

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

February 5, 2021

Ms. Arlova Vonhm
Zoning Administrator
ARLINGTON COUNTY
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1000
Arlington, Virginia 22201

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**RE: STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR MINOR SITE PLAN AMENDMENT APPLICATION
CENTURY CENTER I LLC & CENTURY CENTER II LLC – SITE PLAN #65**

Dear Ms. Vonhm:

This firm represents ML Century I LLC and ML Century II LLC (collectively, the “Applicant”), title owners of the properties located at 2450 Crystal Drive (RPC 34-020-032) (the “2450 Building”) & 2461 S. Clark Street (RPC #34-020-034 and #34-020-035) (the “2461 Building”) (the 2450 Building and 2461 Building, collectively, the “Property”). On behalf of the Applicant, please accept this letter as a statement of support for a minor site plan amendment application. With this application, the Applicant requests ground-floor level changes to the retail tenant storefronts, plaza flow, and landscaping for the Property as well as approval of a change in gross floor area (“GFA”) at the Property.

By way of background, the Property is part of the mixed-use, multi-building Century Center development, which the Arlington County Board approved in 1968. The Property is currently improved with two office buildings. In July 2017, the Arlington County Board approved a series of land use entitlements intended to facilitate redevelopment of the adjacent 2351 Jefferson Davis Highway (“2351 Jefferson”) with a new, mixed-use retail and multifamily residential building. The approved entitlements include a Crystal City Block Plan and withdrawal of 2351 Jefferson from Site Plan #65. These actions, in turn, resulting in modifications to Site Plan #65 to reflect the resulting density and parking ratios once 2351 Jefferson was removed from Site Plan #65.

The Applicant proposes ground level-retail changes to activate the streetscape and allow for an interim public plaza and landscaping for the Property. The Crystal City Sector Plan (the “Sector Plan”) described comprehensive land use and planning goals for the Property and surrounding area. The proposed changes would substantially enhance the existing condition of the area. The proposal would not impede achievement of the Sector Plan, and will instead advance many of Sector Plan’s goals, providing an incremental step toward full Sector Plan implementation for the block.

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Specifically, the Property's existing condition is devoid of any connectivity between Crystal Drive and Route 1 (See Plan Page A-000-B). The proposed project begins the process of achieving the plan goals of breaking down the superblock by adding new porosity and access through the new plaza (See Plan Page A-000-B). This creates an interim pathway of connectivity that enhances connections, a key goal of the Sector Plan's general principles (Sector Plan pp. 28-29) and block-specific principles (Sector Plan p. 38). The Sector Plan envisions both pedestrian and vehicular connections in this area. The current proposal achieves the pedestrian connection now and sets the stage for a full vehicular connection later.

The proposed plan also creates distance between buildings while activating the streetscape (See Plan Page A-000-D). In the current condition, there is no building separation in the area. The minimum building to building width under the proposed plan will be 40 feet; however, this distance is inclusive of a small retail structure that can easily be removed when the entirety of the site is redeveloped. Once this retail structure is removed, the building to building width will be well over 100 feet – these are the distances to the main building faces. This condition will meet the goal of an 80 foot building separation provided in the Sector Plan. This small and structurally insignificant retail space can easily be removed when the time comes for full redevelopment, and will not artificially extend the lifespan of the existing buildings.

Lastly, the proposed plan provides an interim public plaza to enhance community access (See Plan Page A-000-C). In the existing condition, the food court is isolated and located within the Property. Under the proposed plan, outward-facing retail would be created that better engages the public and activates the streetscape. The Sector Plan calls for a “market” public plaza to serve as a neighborhood gathering place (Sector Plan p. 32). The current proposal calls for an interim public plaza. The Sector Plan proposes a 15,000 sq. ft. plaza, and the current proposal's interim plaza measures 10,500 sq. ft. The interim public plaza, coupled with the ground-level retail improvements, fulfills the “market” public plaza and would boost the ability for outdoor gatherings and seating (Sector Plan p. 86). These improvements would all be enhanced by planned landscape improvements along Crystal Drive that further beautify the street.

In order to achieve the aforementioned retail and plaza modifications, there have been minor changes to the GFA for both the 2450 Building and 2461 Building (See Plan Page A-000-A).

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional information.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kedrick N. Whitmore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "W".

Kedrick N. Whitmore
Enclosures