



March 23, 2022

To: Triangle Association Coalition

C/o Judi Kahn

Cc: Alex Wolking, Hon James Cappleman, Rosa Haraf, Suzi Hunter

Re: Response to Triangle Association Letter of August 26, 2021

The Immaculata Redevelopment team appreciates your efforts in reviewing and commenting on the proposed development and your work on behalf of the buildings within your coalition. We worked hard throughout the community process to address each of the questions you have raised and provided responses at the various meetings with members of the community. I also want to apologize for the delay in responding to your comments, but as you are undoubtedly aware these have been and continue to be challenging times not only because of Covid-19 but also the financial conditions caused by of escalating construction costs and increased affordable housing requirements. The project team believes it has successfully navigated the financial conditions faced by the development and is now in the position, working with you, the Alderman and City to move forward with the development.

The Immaculata Building is indeed a neighborhood treasure. From inception, a key component of the proposed development has been its preservation. The Immaculata Building, however, has long been underutilized and is in great need of repair and modernization. The significant costs involve necessitate additional development on the site.

In conceiving a viable and efficient re-use of the property, the development team's focused not only on preservation of the Immaculata Building but a re-use that was compatible with the area and was cognizant of the traffic conditions in the area. Generally, the area is primarily a residential neighborhood, a consistent pattern along Chicago's Lakefront. The areas near DuSable Lake Shore Drive generally are of higher density. The area transit features and nearby amenities, including the Lakefront Parks, provide a strong basis for a transit-oriented development that brings additional residents to the area with a low volume of attendant traffic.

We believe that the proposed development, as revised, meets all these goals. The proposed building has been reviewed by City, State and federal landmark agencies. The design as most recently presented to the community addressed all their comments and was viewed as consistent with the landmark nature of the Immaculata Building. Residential reuse focused on smaller units in the Immaculata Building and a senior building results in the low traffic impact, likely lower than another combination of uses. It does "balance" the preservation goal and the neighborhood traffic and parking concerns and does so in a way that is viable and in keeping with the character of development along Chicago's Lakefront.



Following are responses to your specific points:

1) Building Height

The Senior Building's height is a product of various considerations, including its relationship to the landmark Immaculata building, the context presented by the immediate environs and the program requirements for a viable development. During the review of the original proposal for the site, the City's Department of Planning and Development ("DPD"), including its landmarks staff, suggested that we achieve as slender a profile as possible and alter the buildings shape from rectilinear to the current "L" shape. A more slender profile provides greater separation from nearby buildings, allows for greater light penetration and reduces wind impacts. We believed the originally proposed height at 27-stories was consistent with an immediate area that includes the 3950 N. Lakeshore Drive at approximately 23 stories, Park Place at approximately 56 stories, Lake Park Condominium at approximately 30 stories and 4100 N. Marine Drive at approximately 19 stories. Nevertheless, as a result of community comments, the proposed Senior Building's height was reduced by 5 stories, representing a reduction of 60 feet. The building as now proposed is 22 stories, plus a penthouse, comparing very favorably to the referenced area buildings. It is setback 50 feet from Bittersweet, and the upper levels are setback approximately 120 feet from the Pattington. We believe we have drawn a good balance among all the interests and a further reduction in height is not possible.

2) Parking

We have committed that 15 parking spaces within the development will be made available for use by Bittersweet residents (and/or as a first priority current parking renters), and then secondarily by others in the community. The parking that is being provided is calibrated to the anticipated demand generated by the development. Making 15 spaces available to Bittersweet residents/community members can be accommodated, committing to more, however, could result in insufficient parking being available for the development. Building more parking cannot be accommodated in the budget as it is expensive (over \$50,000 per space), and also would add to the height of the building's larger base. We can commit that if after the project is fully occupied, there are unused spaces, those "extra" spaces also will be made available to Bittersweet residents/community members.

3) Density

The Immaculata Building being programmed to contain studios and one bedroom units was based on a focus on transit-oriented residential use. From a traffic and parking demand perspective, the key factor is population. Larger units generally accommodate



a higher population. In addition, families particularly with children tend to have more cars than singles or empty-nesters. Again, among the development team's key focus, and common themes during community responses, were preservation of the landmark and reducing parking demand and traffic impacts. The focus on studio and one-bedroom units, as well as having a senior focused building, furthers these goals.

We have, however, seriously considered the community's comments about density. As a result, the number of units in the project has been significantly reduced. The original proposal contained 495 total units, with 275 units in the Immaculata Building and 220 units in the Senior Building. The number of units has now been reduced to 437 units a reduction of 58 units. Of these units, 245 would be located in the Immaculata Building and 192 in the Senior Building. In addition, again in response to community comments, we have added five two-bedroom units in the Immaculata Building.

4) Community Access

The auditorium within the existing Immaculata Building will be made available to the community for its gatherings. As the auditorium is private space within what will be a residential building, the types of gathering will be limited to those that are consistent with the nature of the space. In an effort to simplify reservation of the space, we believe that it would be helpful to have a local organization be the conduit through which requests are coordinated with building management. If it is willing and considered appropriate, we suggest that Buena Park Neighbors be such coordinating entity.

5) Community Benefit

Providing commercial and retail space in the base of the Senior Building introduces another use; a new type of use along Bittersweet that has the potential of generating unwanted traffic or parking demand. We believe that it is best to concentrate those uses along established commercial corridors, particularly in the current market where retail and commercial space is in low demand.

6) Aesthetics

Acknowledging that the aesthetics are frequently "in the eye of the beholder", the Senior Building's shape, location and exterior design have been extensively studied by the project architects and reviewed by DPD landmark and design review teams. It also has been preliminarily reviewed by the State historic preservation staff and by the federal landmark staff. The shape, location and exterior design were modified to address all comments received.



ACOSTA EZGUR, LLC

1030 West Chicago Avenue, Third Floor ■ Chicago, Illinois 60642 ■ 312-327-3350 o ■ 312-327-3315 f

The Senior Building's design follows a basic principle of balancing between compatibility and differentiation so that the new building fits with the landmark and also that it is clear what is the original landmark and what came later. It also must and does respond aesthetically to the overall context provided by other buildings in the area, including nearby high-rises. The current design provides a more solid base that is compatible with masonry materials used in the Immaculata Building and the pallet of the buildings along the south side of Irving Park and along Bittersweet. The glassier tower portion contains some elements that evokes the fenestration and vertical lines of the Immaculata Building (which itself has two different styles) and differentiates it from the base. It also blends well into to the other high-rises in the neighborhood. We do not believe that converting the entire design to a more masonry exterior will be as aesthetically pleasing or achieve the desired goals.

In sum, we believe that the proposed development does provide a sustainable, thoughtful redevelopment of the site that preserves the Immaculata Building, adds a state-of-the-art senior building that fits within the neighborhood's character and balances the various interests well.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 312-636-6937 or rolando@acostaezgur.com should you have any questions or wish to further discuss any aspect of the development.

Sincerely,

Rolando R. Acosta

Rolando R. Acosta