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December 16, 2021

Ms. Emily Liu, Director
Louisville Metro Planning & Design Services
444 S. 5th Street, 3rd Floor
Louisville, KY 40202

**RE: St. Matthews Galleria
4101 Oechsli Avenue**

Ms. Liu,

Enclosed please find an application and all associated documentation for a revised development plan for the above-mentioned site. As a matter of history, the site was rezoned in the late 70s with a development plan that reflected a 2-story building. The building was constructed as a 1-story structure in 1980. Over the years this building has housed a variety of restaurant, service and retail uses. In 2019 the roof for the structure collapsed and the building has been vacant ever since. Earlier this year, the applicant purchased the property in order to bring this site back to life. As it turns out, construction methods they used for the original construction in the 80s compromised the integrity of the wood structure which ultimately led to the failure of the roof. This, combined with years of exposure to the elements resulted in the need to replace all of the wood structure in the building in order to rebuild the structure safely.

Because the original development plan was approved for a two-story structure, and because many of the surrounding structures are also two-stories, it makes sense to provide a second story on the subject site. Therefore, the applicant is requesting approval to build 8,400 SF of office on the second floor with some minor site changes including relocation of the entrance to the rear parking lot in order to accommodate rear entry and pedestrian circulation improvements around the existing building.

As you can see in the photo below, there are some strange things happening with steps directly out of the rear doors with no landings and angled risers. In addition, the main entrance for the offices on the second floor will be at the back of the building and so we are trying to dress up this façade to make it look more inviting for office tenants and visitors. A few parking spaces will be lost to accommodate these changes, but we are still meeting the requirements for minimum parking in the City of St. Matthews.



With regard to the specific justification for this request, please note the following:

- 1. Are there any natural resources on the property, including trees and other living vegetation, steep slopes, water courses, flood plains, soils, air quality, scenic views, and historic sites? And are these natural resources being preserved?**

There are a few trees on and adjacent to the site. We will be removing one existing tree to accommodate the entrance relocation but have no plans to remove any other trees. There are no other natural resources to speak of on site as most of the site is impervious.

- 2. Is safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian transportation provided both within the development and the community?**

This is an existing site with existing parking. We will be significantly improving pedestrian circulation around and through the property with the reconstruction of awkward steps and sidewalks so that there is H.C. access to the rear of the building as well as the front.

- 3. Is sufficient open space (scenic and recreational) to meet the needs of the proposed development being provided?**

No open space is required for this site.

- 4. Are provisions for adequate drainage facilities provided on the subject site in order to prevent drainage problems from occurring on the subject site or within the community?**

There is an existing storm system and a private drainage basin on the subject site that will be reused. New roof drains will connect to the existing system.

- 5. Is the overall site design (location of buildings, parking lots, screening, landscaping) and land use or uses compatible with the existing and projected future development of the area?**


Again, this is a developed site that is being renovated and repaired. The parking lots are existing and the building will be significantly updated as a part of this renovation. Many of the surrounding structures in the area are two-story so the two-story addition is in character with the area. Most existing trees on site will be maintained.

- 6. Is the proposal in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code?**

This proposal is in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code because it represents the redevelopment of an underused commercial property per Economic Development goal 1.d. As a part of this proposal, the applicant is making a significant investment to bring life back to a commercial site that sat vacant and deteriorating for several years. It promotes sustainable growth because it involves the renovation of an existing structure to accommodate more leasable area on a site that is served by existing infrastructure. It increases the availability of community serving uses in an existing mixed-use neighborhood, and it increases pedestrian mobility around and through the site with reconstructed sidewalks and the addition of multiple ramps to provide H.C. access to the rear of the building.

Because the approved development plan and binding elements for this property allow a two story building with more building area, we are requesting that this approval be done at staff level. Please contact me with any questions. I can be reached at 502-584-6271 or kelli.jones@swlinc.com.

Thank you,


Kelli Jones, RLA