



July 10, 2015

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

Re: Gables Ponce III / Planning and Zoning Board Application / Statement of Use / 363 Granello Avenue, Coral Gables, FL

Dear Mr. Trias:

On behalf of LG Ponce III LLC, (the "Applicant"), we respectfully submit this statement of use and justification in connection with the enclosed Planning Division Application (the "Application"). The Applicant proposes to construct a mixed use development named "Gables Ponce III" (the "Project"), located at 363 Granello Avenue (the "Property"). The Property is an approximately 73,373 square foot/1.69 acres triangular-shaped parcel south of Greco Avenue and northwest of Granello Avenue in close proximity to Le Jeune Road. The Property lies northwest of the existing Gables Ponce I and Gables Ponce II projects, which are located on the south side of Granello Avenue.

The Applicant is requesting approval to construct a 211 apartment unit mixed-use residential development on the Property, with ground floor retail, office and live-work units. As a new phase to the existing Gables Ponce Phase I and Phase II developments, the proposed Project will be compatible in design, function and aesthetics and will add public plazas and public amenities to this area. In order to accomplish the proposed Project, the Applicant is submitting this mixed-use site plan / conditional use application.

The Property has an underlying Industrial District zoning designation, is located within the Mixed Use Overlay Zoning District, and is designated Industrial on the Future Land Use Map.

DETAILS OF PROJECT

The Project consists of 211 multi-family residential rental units, including 10 units which will be ground floor live-work units, along with amenities and approximately 7,473 square feet of ground floor retail and office space. The Project is nine stories high wrapped around an eight story, 466 space parking garage, with a rooftop pool deck. The maximum height of the structure is 100 feet to the top of the habitable space. The Project includes generous public amenities and spaces around all three street fronts and at each corner, including a large corner plaza with a

fountain at the intersection of Greco Avenue and Granello Avenue. The Project also includes a dog park area on the west side of the Property along the alley.

Based on comments from the Development Review Committee and Board of Architects, the Applicant made modifications to the plans which greatly enhance the Project. For example, the garage entry has been relocated which improves pedestrian circulation to the residential building and retail spaces. Additionally, the retail spaces have been consolidated at each side corner and the live-work units are closer to the entry lobby, improving access and circulation. The elevations have been simplified and the double height arcade at Granello Avenue has been maintained and enhanced.

BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Application is being filed with the intent of bringing a new mixed use project with 211 residential units including 10 live-work units, retail and office to this area of the City, which is designed to create mixed use, pedestrian friendly developments close to businesses and transit areas. The Project will benefit the surrounding area by bringing in residents that will utilize the existing businesses, and due to the close proximity of these businesses, residents, guests and visitors can walk or utilize transit, taking vehicle trips off the roadways. The quality of life (and work) in the City has propelled demand for both multi-family residential and high end commercial uses in close proximity to work, pedestrian friendly areas, and parks. The Project will help address this demand.

At the same time that the Project brings new growth and excitement to this area of the City, the Project will honor and promote George Merrick's legacy of design. The Project will be designed with Mediterranean architecture reaffirming George Merrick's original vision for the City's design, look and lifestyle. The Applicant and Project architect are fully dedicated to the quality of the Project's design and construction. The elevations as currently proposed will include a beautiful Mediterranean design, ornate architectural features and very high quality materials. The Project incorporates public plazas and pedestrian amenities that create a pedestrian friendly corridor around the Project allowing residents and visitors to connect to uses that surround the Project, including the first phases of the development, Gables Ponce I and II.

The Project is consistent and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, as the area contains mixed use developments with similar heights, densities and intensities.

MIXED USE / CONDITIONAL USE STANDARDS / ZONING ANALYSIS

The approval sought in this Planning Application is for a mixed use residential development. Such developments are permitted in Industrial zoning districts as conditional uses in accordance with City Zoning Code Section 4-201, which encourages planned unified projects at higher densities in exchange for public realm improvements. The Project, with its diversity of uses within walking distance to offices, workplaces, and neighborhood commercial areas, has been developed through a unified design providing continuity among the various elements. Utilization of a variety of architectural attributes and street level amenities create a sense of

place, including the spatial relationship of buildings and the characteristics created to ensure attractive and functional areas. The street level pedestrian amenities and public realm elements of the Project have been designed to provide for architectural and design features focused at a pedestrian scale and to integrate street level plazas, courtyards, open space and public gathering areas.

The proposed mixed use site plan complies with the conditional use criteria as set forth in Section 3-408 of the Zoning Code as follows:

A. The proposed conditional use is consistent with and furthers the goals, policies, and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and furthers the purposes of these regulations and other City ordinances and actions designed to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

The development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and will help realize the following goals, objectives, and policies thereof:

Goal FLU-1. Protect, strengthen, and enhance the City of Coral Gables as a vibrant community ensuring that its neighborhoods, business opportunities, shopping, employment centers, cultural activities, historic value, desirable housing, open spaces, and natural resources make the City a very desirable place to work, live, and play.

Objective FLU-1.7. When amendments to the Zoning Code are processed, discourage the proliferation of urban sprawl by including a regulatory framework for encouraging future infill and redevelopment within existing developed areas. In drafting the infill/redevelopment program, the City shall coordinate public and private resources necessary to initiate needed improvements and/or redevelopment within these areas.

Policy FLU-1.7.1. Encourage effective and proper high quality development of the Central Business District, the Industrial District and the University of Miami employment centers which offer potential for local employment in proximity to protected residential neighborhoods.

Objective FLU-1.11. Maintain a pattern of overall low density residential use with limited medium and high density residential uses in appropriate areas to preserve the low intensity and high quality character of the residential neighborhoods.

Objective DES-1.1. Preserve and promote high quality, creative design and site planning that is compatible with the City's architectural heritage, surrounding development, public spaces and open spaces.

Policy DES-1.1.2. Provide for rigorous design guidelines, standards, and review processes via the City's Zoning Code that ensure high quality design of buildings and spaces.

Objective DES-1.2. Preserve the Coral Gables Mediterranean design and architecture.

Policy DES-1.2.1. Continue the award of development bonuses and/or other incentives to promote Coral Gables Mediterranean design character providing for but not limited to the following: creative use of architecture to promote public realm improvements and pedestrian amenities; provide a visual linkage between contemporary architecture and the existing and new architectural fabric; encourage landmark opportunities; and creation of public open spaces.

Policy MOB-1.1.1. Promote mixed use development to provide housing and commercial services near employment centers, thereby reducing the need to drive.

Policy MOB-1.1.2. Encourage land use decisions that encourage infill, redevelopment, and reuse of vacant or underutilized parcels that support walking, bicycling, and public transit use.

Policy MOB-1.1.3. Locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations.

B. The available use to which the property may be put is appropriate to the property that is subject to the proposed conditional use and compatible with existing and planned uses in the area.

The proposed mixed residential, retail and office use is appropriate and compatible with the surrounding area, which is characterized by residential, office, and commercial uses. Specifically, as Phase III of the Gables Ponce development, the proposed Project is compatible with its immediate neighbors Gables Ponce I and II, which include residential, office and commercial uses. The Property is located within the City's Mixed Use Overlay District.

C. The proposed conditional use does not conflict with the needs and character of the neighborhood and the City.

The proposed Project will not conflict with the needs and character of the neighborhood and City; instead it will be complimentary as discussed above and will fulfill the City's longtime goal of converting this area into a mixed use village with pedestrian amenities and tree-lined corridors, and satisfy some unmet needs including a dog park and other public spaces.

D. The proposed conditional use will not adversely or unreasonably affect the use of other property in the area.

The proposed development will enhance the other properties in the area by increasing property values, providing new customers for existing businesses, and new retail options for existing residents.

E. The proposed use is compatible with the nature, condition and development of adjacent uses, buildings and structures and will not adversely affect the adjacent uses, buildings or structures.

The proposed mixed use is compatible with adjacent uses, buildings, and structures and will not have an adverse impact on them as discussed above.

F. The parcel proposed for development is adequate in size and shape to accommodate all development features.

The Property is adequate to accommodate the development. In fact, several portions of the Property are proposed to be used as public spaces such as public plazas and a dog park.

G. The nature of the proposed development is not detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the community.

The proposed development is not detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the community. None of the residential and retail uses proposed constitute nuisances or noxious uses.

H. The design of the proposed driveways, circulation patterns and parking is well defined to promote vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

The proposed development has been designed to carefully address traffic related issues including circulation, parking and pedestrian traffic.

I. The proposed conditional use satisfies the concurrency standards of Article 3, Division 13 and will not adversely burden public facilities, including the traffic-carrying capacities of streets, in an unreasonable or disproportionate manner.

A concurrency impact statement is included as part of this submittal and it indicates compliance with all concurrency standards.

We look forward to your review of Gables Ponce III's Application. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call me. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mario Garcia-Serra

Enclosures

cc: Joe Wilder
Heidi Davis Knapik, Esq.
Lauren Kahn, Esq.