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VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL

March 10, 2024

Deborah Tackett
Historic Preservation & Architecture Officer
City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

RE: **HPB24-0607** – Final Submittal Letter of Intent for Certificate of Appropriateness for Pedestrian Breezeway Connector Connecting 1776 Collins Avenue and 1775 James Avenue

Dear Ms. Tackett:

This law firm represents Red 18 LLC (the "Applicant") relating to the property located at 1776 Collins Avenue and 1775 James Avenue (the "Property") in the City of Miami Beach (the "City"). This letter serves as the required letter of intent for a Certificate of Appropriateness for certain new construction on the Property.

Description of the Property. The Property consists of two lots on the west side of Collins Avenue, with 1776 Collins Avenue identified by Folio No. 02-3234-019-0360, and 1775 James Avenue to the rear and identified by Folio No. 02-3234-0419-0370. Both lots are owned by the Applicant and are operated as the UMA House Hotel. The 1776 Collins Avenue site features a three-story hotel on a lot that is 19,100 square feet, and is identified as a Contributing structure in the Miami Beach Historic Properties database, having been built in 1951 as the Fairfax Apartments and Hotel. The 1775 James Avenue site is improved by a six-story hotel on a 15,000 square foot lot, and is not listed as contributing, having been built in 2021.

The 1776 Collins Avenue Property is zoned CD-2, Commercial Medium Intensity, and is located in the Museum Historic District. The 1775 James Avenue Property is zoned RM-2, Residential Multifamily Medium Intensity, and also located in the Museum Historic District.

Description of the Project. The Applicant seeks approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a pedestrian breezeway connector structure between the lodging buildings at 1776 Collins Avenue and 1775 James Avenue (the "Connector"). This passage between the two buildings presently contains surface pavers, gravel and planters. As far as function, the proposed Connector will provide a secure, covered egress for patrons of the Hotel. As far as form, the imaginative, playful and artistic design provides a fitting and stylish transition between the two hotel buildings.

Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria. The Connector is designed to be compatible with the surrounding historic district, while remaining distinguishable from the surrounding contributing buildings in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. The Connector presents a fashionable upgrade to the existing passageway, that is immediately distinguishable from the contributing structure with its organic form and striking design. At the same time, it's limited size and position behind and between the two buildings presents no danger of diminishing the historic significance of the former Fairfax Hotel site. The proposed Connector is sensitive to the historic district, while also providing interesting architectural variation.

Unified Development Site. The two subject sites are both owned by the Applicant and operated as the UMA Hotel. As a condition of the approval of the Connector, the Applicant will provide a limited, narrowly-tailored Covenant in Lieu of Unity of Title, in a form acceptable by the Office of the City Attorney. The Covenant will be recorded and will operate to unify the sites solely for the purpose of the Connector, without combining zoning or any other substantive rights. The scope of work contemplated by this application is limited to the proposed pedestrian breezeway Connector.

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The Project advances the sea level rise and resiliency criteria in Section 7.1.2.4 of the City Code as follows:

(1) A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.

A recycling and salvage plan for the demolition of the existing structures will be provided during the building permit process.

(2) Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.

The Connector structure will not replace or install windows.

(3) Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.

The Applicant will provide, where feasible, passive cooling systems.

(4) Whether resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native or Florida friendly plants) will be provided.

The site will continue to maintain its resilient, Florida-native, or Florida-friendly landscaping.

(5) Whether adopted sea level rise projections in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Action Plan, as may be revised from time-to-time by the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, including a study of land elevation and elevation of surrounding properties were considered.

Sea level rise projections have been considered in the design and development of the Project.

(6) The ground floor, driveways, and garage ramping for new construction shall be adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-ways and adjacent land.

The ground floor areas will be adaptable to raised public rights-of way and adjacent properties.

(7) Where feasible and appropriate. All critical mechanical and electrical systems are located above base flood elevation.

All new mechanical and electrical systems will be located above base flood elevation, where feasible and appropriate.

(8) Existing buildings shall be, where reasonably feasible and appropriate, elevated to the base flood elevation.

The Connector is designed to marry the existing mezzanine level of the 1776 Collins building with the existing ground floor level of the 1775 James Avenue building.

(9) When habitable space is located below the base flood elevation plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard, wet or dry flood proofing systems will be provided in accordance with Chapter of 54 of the City Code.

The Connector is designed to connect the existing buildings as a breezeway with no new habitable space constructed below base flood elevation.

(10) Where feasible and appropriate, water retention systems shall be provided.

Water retention systems will be provided as part of the resiliency goals of the Project.

(11) Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials shall be utilized.

Cool pavement and porous materials are proposed where appropriate.

(12) The design of each project shall minimize the potential for heat island effects on-site.

The Applicant will continue to maintain existing landscaping to minimize any potential for heat island effects on-site.

Conclusion. The proposed Connector increases the safety and protection of the UMA Hotel patrons with improved circulation between the two buildings by way of a unique contrasting artistic design that is a perfect marriage of form and function. Accordingly, we respectfully request your favorable review and recommendation with respect to the proposed Connector. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Michael Larkin

cc: Paul C. Savage, Esq.