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## **VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL**

August 11, 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 – Resubmittal Letter of Intent -**  
Design Review Approval for Façade Renovation of 1691  
Michigan Avenue “The Lincoln”

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Dear Mr. Madan:

This firm represents Black Lion Investment Group, Inc. (collectively the “Applicant”), the master tenant 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<sup>1</sup> (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 existing office building and parking garage located at Property.

Property Description. The Property is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Michigan Avenue and 17<sup>th</sup> Street and is approximately 76,500 square feet in size. The Property fronts on Michigan Avenue, 17<sup>th</sup> 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”). The Property is improved with an existing six (6) story

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<sup>1</sup> The City is the owner of the Property. The Applicant is the master tenant under a ground lease from the City.

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").<sup>2</sup> 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<sup>3</sup> that contains 719 parking spaces. The design of the Lincoln features a rounded façade and parapet at the corner of Michigan Avenue and 17<sup>th</sup> Street and concrete eyebrows above the corner-facing windows. The attached garage provides ground floor commercial storefronts 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-tinted 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 includes replacement of the eyebrows above the corner-facing windows at 17<sup>th</sup> Street with a rounded awning at the ground level and planters on the levels above, treatment of the stucco façade with a limestone veneer, and addition of light sconces. In addition, the Applicant intends to add a proposed decorative metal cladding and accent lighting to the existing rounded parapet wall at the corner of the building.

With respect to the attached garage structure, the Applicant seeks to refinish the façade with the same limestone veneer and light sconces as the office building, as well as introduce an intricate custom metal perforated screen. The irregular pattern of planters is proposed to be replaced by a combination of limestone clad stucco and metal screen in a regular pattern that is cohesive with the design of the office building. At ground level, the Project proposes to retain the existing eyebrow and storefronts but accent with metal cladding that matches the color of the decorative metal screen proposed for the garage above.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> The parking structure satisfies the parking requirement of the uses within Lincoln Place and provides parking available for use by the general public.

The Applicant's intent is to transform the existing building from an overlooked and aging office building into a new category of office known as "Class X" that eclipses the outdated standards associated with Class A office space. The proposed building is intended to be a recognizably luxurious office building that compliments the character of Lincoln Road and 17<sup>th</sup> Street the as gateway to South Beach and Lincoln Road.

Design Updates. The Applicant appeared before the Design Review Board (the "DRB") on July 2, 2024, and obtained a continuance to allow additional time to refine the proposed design. As compared to the version of the Project that was presented to the DRB on July 2, 2024, the Applicant's proposes the following design updates:

- Refinement of the proposed cladding to the existing parapet wall at the corner of 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Michigan Avenue to reduce the amount of metallic cladding at the center portion of the parapet wall to further accentuate the prominence of the corner;
- The awnings above the ground level were replaced with planters at levels 2 through 5, and the planter at the roof level was removed;
- Replacement of the proposed long strip metallic light sconces with mid-sized light sconces cladded with natural travertine that compliments the façade veneer;
- The alignment of the limestone veneer has been modified to better compliment the existing pattern of windows;
- The planters on the garage façade are proposed to be removed and replaced with a regular pattern of limestone veneer and metal screening that compliments the façade of the office building;
- The proposed metal screening on the garage façade is proposed to be modified at various locations, including on the west elevation to wrap around the southeast corner of the building, the east elevation to allow a continuous horizontal band of stucco above the storefronts and the parking garage vehicular entrance, and reduced along the south elevation to allow better ventilation and additional natural light to enter the garage levels. On the south elevation, the metal cladding is included at the southeast and southwest corners to ensure that the interior of the garage levels are screened from view from Jefferson and Michigan Avenues.

These design updates respond directly to the comments made at the July 2, 2024 DRB meeting by making the Project more cohesive. Specifically, the design details of the building corner at 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Michigan Avenue are substantially refined, the light sconces are more consistent with the overall façade design, and the treatments to the ground floor storefront elevations have been clarified.

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 high-quality materials along the facades elevates the character to make it a more recognizable and attractive building along 17<sup>th</sup> Street. Accordingly, the Project is consistent with the Design Review Criteria.

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 dated City-owned commercial building in the heart of the City. The Project result in a building that is more contemporary and attractive than the current design, improving its relationship with the neighborhood. We look forward to your favorable review and 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.