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April 20, 2021

Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair
and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: 8015 Old Georgetown Road; Sketch Plan Amendment No. 32019010A (“Sketch Plan”),
Site Plan Amendment No. 82020013A (“Site Plan”), and Preliminary Plan Amendment
No. 12016022B (“Preliminary Plan”)

Dear Chairman Anderson and Members of the Planning Board:

On behalf of our client, JLB Realty, LLC (“JLB”), the applicant for the above-referenced applications, the purpose of this letter is to request amendments to the Sketch Plan, Site Plan and Preliminary Plan to increase the approved maximum commercial density from 0 to 82,270 square feet, including up to 76,270 square feet of live/work uses, comprised of up to 73 live/ work units, and up to 6,000 square feet of shared commercial working space. The approved maximum density of 316,500 will remain unchanged, and the requested Bethesda Overlay Zone density will be reduced from 124,536 to 42,266 square feet.

The Sketch Plan, approved on September 16, 2019, permits the redevelopment of the 2.5 acre property generally located at 8011 and 8015 Old Georgetown Road in Bethesda (the “Property”) with up to 320,000 square feet of residential uses (the “Project”). The Site Plan and Preliminary Plan for the Project were approved on August 17, 2020 and slightly reduced the Project’s density to 316,500 square feet, comprised of up to 297 residential units. During the design of the Project in 2019 and early 2020, prior to the current pandemic, JLB spent a significant amount of time planning the amenity spaces for the Project. For inspiration, the JLB team traveled to New York to identify emerging trends, and found the planned spaces in New York were reflective of many of the coffee shops and coworking spaces in Bethesda and around the region: large tables with comfy couches, strangers working closely together and often chatting or sharing ideas. JLB decided to integrate this concept into its building, and the plans approved in 2020 show within the Project’s amenity space a central fireplace with large seating groups and the creation of areas where residents could congregate and form an identity for the Project through its communal seating and shared open space.

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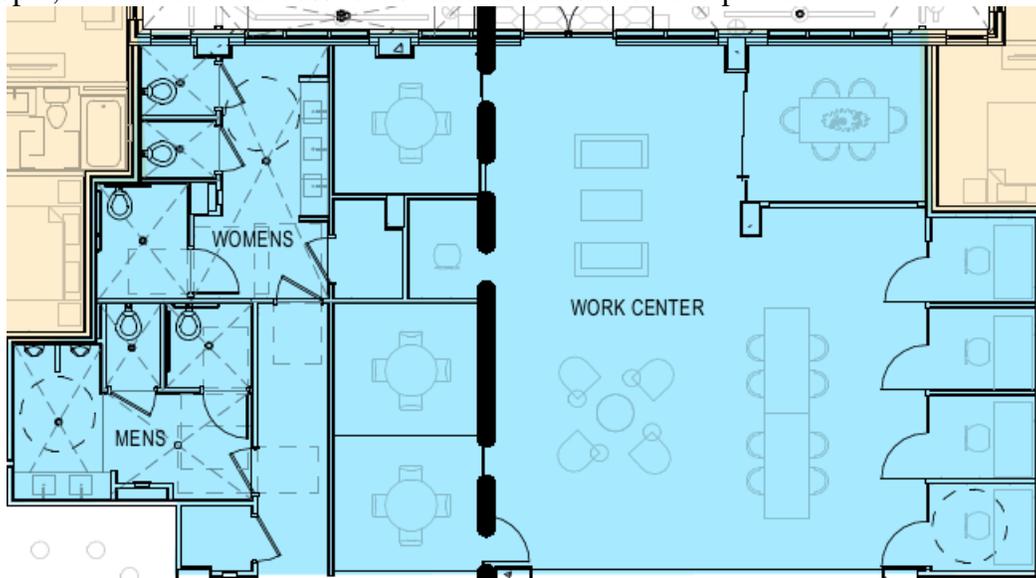
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By the time of the Planning Board’s Site Plan approval, however, it was becoming increasingly clear that the current pandemic was changing the way people work and think about shared spaces. It is currently anticipated that the traditional 9-5 office environment with five day work weeks is morphing into a work from both home and office. In this regard, large and small companies are anticipating working groups outside of the office, while small startups are turning away from the large open spaces of a We Work in favor of working from home. In light of all of this, JLB has been forced to reevaluate the form and function of its building and amenity spaces, and has drawn on its experience regarding how the virus has transformed the use and function of its other projects throughout the country in order to adapt its business plan.

JLB believes that, in the post-pandemic world, multifamily buildings will no longer be seen as static residential spaces, but instead will continue to be hybrid spaces of both residential and commercial uses, as they have been throughout the duration of the pandemic. Residents who have grown accustomed to working from home will continue to use their units as both living and office spaces, and will conduct business both in their units and within the Project’s amenity spaces. JLB is therefore seeking amendments to its approvals to reflect this new reality and account for the more commercial nature of these evolving spaces.

Specifically, JLB is now proposing up to 6,000 square feet of shared commercial working space within the Project¹. The proposed Work Center on the first floor will include glass separations that create individual office spaces where people can either work alone or in a group of up to four people, all with direct access to a shared coffee station and printer.



¹ This space will only be available to residents of the Project and their invitees, and will not be available for lease by the general public.



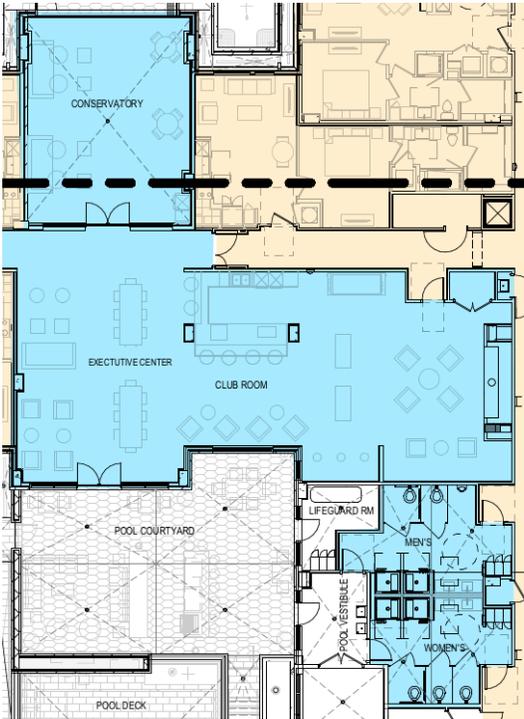
This shared working space connects directly to a quiet courtyard where residents and guests can also work as weather permit. This courtyard will feature furniture that is easily moved and positioned, including funky seats, Adirondack chairs, as well as more typical table and chairs.



The second floor of the building is proposed to house an Executive Center, Club Room and Conservatory that can accommodate larger gatherings, and which spaces connect directly to outdoor areas via accordion doors to open the spaces up for more ventilation and interaction with the courtyards.



The proximity of these spaces allows residents to flow from indoor space to outdoor space, working in many spots depending on their group size, weather and safety concerns.



These areas on the second floor also accommodate smaller, more intimate tables and chairs to provide residents space to both work and interact with others in smaller groupings.



All shared working areas will have wireless access to WIFI, as well as ample plugs to power a working environment.

In addition to the modifications to these amenity spaces aimed at better accommodating a working environment for residents, JLB recognizes that some residents may prefer working directly in their unit. JLB has therefore also taken a fresh look at its units, eliminating some of the smallest ones, creating spaces that have a more multifunctional purpose, and designating up to 76,270 square feet, or up to 73 units, as formal “live/ work” space that will be leased as such.² Understanding that live/ work residents may host colleagues, clients and other visitors throughout a given day, JLB has placed these designated units on the first three floors of the Project, most proximate to the above-described amenity areas, some of which will also have direct access to the units from adjacent public sidewalks. All of these units will be of concrete construction, helping with sound attenuation and creating a quieter working environment.

In order to maintain security for residents, while also allowing for free entry of visitors to the live/ work units and worksharing spaces, both the main entrance off the intersection of Glenbrook Road and Old Georgetown Road and the entrance into the building from the structured parking area will feature call boxes and conditioned waiting areas. Each unit is equipped with a Home Automation System (“HAS”) that allows residents to communicate directly with guests as they come to the building.³ The HAS system is powered by Alarm.com and integrates with the building security system to allow residents to move throughout the building using their phones. The IQ2 panel has a built in camera and communicates with the front door entry systems. The system also enables residents to provide guests one time codes to access the common areas of the building via strategically placed keypads, making it easy for

² No food preparation or catering businesses requiring commercial kitchens will be allowed.

³ This system also allows residents to control their thermostats and lock and unlock their front doors.

clients and guests to gain access to the lobby and work spaces and wait in comfort until the resident comes to join them or bring them up to their Unit/Office.

In all, JLB believes the conversion of these spaces within the Project to shared working and live/work space will accommodate the needs and wants of prospective tenants in the post-pandemic world and reflect the new reality of work environments.

Thank you for your consideration of these amendments. If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.



Erin E. Girard

cc: Graham Brock
Martin Mankowski