

Pre-Application Narrative for 4085, 4101 and 4103 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax City, VA 22030

Introduction

The Christopher Companies (“Christopher”), a local homebuilding company founded in 1974, is the contract purchaser of three properties located at 4085, 4101 and 4103 Chain Bridge Road totaling 2.52 acres. The property located at 4085 contains .8554 acres and is improved with a 6-story office building built in 1968 containing 25,194 square feet. The property located at 4101 Chain Bridge Road contains .2958 acres and is improved with a 3-story office building built in 1960 containing 11,340 square feet. The property located at 4103 Chain Bridge Road contains 1.3691 acres and is improved with a 5-story office building built in 1978 containing 48,000 square feet. The topography of the site is relatively significant, falling approximately 20’ from Chain Bridge Road to University Drive, an approximate 10% grade differential.

Small Area Plan Recommendations

The Subject Property is located within the boundaries of the Old Town Fairfax Activity Center and the Old Town South area as described in The Old Town Small Area Plan (the “SAP”) adopted 6/23/20. The Old Town Small Area Plan provides guidance for the new development including desired mix of uses, recommended height and density, building typologies, street locations, multi-modal connections, infrastructure improvements, parking and open space. A key planning recommendation for the Old Town South area is the creation of a green way – service street (the “Greenway”) that will run between and parallel to Chain Bridge Road and University Drive that can serve as a community backyard for the new mixed-use buildings. The plan recommends a tailored approach to height limits by establishing a lower height limit setback of 4 stories closer to adjacent residential communities. Areas not close to adjacent residential structures are recommended to have a 6- story height limit. The plan encourages a mixed-use activity center that centers and anchors the surrounding communities. As stated in the plan, “Transitioning to a more balanced mix of uses will help create a better sense of place, bring more activity around the clock, potentially reduce single-use peak traffic and help create more dynamic public spaces. The existing offices would be greatly enhanced by additional daytime retail, including restaurants, and a larger nearby residential population.”

Christopher @ Fairfax City

Christopher @ Fairfax City is a proposed mixed-use development including retail, office and apartments. The development will feature a 5-story building over a 2-story high retail/amenity space at street level with 2 levels of underground parking garage along Chain Bridge Road, transitioning to a 3-story building over 2 level townhomes along University Drive. The entry from Chain Bridge Road passes under a third level bridge connecting Buildings 1 and 3 before opening into an expansive internal courtyard. This is the central hub of the project – inviting pedestrians and visitors into a spacious outdoor plaza providing the opportunity for al fresco dining and additional retail space as well as lobbies

for the 2-story office complex and residential buildings. An auto court provides limited retail parking while also allowing for emergency vehicle access.

Another important component is The Greenway which links this internal courtyard with future development areas located north and south of the property. This is a pedestrian and community oriented space lined with trees and plantings along with unique paving materials and benches as it meanders through the property. It also features a bridge on its south entry which links Buildings 1 and 2 at the second level.

The University Drive entry will provide primary vehicular access to the property. Cars entering the development from University Drive will be able to access the two levels of parking garage from the main travel way or continue to the ground level plaza on Chain Bridge Road. Building 2 will feature two-story residential townhomes along University Drive to provide compatibility with the residential townhouse units located on the east side of University Drive. The apartments above step back a total of four times, transitioning in height from University Drive towards Chain Bridge Road.

In total, the project will contain 254 apartments and 3 townhouses along with 26,391 square feet of office, 7,395 square feet of retail and 4,465 square feet of amenity area.

Substantial Conformance With The Comprehensive Plan

The proposed development is in substantial conformance with the Comprehensive Plan (the "Plan"), as it advances several of the Plan's stated objectives. The mixed-use development will contribute to the creation of a balanced activity center, thereby advancing one of the five Key Ideas of the SAP. The introduction of a larger residential population along with retail, restaurants, and office space will greatly enhance the existing neighborhood and the City of Fairfax as a whole - providing active streets and public amenities. Along with the interior courtyard, this project becomes a destination place. Furthermore, The Greenway will function as a shared pedestrian alley with a public walking path linking the block to the courtyard within and creating a pedestrian connected network. This use continues the existing character of Old Town – with its numerous unique alleys - while providing the community with a multi-use space. While the buildings exceed the recommended height in the SAP due, in part, to the significant topography of the site, its unique location adjacent to the Judicial Complex and in proximity to some of the tallest building in the City makes it appropriate in the context of the surrounding area. Fairfax County ultimately intends to develop the Judicial Complex with a number of buildings, the heights of which are currently unknown. Given that there are very few residential buildings in the vicinity of the Subject Property to be adversely impacted, the additional height in this area is appropriate. The proposed development will provide the City with a signature mixed-use project as envisioned by the comprehensive plan.