

October 12, 2021

**BY IZIS**

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairperson  
D.C. Zoning Commission  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 200-S  
Washington, DC 20001

**Re: Z.C. Case No. 21-13: Application of The Douglass LLC (“Applicant”) for Design Review Approval of a Building located in the Northern Howard Road (“NHR”) Zone – Lot 97, in Square 5860 (the “Property”) – Pre-Hearing Submission**

Dear Chairperson Hood and Members of the Commission:

On August 5, 2021, the Applicant submitted the above-referenced application for Design Review of a mixed-use building in the NHR Zone (the “**Application**”). The Applicant plans to construct a mixed-use building with approximately 748 residential units and approximately 45,000 square feet of retail, grocery, and restaurant space at the Property (the “**Project**”). The Applicant would like to supplement the record with additional information in response to comments raised by various government agencies regarding the Project.

**I. Updates to Plans**

The Applicant has continued to refine the Project and has revised the plans slightly. Attached as Exhibit A are the updated sheets showing the changes made to the Project (which modify Exhibit 3E in the record, together, the “**Plans**”). In general, the overall Project parameters and massing remain the same. The Project continues to include a retail base above which are three distinct sections separated on both the north and south by five terraces. The Project will be 130 feet in height and have a floor area ratio (“**FAR**”) of approximately 8.01. The ground floor retail is intended to include a grocery store, in-line retail, and restaurant use.

The main change shown on the Plans are updates to the projections into the public space along Howard Road. The Applicant has been coordinating with the Office of Planning (“**OP**”) and the District Department of Transportation (“**DDOT**”) regarding the Project, as detailed below. As part of this outreach, individuals in the public space divisions of both OP and DDOT

raised concerns about how the proposed balconies complied with the DC Building Code. Based on these conversations, the Applicant has revised the projections to comply with the comments received. Specifically, the Plans have reduced the overall width of the projections at the residential levels. However, the Applicant has maintained the exceptional unit access to balconies, with approximately 85% of the units continuing to have access to private balconies. However, given the revisions, the square footage of outdoor balcony space has been reduced from 56,000 square feet in the initial application to 53,000 square feet shown in the Plans.

The only other material change to the Plans is the addition of a grain silo on the east side of the Property external to the building. The Applicant is in discussions with a local brewer to open a brewery restaurant at the Project. This retailer would be ideal for the Project, providing a new destination point for a local business and diversifying the uses in the Bridge District. Part of the brewery design and visibility includes a plan for an iconic grain silo adjacent to the building. Therefore, the Applicant is proposing an approximate area where the grain silo would be placed, as shown on sheet A2.05 of the Plans. The final location will be coordinated with the future tenant.

## **II. Community Engagement**

The Applicant has engaged with the community regarding the Project throughout the process. This engagement has preceded this Application, including the map amendment for the Property in 2018 and 2019. The Applicant met with both ANC 8A and 8C on numerous occasions regarding the overall Bridge District, which is planned within both ANCs.

The Property is located within ANC 8A, and the Applicant presented to ANC 8A at its regularly scheduled September meeting, where the ANC voted unanimously to support the Design Review application. The Applicant has also continued to engage with ANC 8C regarding the Project. Most recently, the Applicant met with ANC 8C on September 30<sup>th</sup> and is scheduled to present at the ANC's October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting again. The Applicant is committed to continuing to work with the ANCs regarding the Project and the overall Bridge District.

In addition to the ANCs, the Applicant has engaged with the Anacostia Business Improvement District (“**BID**”) to ensure that local businesses are incorporated into the Bridge District, both during construction and ongoing operations. The Applicant has weekly communication with the Anacostia BID to facilitate this partnership.

## **III. Agency Outreach**

The Applicant has also continued to engage with OP, DDOT, the Department of Energy and Environment (“**DOEE**”), and other District agencies regarding the Project. As noted above, the Applicant responded to the projection issues raised by OP and DDOT. Additionally, the Applicant has continued to engage with DDOT regarding the Comprehensive Transportation Review (“**CTR**”) filed in the record.

The Applicant also participated in a robust interagency meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. The meeting included representatives from OP, DDOT, DOEE, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and DC Water. The meeting was helpful to provide greater detail on the Project to

the agencies, and the Applicant looks forward to continuing to work with these agencies moving forward on the Project.

#### **IV. Resumes and Outlines of Testimony**

Three witnesses will testify regarding the Project at the hearing: Britt Snider on behalf of the Applicant; Brian Earle with ZGF Architects, who is being proffered as an expert in architecture; and Rob Schiesel with Gorove/Slade Associates, who is being proffered as an expert in transportation engineering. Brian Earle's resume is attached as Exhibit B. Rob Schiesel's resume was previously submitted with the CTR in the record at Exhibit 9B. Outlines of the testimony for each witness are also attached as Exhibit C. The Applicant anticipates needing 30 minutes for its presentation.

#### **V. Flexibility Requested**

The Project complies with all of the Zoning Regulations in the NHR Zone. The Applicant requests the following design flexibility with the approval of the Project:

- a. To vary the location and design of all interior components, including but not limited to partitions, structural slabs, doors, hallways, columns, signage, stairways, mechanical rooms, elevators, and toilet rooms, provided that the variations do not change the exterior configuration or appearance of the building;
- b. To vary the final selection of the exterior materials within the color ranges of the material types as proposed, based on availability at the time of construction without reducing the quality of the materials;
- c. To make minor refinements to exterior details, locations, and dimensions, including: window mullions and spandrels, window frames, doorways, glass types, belt courses, sills, bases, cornices, railings, balconies, canopies and trim, such that the refinements do not substantially change the external configuration or appearance of the building;
- d. To make refinements or revisions, including modifying the projections, required by District agencies, including DDOT or the Public Space Committee, to receive building permits and Certificates of Occupancy for the Project;
- e. To vary the number of residential units and the residential unit types by plus or minus 10%;
- f. To vary the number of parking spaces by plus or minus 10% provided that no relief is required;
- g. To reconfigure the garage layout provided that no relief is required;
- h. To vary the roof plan as it relates to the green roof areas, solar panels, planters, terraces, pool, equipment, and outdoor amenity areas, provided that no relief is required;

- i. To vary the signage of the building pursuant to market or tenant demands, subject to D.C. signage regulations;
- j. To modify the streetscape design and areas in public space in response to DDOT and the public space permitting process; and
- k. To modify the location of the grain silo, if provided, in coordination with the brewery tenant.

**VI. Conclusion**

The Applicant believes the Project presents an exciting, place-making start to the Bridge District. The Applicant looks forward to presenting to the Commission at the public hearing on November 1, 2021.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
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John T. Epting

Meghan Hottel-Cox

## Certificate of Service

The undersigned hereby certifies that copies of the foregoing document will be delivered by electronic mail to the following addresses on October 12, 2021.

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/s/

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Meghan Hottel-Cox