



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**City Commission Agenda Memo**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

**#13-0761**

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**DATE:** November 19, 2013

**TITLE:** Resolution to Approve a Site Plan Level IV Development Permit – Vintro Hotel - Case 70R12

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the City Commission adopt a resolution approving the issuance of a Site Plan Level IV Development Permit.

**Background**

The City Commission will determine whether the proposed development or use meets the standards and requirements of the Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR) and criteria for development in the Central Beach.

The applicant proposes a hotel with a 500 square-foot bar/lounge and a 2,000 square-foot restaurant located along Alhambra Street, between Seabreeze Boulevard and N. Birch Road, in the A-1-A Beachfront Area (ABA) zoning district. The development consists of a thirteen-story (164-feet, four inches) structure with parking on the first and second floors.

The Development Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the proposal on October 9, 2012. All requirements of the ULDR and DRC comments have been addressed. The site plan was subsequently reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) on March 20, 2013. The associated plans, corresponding project narratives are provided as Exhibit 1. The staff report and meeting minutes are attached as Exhibits 2 and 3 respectively. The PZB recommended denial of the application by a vote of 4-3.

Since the PZB meeting, the applicant is proposing modifications to the site plan to address comments and concerns raised at the meeting regarding building mass and queuing of traffic and loading, among others. The proposed revisions create a better pedestrian environment and help the hotel use function more efficiently. The proposed site plan with modifications since the Planning and Zoning Board review is provided as Exhibit 4. The modifications are described in detail in applicant's supplemental narrative and elevation renderings attached as Exhibit 5, and are generally outlined below:

- The total number of hotel rooms has been reduced from 69 to 61, thereby reducing the total number of parking spaces from 53 to 47;
- The total building square footage has been reduced from 52,475 square feet to 49,963 square feet, thereby reducing the building's floor area ratio from 4.2 to 4.0;
- The building's facades have been refined to include additional fenestration including windows and glass to lighten the building's mass and emphasize its vertical orientation, which is now more apparent on the north side of the building, where eight of the units have been removed;
- An additional two feet of sidewalk has been added onsite along Alhambra Street, creating a wider seven-foot wide sidewalk;
- A twelve-foot, five inches wide truck loading area, which has been designed to function as a covered pedestrian plaza space, when not in use for loading, has been introduced on the west side of the building;
- The distance between the ground floor and the second floor increased from 13 feet to 14 feet in order to provide additional vehicular clearance and the distance between the third floor and the fourth floor was decreased by one foot in order to maintain the height of the building.

### **Compliance with Unified Land Development Regulations**

Pursuant to ULDR Section 47-12.5.B, The A-1-A Beachfront Area District is established for the purpose of promoting high-quality destination resort uses that reflect the desired character of the Fort Lauderdale Beach and improvements along A-1-A. General uses in this district include hotels, restaurants and commercial uses offering services and goods for tourists and visitors. The proposed hotel and restaurant use is complementary to the resort atmosphere in the Central Beach Regional Activity Center.

Pursuant to ULDR Section 47-12.5.B.1.c, the minimum side and rear yard setbacks in the ABA zoning district shall be no less than an amount equal to one-half the height of the building, unless otherwise approved as a Site Plan Level IV development. For the proposed 164-foot, four inches structure, this would create an 82-foot, two inches setbacks on the side and rear of the building. As part of the request for a Site Plan Level IV development permit, the applicant proposes 10 foot setbacks on the sides and a 20 foot setback in the rear.

Pursuant to ULDR Section 47-12.6.B, the following criteria shall apply for developments in the Central Beach:

1. It shall first be determined whether the proposed development or use is compatible with the character of the overall plan of development contemplated by the revitalization plan for the central beach area;
2. It shall then be determined whether the architectural design of the proposed development is compatible with the design guidelines provided in Sec. 47-25.3. The design guidelines provided in Sec. 47-25.3 are intended to provide a framework for design review of proposed developments and outline the design elements, which have been determined to be compatible with the revitalization plan;

3. The design guidelines provided in this section are not intended to be exclusive. Alternative architectural and design concepts outlined in the development application will be considered during review of the development application. It shall be the applicant's burden to show that the proposed alternative architectural and design concepts are compatible with the character of the overall plan of development contemplated by the revitalization plan for the central beach area and not incompatible with the design guidelines provided in this section;
4. It shall then be determined whether the proposed development incorporates design or architectural elements, which mitigate the development's impacts, if any, on existing uses in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development;
5. The goal of the City in the adoption of the revitalization plan is to facilitate development of the central beach area as a world-class destination resort. The primary objective of the design review shall be to implement the overall plan of development and to foster redevelopment as contemplated in the revitalization plan.

In addition, as per ULDR Sec. 47-25.3.A.3.e.i.b, consideration shall be given to the recommendations of the adopted neighborhood master plan in which the proposed development is to be located, or which it abuts. The draft Central Beach Master Plan is intended to take the place of previous plans for the Central Beach area, and the applicant took certain efforts to accommodate the intent of the Master Plan guidelines as well as the architectural design criteria of the code, as further outlined below.

The proposed design of the project has a 32 foot, six inches shoulder pedestal, providing a pedestrian scale at the lower levels, and incorporates Miami Modern "MiMo" architectural style elements such as cantilevers, a spiral stair motif, glass walls and decorative screening elements. The project's vertical plane is moderated through the use of balconies, fenestration, a roof garden and eyebrow projections. At least one form of moderation is used every three stories. The ground level includes an open plaza and seating, with landscaping, a water feature and shading devices to help create an active, vibrant and comfortable pedestrian environment at the street level, and which responds to the principles of pedestrian oriented street design outlined in the Central Beach Master Plan.

The project is located in the Mid-Beach character area, which has a defining characteristic of resort, hotel and residential uses for this district. The project is responsive to the building design guidelines of the Master Plan by maintaining a street wall length of 85 feet, which is less than the maximum 200 feet. The building floor plate is approximately 4,000 square feet, which is significantly less than the maximum of 16,000 square feet for hotels above 65 feet in height in the Mid-Beach Area. In addition, the building provides active ground-level uses and screens two levels of parking above with a decorative metal screening solution.

The proposed structure will help improve the visual experience with prominent architecture and an active, human-scale pedestrian environment. The Vintro Hotel proposal, together with other recently approved projects in the Central Beach Area, can

help to support a setting for a more cohesive and vibrant environment, as well as an enhanced resort atmosphere for residents and tourists alike.

The applicant has submitted narratives regarding the project’s compliance with Section 47-25.2, Adequacy Requirements, and Section 47-25.3, Neighborhood Compatibility Requirements, attached with the site plan and submittal material, to assist the Commission in determining if the proposal meets these criteria.

The neighborhood compatibility criteria include performance standards requiring all developments to be “compatible with, and preserve the character and integrity of adjacent neighborhoods...include improvements or modifications either on-site or within the public rights-of-way to mitigate adverse impacts, such as traffic, noise, odors, shadow, scale, visual nuisances, or other similar adverse effects to adjacent neighborhoods. These improvements or modifications may include, but shall not be limited to, the placement or orientation of buildings and entryways, parking areas, buffer yards, alteration of building mass, and the addition of landscaping, walls, or both, to ameliorate such impacts”. A context plan and perspective renderings depicting the height, mass, scale, shadow, materials and details, etc. of the proposed development as it relates to surrounding properties have also been provided with the site plan submittal.

The properties to the north, south, east and west are all zoned A-1-A Beachfront Area (ABA) zoning district. Overall, the buildings surrounding the site range from two to sixteen stories. Directly to the northeast of the project site is a sixteen-story multi-family building with a significantly higher mass and floor plate size than the proposed building. Other buildings on the block between Seville Street and Alhambra Street are two, three and four-stories in height. Across Alhambra Street to the south is a three-story multifamily building and a surface parking lot. The proposed project is generally compatible with the mass and scale of structures in the surrounding vicinity and throughout the Mid-Beach Character Area.

**Transportation & Mobility**

As per ULDR Sec. 47-20, Parking Requirements, a total of 47 parking spaces are required for the proposed uses, based on recently approved hotel and bar parking rates adopted for the Central Beach area, as follows:

(61) hotel units	@ 0.67 spaces per room	=	40.87
Bar/Lounge	@ 1 space per 76 SF	=	6.58

TOTAL: (47.45) 47 parking spaces required

The applicant is providing 48 parking spaces in the garage located on the first and second floors, exceeding the parking requirement by one space. The project incorporates new parking technologies that include hydraulic lifts allowing two vehicles to occupy the same parking space on all but six of the garage’s 48 parking spaces. A car freight elevator provides access to the 38 second-floor parking spaces. The applicant will execute a valet

parking agreement for 100% of the project's parking.

According to the trip generation study performed by the applicant's traffic consultant, Hughes Hughes Inc., the project is projected to generate 32 trips during the morning peak hour, and 37 trips during the afternoon peak hour, with a total of 173 daily trips. The applicant anticipates that these volumes will be lower based on the project's location within a destination environment in the Central Beach Regional Activity Center and with future clientele utilizing alternate means of transportation such as taxis. If the project is approved, 444 available trips will remain (including all pending projects) in the Central Beach Regional Activity Center for future development. The trip generation study is attached as Exhibit 6.

According to the applicant's parking system evaluation study, performed by Hughes Hughes Inc., the roadway network providing access to the project site has adequate capacity to accommodate the estimated traffic. To help ensure that traffic associated with the restaurant is kept to a minimum, the applicant proposes to put transportation demand management (TDM) programs in place, including incentives to encourage patrons to bike to the site, and employees to bike, ride the bus or carpool to work, with a heavy emphasis on reducing employee trips. The parking system evaluation study is provided as Exhibit 7.

The applicant has worked with staff on additional means to improve pedestrian connectivity in the immediate area of the development, and has committed to pay \$50,000 towards streetscape improvements, prior to the issuance of a master building permit. The funds will be utilized towards enhancing pedestrian connectivity, including engineering design, permit fees, bonds and engineering construction support, as well as street trees and other landscaping, and will encompass improvements adjacent to the City's Sebastian parking lot.

In addition, safety enhancements in accordance with the Safety Study for the District prepared by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will also be incorporated and will include elements such as bollards, signage and signal treatments at the intersection of Alhambra Street and State Road A-1-A in close proximity to the project.

Together, the proposed public realm enhancements will improve the pedestrian environment by enhancing connectivity along Alhambra Street, which provides an east-west connection between the Intracoastal Waterway and the beach.

Should the City Commission approve the development, staff is recommending the following conditions:

1. Execute a Valet Parking Agreement prior to CO for 100% of the project's parking;
2. Prior to Final DRC, applicant will submit a valet parking procedures document for review and approval by the City's Transportation and Mobility Department, that will identify, among other policies, specific individual valet assignments by number, location and shift in accordance with the approved procedures to ensure proper staffing for valet parking operations;

3. Execute an Off-Site Parking Agreement with City or private property owner prior to CO that provides an additional two standard parking spaces at an off-site location near the site for emergency temporary use. Further, prior to CO provide evidence of a private or public long-term parking agreement to accommodate up to 47 spaces (8 downstairs always accessible and 39 cars off-site for extended emergencies);
4. Adopt and incorporate transportation demand management (TDM) programs set forth in the May 6, 2013 Hughes Hughes, Inc. Parking System Evaluation;
5. Waste/recycling pickup and truck loading hours are restricted so that loading activities do not occur on site prior to 7:00 AM or after 8:00 PM;
6. A three-year minimum service maintenance agreement for the vehicle elevator and lift system equipment shall be provided to the City's Engineering Division prior to CO. Said agreement will specify the frequency of regular maintenance, the guaranteed response time to emergencies, and the minimum technician qualifications to the satisfaction of Engineering Staff, said specifications to be agreed to prior to final DRC. The applicant and successors shall maintain a similar service agreement for the life of the development program;
7. Prior to issuance of a C.O., a backup up generator shall be provided to service the elevator and lifts in the event of a power outage;
8. Prior to issuance of a C.O., a two-foot sidewalk easement shall be provided to ensure a total seven-foot wide sidewalk along Alhambra Street along the frontage of the project;
9. Prior to issuance of a master building permit, the applicant shall contribute \$50,000 toward pedestrian connectivity improvements in the vicinity of the development which may include the Sebastian Lot project. The funds may be utilized towards engineering design, permit fees, bonds and engineering construction support, as well as street trees and other landscaping;
10. As per the Broward County Historical Commission recommendation, any ground disturbance activity on the project, including disturbances which may occur during site preparation, demolition and construction be monitored by a qualified professional and conform to the Florida Division of Historical Resources, Cultural Resource Management Standards for such work. The archeological monitor will observe ground disturbance activities for unanticipated archeological discoveries and will be required to complete a project monitoring report, including dates and times of monitoring as well as site observations to be submitted to the Broward County Historical Commission for review.

### **Resource Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action

### **Strategic Connections**

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Here. We are an urban center and a vacationland in the heart of South Florida.*

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 – Site Plan and narratives presented to PZB

Exhibit 2 – Staff Report from the March 20, 2013 Planning and Zoning Board Meeting

Exhibit 3 – Minutes from the March 20, 2013 Planning and Zoning Board Meeting

Exhibit 4 – Site Plan and narratives with modifications since PZB

Exhibit 5 – Applicant's Supplemental Narrative

Exhibit 6 – Trip Generation Study and Parking Calculations

Exhibit 7 – Parking System Evaluation

Exhibit 8 – Resolution to Approve

Exhibit 9 – Resolution to Deny

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