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Lexington-Fayette Urban Co. Planning Commission
200 East Main Street, Suite 700
Lexington, KY 40507

RE: MAR-21-00018, 2717 Flora Fina Street Zoning & Conditional Use request

On behalf of Flora Investments LLC, we would like submit a rezoning application approximately 1.035 acres from a Professional Office (P-1) zone to a Commercial Center (B-6p) zone to construct a small-tenant shopping and professional office development on the property. A portion, approximately half of the property will remain (P-1) zone and as a requested conditional use serve to support open space, landscaping and parking for the proposed B-6p building development. We submit that this proposal is in accord with the adopted Imagine Lexington 2018 Comprehensive Plan and request approval of the zoning request.

The subject property has been vacant and undeveloped since a May 2003 Sir Barton Office Park zone change from agricultural to a professional office project (P-1) zone. To the south of the site, there is a B-6p development – Burlington Clothing store. To the east contains the larger regional shopping center properties (Hamburg Pavilion) and Regal Movie theatres, to the north is Old Rosebud Road professional office developments (3-story buildings with office units) and Longship truck logistics office. To the west, across Sir Barton Way are higher density residential, apartment homes at two (2) locations on approximately 28 acres. The site is within the Hamburg Place regional multi-zone land use.

Our belief is that the planned development is appropriate for this site and fits within the retail and office development fabric to spur more pedestrian movement and interconnectivity at Hamburg Place. A few areas in Hamburg Pavilion and Sir Barton Office Park have pavement but does not have defined areas for pedestrian movement in terms of sidewalks and pavement marking. The proposed site plan will allow for better movement between Star Shoot Parkway and Old Rosebud Road and deflects from the straight line walled area of the Regal IMAX and 16-screen multi-plex that parallels this site.

This proposal meets many Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives further conforms with the relevant Placebuilder items.

Theme A, Growing Successful Neighborhoods

Goal 2: Support Infill & Redevelopment Throughout The Urban Service Area as a Strategic Component Of Growth.

Objective a. Identify areas of opportunity for infill, redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and mixed-use development.

Objective b. Respect the context & design features of areas surrounding development projects and develop design standards and guidelines to ensure compatibility with existing urban form

Theme C, Creating Jobs and Prosperity

Goal 1: Support & Showcase Local Assets to Further The Creation of a Variety Of Jobs.

Objective a. Strengthen efforts to develop a variety of job opportunities that lead to prosperity for all.

The Applicant's project will create jobs and provide a job opportunity within a short walking distance to residential communities and within the Hamburg Place transit route. The Applicant acknowledges that a service-related job with this project will develop job opportunities for those with less education, "allowing upward mobility for lower income residents" (Theme C, Diversity Policy 2).

Objective d. Provide entertainment and other quality of life opportunities that attract young, and culturally diverse professionals, and a work force of all ages and talents to Lexington.

A restaurant is planned with the small shopping area tenant and this could be a local connected spot for the nearby residential community and abundant Lexington college student population.

Theme D, Improving a Desirable Community

Goal 1: Work to Achieve an Effective and Comprehensive Transportation System

Objective c: Concentrate efforts to enhance mass transit along our corridors in order to facilitate better service for our growing population, as well as efficiencies in our transit system.

The existing Lextran Hamburg Place Route 10 runs northbound along Sir Barton Way and bus shelter is at the 2352 / 2376 Sir Barton Way property line and within a few hundred feet of the subject property along mainly existing sidewalks on Flora Fina Street. Future sidewalks with the planned development can help link Star Shoot Parkway to Old Rosebud Road for a better walkable path, connection for professional office tenants to the Hamburg Pavilion retail area.

Attached to this document is a color-coded reflection that addresses the design criteria listed in the corresponding Placebuilder category. Items highlighted in green are represented graphically on the preliminary development plan, items in yellow are addressed in this letter, and items highlighted in orange we do not believe are applicable to the planned development.

Standards That Are Applicable

SITE DESIGN, BUILDING FORM, & LOCATION

A-DS4-2 The new construction should be set at an appropriate scale and respect the context of neighboring retail and professional office structures and fit within the context with Imagine Lexington regional center policies and Placebuilder priorities. Planned site will have a 250 foot setback from the four lane boulevard, collector street Sir Barton Way. A small retail and professional office multi-tenant two (2) story building helps step down, transition from the Regal cinemas building to the existing medium density residential communities along Sir Barton Way.

A-DS5-3 Building orientation toward Sir Barton Way and Flora Fina Street should maximize connections with the surrounding area and create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. The area between Star Shoot Parkway and Old Rosebud Road has lacked an inviting walkable path between the established Hamburg Pavilion and professional office buildings. A new retail building at 2717 Flora Fina Street could provide a needed boost and connection.

A-DS5-4 Development should provide a pedestrian-oriented and activated ground level. A planned restaurant with seasonal outdoor patio can engage the public and shops will be at a pedestrian rather than vehicle scale. The site helps incorporate walkable commercial and professional office uses for the Star Shoot Parkway, Old Rosebud Road and Sir Barton Way collector streets.

A-DS7-1 Parking should be oriented to the interior or rear of the property for non-residential or multi-family developments.

A-DS7-2 The property is adjacent to a few asphalt parking areas and includes previous required landscape screening, trees. A two (2) story building will be built according to Hamburg Place design guidelines and be compatible to adjacent land uses. This criteria is also represented graphically on our preliminary development plan.

C-L17-1 Development aids safe access within the Hamburg Place mixed-use neighborhood with connections to employment, businesses, shopping and entertainment.

C-PS10-3 New development overparking is avoided for the planned site and considers the Zoning Regulations Articles 8, 12, 16, 18 and 20 on land use compatibility with landscaping, open space and parking. If additional parking is needed in the future, adjacent professional office parking spaces could be sought in terms of a shared use agreement.

D-PL7-1 On behalf of the Applicant and our Client, the adjacent property owners stakeholders are being notified individually by mail, phone, e-mail and through a future Zoom meeting. Stakeholders / adjacent property owners within the 500 foot notification radius have been identified and questions / answers opportunities will be continued in virtual meetings and / or phone conversations. The closest residential area is on the west side of Sir Barton Way Road with larger scale residential housing – Hamburg Farms (155 townhome / condominiums and 213 apartments) and the Retreat at Hamburg Place (150 apartments).

E-GR9-4 Planned retail development site takes an underutilized two (2) acre property that has been zoned professional office (P-1) since May 2003 and transforms the space into a small multi-tenant building and serve a smaller scale retail with a restaurant and professional office space. The planned commercial continues the Hamburg Pavilion lifestyle shops, main street theme on 10.35 acres between Star Shoot Parkway and Vendor Way constructed in the early 2000's.

E-GR10-2 The planned development should provide walkable service from the residential apartment communities, adjacent professional office buildings and existing commercial uses.

TRANSPORTATION & PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

A-DS1-1 Lextran Hamburg Place Route 10 bus shelter on Sir Barton Way is established and with a 525 foot walking distance to the 2717 Flora Fina subject property.

A-DS1-2 A direct link on Flora Fina Street existing and future sidewalk to Lextran Route 10 bus shelter will be provided.

A-DS5-1 City of Lexington government staff including Planning, Bike-Pedestrian Planner, Traffic Engineering and the Area MPO Transportation Planners will be consulted on multimodal infrastructure improvements and how to better reach all users.

D-C01-1 Site design should include multimodal facilities that reflect and promote the commercial center. Lexington government expertise will be relied in this area to expand and improve how more than vehicle transportation can be accommodated.

D-CO2-1 Building entry and exit points and parking connections will comply with ADA and Kentucky building code to ensure safe facilities for all users and transportation modes.

D-CO2-2 Entry ramps and handicap parking spaces will work within the ADA requirements to accommodate those with disabilities. Paths within and outside the building should consider wheelchair, scooters and other forms of transportation.

GREENSPACE & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

B-PR7-2 The Applicant is incorporating trees on the site; provided, this is a new development / infill project with Hamburg Place. A proposed new building with smaller retail and professional office tenants that fit within the B-6p zone. This criteria is also represented graphically on our preliminary development plan.

B-PR7-3 The Applicant is improving tree canopy on the site. This criteria is also represented graphically on our preliminary development plan.

B-RE1-1 The project is incorporating street trees. This criteria is also represented graphically on our preliminary development plan.

Standards Not Applicable

SITE DESIGN, BUILDING FORM, & LOCATION

A-DS7-3 Parking structure is not proposed with this development plan.

A-DS8-1 At the individual street level, medium density housing types should be interspersed with single-family detached units and should be context sensitive. Housing is not proposed.

A-DS10-1 Residential land use is not a part of our preliminary development plan.

A-DS11-1 Common public uses that serve as neighborhood focal points, such as parks and schools, should be on single loaded streets. A park / school is not proposed.

D-DN1-1 High density residential development (HR) is not proposed on development plan.

A-DN2-1 Infill residential should aim to increase density. Residential is not planned on site.

A-DN2-2 Development should minimize significant contrasts in scale, massing and design, particularly along the edges of historic areas and neighborhoods. (D-PL9, E-GR6) No proposed residential units for the site.

A-DN3-2 Development should incorporate residential units in commercial centers with context sensitive design. The two (2) acre project does not include residential at the preliminary stages of a zoning request and has been considered by the owner / applicant.

A-EQ3-1 Development should create context sensitive transitions between intense corridor development and existing neighborhoods. Boulevard 4-lane street Sir Barton Way with grass median separates commercial center, professional office zones from residential communities.

A-EQ7-1 There are no proposed schools for the site.

B-PR9-1 There are no environmentally sensitive areas on the site.

B-SU11-1 Preliminary plan at this time, green infrastructure conversation is needed.

C-DI1-1 The site development hasn't considered flexible zoning options at this stage.

C-DI5-1 In Opportunity Zones with a clearly defined local context, consider adaptive reuse to enhance the existing context. Subject property does not qualify as an opportunity zone.

C-LI2-2 There are no known potential or existing gateways on the site.

C-LI2-3 There are no known potential or existing gateways on the site.

C-LI2-4 There are no historic turnpikes, scenic byways, turnpikes, and other scenic roads adjacent to the site.

C-L16-1 Developments should incorporate multi-family housing and walkable commercial uses into development along arterials/corridors. Site does not include housing at this time.

C-PS9-2 No current office space on the site.

C-PS10-2 If needed in the future, shared and flexible parking option will be considered.

D-PL9-1 No historical structures are on the site.

D-PL10-1 The area may not qualify as a prominent location for public art easement.

D-SP3-1 Adequate easements for infrastructure exist in Hamburg Place.

D-SP3-2 There are no proposed cellular tower antennae on the site.

D-SP9-1 There are no proposed housing units on the site.

E-GR4-1 No structures are being removed from the site.

E-GR5-1 No structures are being removed from the site.

E-GR9-1 Planned site does not include residential components.

E-GR10-3 The Applicant is not proposing any common space for the building.

TRANSPORTATION & PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

A-DS5-2 Flora Fina is not a new roadway / access easement, this may prove a vertical edge with the project building and landscaping, trees added with project.

A-DS10-2 This is a new development and may provide multimodal focal points, further discussion is needed at a future final development plan stage.

A-DS13-1 There are no stub streets at the property.

A-EQ3-2 The development is not considered on a corridor and within a regional center.

A-EQ7-2 No healthcare or social services facilities are proposed for the site at this time.

B-SU4-1 A passive greenway / floodplain is located on the west side of Sir Barton Way and adjacent to the Retreat at Hamburg Place Apartments, within walking distance to the site.

C-PS10-1 Shared and flexible parking option could be considered at a future time.

D-CO4-2 No new roadways are proposed, capacity on existing roadways.

D-CO4-3 Street pattern and design should consider site topography and minimize grading where possible. Building entries and site grading will be further analyzed.

D-CO5-1 No new streets are proposed for this site, traffic calming will be considered.

D-SP1-3 There are no proposed schools for the site, existing sidewalks in the area.

E-ST3-1 Proposed development is not on a major corridor for park and ride options.

GREENSPACE & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

A-DS4-3 The site is a vacant, un-developed property with unremarkable natural features.

A-EQ7-3 The parking area proposed could serve as a future popup community open space.

B-PR2-1 There are no environmentally sensitive areas on the site.

B-PR2-2 No portion of the site is in a floodplain.

B-PR2-3 No portion of the site is in a floodplain.

B-PR7-1 No portion of the site has a greenway, tree stand, or stream corridors.

B-RE2-1 Unsure how green infrastructure could connect to the greenspace network.

D-SP2-1 There are no school sites.

D-SP2-2 There are no school sites.

E-GR3-1 Existing sidewalks along the roadways could lead to safe pedestrian crossings at Star Shoot Parkway and Old Rosebud Road signalized intersections to the greenway west of Sir Barton Way and within the West Wind neighborhood.

E-GR3-2 There are no unique geographic features on the site.

Proposed Conditional Use

A portion of the 2717 Flora Fina Street portion will remain professional office (P-1) and we would like to submit a Zoning Regulations conditional use permit request relating to Section 8-15 (d) (2) to allow a parking lot in the remnant (P-1) zoned property to serve the planned two (2) story commercial and office building.

Granting the conditional use will not adversely impact public health, safety and welfare. The general P-1 zoned character will be maintained with adjoining properties and allows a reasonable use of property that has been undeveloped since 2003. Shared retail and office parking will be screened appropriately and within the Zoning Regulations requirements. Strict application of the Zoning Regulations would deprive the owner / applicant reasonable use of land and create an unnecessary hardship.

The zoning amendment and conditional use request provides a development opportunity with mixed land use and increased density as intended in the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment (ZOTA) 2017-8 / Ordinance-005-2018. This planned development encourages walkability through pedestrian connections and accessible transit facilities (Lextran Route 10 bus shelter) is available on Sir Barton Way approximately 500 feet from the subject property. The proposed land use should assist in creating a variety of employment and supports the Imagine Lexington Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you on the consideration, we appreciate the review -

Vision Engineering

MSM/SMM/MBC/JAH