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9. 30. 2013

Sam Beydoun
Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Transportation Public-Private Partnerships
600 E. Main Street, Suite 2120
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Rosslyn I-66 Development Capacity Evaluation

Dear Mr. Beydoun,

This letter proposal responds to your agency's Request for Information of July 3, 2013 regarding the development of air rights at the Rosslyn and East Falls Church Metro Station Areas. I am pleased to submit the attached two exhibits drawn from a more comprehensive study of a site in Rosslyn that was prepared on behalf of a prominent Arlington-based citizen and commission member in April, 2012. The purpose of the study was to consider the advantages and/or disadvantages of a parking podium as a feature of a proposed development, then under site plan review within the county's Administrative Regulation 4.1 process.

Although the parking podium was discouraged at the time by county staff per their statutory guidance, the study showed that a significant public benefit could be achieved if the podium was extended over I-66 to provide pedestrian access to the Potomac River and the National Park Service's facilities serving Roosevelt Island. That benefit, in my opinion and in the opinion of many who viewed the study, would more than mitigate the "superblock" configuration that Arlington County was seeking to avoid by recommending against a podium, particularly if a street network was incorporated to access newly configured blocks. My understanding is that staff has since pursued this strategy with the applicant.

The study also found that between 3.3- and 4-million square feet of interior space could be created on the combined site with massing that enables outstanding views from all the buildings within the master plan. The 3-D model that was created showed that a number of significant benefits could be achieved for a wide range of players and interests:

- The developer would achieve optimal square footage yield from their existing site, and with the podium, create a viable pool of parking spaces to jointly serve both sites.
- Arlington County would gain significant additional property tax base, a "signature" public square that would become a focal point for Rosslyn, and a potential high-profile urban "campus" that could meet the future needs of a significant tenant (federal agency, university or corporate user).
- The Commonwealth of Virginia would gain revenue from air rights leases (consistent with the strategy outlined in the current Request for Information).
- The immediate Rosslyn community of neighbors and workers would gain more convenient access to the compelling riverfront amenities already provided by the National Park Service.

- Regional visitors, using the nearby Metro station and parking integrated into the lid (for potential evening and weekend use) would gain easier access to the riverfront and the National Park Services facilities.
- And finally, the hypothetical plan in the study calls for an interpretive center for the use by the National Park Service in the building that lines the parking within the lid, immediately above the “lower” retail directly fronting Arlington Ridge Road. This facility (not easily discerned in the materials provided, but covered fully in the study) is situated at the level of the promenade overlooking the river, with sweeping views of the Potomac, George Washington Parkway and Roosevelt Island. As such, it would provide a much-needed showcase for a regionally-scaled park that is arguably one of the National Park Service’s most important, yet underappreciated facilities.

The study looked in detail at issues related to pedestrian and vehicular circulation in the study area and larger Rosslyn neighborhood, possible upgrades to public transportation infrastructure to accommodate the project, urban design, provision of cultural and open space amenities, phasing (see attached for a related exhibit) and cost. Owing to limitations of time and resources, however, the study stopped short of extensive technical and economic analysis. The general sense from the study is that, with sufficient building capacity possible due to the presence of tall buildings in the immediate vicinity (and therefore a precedent for future zoning), there would be enough additional rent revenue created within the I-66 air-rights site to pay for the cost of the lid. Whether there would be enough revenue to satisfy the state’s expectations for air rights fees and also for the community benefit contribution that is customary within Arlington County’s 4.1 site plan review process is an open question.

The latter point, however, raises some interesting and important policy issues: Although Arlington County has been a leader in the creation of highly successful Smart-Growth districts that involve the densification of existing urban areas, the municipality currently lacks an agency with true redevelopment powers that’s able to acquire and hold land for the purpose of redevelopment, negotiate in the public interest with other units of government and perform other functions that may be key to implementing a public-private project like the one described in this study. That said, a proactive state-level initiative to advance a high-profile local development is not without precedent: New York’s Battery Park City, a successful mixed-use community built on fill from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey’s earlier construction of the World Trade Center, was spearheaded by New York State’s Urban Development Corporation, a state authority with powers that superseded local municipal regulation.

In submitting the attached, I am aware that, per your RFI, other submissions will likely be coming from *“firms that have experience in developing large-scale real estate development projects, especially involving development of Air Rights over active highway and transit corridors.”* Operating as an individual consultant, my situation is rather different. But I offer my study in the spirit of your verbal request from our phone call, paraphrased as: *“We’re looking for ideas.”*

The full study from which the two attached images are drawn provides a number of catalytic ideas that could inform a future Request for Proposal. Since my original study was in the form of a power point presentation and not a written report, and no party has stepped forward to fund a more complete written report, I offer this submission as a mere preview. Upon your agency’s request, I am willing to

present my full study to either a private or public audience, and/ or be videotaped, as appropriate to your needs.

I look forward to discussing this project with you and your colleagues in the future and exploring the further potential of the ideas showcased in the study. From my time living and working in the Washington DC region, I know that Arlington possesses an active and engaged citizenry and a strong and creative development community. By entering the full study into the public record, my hope is that it will stimulate new thinking by many; that those who view the presentation will recognize the win-win possibilities that robust real estate development *and* the creation of an enhanced public realm over the I-66 air rights could achieve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Katz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Katz

Attachments with E-mail:

Two exhibits from Rosslyn, Virginia, I-66 Development Capacity Evaluation

Specific responses to information requested:

Point of contact is Peter Katz, per information on letterhead, page 1

Firm background:

As strategic consultant to government, public agencies and private-sector clients, Peter Katz addresses real-world needs with state-of-the-art planning practices. In so doing, he has played a key role in shaping and implementing a range of nationally significant community design and development projects.

Such projects include the master plan and codes for the recently completed \$375 million-dollar transit village at Contra Costa Center (Walnut Creek, CA) where Katz served as lead advisor to Contra Costa County. Prior to his involvement, that project was stalled due to NIMBY opposition for almost 20 years. The joint public-private development project received the American Planning Association's national award for excellence in implementation in 2012. Other recent projects where Katz acted in an advisory role include the Columbia Pike corridor redevelopment in Arlington, VA and the Upper Rock District in Rockville, MD.

Peter Katz's professional expertise extends to the field of real estate marketing. He has created marketing plans for several high-profile projects including two highly successful HUD Hope VI communities—Park DuValle in Louisville, KY and CityWest in Cincinnati, OH. Working for the Province of Ontario, Canada, Katz created the marketing plan for Cornell, a 3,000-acre master-planned community outside Toronto.

As a thought leader and advocate for better community planning, Peter Katz played a catalytic role in launching the New Urbanism, a movement that *The New York Times* called “the most important phenomenon to emerge in American architecture in the post-Cold War era.” He wrote the seminal book that initially defined the movement, *The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community*. In 1991, Katz convened the founding board members of CNU (Congress for the New Urbanism) to plan the organization and its initial series of “congresses.” He was later asked by CNU’s board to serve as the organization’s first Executive Director. During Katz’s tenure, CNU adopted its charter, obtained its first grant funding, began a strategic partnership with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and convened its first international congress.

In 1991, on behalf of the Local Government Commission, Katz initiated and co-edited *The Ahwahnee Principles*, one of the earliest statement of principles and policies related to sustainable community-building practices. It has been adopted by over 120 cities and counties in the western United States. Katz is an associate member of the Citistates Group, a national network of speakers under the leadership of syndicated columnist Neal Peirce. He is also the founding president of the Form-Based Codes Institute, a national alliance advancing an emerging approach to development regulation.