available at the Project. One of the first job opportunities in 2017-18 will be Redbrick LMD professional job internships offered to high school and college students from Ward 8.

In preparation for the ANC Full Commission meeting in September 2017, the Applicant conducted a project update meeting with members of the ANC 8A and 8C Executive Development Committee members on August 31, 2017. Both ANC Single Member District representatives Karen Lucas from SMD 8C01 and Greta Fuller from SMD 8A06 participated in the 8A ANC and 8C Executive Development Committee meeting which was organized by ANC 8C Chairperson Mary Cuthbert. The Applicant subsequently presented the latest Project drawings and benefits and amenities to the ANC 8A Full Commission on September 5, 2017 and the ANC 8C Full Commission on September 13, 2017. If requested, the Applicant will return to the individual or larger joint ANC 8A and 8C Executive Committee and Full Commission before the end of the year to present the most updated PUD application architectural design and development scheme, public amenities and benefits and public engagement process and participation.

The Applicant also met with Ward Council members throughout the District of Columbia to present the Project plans. The Applicant met with Ward 6 DC Council member Charles Allen in the spring of 2017, and discussed the Project with Chairman of the Council of District of Columbia Phil Mendelson, and Ward 2 Council member Jack Evans on May 22, 2017. The Applicant met with Ward 8 DC Council member Trayon White on May 15 and 23, 2017; Ward 7 DC Council member Vincent Gray on May 23, 2017; Ward 5 DC Council and Business and Economic Development Committee Chair Kenyan McDuffie on April 5, 2017; at-large Council member Anita Bonds on May 22, 2017; at-large DC Council member Robert White Jr. on May 22, 2017; and, at-large DC Council member David Grosso on May 23, 2017. The Applicant continues to meet with Ward 7 DC Council Member Vincent Gray and Ward 8 DC Council Member Trayon White on progress with the Project design, development, amenities and benefits.

The Applicant met with the Anacostia Park Initiative Public Forum, Cedar Tree Academy Executive Board, Bishop Walker School for Boys, 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park, Congress Heights Wellness Center for Seniors, and Living Classrooms in the spring of 2017. The Applicant presented the latest Project information to the Anacostia Coordinating Council (ACC) on July 25, 2017 and the Anacostia Preservation Council (APR) on August 7, 2017. In the month of October, the Applicant will also meet with the Anacostia BID, Barry Farm Resident Council, United Planning Organization, Earth Conservation Corporation, United Black Fund, Bread for the City, and other local community groups to present the latest Project plans prior to the Zoning Commission hearing on October 26, 2017.

As a result of all of these meetings, the Applicant continues to revise the Project to address thoughts and concerns raised by the community.

#### **IV. Project Benefits and Amenities**

The Applicant is continuing to refine the proffered benefits and amenities associated with the Project, and the benefits and amenities discussed in the initial application continue to be ongoing commitments for the Project. Discussed below are further refinements and additional details regarding some of the largest commitments of benefits and amenities for the Project. These are additional details, and the Applicant remains committed to the full benefits and amenities discussed in the initial Application.

##### **A. Streetscape Improvements and Connectivity**

The Applicant has worked with OP throughout the planning process, and OP has repeatedly encouraged the Applicant to provide open space at the Property and to anticipate future development in the Poplar Point area. In early conversations regarding the Project, OP encouraged the Applicant to break up to the Property to provide open space, reduce the massing of the development, and to anticipate development based on the Anacostia Park Management Plan and the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative. Therefore, the Applicant has provided significant open space at the Property, most importantly in the private streets the Applicant is committing to create off of Howard Road. These private streets occupy approximately 11,000 square feet at the Property. Given the FAR of the Project, this foregoes almost 100,000 square feet of development potential to provide open space and connecting points to future development in the area.

##### **B. Additional Ground Floor Retail**

In response to OP and the Zoning Commission's comments regarding retail use, the Applicant has revised the Project to incorporate retail use into each of the Project's buildings. This increase provides an additional 5,950 square feet of ground floor retail use at the Project, which is a slight increase of 1,270 square feet over the additional 4,680 square feet of ground floor retail use proposed in the Pre-Hearing Submission. The Project will line Howard Road SE from the Anacostia Metrorail station with retail uses, increasing the vibrancy of this development and the pedestrian experience for visitors, residents, and employees at the Project.

##### **C. WMATA Improvements**

The Applicant has continued to work with WMATA regarding improvements to the Anacostia Metrorail station. As illustrated by the updated letter and concept drawings attached as Exhibit B, the Applicant is committed to providing improvements to the Metrorail station, and is seeking WMATA's approval of these improvements before October 26, 2017. The Applicant will continue working with WMATA to finalize the design of the improvements, but anticipates station improvements to include the following:

- Facilitate the design of a new Metro Entrance plaza area by demolishing the parking deck vehicular ramp, moving the outdoor Kiss n' Ride parking lot and realignment of the existing WMATA access ramp to Howard Road SE;
- Upgrade road, pedestrian and bicycle pathway improvements to Metrorail station from Howard Road SE;
- Create a community pocket park adjacent to the Metrostation entrance and mixed-use residential building;
- Enhance landscaping and hardscaping around the Metrorail entrance plaza area;
- Incorporate Metrostation amenities and features including DC Bikeshare Station or similar bike sharing service amenity, bike racks, benches, trash receptacles, local art installations; and
- Integrate potential retail areas within the proposed metro entrance plaza area.

#### D. Transportation Improvements

The Applicant continues to work with DDOT and WMATA regarding transportation improvements as part of the Project. As reflected in the draft transportation plan, the Applicant is committed to mitigation measures to address impacts from the Project development. The transportation improvements include the following: delivery of new public infrastructure at Howard Road SE and the Anacostia Metro station entrance plaza; installation of traffic signal at the Howard Road/Suitland Parkway Intersection as well as other transportation improvements around the Project; implementation of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan with on-going monitoring studies; and coordination of improvements to the surrounding roadway network with the design and construction of the South Capitol Street Corridor Project. The Applicant will continue working with DDOT and WMATA to finalize the transportation improvements.

#### E. Transit-Based Housing and Affordable Housing

The Applicant will provide 700-800 new residential apartments and/or condos within an 1/8 mile or 5-minute walk from the newly improved Anacostia Metro station plaza entrance. Building C, designed for residential use with ground floor retail, will be the first phase (Phase I) of the proposed Stage One PUD development. The new mixed-use, multi-family rental building, will consist of approximately 291,000 GSF of market-rate and affordable units with ground floor retail, two levels of underground parking and amenity spaces, including a fitness center, leasing/concierge area, rooftop clubhouse/lounge and outdoor pool.

The Applicant also continues to proffer 10% of the gross floor area of the Project be provided for affordable housing, with 50% of the affordable units at 50% of the Area Median Income (“AMI”) and 50% of the affordable units at 80% of the AMI, including three-bedroom affordable units. The Applicant has made this determination based on significant conversations with the community as well as government agencies, including the Department of Housing and Community Development (“DHCD”), who are supportive of this proffer.

#### F. Workforce Development

The Applicant is also committed to providing workforce development and job opportunities at the Project for Ward 8 residents, including the following:

- Partnership with DMPED’s Ward 8 Works Program to connect Ward 8 residents with pre-construction and construction jobs on the Project in Ward 8. As one of the largest real estate and community developers in Ward 8, the Applicant is taking an active role in participating on the Ward 8 Works Program’s Orange Core Team. Through a series of planning meetings in the summer and fall of 2017, the Applicant will be updating DMPED and participants on specific Ward 8 Works development and construction projects, with hiring timelines and the types of jobs that will be available at the Project.
- Professional workforce training, internship and/or apprenticeship in professional fields related to development, real estate and/or construction. One of the first job opportunities in 2017-18 will be professional internships offered to high school and college students from Ward 8. By the end of 2017, the Applicant has committed to recruiting two high school students from Ward 8 to participate in a multi-year mentoring program focused on all aspects of real estate development, including acquisitions, zoning and land use law, design, development, pre-construction, construction, marketing and branding, leasing, property management and asset management. Through Redbrick LMD’s departments and development partners, the high school and college students will be mentored and trained by the leading real estate experts in the Washington, DC area. Building a strong foundation in the core competencies, the interns will be able to make significant contributions to large- and small-scale development projects in Ward 8, including the Project.
- Construction job creation during the 5-10-year predevelopment and construction period build-out. Through the Ward 8 Works Program and Redbrick LMD’s Construction Apprenticeship Program, Ward 8 residents will have the opportunity for immediate and long-term employment opportunities in the construction field. By the time of the first construction closing, the Applicant will commit to hiring a Ward 8 resident to participate in a hands-on, two-year apprenticeship program with the general contractor and developer that will focus on all aspects of construction during first construction phase of the Project.
- Permanent property management, retail and professional service job sector creation after the delivery of the mixed-use buildings. Through Redbrick LMD’s Real Estate Professional Service Internship Program, Ward 8 residents will have the opportunity for long-term employment opportunities in the residential

property management field. Before the time of the first residential building opening, the Applicant will commit to hiring a Ward 8 resident to participate in a hands-on, one-year internship program with the property manager and developer that will focus on all aspects of residential property management during construction of the first residential building at the Project.

G. LEED Gold Certification

Even with the redesign of the building, the Project continues its commitment to the LEED v. 4 Gold certification, as discussed in the initial application.

V. Conclusion

The Applicant believes it has made positive changes to the Project and it looks forward to continuing its dialogue with the Commission, agencies, and stakeholders in this community. The Applicant looks forward to presenting the Project to the Zoning Commission at the October 26, 2017 hearing.

Sincerely,



John T. Epting



Jennifer Logan

Enclosures



## Certificate of Service

The undersigned hereby certifies that copies of the foregoing document will be delivered by first-class mail or hand delivery to the following addresses on October 6, 2017.

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