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August 23, 2021

Anne McClung, Planning and Building Director  
Town of Blacksburg  
300 South Main Street  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

**RE: OBMS Rezoning Amendment #2**

Dear Anne,

Along with the typical application materials submitted with this rezoning amendment request, I am including this letter to specify what items in the application are being requested for revision. The revisions relate to overall residential density in the DC zoned area, parking, some changes to the use requirement specifications for DC Parcels 2A, 2B, 4A and 6 and some trail changes through the central park area. The general description of the request and reasoning are below. A list of the specific changes within the documents is also included in this letter.

Residential Density Revisions

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the demand for commercial office space and changed how companies view their needs for office space, and the mix of in-office versus remote work appears here to stay. At the same time, lenders will only underwrite a commercial building that is primarily office space if a significant portion, 65% for example, is pre-leased to a credit rated tenant. In the current market, there are not prospects for this volume of space- especially in light of the other currently available office space.

As the parties all have a desire for the project to move forward in the current environment and contribute to a vibrant downtown, and particularly so regarding the parcels fronting on Main Street, we are seeking to add a limited amount of residential density to the downtown commercial district so that the building become more “mixed-use” of office, retail and residential uses in these buildings; while retaining the currently approved South Main Street ground floor retail. This adjusted mix will help the financial viability of the project and the ability to finance and construct these buildings sooner.

Parking Revisions

With the proposed shift in the mix of uses in the DC district, we recognize there may be changes in the parking demands. As currently proposed, there is approximately 65,000 sq ft of retail/office space between DC 2 & 4. Based on the parking goal set in our documents of 1 space per 300 sq ft for non-residential use, that equals 215 spaces. The parking around the Commons Loop and the DC 4 parking lot provides 129 of those spaces. Midtown would then reserve 80 parking spaces from the parking garage specifically for office/retail use. The remaining 170 spots from the garage would be reserved for residential and public use. If the parking requirements for the residential end up being higher than the 170 remaining spots in



the garage, then Midtown would remove the parking requirement as allowed within the rezoning documents and pattern book.

For the Hotel parking proposed on DC 6, we are proposing a minimum 0.50 space per room parking requirement. Based on the ongoing conversations with hotel developers, a downtown hotel at the Midtown site should not need to park at a 1 space per room standard. If the Hotel requires more parking, Midtown will lease them spaces through the garage if available.

#### DC Parcel Uses Revisions

Parcels DC 2A, 2B and 4A have all previously had allowances for multiple uses including commercial/retail/restaurant, office (general and medical) and residential. As interest in these buildings continues to grow, there appear to be several reasons why limiting the uses vertically to no more than two per building is advantageous. Meaning one building is commercial with residential above and another building would be commercial with office above. This proposed change has been addressed in the application text and Pattern Book. All South Main Street frontage would continue to be all non-residential uses as previously planned. Any other use, including residential, can now be located on the second floor and above.

Parcel DC 6 has also been amended to allow for other uses should a hotel become a non-viable building option. The uses proposed and allowed on DC 2A, 2B and 4A will now also be allowed on DC 6. Residential uses would be required to be on the second floor and above.

#### Multi-Use Trail Revisions

As the extent of design and construction requirements for the Eheart Street Cycle Track has expanded beyond what was initially envisioned in the rezoning process, we are proposing to revise the multi-use trail section that was proposed through the site. This cycle track will be a physically separated bike lane and will bring bikers to a traffic signal and safe crossing at South Main Street. A paved asphalt pedestrian trail is still proposed extend from Willard to Central park and to the eastern connection to Clay Street. However, it is being reduced to a 5' width and will not continue between the northern border of Parcel DC 5 and Clay Street. It will connect into the sidewalk/trail system within Central Park which in turn connects to the Midtown Way sidewalk system. The sidewalks will provide access for pedestrians to new Church Street and then to Clay Street or Eheart Street.

#### Pattern Book:

- 1) Updated 8-23-2021 Date on Cover Sheet.
- 2) Added uses to DC Parcel 6 on Page 8.
- 3) Revised the Hotel parking requirement to 0.50 spaces per room and added note on Page 17.
- 4) Additional language on DC 6 uses added on Page 24.
- 5) Removal of multi-use trail section that runs from central park to the north of DC 5 and connecting to Clay Street on multiple pages.



Application Text:

- 1) Updated 8-23-2021 Date on all text, Proffer statements, etc.
- 2) Amended Proffer #2 to adjust the timing of construction for the Eheart/South Main traffic signal.
- 3) Amended Proffer #10 to adjust the allowable uses on certain floors for DC 2A and 2B.
- 4) Amended Proffer #10 to allow additional uses on DC 6 and where those uses can be located within the building.
- 5) Amended Proffer #11 to include additional uses in Exhibit E for DC 6.
- 6) Amended Proffer #11 to include a note about tracking approved residential units within the DC District on submitted site plans
- 7) Amended Exhibit B and Exhibit C by adding text regarding the scenario if the parking facility cannot provide enough parking to meet parking standards for DC 2A, 2B, and 4A.
- 8) Amended Exhibit B and Exhibit C by adding text regarding the vertical stacking of uses within a single building and what uses are allowed on which floors.
- 9) Amended Exhibit E for a new proposed Hotel parking ratio for DC Parcel #6 as well as adding parking notes for residential and non-residential uses on DC 6.
- 10) Amended Exhibit E allowing for additional uses beyond a singular hotel.
- 11) Amended Exhibit E Page 16 noting “ Hotel / Multi-Use” in site section.
- 12) Revised Section 3.1.2 Density and Occupancy on Page 37. Removed the Unit per acre language, noted that density shall be a maximum of 400 beds, designated which DC parcels may contain residential and prohibited 4-bedroom units.
- 13) Revised Section 3.1.4 Conditional Use Permits on Page 38. Added language for DC 6 and potential office space on the ground floor.
- 14) Revised Section 3.2.2 Occupancy on Page 38. Removed the Unit per acre language.
- 15) Revised Section 6.4 Multi-Use Trails and Bike Lanes. Removed language concerning the 10’ wide multi-use trail.
- 16) Updated Section 7.1 Project Phasing on Page 51 to be more in line with current timelines.
- 17) Revised the “Open Space” text on Page 59 and “Bicycle Facilities” on Page 60 to remove references to the 10’ multi-use trail.
- 18) Updated/confirmed all current adjacent landowner information on Pages 65-70.

“Z” Sheets:

- 1) Sheet Z4 - Changed the Label on DC Parcel 6 from “Hotel” to “Building 6” for consistency in labeling.
- 2) Sheet Z4, 5, 6, 7, & 9 – Removed the trail connection from Central Park to Clay Street.
- 3) Sheet Z4 - Z9 – Showed a dashed line extending from proposed building on DC4 to the screen wall structure adjacent to new Church Street to indicate a potential for the building to podium over the parking lot and service area.



- 4) Sheet Z5 & Z6 – Removed 10’ Multi-use trail from legend and adjusted remaining trail alignment to the Pedestrian Trails/Walkways linestyle.
- 5) Sheet Z7 – Revised Provided Open Space percentage due to removing the portion of the trail north of DC 5.
- 6) Updated 8-23-2021 Date on all drawings.

Thank you and please feel free to contact me with any further questions or comments on these revised materials.

Sincerely,  
**BALZER AND ASSOCIATES, INC.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Semones', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steven M. Semones  
Executive Vice President