



November 22, 2016

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

Re: Villa Valencia / 501, 515 and 525 Valencia Avenue / Planning and Zoning Board Application / Amended Statement of Use and Justification

Dear Mr. Trias:

On behalf of Valencia 34 Development, LLC (the "Applicant"), we respectfully submit this amended statement of use and justification in connection with the enclosed amended Planning and Zoning Board Application (the "Application"), for review of the revised Villa Valencia project, a luxury multi-family residential apartment project (the "Project") to be located at 501, 515 and 525 Valencia Avenue; south of Biltmore Way, between Segovia Street and Hernando Street (the "Property"). The Property is just over one acre in size (45,229 square feet) and will consist of 38 luxury condominium units with upscale amenities, large open and green spaces, including an approximately 10,000 square-foot public park, and lush landscaped areas around the Project that will enhance the surrounding neighborhood and be consistent with the City of Coral Gables' (the "City") vision for this area. It is important to note that this revised version of the Project has been changed considerably from the original version of the Project which proposed a 103-unit rental apartment project and did not include a public park. These revisions were made after considerable input from neighboring property owners and these neighboring property owners which previously objected to the original version of the Project have been strongly supportive of the proposed changes.

The Property is located in an area with a mix of high intensity commercial and high and low density residential developments with varying land use and zoning designations. Its location between the large office and apartment buildings along Biltmore Way and only one block west of the Central Business District (the "CBD"), makes this Project and area suitable for transitional multi-family development projects, like Villa Valencia, which will benefit from being so close to the CBD and pedestrian and transit corridors. The Property is currently zoned Multi-Family Special Area District, with site specific zoning regulations, and has an underlying land use designation of Residential Multi-Family Medium. The Applicant is requesting a text amendment to the Site Specific Regulations of the Zoning Code to permit a FAR of 3.0, as detailed in the

attached **Exhibit A**, as well as a Planned Area Development (“PAD”) approval of the enclosed site plan.

Proposed Zoning Code Amendment

The Applicant is proposing a Zoning Code text amendment to the Site Specific Regulations that would change the permitted FAR for the Property from 2.0 to 3.0. Pursuant to Section 3-1405, the Application satisfies the standards for review of text amendments as follows:

1. Promotes the public health, safety and welfare.

One of the stated purposes of the existing MFSA zoning district is to “accommodate various forms of Multi-Family housing to meet the housing needs of a diverse community, while *insuring that there is a transition to single family neighborhoods* [emphasis added] which protects the integrity of those neighborhoods.” Even though the MFSA zoning regulations have been in place for ten (10) years, there has been an obvious lack of redevelopment on the north side of Valencia Avenue. As a result, there is no transition from the large existing buildings on Biltmore Way and the north side of Valencia to the lower density neighborhoods to the South. This Zoning Code text amendment will create the incentives and additional regulations to facilitate development which will serve as a proper transition between the high density buildings along Biltmore Way and much lower density smaller residential buildings to the south, promoting the public health, safety and welfare.

2. Does not permit uses the Comprehensive Plan prohibits in the area affected by the district boundary change or text amendment.

The Future Land Use Map designation for the lots on the north side of this section of Valencia Avenue is Residential Multi-Family Medium Density, which allows multi-family residential uses at a maximum density of 40 units per acre, or 50 units per acre with Mediterranean bonus. The density of the proposed project is 37 units per acre which is well below the maximum density permitted by the Comprehensive Plan. Nothing in the proposed Zoning Code text amendment would allow uses that are not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

3. Does not allow density or intensities in excess of the densities and intensities which are permitted of the future land use category of the affected property.

As noted, the Future Land Use Map designation on the lots on the north side of Valencia Avenue is Residential Multi-Family Medium Density, which allows a density of up to 50 units per acre with Mediterranean bonus. The proposed density of 37 dwelling units per acre is well within that prescribed by the Future Land Use regulations—50 units per acre.

4. Will not cause a decline in a level of service for public infrastructure which is the subject of a concurrency requirement to a level of service which is less than the minimum requirements of the Comprehensive Plan.

The concurrency analysis previously submitted for the larger original version of the Project indicates compliance with the concurrency levels of service in the Comprehensive Plan.

5. Does not directly conflict with an objective or policy of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Project will provide residential development near transit corridors and multimodal stations and will encourage infill redevelopment project which will discourage urban sprawl and encourage reuse of underutilized parcels while encouraging walking, bicycling and public transit use. Villa Valencia promotes sound, aesthetically pleasing housing which is designed to ensure the preservation of the unique character of the City's existing neighborhoods and which is compatible with surrounding areas and the existing nearby buildings.

Proposed PAD Approval

In addition to the proposed Zoning Code text amendment, the Applicant is requesting a PAD approval for this property which is just over one acre in size. The proposed PAD will encourage harmonious and coordinated development, and will also help to facilitate a centerpiece of the revised Project, the new public park, as well as other urban design amenities.

The uses permitted under the proposed PAD are consistent with those permitted in the underlying district, MFSA. Specifically, the proposed PAD will permit multi-family dwellings and public open space. Additionally, both the height (147'5" where 150' is permitted) and density (37 dwelling units per acre where 50 dwelling units per acre are permitted) are well within the provisions of the underlying zoning regulations. Approximately 10,000 square feet along the east end of the Property will be reserved for a public park and colonnade, which includes an entry trellis feature that extends into the setback area. This inviting feature will provide an entry point for the public so that it can enjoy the public open space. The public park along with the additional landscaped areas, composing of 32% of the PAD site, exceed the requirement that at least 20% of the PAD site be landscaped open space. The site plan exceeds the required 86 parking spaces, providing 89 parking spaces. As demonstrated by the enclosed plans, architectural relief and elements are provided on all sides of the building. The parking garage provides architectural treatments—including sight-proof and decorative plantation louvers and decorative metal grates—compatible with the buildings surrounding it and there are also arcades and ample sidewalk areas.

In summary, the approvals being requested in connection with the Villa Valencia project are made with the intent of developing a high quality residential condominium building which addresses the challenges of this important transitional area which is in very close proximity to both the Central Business District and a single family residential neighborhood. We respectfully submit that this Project achieves the City goals of a responsible transition between high intensity uses and the less intense residential neighborhoods to the south and of increasing the variety of housing options available to City residents. Accordingly, we respectfully request your favorable

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consideration of this submittal and look forward to continuing to work with the City on this promising Project.

Sincerely,



Mario Garcia-Serra

Enclosures

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