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May 30, 2019

VIA IZIS AND HAND DELIVERY

Anthony J. Hood, Chairman
Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia
441 Fourth Street, NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

**Re: Z.C. Case No. 18-22: The Yards Parcel G
Applicant's Posthearing Submission**

Dear Chairman Hood and Commissioners:

Since the public hearing, the Applicant has further studied the design of the Project in response to the Commission's comments.

Broadly, the Applicant continues to believe that the proposed design is appropriate. The District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan as well as the SEFC Master Plan and related guidelines emphasize that building design at waterfront sites should respond to their unique context and incorporate a range of building forms. Furthermore, the proposed design is consistent with the zone plan for the SEFC-1 zones, which establishes a ratio of height to density that encourages significant and creative sculpting to create varied roofscapes and address important viewsheds. As outlined in the Applicant's May 3 pre-hearing submission and explained at the hearing, the proposed design does "reinforce the urban form" at this unique location. Parcel G is located not only at the intersection of a radial avenue with the orthogonal street grid but also features direct frontage on a public square created by the offset of Tingey Street and N Street as well as direct views to and from the Anacostia River over and above the Main Pumping Station and Yards Park. (See Exhibit A.) The confluence of all of these factors—and in particular the waterfront context—make this a unique urban location that calls for a building design that departs from conventional design approaches for a trapezoidal site.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Applicant appreciated the Commission's detailed and insightful design feedback, and studied five building design elements based on the Commission's comments. Each element is discussed below.

Brick Range

While the Commission agreed with the choice of brick as the predominant façade material, members of the Commission expressed concern with the range of colors within the brick palette. In response, the Applicant has narrowed the variability of the brick palette, which should allow the brick façade to blend more and allow the building form itself to express itself more clearly. The revised palette and renderings are included in Exhibit A; the Applicant will also bring samples of the revised brick palette to the Commission's public meeting on June 10.

Window Headers

At the hearing, the Commission expressed concern about the metal panel used as headers for the lower-story windows along the base. On the whole, the Applicant believes that the proposed design is appropriate for the urban context: the inset channel around each window creates a crisp, elegant brick detail to create articulation and depth for each opening, while the metal panel header creates a consistent zone to be supplemented with building signage, canopies or awnings, or other tenant-specific elements. However, the Applicant did re-evaluate the design and concluded that the renderings are not accurately reflecting the proposed metal panel, which is intended convey a muted and industrial rust orange, rather than the brighter orange that appears in some renderings. Revised renderings reflecting the correct color are included in Exhibit A.

Upper-Story Façade Design

The Commission asked the Applicant to study the potential to carry design elements from the "urban window" around the corners to the rest of that bar of the building. Broadly, the Applicant believes it is important to maintain the brick façade with punched windows along the bulk of the building, with the urban window serving as an exception because of its unique location connecting the building to the water. The Applicant did study carrying the same rust orange mullion material into the upper-story windows, but concluded that doing so would contrast with the clean, simple façade design otherwise sought with the brick material, window rhythm, and building curves. Furthermore, the orange mullions would undermine the otherwise-limited use of that metal to just the urban window and the two-story base.

Lobby Entrance

The Commission suggested that the design of the main lobby entrance could be strengthened to better "announce" its presence and function. The Applicant carefully studied this

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design feature with GSA over the course of many weeks, including through the exploration of different materials, heights, and scale for the entrance and canopy, and settled on the proposed design as the best fit within the overall design scheme. However the Applicant revisited the design again and has concluded that the entrance could be strengthened by extending the metal panels that clad the lobby interior out of the exterior, flanking the building entrance. This distinguishes the entrance from the surrounding brick base and better defines it as the primary entrance to the building. The Applicant also studied alternative materials and form for the canopy, but concluded that the current canopy is the most successful option, particularly when paired with the revision to the façade flanking the entrance. Revised renderings reflecting the new entrance are included in Exhibit A.

Bike Room

Finally, the Commission inquired whether the entrance to the bike room could be improved to facilitate more direct access from 1 ½ Street. The Applicant has worked with the lead tenant to balance the desire for tenant access from 1 ½ Street with the need to secure entrance points into the building. To this end, the Applicant has co-located a secondary entrance with the bike room entrance by creating an entry vestibule on 1 ½ Street, with direct access to the bike room from the vestibule. The proposed solution effectively balances security and operational needs for the building as a whole and the bike room itself.

Thank you for your attention to this application. We look forward to the Commission's decision at the June 10, 2019 public meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ David M. Avitabile

/s/ David A. Lewis

CC:

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Enclosures

Certificate of Service

I certify that on or before May 30, 2019, I delivered a copy of the foregoing document and attachments via e-mail, hand delivery or first class mail to the addresses listed below.

/s/ David A. Lewis

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