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July 10, 2023

**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

Thomas Mooney, Director
Planning Department
City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness for Lincoln Road East of Collins Avenue, Beach Access, and Beach Walk Improvements (HPB23-0575)

Dear Tom:

This firm represents of Di Lido Beach Commercial Lessor, LLC, Di Lido Beach Commercial, LLC, Di Lido Beach Resort, LLC, Di Lido Beach Resort Land, LLC, and Sobe Sky Development, LLC (collectively the "Applicant"), the owners and developers of 1 Lincoln Road and 1669 Collins Avenue (the "Private Property"). The Private Property is currently developed with the Ritz Carlton South Beach hotel. Please consider this letter the Applicant's letter of intent in support of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposed public/private development plan that will bring significant improvements to the public realm of Lincoln Road east of Collins Avenue, the beach access walk, and the Beach Walk. This application is a companion application to HPB23-0574, which proposes changes to the Ritz Carlton and Sagamore parcels.

Description of the Subject Property. The property that is the subject of the instant application includes the Private Property, most notably the north half of the Lincoln Road east of Collins Avenue (vacated over twenty years ago) and the beach access easement that is located on the southeast corner of the site, as well as the City right of way in the south half of Lincoln Road and the Beach Walk area.

The south side of Lincoln Road is developed with the large "Decoplage" mixed-use condominium building. The land to the west across Collins Avenue is developed with commercial uses.

Existing Development in the Public Realm. The pedestrian access from Collins Avenue to the public beach was last significantly improved at the time of the Ritz Carlton's major renovation approximately twenty (20) years ago. It has become evident in recent years that the current access is awkward and unattractive. One of South Beach's premiere beach entrances – located along the most important pedestrian routes in the City – is one of the City's least attractive for residents and visitors.

Public/Private Project. The instant application is an essential element in a public/private redevelopment plan designed to significantly improve Lincoln Road east of Collins Avenue, the beach access, and the Beach Walk area.

The project has three main components:

1. First, the Applicant has agreed to assume maintenance of the existing Lincoln Road, beach access, and Beach Walk, which currently are the City's obligations.
2. Second, the Applicant has proposed a private redevelopment plan, which will be focused on adding residential uses to the Private Property, not increasing hotel room count. These are improvements are the subject of a companion HPB application (HPB23-0574)
3. Third, as part of this application, the Applicant has proposed significant new pedestrian focused improvements to the public realm of Lincoln Road, the beach access on the Property, and the Beach Walk. These improvements will also be the subject of an agreement to be reviewed by the City Commission. The City Commission has approved the term sheet for this work.

Proposed Public Realm Development. The proposed public realm redevelopment includes the following scope:

1. Pedestrian and vehicular access changes to both sides of Lincoln Road to maximize the pedestrian experience and safety while retaining full vehicular access.
2. The installation of a new gateway element at the street end.

3. Improvements to the beach access walk, including the widening of the walkway to improve visibility.
4. The introduction of new open space and landscaping on the Beach Walk.

Plan Review Standards. Below are the standards applied by your Department and the Historic Preservation Board as well as the status of the proposed development with each criterion:

a. 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 provided plans provide the necessary details.*

b. 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 provided plans provide the necessary details.*

c. The color, design, surface finishes and selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of the exterior of all buildings and structures and primary public interior areas for developments requiring a building permit in areas of the city identified in section 118-503.

*The provided plans provide the necessary details.*

d. The color, design, surface finishes and selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of the exterior of all buildings and structures and primary public interior areas for developments requiring a building permit in areas of the city identified in section 118-503.

*The provided plans provide the necessary details.*

e. The proposed structure, and/or additions to an existing structure is appropriate to and compatible with the environment and adjacent structures, and enhances the appearance of the surrounding properties, or the purposes for which the district was created.

*Care has been taken in the design of the proposed development to be compatible as possible with the surrounding development.*

f. The design and layout of the proposed site plan, as well as all new and existing buildings and public interior spaces 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 preserving historic character of the neighborhood and district, contiguous and adjacent buildings and lands, pedestrian sight lines and view corridors.

*The proposed improvements to the public realm will significantly improve the pedestrian experience – with a focus towards creating an attractive and safe pedestrian access to the public beach.*

g. 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 any driveways and parking spaces are usable, safely and conveniently arranged and have a minimal impact on pedestrian circulation throughout the site. Access to the site from adjacent roads shall be designed so as to interfere as little as possible with vehicular traffic flow on these roads and pedestrian movement onto and within the site, as well as permit both pedestrians and vehicles a safe ingress and egress to the site.

*An important element of the instant application is to improve the pedestrian access to and from the beach. Care has been taken to maximize pedestrian safety and comfort while retaining vehicular access – including access for adjacent residents of the Decoplage, hotel patrons, loading, and trash vehicles.*

h. 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 and consistent with a city master plan, where applicable.

*Lighting improvements have proposed to benefit public security.*

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

*New landscaping has been designed to enhance the pedestrian experience.*

j. 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.

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

k. Any proposed new structure shall have 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).

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

l. All buildings shall have, to the greatest extent possible, space in that part of the ground floor fronting a sidewalk, 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 sidewalk street, or streets shall have residential or commercial spaces, or shall have the appearance of being a residential or commercial space or shall have an architectural treatment which shall buffer the appearance of a parking structure from the surrounding area and is integrated with the overall appearance of the project.

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

m. All buildings shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

n. Any 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.*

o. All portions of a project fronting a street or sidewalk shall incorporate of transparency at the first level necessary to achieve pedestrian compatibility.

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

p. 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 proposed plan will significantly improve the buffering of the Ritz Carlton loading and service area from the public and neighboring parcels.*

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency. Section 133-50(a) of the Land Development establishes review criteria for sea level rise and resiliency that must be considered as part of the review process for board orders. The following is an analysis of the request based upon these criteria:

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

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

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

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

3. Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.

*This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

4. Resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native, or Florida-friendly plants) shall be provided, in accordance with chapter 126 of the city Code.

*The landscape plan is resilient as it is comprised of native and Florida-friendly plants appropriate for the area.*

5. The project applicant shall consider the 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. The applicant shall also specifically study the land elevation of the subject property and the elevation of surrounding properties.

   *The project has been designed with sea level rise in mind.*

6. The ground floor, driveways, and garage ramping for new construction shall be adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-way and adjacent land, and shall provide sufficient height and space to ensure that the entry ways and exits can be modified to accommodate a higher street height of up to three additional feet in height.

   *This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

7. As applicable to all new construction, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation. All redevelopment projects shall, whenever practicable and economically reasonable, include the relocation of all critical mechanical and electrical systems to a location above base flood elevation.

   *This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

8. Existing buildings shall, wherever reasonably feasible and economically appropriate, be elevated up to base flood elevation, plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard.

   *This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

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 54 of the city Code.

   *This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

10. As applicable to all new construction, stormwater retention systems shall be provided.

    *This criterion is inapplicable to this application.*

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

    *The project can accommodate cool pavement where possible.*

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

    *The project has been designed to avoid the heat island effect by maximizing landscaped areas.*

Conclusion. We are excited to bring forward the first major set of improvements to this area of the City in over twenty (20) years. The proposed public/private improvements will significantly improve the pedestrian experience in one of the City's major beach access points in South Beach. We look forward to your favorable recommendation. If you have any questions or comments, please call me at 305-377-6229.

Sincerely,

Graham Penn