

December 20, 2021

**VIA ELECTRONIC & HAND DELIVERY**

Mr. Ramon Trias  
Planning and Zoning Director  
City of Coral Gables  
427 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor  
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

**Re: Alexan Crafts Project / Statement of Use / Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) Application / Property located between Catalonia Avenue and Malaga Avenue along Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, Florida (Folio Nos. 03-4117-005-6940/6950/6970/6990/7000/7010/7080/7070/7060/7050/7040/7030/7020)**

On behalf of Maple Multi-Family Land SE, L.P. (the “**Applicant**”), please accept this as our statement of use in connection with the Planning and Zoning Board Application for a proposed mixed use development located at the above referenced properties (collectively, the “**Property**”). Specifically, the Applicant is requesting (i.) a Planned Area Development (PAD) designation; and (ii.) a Conditional Use/Mixed Use Site Plan Approval (collectively, the “**Application**”) for the Property in accordance with the recent Mixed Use designation that was approved for this area.

**I. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

The Property is located in the Crafts Section of the City of Coral Gables (the “**City**”) and is generally bounded by the LeJeune Road thoroughfare to the West, Catalonia Avenue to the North, Malaga Avenue to the South, and Salzedo Street to the East. The Property consists of platted lots 5 through 27, Block 28 of the Coral Gables, Craft Section as recorded in Plat Book 10, Page 40 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. According to the enclosed survey prepared by J. Hernandez & Associates, Inc., dated January 2021 (the “**Survey**”), the Property is comprised of approximately 91,933 +/- square feet or 2.11 +/- acres of land.

Pursuant to Ordinances 2021-09 and 2021-08, the Property was recently designated to Commercial Low-Rise Intensity on the City’s Future Land Use Map and to Mixed Use 1 (MX1) on the City’s Zoning Map. In accordance with the recent designations, the Applicant proposes to develop a high quality, mixed use development with residential units and ground floor live work units along with a substantial public space and streetscape improvements located just steps

away from the City's Central Business District and Miracle Mile (the "Project"), the City's premier shopping and dining destination.

## **II. MIXED USE SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

As detailed in the Site Plan prepared by Corwil Architects, Inc. dated October 28, 2021 (the "Site Plan"), the Applicant proposes to redevelop the Property with a mixed use building ranging between 6 to 7 stories and containing a total of 22 live work units at the ground level and 263 multifamily residential units on the upper levels<sup>1</sup>. The Project will also include approximately 6,805 square feet public park with large sidewalks that provide a pedestrian friendly amenity for the neighborhood.

The Project is uniquely designed with various residential components to accommodate the growing demand for new and diverse housing options within the City's downtown area and major employment hubs. Specifically, the Project includes a mixture of studio, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom floorplans as well as 22 ground floor live work units situated along the Catalonia and Malaga street frontages. The provision of ground floor live work units will activate these frontages with semi-professional office uses and provide for an appropriate transition from the adjacent residential use. The inclusion of live work units as opposed to a purely retail component is consistent with the City's vision for this area and its goal of ensuring the continued success of Miracle Mile as the City's premier retail destination.

Due to the Property's location near Miracle Mile and the Central Business District to the North, commercial plazas and businesses to the East, and residential neighborhoods to the West and South, the Project is compatible with the type of community focused, mixed use residential development envisioned for the Crafts neighborhood. One of the central focuses of the Project is the continued connectivity of public and private open spaces throughout the Property. The pedestrian pathways adorned with beautiful landscaping features seamlessly integrate the Project with the adjacent, residential neighborhood. The ground floor commercial uses coupled with the proposed streetscape and connectivity enhancements (i.e. midblock paseo and public open space) contribute to creating a pedestrian-friendly urban environment. Specifically, the public pathways and paseos provide connectivity throughout the block and among the various open spaces, including a 6,805 SF public open space located at the northeast corner of the Property.

Lastly, the Project's architecture has been significantly enhanced with the Coral Gables Mediterranean architectural style and design features that was recently unanimously approved by the City's BOA on December 9, 2021.

## **III. PLANNED AREA DEVELOPMENT (PAD)**

The Applicant requests a Planned Area Development (PAD) approval for the construction of a mixed-use project at the Property pursuant to Division 5 Article 2 of the City's Zoning Code. For the reasons outlined below, the proposed PAD request would be in the best interest of the public, is appropriate for the Property, meets the applicable criteria established in Section 14-206.1 of the Zoning Code and therefore, should be approved.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to City Commission approval pursuant to Section 2-500(B)(2) of the Zoning Code.

**1. In what respects the proposed plan is or is not consistent with the stated purpose and intent of the PAD regulations.**

The requested PAD approval for the Property is wholly consistent with the purpose and intent of the PAD regulations per Sections 2-500 as expressed below:

- a. Allow opportunities for more creative and imaginative development than generally possible under the strict applications of these regulations so that new development may provide substantial additional public benefit.*

The requested PAD approval and proposed Project is aligned with the purpose and goals of the underlying Mixed Use zoning district and furthers the City's vision for creating additional neighborhood focused public amenity opportunities such as enhanced pedestrian environments and usable open spaces.

- b. Encourage enhancement and preservation of lands which are unique or of outstanding scenic, environmental, cultural and historical significance.*

The utilization of the PAD regulations helps achieve an overall reduced building massing and additional enhanced open spaces that create a focal point for the neighborhood. Specifically, the Project has been designed to enhance the existing neighborhood with both private and public landscaped open spaces as promoted by the PAD design regulations, which include over 26,000 square feet of landscaped open space and a 6,800 square foot public park designed for the active enjoyment of the local neighborhood.

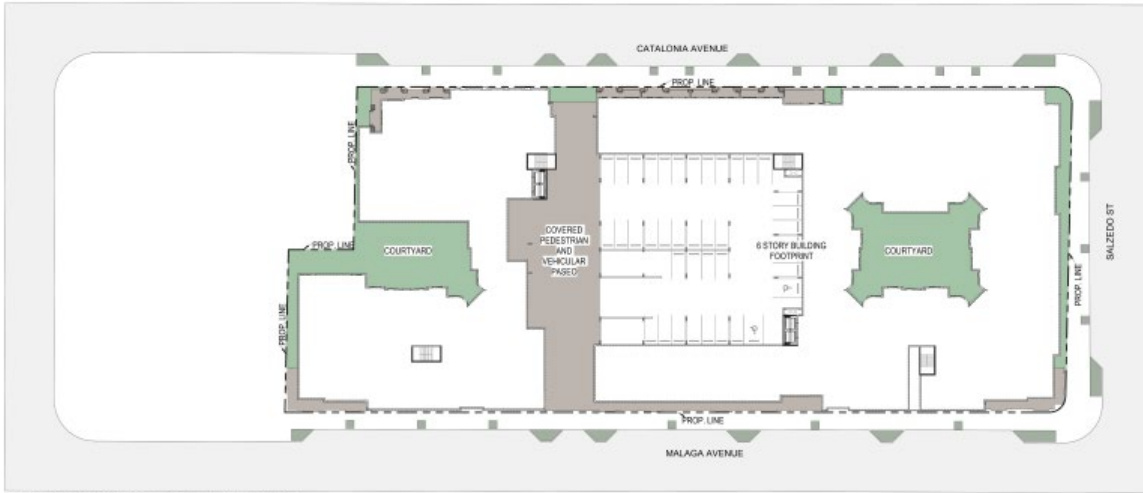
- c. Provide an alternative for more efficient use and, safer networks of streets, promoting greater opportunities for public and private open space, and recreation areas and enforce and maintain neighborhood and community identity.*

As discussed above, the Project's ground floor live work component will provide new opportunities for people to live and work in the City. These units will facilitate an inviting and walkable streetscape and create an appropriate transition to adjacent residential uses. The Project has been designed to provide enhanced ground floor setbacks which allows for wider sidewalks with additional planting areas and creates a more walkable and pedestrian friendly environment with significant landscaping and shade trees; ultimately transforming this seemingly commercial street with limited landscaping and tight sidewalks into a true neighborhood pedestrian street.

- d. Encourage compatible and coordinated development of the site, through the use of a variety of architectural solutions to promote Mediterranean architectural attributes, promoting variations in bulk and massing, preservation of natural features, scenic areas, community facilities, reduce land utilization for roads and separate pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems and promote urban design amenities.*

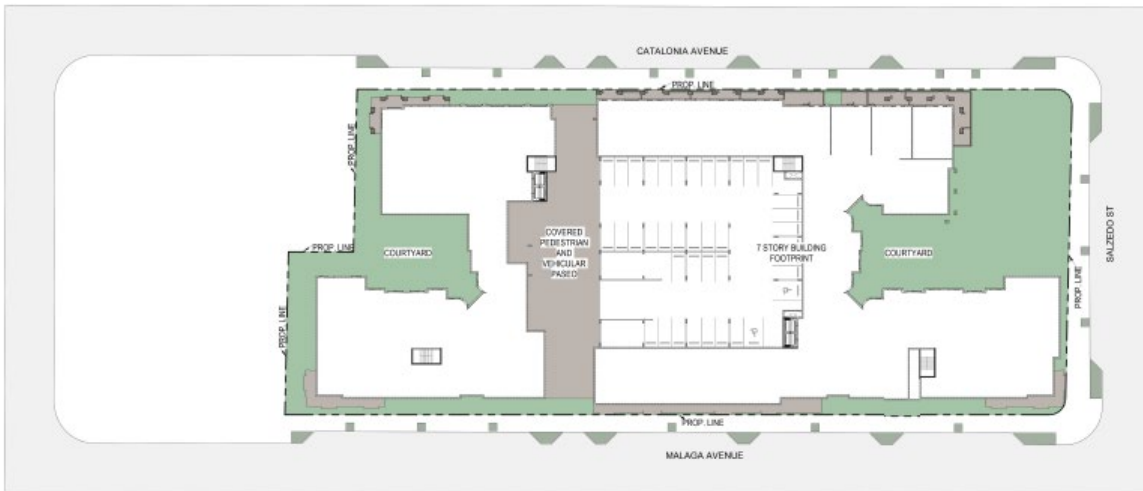
The Project's architectural design implements the City of Coral Gables Mediterranean style and has obtained Level 2 Mediterranean Bonus approval from the City's Board of Architects.

- e. *Require the application of professional planning and design techniques to achieve overall coordinated development eliminating the negative impacts of unplanned and piecemeal developments likely to result from rigid adherence to the standards found elsewhere in these regulations.*



**6 STORY PROPOSED SITE PLAN**

SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"



**7 STORY PROPOSED SITE PLAN**

SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"



The PAD Application and proposed design elements will permit a unified, cohesive development by allowing flexible development standards that would enhance the Property and overall neighborhood. As reflected above, the Project's unique design with greater

setbacks (where 0' feet is permitted) and reduced massing allows the following public benefits serving the Property and overall neighborhood:

- The Project's increased building setbacks along the main frontages and interior Property line allows for the physical and functional integration of increased open space via open courtyards and an extended 10-foot interior walkway that creates an enhanced buffer from the abutting single family residences to the West and providing a garden-like aesthetic.
  - Significantly reduced building massing that allows natural elements – such as light and air – to interplay with the Project's extensive landscaping and publicly accessible open space.
  - Better overall pedestrian connectivity via augmented paseos with courtyard areas, covered walkways, a cross block pedestrian passage and a 6800 square foot park.
  - Wider streetscapes with and increased area for green space that can better accommodate tall shade trees and landscaping that provides for a more optimal pedestrian experience and residential street scape.
- 2. The extent to which the proposed plan departs from the zoning and subdivision regulations otherwise applicable to the subject property, including but not limited to density, size, area, bulk and use, and the reasons why such departures are or are not deemed to be in the public interest.**

The proposed Project is designed in accordance with the applicable MX-1 zoning regulations, with the exception of the number of stories which are being modified in accordance with Section 2-500(B)(2) of the Zoning Code to reduce overall business massing and provide additional open space benefits to the public. As reflected in the Image above, by accommodating an additional story within the allowable building height, the Project is able to reduce the ground floor building coverage and building massing thereby creating additional opportunities for enhanced setbacks from adjacent uses and additional landscaped open space areas for public enjoyment.

- 3. The extent to which the proposed plan meets the requirements and standards of the PAD regulations.**

As discussed above, the Project design will allow development of the Property in accordance with the PAD development standards provided in Division 5, Article 3 and the underlying MX-1 zoning district.

- 4. The physical design of the proposed PAD and the manner in which said design does or does not make adequate provision for public services, provide adequate control over vehicular traffic, provide for and protect designated common open areas, and further the amenities of light and air, recreation and visual enjoyment.**

As discussed above, the Project provides for a nearly 7,000-square foot public park benefit that will be improved with lush landscaping and that has been designed as an active, gathering space for the local community. The design of the public amenity park fuses the natural amenities of light and air with recreational services for the visual, social and physical enjoyment of the residents and visitors of the Project and the surrounding neighborhood.

**5. The compatibility of the proposed PAD with the adjacent properties and neighborhood as well as the current neighborhood context including current uses.**

The Project's proposed development program strikes the perfect balance and creates an appropriate transition between the high density, mixed use developments to the North in the Central Business District, the future Multi-Family uses that are planned for the Crafts Section, and the San Sebastian Apartments to the South of the Property. Additionally, the Property is ideally confined by major thoroughfares that serve as a natural buffer from the surrounding single-family residences West of LeJeune Road and South University Drive and protects the integrity of these neighborhoods.

**6. The desirability of the proposed PAD to physical development of the entire community.**

The Project's proposed uses are consistent with the City's recent land use and zoning redesignations (Mixed Use 1 and Multi-Family) for this area and future vision for this area. Consistent with the MX-1 zoning district, the approval of the Application will provide a residential focused/mixed use development with abundant landscaped open space, public walkways, and pedestrian focused amenities all within walking distance of the City's downtown core.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

In light of the foregoing, the proposed Project and the requested approvals are consistent with the goals and intent of the Mixed Use-1 zoning district and the PAD regulations under the City's Zoning Code. We look forward to your favorable consideration of our Application. As always, should you have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 305-579-0821.

Best Regards,



Jorge L. Navarro, Esq.

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