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July 21, 2021

Will Randle
Village of Okemos, LLC
2410 Woodlake Drive, Ste. 440
Okemos, MI 48864

**Re: Village of Okemos – Minor Amendments
Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #21-19024-2 & Special Use Permit #21-19051-2**

Dear Mr. Randle,

I have completed my review of the minor amendments to the Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) #21-19024-2 and the Special Use Permit (SUP) #21-19051-2 for the Village of Okemos development. The proposed amendments include the following changes to the development:

- A decrease in the total square footage of buildings from 295,855 square feet to 201,080 square feet, a reduction of 32.1 percent.
- A decrease in commercial square footage from 32,860 square feet to 17,160 square feet, of which 6,360 square feet is proposed to be rear, lower level space along Ardmore. This represents a reduction of 47.8%, leaving commercial space to comprise 8.5% of the project. The entire reduction of commercial space would be on the first floor of the Hamilton Road buildings, converting 18,000 square feet of space to lobby and 'flex space' that could be used for residential units.
- A decrease in dwelling units from 286 units to 200 units. Overall residential density decreased from 71.7 dwelling units per acre to 50 dwelling units per acre.
- Removal of the parking structures from the project. The total number of parking spaces required for the project decreased from 659 spaces to 397 spaces. 453 parking spaces are proposed, down from 555 spaces, which includes 119 surface parking spaces located on the block to the west, identified as Block 3 on the submitted site plans.
- The buildings along Okemos Road would be removed from the initial phase and moved to a future construction phase. Their future reintroduction would include commercial on the first floor of the buildings, per your letter of June 8, 2021.
- The building at Ardmore and Methodist would be added to the initial phase, when previously is was in a future phase.

Pursuant to ordinance requirements, the Director of Planning and Community Development held a public hearing on the minor amendment on July 7, 2021. At that meeting, Staff received mixed feedback from the

general public. Notable concerns were with respect to the reduced commercial space, the lack of buildings on Okemos Road, the overall process for the amendment, and the desire of the community for a true commercial area downtown. Notable comments of support included the desire to get the project moving, a desire to have the Township incentivize the commercial space to make it work, and a desire to avoid a long term vacant space in the heart of the community.

At this time, in my role as the Director of Community Planning and Development, I am **approving in part the proposed minor amendments to MUPUD #21-19024-2 and SUP #21-19051-2**. The following changes are not approved:

- The removal of the buildings on Okemos Road is not permitted without a major amendment being approved by the Township Board.
- The conversion of the commercial space to flex/residential space along Hamilton Road is not permitted without a major amendment being approved by the Township Board.

The following changes are approved:

- The removal of the fifth story on all of the buildings is approved.
- The removal of the parking structures for the project is approved.
- The inclusion of the building at Ardmore and Methodist is conditionally approved, pending parking calculations being provided showing the parking can still meet parking requirements within the parameters of previously approved parking waivers. If parking cannot be accommodated at this time, both Ardmore buildings are permitted to be shifted to phase 2 of the project.
- Adding commercial space to the first floor of the buildings on Okemos Road is permitted, but not required. The current approved plans for the two buildings on Okemos Road include first floor residential uses.
- The increase in impervious surface on the property by 1.47% is conditionally approved, pending redesign of the site incorporating the other items in this review letter. The impervious surface shall not be increased beyond the amount shown on the plans from KEBS, Inc dated 6/9/21.

The following factors were considered during the review of the amendments:

- The amendment as initially proposed would alter the character of the development, so only partial approval is appropriate, to keep the project consistent with the MUPUD and SUP approved by the Township Board on July 9, 2019.
- The daily vehicle trips will not be increased by the proposed reduction in project size.
- The change to the total size of the buildings will have no significant impact on the design or use of the buildings and there will be no adverse impact to existing neighboring uses.

- The reduction in commercial space for the project would have a substantial impact on the project. Eliminating commercial space on Hamilton Road will fundamentally change the nature of the development and cannot be approved administratively.
- The Zoning Ordinance allows for parking to be within 500 feet of an entrance to a building. Parking on Block 3 is within the limit of the ordinance. The MUPUD ordinance encourages shared parking with adjoining properties where possible.
- The MUPUD overlay for the Okemos Downtown area allows for a higher density per acre of residential dwelling units.

The approval is contingent on the following:

1. The applicant shall submit revised plans, detailing the partial approval outlined in this letter. The plan set shall include the following:
 - a. Revised plans from KEBS, Inc, to include an Overall plan, Dimension plan, Utility plan, Storm plan, Pervious/Impervious plan, Amenities plan, and Existing Features plan.
 - b. Revised elevations and floor plans to replace the plans from by Hobbs & Black Architects, Presley Architecture an M Architects dated November 25, 2020.
 - c. A landscape plan, outlining the details of the amenities being proposed and referenced on the Amenities plan from KEBS, Inc dated 6/9/21.
2. A total of 32,860 square feet of nonresidential space remaining in the project on the first floor of the Hamilton Road and Okemos Road buildings. The 6,360 square feet of lower level space at Hamilton and Ardmore will be counted towards this requirement.
3. All of the waivers originally approved by the Township Board from their meeting on July 9, 2019 remain in effect.
4. All other applicable conditions of Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19024 and Special Use Permit #19051 shall remain in effect.

In summary, the following is the current approved development scheme for the project, after the minor amendment partial approval:

- Buildings along Okemos Road are required, four stories in height, with nonresidential or residential permitted on the first floor, consistent with the November 25, 2020 plans from KEBS, Inc that were previously approved by the Township.
- Buildings along Hamilton Road are required, four stories in height, with nonresidential space on the first floor largely consistent with the November 25, 2020 plans from KEBS, Inc that were previously approved by the Township.
- Buildings along Ardmore Avenue, four stories in height, conditionally permitted, pending parking calculations showing that the parking required and parking provided still would fit within the previously approved parking waiver for the project.
- Streetscape enhancements along Hamilton Road still required.
- Transit stop on Okemos Road still required.
- Parking structures (above or below ground) not required.
- A total of 32,860 square feet of nonresidential space is required in the project.

Please note: No building permits will be issued until all comments from the site plan review letters have been addressed and the plans have been approved by the Director of Community Planning and Development.

A person aggrieved by the decision of the Director of Community Planning and Development on a minor amendment may be appealed to the Township Board. An appeal must be filed within ten (10) days of the Director of Community Planning and Development's decision in accordance with Section 86-188 of the Code of Ordinances. The minor amendments to the MUPUD and SUP will not become valid until July 31, 2021.

The next step in the process is to submit for site plan review. No construction shall commence prior to site plan approval and issuance of all necessary permits. The effective date of MUPUD #21-19024-2 and SUP #21-19051-2 is the date of the Director of Community Planning and Developments approval, July 21, 2021. If construction has not commenced within two years after the effective date the approval shall be void, except an extension may be considered if a written request is submitted to the Department of Community Planning and Development prior to the expiration date.

If you have any questions regarding this matter please contact me at 517-853-4506 or by email at schmitt@meridian.mi.us.

Sincerely,



Timothy R. Schmitt, AICP
Director of Community Planning & Development

Cc: Frank Walsh, Township Manager
Derek Perry, Deputy Township Manager
Younes Ishraidi, Chief Engineer
Tavis Millerov, Fire Marshal
John Heckaman, Chief Building Inspector
Allen J. Patrick, KEBS, Inc.