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VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL & HAND DELIVERY

September 11, 2023

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

RE: **HPB23-0588** Certificate of Appropriateness for
Renovation of 1601 Washington Avenue

Dear Ms. Tackett:

This firm represents NG 1601 Washington LLC, JBL 1601 Washington LLC and Review Avenue Miami LLC (collectively the "Applicant"), the master tenants of the property located at 1601 Washington Avenue, identified by Folio Nos. 02-3234-019-0842 and 02-3234-019-0840¹ (the "Property") in the City of Miami Beach (the "City"). This letter serves as the required letter of intent on connection with a proposed Certificate of Appropriateness for cosmetic renovation of the existing office building located at the Property.

Property Description. The Property is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Washington Avenue and 16th Street and is approximately 64,740 square feet in size. It is zoned Government Use ("GU") but follows the regulations of the surrounding High Intensity Commercial District ("CD-3"). The Property is within the Flamingo Park Local Historic District and the Miami Beach Architectural District. The Property is

¹ The City is the owner of the Property as reflected by the Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser website under Folio No. 02-3234-019-0840. The Applicants leasehold interest is identified by Folio No. 02-3234-019-0842. The Applicant is in the process of obtaining the City's consent to this application in accordance with the Lease Agreement.

improved with an existing eight story mixed-use commercial building developed in 2000 (“Lincoln Place”). According to the Miami Beach Historic Properties Database, the existing structure on the Property is classified as Non-Contributing within the Flamingo Park Historic District. See below Figure 1, Historic Properties Database Excerpt.

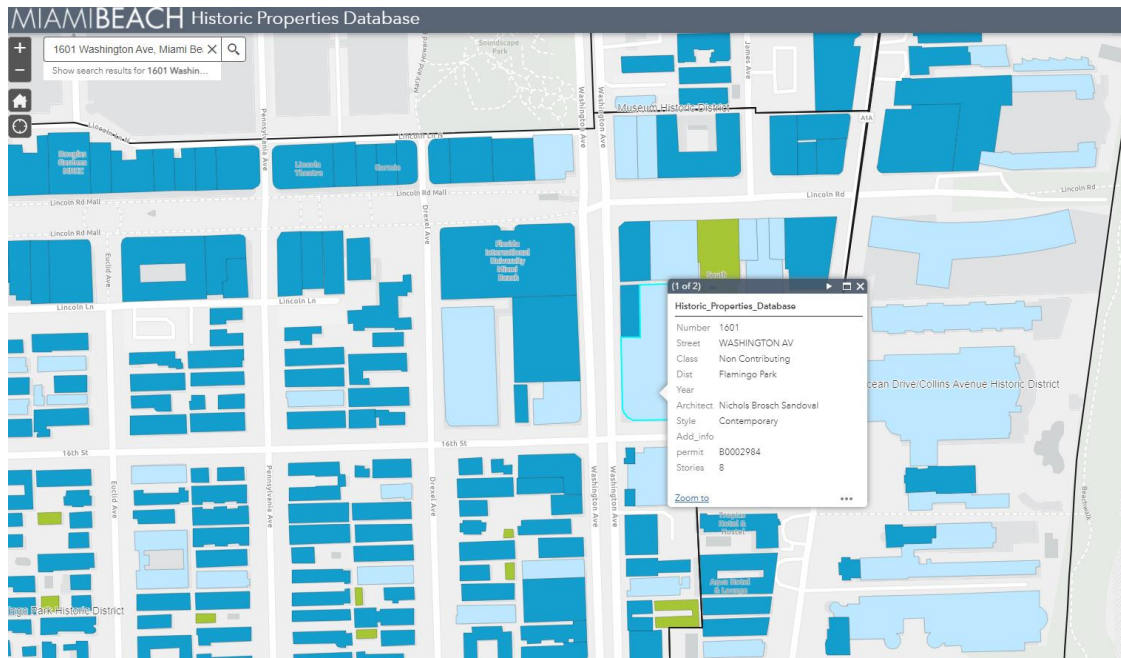


Figure 1, Historic Properties Database Excerpt

Ground Lease and Existing Structure. In 1999, the City entered into a ground lease with the Applicant’s predecessors for development of Lincoln Place (the “Lease”).² Lincoln Place is an eight-story building consisting of ground floor retail/general commercial uses, seven levels of office space, and a parking garage structure³ that contains 493 parking spaces. The design of Lincoln Place is contemporary with a rounded façade at the corner of Washington Avenue and 16th Street, projecting metallic louvres at each level, and a

² The Lease is recorded in Official Record Book 18770, Page 46 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. This application does not impact the number of existing parking spaces or the required parking for the building.

large ornamental parapet that is rounded at the corner of Washington Avenue and 16th Street. On the lower levels west façade facing Washington Avenue and portion of the south façade, Lincoln Place features keystone cladding, metallic awnings, and glazing with metallic mullions. The upper levels feature glazing with a geometric pattern on the portions of the west and south facades closest to the street corner and stucco on the remainder the 16th Street and Washington Avenue frontages. In recent years, Lincoln Place has suffered from a high vacancy rate within its office and retail/commercial units as newer commercial mixed-use building offer more attractive designs and modern facilities.

Proposed Project. The Applicant seeks to renovate Lincoln Place into “Le Royale,” an attractive mixed-use commercial structure that compliments the character and heritage of the Flamingo Park Historic District (the “Project”). The Applicant proposes Le Royale as a contemporary take on European buildings, including design elements such as new Juliet balconies with planter boxes for seasonal flowers, French-style window awnings, stone veneers, and metallic cladding. The Applicant’s intent is to transform the existing building from an overlooked and aging office building into an iconic building in the heart of one of the City’s most iconic historic districts.

Specifically, the Applicant proposes to demolish the existing stucco and decorative finishes of Lincoln Place and replace with new stone veneer finish, champagne-gold metal cladding, new exterior balustrades and awnings, new Juliet balconies with planter boxes, and a new building crown at the prominent corner of Washington Avenue an 16th Street. Portions of the west, south, north, and east elevations will be accented with stone veneer finish. Each window on the facades finished with stone veneer will have red fabric awnings above the proposed Juliet balconies and planter boxes for seasonal flowers. The central portions of the façade on the east west and south elevations will feature the champagne-gold metallic cladding with additional planters for seasonal flowers. At the ground level, along the curved façade at the corner of Washington Avenue and 16th Street, a more open and welcoming structural glazing system will invite pedestrians to the building. At each level above, the Applicant proposes curved red awnings with lushly landscaped planters. The top of Le Royale at the corner of Washington Avenue and 16th Street will be crowned with a champagne-gold metal cladded decorative parapet.

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 landscaped balconies, breaks of the massing of the building to make it more sensitive to the traditionally lower scale buildings of the Flamingo Park Historic District. Notably, the

Applicant does not propose changing the uses permitted within the building, nor any enlargement of the building. Accordingly, Le Royale will continue to comply with the City Code with respect to floor area, height, parking, and setbacks.

Compliance with Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria. The Project satisfies the applicable criteria for demolition and new construction in a local historic district. The design, scale, and massing of the Project remains sensitive to and compatible with the surrounding area, which contains similar blend of historic and contemporary designs. The Code provides that the examination of architectural drawings for consistency with the certificate of appropriateness criteria includes aesthetics, appearances, safety, and function of any new or existing structure, public interior space and physical attributes of the project in relation to the site, adjacent structures and properties, and surrounding community. In this case, the improved aesthetic appearance is consistent with the Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria, as the proposed design upgrades are compatible the historic district. While borrowing elements of architectural styles historically found in the City, the proposed design simultaneously distinguishes itself as a contemporary building that compliments the architectural context of the historic district. Accordingly, the proposed design is consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Structures and the Certificate of Appropriateness criteria.

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The Project advances the sea level rise and resiliency criteria in Section 133-50(a) 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 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 Certificate of Appropriateness 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 historic district than the existing design. We look forward to your favorable review of the application. If you have any questions or comments in the interim, please give me a call at 305-377-6231.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Larkin".

Michael Larkin

cc: Robert Rivani
Mathieu Massa
Nicholas Rodriguez, Esq.