BERCOW RADELL FERNANDEZ LARKIN + TAPANES
ZONING, LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

200 S. Biscayne Boulevard
Suite 300, Miami, FL 33131

www.brzoninglaw.com

305.377.6231 office
305.377.6222 fax
mlarkin@brzoninglaw.com

VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL

April 7, 2024

Rogelio A. Madan, AICP
Chief of Community Planning & Sustainability
City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

RE: **DRB24-1009 – Letter of Intent** -Design Review Approval for Façade Renovation of 1691 Michigan Avenue "The Lincoln"

Dear Mr. Madan:

This firm represents Black Lion Investment Group, Inc. (collectively the "Applicant"), the contract purchaser of the leasehold interest in the property located at 1691 Michigan Avenue, identified by Folio Nos. 02-3234-004-0690 and 02-3234-004-0695[1] (the "Property") in the City of Miami Beach (the City"). This letter serves as the required letter of intent on connection with an application for design review of proposed improvements to the façade of the Property.

Property Description. The Property is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Michigan Avenue and 17th Street and is approximately 76,500 square feet in size. The Property fronts on Michigan Avenue, 17th Street, North Lincoln Lane, and Jefferson Ave, and is located just a few steps north from Lincoln Road. The northern portion of the Property is zoned CD-3 High Intensity District ("CD-3") and the southern portion of the Property is zoned Government Use ("GU") but follows the regulations of the surrounding CD-3 District. The Property is improved with an existing six (6)

[1] The City is the owner of the Property. The Applicant is the contract purchaser of the master tenancy under a long-term lease. The Applicant is in the process of obtaining the City's consent to this application in accordance with the Lease Agreement.

story mixed-use commercial building and attached parking garage structure developed in 2000 known as "The Lincoln."

Ground Lease and Existing Structure. In 1999, the City entered into a ground lease with the Applicant's predecessors for development of The Lincoln (the "Lease").[2] The Lincoln is a six (6) story building consisting of ground floor retail/general commercial uses, five (5) levels of office space, and a parking garage structure[3] that contains 719 parking spaces. The design of the Lincoln is contemporary with a rounded façade and parapet at the corner of Michigan Avenue and 17th Street and concrete eyebrows above the corner-facing windows. The attached garage structure features ground floor commercial storefront and is screened on the upper levels by suspended planters in an irregular geometric pattern. The majority of the Lincoln is finished with white stucco and blue glazing, except for the attached garage structure which is finished with gray painted concrete.

Proposed Project. The Applicant seeks to renovate the façade of the Lincoln and the attached parking garage to make it an attractive mixed-use commercial structure that compliments surrounding character of the area and attracts new office, restaurant, and retail tenants (the "Project"). With respect to the office building, the Project proposes replacement of the eyebrows above the corner-facing windows at 17 Street with a pattern of alternating rounded awnings and planters, treatment of the stucco façade with a limestone veneer, and addition of sleek and modern iron light sconces. With respect to the attached garage structure, the Applicant seeks to refinish the dark gray painted concrete with a light-colored paint that softens the elevation, add the same light sconces as proposed for the office facades, and replacement of the existing parking garage screen with an elegant custom metal perforated screen. In addition, the Applicant intends to refinish and rearrange the planters on the Michigan and Jefferson Avenue facades in a regular geometric pattern and improve the irrigation system to ensure lush plantings survive in the planters. The Applicant's intent is to transform the existing building from an overlooked and aging office building into an iconic building that compliments the character of Lincoln Road and 17th Street, which in many ways serve as gateways to South Beach and Lincoln Road.

[2] The Lease is recorded in Official Record Book 1877. Page 447 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County. The Applicant shall comply with all provisions of the Lease requiring the City's consent for modifications.

[3] The parking structure satisfies the parking requirement of the uses within Lincoln Place and provides public parking. Specifically, the Lease requires that a minimum of 100 spaces are maintained open to the public at all times and ten (10) spaces for monthly parking for members of the general public.

Overall, the proposed improvements elevate the stature of the building to make it more attractive to potential office, retail, and restaurant tenants. The use of different materials along the facades, along with the introduction of awnings and refinishing of the planters breaks of the massing of the building to make it more sensitive to the surrounding lower scale buildings along Lincoln Road and 17th Street. Notably, the Applicant does not propose changing the uses permitted within the building, nor any enlargement of the building. Accordingly, the Project will continue to comply with the Resiliency Code with respect to floor area, height, parking, and setbacks.

Cost Estimate. The estimated cost of the project is $6,000,000.00.

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The proposed project advances the sea level rise and resiliency criteria provided in Section 7.1.2.4(a) of the Code as follows:

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

A recycling and salvage plan for the partial demolition proposed will be provided at permitting.

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

New windows will be hurricane proof impact 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.

All landscaping will be Florida friendly and resilient.

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 and appropriate flood mitigation will be incorporated into the design where appropriate and feasible.

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 application is a renovation of an existing building that does not propose to modify driveways or ramping.

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

All mechanical and electrical systems will be located above base flood elevation.

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

The existing building cannot feasibly be elevated to base flood elevation.

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.

To the extent habitable spaces are located below base flood elevation plus freeboard, wet or dry flood proofing systems will be provided to the extent necessary and appropriate.

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

Where feasible, water retention systems will be provided.

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

Cool pavement or porous pavement materials will be utilized where any new pavement is proposed.

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

The Project increases the landscaping on the facades and introduces various materials with high reflectivity that minimize potential for heat island effect.

Conclusion. Granting this Design Review approval will permit the rejuvenation of a struggling City-owned commercial building in the heart of the City. The Project will improve the appearance of the building while also resulting in a building that is more sensitive and compatible to the surrounding neighborhood than the current design. We look forward to your favorable review an recommendation with respect to this application. If you have any questions or comments in the interim, please give me a call at 305-377-6231.

Sincerely,



Michael Larkin

cc: Robert Rivani
Nicholas Rodriguez, Esq.