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PROJECT NAME

**Amity Station Development Review**

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PROJECT NO.

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DATE OF MEETING

**N/A**

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TIME

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**Judy Johnson, Town of Chapel Hill**

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ITEMS

**RE: April 9, 2019 Development Concept Package**

**Judy-**

Thank you for the opportunity to review the most recent proposed development concept for Amity Station. In preparation for Friday's work session, I offer the following thoughts on compliance with the West Rosemary Street Development Guide:

#### **COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

Discussion of Community Benefits was intended as a case-by-case negotiation that would likely occur at a later stage. Community Benefits were defined as incentives to encourage Local Business, Homeownership, Affordable Housing and/or Cultural Identity. These considerations are very important to local stakeholders.

#### **DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

These area-wide frameworks include considering larger-scale circulation, particularly across a busy West Rosemary Street, the provision of publicly-accessible parking and open space as part of new development when possible and the encouragement of best practices of sustainable development. The proposed parking ratio is relatively low to typical developments, which may lead to concerns over spillover street parking in the neighborhood.

#### **PUBLIC REALM STANDARDS**

- 1) **Provide Sufficient Space for Pedestrians-** *it is not completely clear, but the concept plan seems it may have less than the 10 feet of clear pedestrian sidewalk circulation area recommended;*
- 2) **Provide Continuous Sidewalks-** *this standard appears to be met;*



- 3) **Require Street Tree Plantings-** *the grades on West Rosemary Street are very challenging, but the intent is to keep a five-foot “furniture/landscaping” area behind the curb to provide a visual and physical buffer to traffic and a place for street trees, lights and street furniture. The concept plan does not appear to provide this recommended area next to the curb. It would seem revisions could address this standard by re-allocating the present street frontage dimensions;*
- 4) **Provide Sufficient Amenities-** *this detail cannot yet be evaluated;*
- 5) **Add Welcoming and Safe Lighting-** *this detail cannot yet be evaluated;*
- 6) **Clearly Mark Paths & Wayfinding-** *this detail cannot yet be evaluated;*
- 7) **Provide Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings-** *this detail cannot yet be evaluated and may not be applicable unless a mid-block crossing is proposed. However, pedestrian safety should be considered for the crossing of side alleys;*
- 8) **Screen Infrastructure-** *this detail cannot yet be fully evaluated;*
- 9) **Hide or Screen Parking-** *the concept design meets this standard by locating parking underground and in the interior behind building frontage facing the street. However, the parking deck appears to protrude out on side streets, which could hopefully be mitigated from views near West Rosemary Street;*
- 10) **Manage Deliveries & Loading Areas-** *the conceptual location of Service appears to address this standard;*
- 11) **Bury Utility Lines-** *this detail cannot yet be evaluated;*
- 12) **Reduce the Number & Size of Curb Cuts-** *the concept design meets this standard by having parking access off of side streets/alleys and no entry off of West Rosemary Street.*

## **BUILDING DESIGN**

- 1) **Create a Horizontal Datum Line-** *this standard would affect the detailing of the first floor at street level, but cannot yet be fully evaluated without elevations;*
- 2) **Create Minor Setbacks Above the Datum Line-** *while conceptual, the massing model does seem to indicate a small offset above the first floor. More details could be provided. Given the height (5-6 stories) of these facades that front West Rosemary, it may be wise to consider additional variation to setbacks on upper floor(s). While variance is shown facing West Rosemary Street, additional variation of the side facades would be desired as well to break up the appearance and scale of a large building;*
- 3) **Require Entries Off of Streets or Public Spaces-** *the conceptual development appears to meet this standard by providing public open space and amenity/lobby entries facing West Rosemary Street, but more prominence could be made with a larger Lobby entry directly on West Rosemary Street;*
- 4) **Specify Spacing Between Entries-** *more details should be provided on exactly how entries will be treated and how many access points will be provided, even if some entries are secured access;*
- 5) **Specify Minimum Number of Doors & Windows-** *more details would need to be provided in elevations to evaluate this standard;*
- 6) **Encourage the Use of Canopies-** *this standard cannot yet be evaluated;*



- 7) **Allow for Pedestrian-Scale Signage and Amenities-** *this standard cannot yet be evaluated;*
- 8) **Denote Public & Private Spaces-** *this standard will need more details provided, but there seems to be an intent to denote a transition between public and semi-private space. Nunn Alley has a significant grade change at the corner and will need sensitive detailing to avoid the feeling of a “wall” at that location. We also recommend more details be provided on the Covered Public Plaza to the east of the Lobby. The apparent separation from grade level for the majority of its length would not make that space feel public, which may be acceptable if more obvious public space exists in front;*
- 9) **Discourage Excessive Window Tinting-** *this standard cannot yet be evaluated*
- 10) **Design for Vertical Bays-** *while conceptual, the massing model appears to address this standard by creating five varying masses along West Rosemary Street. As noted, side elevations would also benefit from a similar attitude;*
- 11) **Vary the Upper Cornice Heights-** *while conceptual, the massing model does not seem to indicate this intent at the moment, but with more detailed elevations it could be evaluated;*
- 12) **Provide Visual Breaks in the Façade/No Blank Walls-** *more details should be provided to fully evaluate this standard;*
- 13) **Accentuate Visible Corners-** *while conceptual, the Nunn Alley corner seems to indicate a varied treatment of this corner. The Andrew Lane corner does not appear to address this intent, but does include a ground level open space and could be evaluated with more details of the elevation provided;*
- 14) **Restrict Parking to the Rear/Interior/Below Buildings-** *this standard appears to be met by the conceptual development that places parking underground and behind building frontage;*
- 15) **Screen Service or Locate to the Rear/Underneath-** *this conceptual floor plans showing interior service and Trash screened from West Rosemary Street appear to meet this standard;*
- 16) **Screen Rooftop Units-** *this standard cannot yet be evaluated.*
- 17) **Create Transitional Height Planes-** *this standard appears to be met with the conceptual development;*
- 18) **Buffer Adjacent Residential-** *The intent of this standard seems to be generally met, but details should be provided on the specific treatment of any fences, landscaping, etc. Also, it would be good to better understand the details of how the liner building facing the neighborhood is to be detailed and accessed;*
- 19) **Follow Solar Setback Regulations-** *the setback of 15'-9” and height plane transition appears to meet this standard*

