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MEMO

DATE: APRIL 2, 2015

RE: HPZ 14-20

REQUEST FOR A CHANGE TO AN APPROVED DESIGN PACKAGE

PROPOSED EUCLID AVE. HOTEL

714 N. EUCLID AVE. TUCSON, AZ

TO: JIM MAZZOCCO, PRINCIPAL PLANNER

CITY OF TUCSON DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

201 N. STONE AVE. TUCSON, AZ 85701

Dear Jim:

As discussed at our meeting last Friday morning March 27, 2015, I am submitting this Request for a Change to an Approved Design Package pertaining to HPZ-14-20 as follows:

My client (714 Tucson LLC) has agreed to provide all required parking for hotel and retail uses on-site. Required parking per MGD/UOD and approved Traffic & Parking Statement by Curtis Lueck Assoc. = 97 spaces. The Approved Design Package includes a 2-level underground parking structure.

Detailed analysis of the 2-level below grade parking structure during Design Development phase has revealed two circumstances:

- (1) Such a construction project would create significant disruption of surrounding roads and buildings, requiring lengthy closures of: (a) at least one lane of Euclid Ave.; (b) the alley serving Geronimo Court; and (c) 4th St. entering the Tyndall Ave. garage from the west. These closures would last several months and greatly disrupt traffic flow affecting the City of Tucson and University of Arizona.
- (2) Owing to the need to shore surrounding roadways and buildings, the cost of the underground parking structure is approximately \$4,000,000., creating an untenable burden on the project budget.

We therefore request the following change to address these emergent issues:

In lieu of underground parking, install a **parking plenum** above first floor level retail/hotel lobby & drop-off. The plenum would contain mechanical equipment to robotically park cars that are brought up to the plenum by an automatic lift (please refer to attached Site/First Floor Plan). The plenum space would not be occupied by the public: the only people with access to the space would be service technicians, in the same way that an HVAC plenum containing air-handlers and ductwork would be accessed periodically by maintenance staff. Hence it does not represent an additional floor level – rather it is a mechanical equipment space.

I submit that the proposed change is **(1) as equivalent as practical to the approved feature**, in that the exterior appearance of the hotel is largely unchanged on the public sides (West, South & North). The proposed parking plenum would contain only cars and be invisible to passers-by (much as underground parking would be invisible); that is, the public won't know whether the parking is below grade or above the ceiling. We propose to maintain the approved serrated appearance of the west elevation, with a row of

matching windows across the front aligned with the hotel rooms above. From Euclid Ave. – the principle public face of the building – there would be no visible change, as the proposed change occurs internally. Changes to the north & south elevations are minimal, as illustrated on the attached revised elevations. There is no proposed change to the east elevation.

I further submit that the proposed change is **(2) an improvement to the approved feature**, in that it would avoid months of disruptions surrounding of roads & utilities and existing structures. This is a quantifiable benefit to the City, and will support greater economic activity and hence higher sales tax revenues generated during the construction period (disruptions would be costly surrounding businesses and the City alike). In this regard, the plenum concept is superior, and takes advantage of new technology: robotic parking systems eliminate the needs for ramps and circulation space so that the same number of cars can be parked on one plenum level rather than two levels underground.

I also maintain that the requested change is **(3) a reasonable response to unforeseen conditions**. Initially we had proposed to lease spaces for the proposed hotel/retail in the adjacent U of A Tyndall Ave. garage (which has 1,700 spaces). Our idea was to recognize a major public investment in parking right next to our site (the Tyndall garage is public in that it's open to the public and anyone may park there, if spaces are available, which they generally are, with the exception of home-coming and graduation – the same times our proposed hotel is also likely to be filled!). In any event, the U of A parking dept. would not discuss the possibility, and over the course of HPZ review my client agreed to provide all parking on-site. We still propose to do that – but overhead using robotic parking, rather than below ground. Attached please find drawings illustrating the requested change in our Approved Design Package:

1. Site Plan
2. Cross-Section
3. West Elevation
4. South Elevation
5. East Elevation
6. North Elevation

We therefore submit that the requested revision represents an unsubstantial change to the Approved Design Package. Thank you for your attention, and please contact me should you require further information.

Sincerely,



Bob Vint
Architect