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## **VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL**

September 8, 2024

Rogelio A. Madan, AICP  
Development and Resiliency Officer  
City of Miami Beach  
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor  
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

RE: **DRB24-1039** - Design Review Approval for Proposed  
Valet Area at 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 approval of a proposed new valet pick up/drop off area on the east side of the Property. Notably, the Property is the subject of the recently approved application under DRB File No. DRB24-1009. This application furthers the design intent of the recently approved application.

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-

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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) 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").<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 is contemporary with 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 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 repurpose the existing vacant drive through area into a new valet pick up and drop off area on the east side of the building to create an elegant arrival sequence for office tenants and visitors. The existing area consists only of gray painted concrete and has been vacant for several years. The east façade of the building at the ground level is a seldom used back door to the Lincoln's main lobby. The lack of lighting or active use of the space makes it vulnerable to vagrants to the detriment of the Property and the surrounding neighborhood.

The Applicant intends to transform the existing drive through space on the east side of the building to a new luxurious main entrance improved with high quality materials and finishes. The design includes two drive aisles accessible from 17<sup>th</sup> Street, and existing onto Lincoln Court. On the east side of the drive aisles, between the Property and the adjacent residential condominium building, the Applicant proposes a series vertical water features and split-face stone cladded walls to buffer the valet area from the adjacent residential neighbors. Throughout the valet area, the Applicant proposes travertine cladding, decorative pavers, and three new arch shaped window openings on the ground

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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 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.

floor façade of the building, as well as building identification signage and lighting that compliments the attractive new valet area.

The Applicant's vision is for the Lincoln to become an office building in a class of its own, with superior finishes and services to that of any other office building in the City. The proposed valet area is essential to this vision as it provides both the valet service necessary for an office building of this caliber, while also creating an elegant and memorable entrance sequence to the building.

Design Review Criteria. The application is consistent with the City's design review criteria codified in Section 2.5.3.1 of the City's Resiliency Code. Below is each relevant criterion and the application's consistency with all of the standards.

- a. The existing and proposed conditions of the lot, including but not necessarily limited to topography, vegetation, trees, drainage, and waterways.**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- b. The location of all existing and proposed buildings, drives, parking spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, drainage facilities, utility services, landscaping structures, signs, and lighting and screening devices.**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- c. The dimensions of all buildings, structures, setbacks, parking spaces, floor area ratio, height, lot coverage and any other information that may be reasonably necessary to determine compliance with the requirements of the underlying zoning district, and any applicable overlays, for a particular application or project.**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- d. The color, design, selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of exterior building surfaces and primary public interior areas for developments requiring a building permit in areas of the city identified in section 2.5.3.2.**

The Applicant has selected high quality materials and finishes for the project.

- e. The proposed site plan, and the location, appearance and design of new and existing buildings and structures are in conformity with the standards of this article and other applicable ordinances, architectural and design guidelines as adopted and amended periodically by the design review board and historic preservation board and all pertinent master plans.**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The site plan complies with the standards of the City Resiliency Code.

- f. The proposed structure, or additions or modifications to an existing structure, indicates a sensitivity to and is compatible with the environment and adjacent structures, and enhances the appearance of the surrounding properties.**

The proposed modifications are sensitive and compatible with the surrounding built environment, and enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.

- g. The design and layout of the proposed site plan, as well as all new and existing buildings shall be reviewed so as to provide an efficient arrangement of land uses. Particular attention shall be given to safety, crime prevention and fire protection, relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, impact on contiguous and adjacent buildings and lands, pedestrian sight lines and view corridors.**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The project is repurposing the existing drive through as an attractive valet circulation area and main entrance. The proposed improvements buffer the activities of the office building from the adjacent residential building, improving the relationship of the Property with the surrounding neighborhood.

- h. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic movement within and adjacent to the site shall be reviewed to ensure that clearly defined, segregated pedestrian access to the site and all buildings is provided for and that all parking spaces are usable and are safety and conveniently arranged; pedestrian furniture and bike racks shall be considered. Access to the site from adjacent roads shall be designed so as to interfere as little as possible with**

**traffic flow on these roads and to permit vehicles a rapid and safe ingress and egress to the site.**

The proposed plan includes clearly defined, segregated pedestrian and vehicular access. Pedestrian access occurs primary from the Michigan Avenue entrance, while vehicular ingress will occur primarily through the new valet area on the east side of the building. The valet circulation area is being designed with sufficient depth and capacity to prevent queuing into the adjacent 17<sup>th</sup> Street right of way.

- i. Lighting shall be reviewed to ensure safe movement of persons and vehicles and reflection on public property for security purposes and to minimize glare and reflection on adjacent properties. Lighting shall be reviewed to assure that it enhances the appearance of structures at night.**

The plan is in compliance. The project lighting has been designed to limit glare on adjacent properties.

- j. Landscape and paving materials shall be reviewed to ensure an adequate relationship with and enhancement of the overall site plan design.**

Landscaping and paving materials are designed to compliment and enhance the overall site design.

- k. Buffering materials shall be reviewed to ensure that headlights of vehicles, noise, and light from structures are adequately shielded from public view, adjacent properties and pedestrian areas.**

The plan is in compliance. The design of the project includes solid walls that buffer noise and light from the proposed valet area.

- l. The proposed structure has an orientation and massing which is sensitive to and compatible with the building site and surrounding area and which creates or maintains important view corridor(s).**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- m. The building has, where feasible, space in that part of the ground floor fronting a street or streets which is to be occupied for residential or**

**commercial uses; likewise, the upper floors of the pedestal portion of the proposed building fronting a street, or streets shall have residential or commercial spaces, shall have the appearance of being a residential or commercial space or shall have an architectural treatment which shall buffer the appearance of the parking structure from the surrounding area and is integrated with the overall appearance of the project.**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- n. The building shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.**

The existing building and rooftop screening is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- o. An addition on a building site shall be designed, sited and massed in a manner which is sensitive to and compatible with the existing improvement(s).**

This criterion is inapplicable to this application.

- p. All portions of a project fronting a street or sidewalk shall incorporate an architecturally appropriate amount of transparency at the first level in order to achieve pedestrian compatibility and adequate visual interest.**

The existing building is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- q. The location, design, screening and buffering of all required service bays, delivery bays, trash and refuse receptacles, as well as trash rooms shall be arranged so as to have a minimal impact on adjacent properties**

The existing building, including back of house areas, is proposed to remain. The project is in compliance.

- r. In addition to the foregoing criteria, section 104-6 (t) the General Ordinances shall apply to the design review board's review of any proposal to place, construct, modify or maintain a wireless communications facility**

**or other over the air radio transmission or radio reception facility in the public rights-of-way.**

This criterion is inapplicable to this application.

**s. The structure and site comply with the sea level rise and resiliency review criteria in chapter 7, article I, as applicable.**

See below analysis.

Cost Estimate. The estimated cost of the project is \$500,000.00.

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 introduces pavers in lieu of concrete, which will reduce heat island effects on-site.

Conclusion. Granting this Design Review approval will permit the Applicant to introduce an attractive valet area accessible and visible from 17<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposed improvements 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 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.