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City of Las Vegas Planning and Zoning
495 South Main Street
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

RE: Use Permit and Site Development Plan Review for 103-unit multifamily mixed-use development at northwest corner of Vegas Drive at Simmons Street 139-20-403-001,002

Dear Mr. Swanton:

Our client is interested in developing 3.03 acres located on the north side of Vegas Drive between Simmons Street and Windchime Drive. County aerial records indicate the site has been vacant for more than 20 years. Adjacent properties were built in the 1950's and 1990's. The area is transitioning from a residential character to multi-use. Simmons Street is now developed as a 100 foot major arterial spanning the boundaries of North Las Vegas and terminating at the subject intersection bringing more activity and development to the area. A car wash was recently approved opposite the site at the northeast corner of the Vegas and Simmons intersection. Also, within a 1,000 foot radius, properties have been reclassified to MXU by a city initiative. Advanced Technological Academy is located southeast of the Vegas Simmons intersection thereby establishing the neighborhood as sufficiently diverse to accommodate a vertical and horizontal mixed-use multifamily property. The proposal is to build two 3-story vertical mixed-use buildings, with one and two-bedroom residential units, atop general retail store and other non-specified C-1 uses. The three remaining buildings are three-story multifamily residential. The layout is designed to facilitate walkability in the neighborhood with the two vertical mixed-use buildings located adjacent to the major intersection, while three residential buildings (12 and 24-plexes) are accessed from a gated area.

Site Development Plan Review: In keeping with infill guidelines, the layout orients the buildings towards the intersections to the extent possible. This bifurcates the parking areas into one used by the public adjacent to the fueling area then a second resident parking in the secure area. The public has access to the required 42 spaces while the secured resident parking area requires a waiver.

Special Use Permit for Mixed Use Development in C-1 district: As a result of the streetscape guidelines to orient buildings adjacent to the sidewalk, the 3:1 residential adjacency requirement cannot be met thereby requiring a use permit. To alleviate the impact on abutting residential the northern buildings have been modified. First, all balconies that would overlook abutting homes are eliminated and converted to enclosed conditioned living space. This is to preserve privacy and quiet enjoyment of existing residences. **Second, the north facing units on the third story have been eliminated and the maximum height has been reduced to 36-feet.** As a result, the proposed building's impact on existing homes is comparable to two-story buildings which are typically deemed compatible with R-CL zoned neighborhoods. The remaining third story living space is oriented away from the R-CL property line. Third, the massing of the rear buildings has been alleviated by designing a terrace concept for the third-floor units. The third floor living spaces have been designed to step-back from the original footprint. Each three-bedroom unit has one or two daylighted terraces and fenestration on each elevation. The resulting lowered and recessed rooflines reduces the bulk of the buildings to a more appropriate transition to neighboring residential.

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Waiver – perimeter landscaping: C-1 zones require 15 feet of landscaping between the front and side property lines and parking areas. Code allows 10 feet of landscaping on sections where a building footprint is placed streetside at the setback line.

In order to facilitate on-site vehicle circulation, proposed landscaping has been reduced to 10 feet adjacent to the fueling area where 15 feet are required. Complete Streets standards recommend detached sidewalks to provide pedestrians with both shade and a comfortable separation from vehicular traffic. The use of a five-foot landscaping area at curb, a five-foot sidewalk and a second five foot landscaping area at the back of sidewalk meets the intent of Complete Streets. The proposed landscaping is sufficient to provide a shade canopy for pedestrians, meet separation standards from vehicular traffic, and screen on-site activity from the ROW. Where not constrained by existing utilities, a berm and hedge will be provided to visually alleviate this reduction at street level. The composition also allows for the same quantity of accent/shade trees required by code. We respectfully submit that this design is sufficient to meet the intent of complete streets both functionally and aesthetically as this street section is found in many of the City’s Planned Community Districts on for 60-80 foot ROWs.

A sidewalk exists along Vegas Drive thereby constraining the ability to use detached sidewalks on this frontage. As with the previous description of Simmons Street frontage, the 10 feet of landscaping is sufficient as the selected trees (Red Pistache and Purple Robe) will provide the same visual interest and shade for pedestrians as compared to a 15-foot cross section. This waiver is applicable only to the south-east portion of the site as different standards apply to areas with streetside building placement.

Waiver – interior landscaping: Code requires a landscaping island for every six parking spaces. Currently the secure area provides 121 spaces for 103 units. As the parking lot has only two drive aisles, all spaces are adjacent (perpendicular) to trees. In addition to shade from trees, most spaces fall into the shade cast by the 36 to 47-foot buildings.

Variance – parking: The general retail with fueling station and unassigned C-1 suite meet code requirements for parking accessible to the public. The enclosed private resident parking provides 1.17 spaces per unit where Title 19 requires a multiplier of 1.25 and 1.75 spaces per one and two-bedroom units with guest parking. Site-wide, 159 spaces are provided where 175 spaces are required for peak residential hours between midnight and 7:00 AM. The shared parking schedule indicates peak residential parking is during the night-time hours, when a large portion of site’s commercial businesses will be closed. If needed, guests and motorists can park within the public area as commercial suites will not require parking during these hours. The plan provides 159 spaces which substantially exceeds the one-space-per-unit ratio that has been deemed sufficient as evidenced by other approvals in Las Vegas’ central districts.

This proposal aligns with the goals and the long-term planning policies in Las Vegas. It meets the infill considerations to bring new architectural varieties and higher density housing types to established neighborhoods. It also conforms to smart growth and walkable community considerations. I can be reached at (702) 598-1408 to discuss further.

With appreciation,



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