



WALSH COLUCCI
LUBELEY & WALSH PC

January 13, 2023

Via Permit Arlington

Ms. Arlova Vonhm, Zoning Administrator
Arlington County Zoning Division
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1000
Arlington, Virginia 22201

**Re: Statement of Justification
Request for Administrative Regulation 4.1 Site Plan
Applicant: MR 1601 Fairfax Drive Property LLC (c/o Monument Realty)
Property: 1601 Fairfax Drive (RPC #17-027-008)**

Dear Ms. Vonhm:

On behalf of the above-referenced Applicant, please accept this statement of support for an Administrative Regulation 4.1 Site Plan (“4.1 Site Plan”) for the Property. As detailed below, the Applicant proposes to replace the existing 65-year old motel building and a surface parking lot with a new mid-rise multifamily residential building and below-grade parking.

The Applicant, a special-purpose entity affiliated with Monument Realty, is the contract purchaser of the Property. 1601 Fairfax Drive, L.L.C., a special-purpose entity affiliated with JBG Smith, owns the Property. Both the Applicant and the property owner have consented to this application.

Property Background

The Property consists of one parcel of record containing approximately 20,050 square feet located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Fairfax Drive and N. Queen Street in the Radnor/Fort Myer Heights neighborhood. The Property is currently improved with a surface parking lot and the now vacant three-story Inn of Rosslyn motel building, which was formerly known as the Motel 50 and was constructed in 1957. The Property is zoned to the RA6-15 Multiple-family Dwelling District pursuant to §6.5 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance (the “Zoning Ordinance”).

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The General Land Use Plan (“GLUP”) designates the Property as “Medium” Residential and subject to the Fort Myer Heights North Plan (“Plan”) adopted by the Arlington County Board in September 2008, which makes it eligible to redevelop in accordance with the recommendations of the Plan and the provisions of the Fort Myer Heights North Special District identified in Section 9.3 of the Zoning Ordinance. This district permits, with a 4.1 Site Plan approval, building heights up to 12 stories and 125 feet and a 3.24 floor area ratio (“FAR”) or higher if the proposed development is consistent with the goals, design guidelines, and building height maximums of the Plan, as discussed below. It also requires that 20 percent of the gross floor area (“GFA”) above the GLUP maximum of a 1.65 FAR be designated as on-site committed affordable units.

The Property is located within Block 6 of the Plan’s Revitalization Area and within the Boulevard Zone, which recommends re-development of the Property with a multifamily residential building up to 12 stories or 125 feet in height with optional retail along Fairfax Boulevard. The Plan further recommends that new development be oriented toward and have its main entrance on Fairfax Drive, locate loading and parking access off Queen Street, and have architecture consistent with the existing neighborhood character.

The Plan does not call for historic preservation of any kind for the existing motel. The Historic Resources Inventory (“HRI”), which was adopted by the County Board in 2011 and three years after the adoption of the Plan, designates the existing motel in the top one-third of the “Important” category. The “Important” properties are those which are central to the County’s history, but less distinctive than the next highest tier, “Essential” properties, and/or have less physical integrity than “Essential” properties.

Proposal

The Applicant proposes to demolish the existing motel and construct an eight-story residential building containing up to 141 units and approximately 126,129 square feet of residential GFA at a 6.11 FAR. While the Plan permits, but does not require, retail uses along Fairfax Drive, no retail uses are proposed with this project given the topography of the site along Fairfax Drive and lack of sufficient pedestrian traffic to support retail uses. The maximum building height will be approximately 79.83 feet. The Applicant also proposes to vacate approximately 595 square feet of County-owned right-of-way along Fairfax Drive, resulting in a total site area for density purposes of 20,645 square feet.

Parking will be provided in a two level below-grade garage containing approximately 88 parking spaces at a ratio of 0.62 spaces per unit. This ratio is consistent with the County’s residential parking guidelines, which recommend a minimum ratio between 0.2 and 0.4 spaces per unit. Consistent with the Plan’s guidelines, the lobby entrance is provided on Fairfax Drive and the loading and parking entrance is located on Queen Street.

Further, in accordance with the Plan’s Design Guidelines, the architecture of the proposed building will compliment and draw from the architecture of the existing building and the characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed building design is partly influenced by the existing distinctive bold “50” sign of the Inn of Rosslyn. The main building façade facing

Fairfax Drive and Route 50 mimics the “50” sign with two portions forming strong planes which cantilever over the building edges similar to how the “50” sign cantilevers over the edge of the motel building. These masonry planes are offset by a lighter material that will resemble wood and will be visible to individuals approaching the building from the east, west, or driving along Fairfax Drive and Route 50. This selection of building materials is appropriate for the neighborhood, which predominately features masonry, while also introducing a biophilic design with the wood-like paneling.

The two cantilevered plains of the main façade shelter balconies at the southeast corners of the proposed building which feature V-shaped pickets mimicking the zig-zag pattern of the existing building’s railings. The existing “50” sign will be further honored in an outline of the sign itself and recreation of the sign’s metal support. This feature will be located above the proposed building’s lobby and in front of the second-floor outdoor terrace connected to the building lounge.

Additionally, the proposed project meets the following Zoning Ordinance requirements and the Plan recommendations in the following ways:

- This project complies with the recommendation to redevelop the Property with a new multifamily residential building;
- The proposed building height complies with the Plan and Zoning Ordinance maximum height of 12 stories or 125 feet and with the massing of eight stories shown in the illustrative plan;
- The proposed building is oriented toward Fairfax Drive with the main entrance located mid-block along Fairfax Drive;
- The proposed parking and loading access off Queen Street complies with the Plan’s recommendation that parking and loading be located on side streets;
- The proposed building complies with the Plan’s recommendation for below-grade parking;
- The proposed architectural design is in keeping with the existing neighborhood
- The proposed architectural design makes reference to the architecture of the current motel; and
- The proposed project will implement the recommended streetscape improvements, as they may be modified through discussions with the Virginia Department of Transportation and County staff.

Proposed Modifications & Density Exclusions

The Zoning Ordinance permits the County Board to modify certain regulations for 4.1 Site Plans. With this application, the Applicant requests the following Zoning Ordinance modifications:

- Pursuant to § 15.5.7.A.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant requests 7,225.75 square feet of bonus density at the 0.35 FAR level for LEED Gold in accordance with Arlington County's recently-adopted *Green Building New Construction Program*;
- Pursuant to §§ 9.3.1 and 15.5.5 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant requests an additional 52,013.45 square feet of bonus density (inclusive of GFA exclusions, discussed below) in consideration for community benefits, to include the provision of committed affordable housing units;
- Pursuant to § 15.5.7.A of the Zoning Ordinance, and consistent with Arlington County policies, the Applicant requests a reduced parking ratio from one space per dwelling unit to 0.62 spaces per dwelling unit due to the Property's proximity to a variety of public transit options (e.g., the Courthouse Metrorail station, Metrobus, and ART bus stops). The proposed parking reduction will allow the Applicant to construct a more transit-oriented development with reduced vehicular traffic to the site;
- Pursuant to § 15.5.7.A of the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant requests an increased compact parking ratio from 15 percent to 25 percent;
- Pursuant to § 15.5.7.A of the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant requests modifications of required vision triangles, lot coverage, and setbacks; and
- All other modifications necessary to achieve the proposed development.

The Applicant proposes 1,987 square feet of exclusions from GFA, as follows:

- A total of 1,730 square feet of below grade utility rooms and amenity areas;
- A total of 257 square feet of open mechanical and air shafts; and
- All other exclusions necessary to achieve the proposed development.

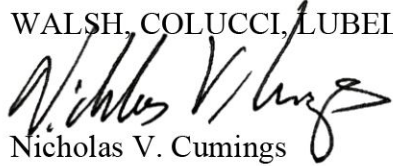
Summary

The Applicant's proposed development represents a thoughtful design in acknowledgment of the Plan recommendations and County goals. The Proposed building will provide new residential units in a high-quality architectural building within a half-mile from two Metrorail stations and in walking distance to many transit options and retail opportunities.

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

Very truly yours,

WALSH, COLUCCI, LUBELEY & WALSH, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicholas V. Cumings". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "N".

Nicholas V. Cumings

cc: Josh Olsen, Monument Realty
Jasna Bijelic, LEED AP BD+C, DCS Design
Jeff Kreps, PLA / ASLA, VIKA Virginia, LLC
Lauren G. Riley, Esq., Walsh Colucci