

**City of Bloomington Planning Department
Formal DRC Review Project Narrative
Alpha B Site, Bloomington, MN**

March 4, 2015

The following is a brief project narrative outlining our proposed uses and the redevelopment of the 4.45 acre site currently referred to as “Alpha B” on the corner of Lindau Lane and 24th Street in Bloomington MN. Over the last two years we have worked closely with the Port Authority and City officials to help realize a vision for a denser, mixed-use development that helps meet the needs of the growing South Loop District. This collaboration has explored a number of development scenarios with the intent to deliver denser mixed-use development in the spirit of the new LX code and with the intent to advance the thinking gathered in the 2011 South Loop District Plan.

With the help of the City and Port Authority we believe we have gathered some dynamic users to add to the entertainment and utilitarian needs of the growing future residential base in the neighborhood. The site had the challenges of significant environmental noise, a current lack of significant “rooftop” population, height and residential prohibitions imposed by the Airport Authority, and being bordered generally by the airport, two highways, and wetlands. That said we feel strongly that the neighborhood has the potential to achieve momentum in attracting residents, businesses, and visitors. The expanding Mall of America, a healthy international airport, and the careful planning and investment by the Port Authority and City in recycling blighted properties and adding dynamic streetscapes and transit oriented features should serve the area well.

The following is a narrative of our current site design as shown on the Site Plan (sheet C2-1) and incorporates the following six elements:

“AC Hotels by Marriott” Hotel: The current site plan places a five story, 148 room, upscale hotel on the site, parallel to the TownePlace Suites hotel that is currently under construction across Lindau Avenue. The hotel is anticipated to commence construction in the summer of 2015 with completion in mid-2016. The AC Hotels by Marriott concept is new to North America and is essentially an import of a hotel brand that has been very successful in Spain, France, and Italy. More information on the AC Hotels brand may be found at www.achotels.marriott.com.

AC Hotels were founded in Spain by Antonio Catalan who had a unique vision for a hotel that could provide “higher design” with cleaner more contemporary aesthetics at an affordable price point for travelers looking for unique lodging. The AC hotel chain expanded throughout Spain, Portugal, Italy, and France, and has become recognized by travelers for their unique AC exterior, AC room design, AC Fitness, Lounge, and Library, to name a few. Marriott was intrigued about bringing the AC “lifestyle” experience to North America and licensed the brand with the intent on developing AC properties in core urban cities in the United States. The first AC property opened recently in New Orleans with the next few properties opening soon in Miami, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Chicago, and beyond.

We are excited about securing the approval to bring AC Hotels to Bloomington and we were successful with an effort that some considered unlikely to succeed considering that the

neighborhood lacked the walkable, dense, urban character that AC and Marriott demanded. That said we felt the future was bright and that certainly the Mall of America offered considerable density and design-minded guests interested in a unique experience. In our mind and in Marriott's mind we need to ensure that we deliver on the AC promise and that temptations to compromise the AC experience are avoided. We want to provide a classic European experience from the building geometry and classic AC signage, to the AC breakfast which has fresh croissants, tarts, sliced prosciutto, fruits, and cheeses. The interiors are very clean and refined and we need to ensure that the environmental noise in the neighborhood is contained, etc. We think the enclosed elevations and interior public space design program go a long way to achieving what could be considered a classic example of an AC Hotel. We hope you like it!

ESG is providing the design services for the hotel development. The current design calls for a concrete first floor "podium" with wood frame construction above. The exterior will be a mix of stucco, glass, and metal panels with a vibrant and eclectic contemporary design. All construction will incorporate acoustical recommendations from our consultant which will seek to mitigate environmental sound issues. The hotel incorporates the iconic "AC Hotels by Marriott" cube sign that is found on most AC Hotels throughout Europe and now North America. The current approximate airport runway overlay height limitation at the hotel is approximately 79 feet and the proposed hotel design maximum height is approximately 72 feet 6 inches. The project will submit an application for permit through the Metropolitan Airports Commission and the Federal Aviation Administration. The hotel is proposed to be setback from Lindau approximately 18'6" at the northwest corner and 16'9" at the northeast corner. The required setback for the LX zoning code is a minimum of 10', or the width of the adjacent utility easement, and a maximum of 20'. Site landscaping throughout the project represents a tree count of 117 and a shrub count of 950 which exceed the required tree counts of 79 and shrub counts of 196. The incorporation of future users on the site and the refinement of their building geometry may shift the positioning and quantity of some landscaping elements.

The hotel will be limited service but will contain a small evening lounge, breakfast area, fitness facility, library, and lobby. To achieve the density required by the City we anticipate providing limited valet service to an adjacent structured parking ramp. The hotel will also employ guest shuttles to provide guests with access to the MOA and airport. Trash services for the hotel will be located on the east end of the building and will be within the hotel structure per City code. Additionally the hotel transformer and generator will be located and screened on the east end of the hotel.

The hotel is currently being submitted for Preliminary Development Plan and Final Development Plan reviews as part of this application.

Restaurant: Early discussions with the City confirmed a strong desire to curate exceptional casual dining and coffee shop restaurant options for the South Loop District. After numerous conversations we have narrowed down on two specific users and are in an advanced lease stage with the restaurant and an early lease stage with the coffee user.

The provided site plan incorporates the full service restaurant and bar with a size of approximately 9,500 sf. The restaurant will have an outdoor patio of approximately 1,300 sf and will utilize a brick and glass exterior façade. The restaurant accommodates 375 seats. Restaurant hours are anticipated to be lunch and dinner with a bar that is active in the evening. The intention

is to provide for common, interior trash facilities for this and the adjacent coffee user in the SW corner of the building. The proposed building setback is approximately 19'3" at the northwest corner and 19'9" at the southwest corner. The required setback for the LX zoning code is a minimum of 10', or the width of the adjacent utility easement, and a maximum of 20'. The development and construction timeline of the restaurant is significantly shorter than the hotel and is currently planned to open coincidental to the hotel in mid-2016.

The restaurant is currently being submitted for Preliminary Development Plan review and will be submitted for Final Development Plan review separately at a later date.

Coffee Shop: In the interest of cultivating future residential development to the East and giving the walkable neighborhood something to walk to – we have been successful in securing the interest of a coffee shop operator who will occupy space adjacent to the restaurant. The site plan incorporates this small coffee user with an adjacent patio. The coffee shop is proposed to be 2000 sf and will provide approximately 35 seats. Exterior building materials will be compatible with the restaurant user and will comply with the current codes and the “brick or better” vision for the South Loop district.

The development timeline for this use is similar to the restaurant. The coffee shop is currently being submitted for Preliminary Development Plan review and will be submitted for Final Development Plan review in conjunction with the restaurant submittal.

Market/Retail: A final user that was is also considered critical to adding to the fabric of a residential neighborhood and to South Loop's neighborhood viability was a market of some kind. Markets come in many varieties and our current search has yielded a top candidate and the process of securing this user is in progress. The site plan incorporates a market/retail location that is proposed to be 14,500 sf. and this use may come as a second phase to the current development. This use integrates a delivery area on the south side of the building and a drive thru on the north side. Appropriate screening strategies will be employed to enhance the building aesthetics as well as ensure that the building design and exterior is harmonious with the other site users. The user is aware of the LX zoning exterior material and code requirements and this later submittal will seek to meet those requirements. The Market is setback approximately 22'6" from the right-of-way at the southwest corner of the building, which is the width of the easement. The required setback for the LX zoning code is a minimum of 10', or the width of the adjacent utility easement, and a maximum of 20'. The easement near the Market creates an unusual condition where the minimum required setback is greater than the maximum for the LX zoning code. We have located the market with the corner of the building on the easement line to keep with the intent of the zoning code and place the building to minimize the setback from the frontage road.

The Market/Retail is currently being submitted for Preliminary Development Plan review and will be submitted for Final Development Plan review in the future. The hope would be that this design and development could be submitted at the same time as the restaurant/coffee submittal.

Parking Structure: The site densities require the integration of a four-story parking structure. The parking structure exterior is proposed as precast and meets LX height and material requirements. The current design comprises four-stories of parking that provide 321 stalls. The ramp design is currently in progress with Walker Parking Consultants providing the lead structural engineering and ESG providing architectural design. We anticipate commencing

construction of the ramp this summer. The ramp will not be controlled access although it is designed to serve the users of the site only. The proximity of the ramp to the Mall of America may require management and defense during peak shopping periods..

The Parking Structure is currently being submitted for Preliminary Development Plan review and Final Development Plan review as part of this application.

Public Plaza: A public plaza similar in character to what was proposed and approved at the TownePlace Suites hotel site across the street has been incorporated into the site design. This plaza will provide visual emphasis to the entry into the South Loop District and provide another place for pedestrians to pause as they travel by foot to the Mall of America. Like the TownePlace public plaza, the Alpha B plaza will incorporate public art as a focal point for the space. This proposed plaza will also incorporate signage to help identify the South Loop District. The developer will provide a perpetual plaza easement and will also provide plaza maintenance as well as an approved public art installation. The City will provide for the installation of the plaza site improvements. The proposed plaza design is subject to design approval by the Port Authority and City in addition to being incorporated into a pending Plaza Easement and Maintenance Agreement between the parties.

The Public Plaza is currently being submitted for Preliminary Development Plan and Final Development Plan reviews as part of this application.

Other Site Clarifications: The preliminary DRC meeting surfaced the need to accommodate the City Ladder 3 truck turning radius' and travel paths through the site. The project civil engineer has confirmed that these turns and travel paths are functional. Plan sheet C2-2 shows the truck route through the site. The City also required a traffic consultant to be engaged and a traffic study completed. The study has been completed and the results are currently being reviewed by City staff and are generally favorable to the proposed design. The City engaged the completion of the Preliminary Plat and Final Plat for the project. That plat anticipates a parcel to include the City owned parking structure, a parcel for the retail that is contemplated as a potential phase 2, a parcel for the restaurants, and the remaining parcel for the hotel. It is anticipated that the public plaza will be treated in an identical fashion to the TownePlace plaza and be owned fee simple by the hotel subject to a perpetual easement in favor of the City.

The project is currently being submitted for Preliminary and Final Plat review.

Parking: Because of the site density and incorporation of structured parking, ensuring ample and convenient parking will be critical to the project's success. Parking supply will comprise of 321 stalls within the parking structure plus the 106 surface parking stalls for a total of 427 stalls. Of those parking stalls, 17 are accessible stalls with accessible aisles. The accessible stalls are located adjacent to the entrances of each of the proposed buildings. Parking code mandated demand of 179 stalls for the hotel (148x1.1 + 41/2.5 lounge), 164 stalls for the restaurants (375 seats / 2.5 + 35 seat patio / 2.5), and future retail stalls of 81 (14,500sf/180) equates to a rough demand of 424 which is unadjusted for captive considerations. This demand number sums the peak parking demands for different uses that have different peak demand periods. Coffee demand peaks in the morning, hotel peaks in the late evening, restaurants peak at lunch and dinner, and retail can obviously vary but most likely would mirror mall related traffic hours of operation. The supply and demand numbers are roughly in equilibrium. This equilibrium may be

stressed some during seasonal periods and depending on what final user is secured for the phase 2 parcel.

There are various studies we can share that scenario plan peak parking demands of around 350 stalls, which include the retail assumption on the Phase 2 corner user. We feel confident that parking is adequate and that providing less parking would take an undesirable risk and potentially limit phase 2 retail user prospects.

To allow for the shared parking scenario the project is being submitted for a Rezoning to include a PD Overlay District.

Floor Area Ratio: The following table shows the calculation of the Floor Area Ratio.

Use	Square Footage	Parcel Size
Hotel	80,550	72,744
Restaurant + Coffee Shop	9,500+2,000	27,342
Market	14,500	47,717
Ramp	N/A	46,169
Total	106,550 sf	193,972 sf

Based on the site square footages the FAR = 0.55. The LX zoning district allows for an FAR as low as 0.50 provided the conditions identified in city code section 21.207.02 (c) (1) (A). The project as proposed meets all of these conditions except item (iv) of that section, which requires that “on-site parking does not exceed code requirements.” As shown in the Parking section we exceed the calculated required parking by three stalls. However, we feel the parking, as proposed, may be stressed during seasonal periods given the high traffic loads this area receives during seasonal periods. Should the City find that we need to eliminate these three stalls to comply with this code requirement this can easily be met by eliminating three stalls from the ramp.

Signage: We consider signage to be a critical element to this project’s success and as such are sensitive to ensuring that our guests and patrons can efficiently find us and make their way to and from the project. With that said we understand the need to understand and strive to meet local codes and we have made every attempt to meet or exceed code expectations while trying to achieve the critical branding expectations and aesthetic considerations needed to make this project resonate with our AC Hotel guests. The South Loop Plan in 2011 outlined the desire to achieve a “unique character” and to represent a more “urban” vs. “suburban” feel within a “human scaled” neighborhood. We think we’ve achieved that aesthetic but this achievement may require slight variances from the current code. In exchange we have been able to accommodate some site aesthetics strongly desired by the City such as pushing the hotel away from the corner to accommodate the public plaza. Our signage analysis is attached for your review and we appreciate your consideration and interest in advancing the unique character of South Loop.

Conclusion: In conclusion we appreciate the opportunity to advance what we consider to be a unique and very attractive mixed use addition to the South Loop District. We think the incorporation of these varied uses and public art will add to the fabric of South Loop and add

momentum to the addition of future dynamic elements and residential interest in the neighborhood.

Development Application: This submittal includes application for:

Preliminary Plat

Final Plat

Rezoning to include a PD Overlay District

Preliminary Development Plan review for all parcels and uses proposed

Final Development Plan review for the Hotel and Parking Ramp

Case 8490ABCDE-15
HOTEL SPACE
SUMMARY

GROSS SQUARE FOOT SUMMARY

Level 1	16,102
Level 2 (Typical).....	16,112
Levels 3-5 (16,112 x 3=).....	48,336
TOTAL	80,550

FRONT OF HOUSE / PUBLIC SPACE

Food & Beverage	
AC Breakfast	2,162
AC Lounge.....	2,013
The Market	134
Total.....	4,309
Public Spaces	
Lobby/Vestibule	846
Front Desk.....	264
AC Library.....	352
Total.....	1,462
Food & Beverage	
Media Salon (2)	328
Meeting Room	716
Meeting Room Closet	38
Total.....	1,082
Recreation	
Fitness Room	625
Guest Amenities	
Public Toilets	348
Guest Laundry	70
Circulation.....	2,000
Total.....	2,418
TOTAL FRONT OF HOUSE	11,124

BACK OF HOUSE AREAS

Administration	
Work Area.....	—
General Manager Office.....	—
Sales Manager Office.....	—
Luggage Storage Room	48
Total.....	663
Employee	
Employee Breakroom	338
Employee Restroom	109
Total.....	447
Housekeeping	
Main Laundry.....	—
Linen Room	—
Laundry Chute	45
Total.....	562
Kitchen	
Food Preparation	974
Engineering	
Engineering Office/Storage	152
Miscellaneous Service	
Mech/Elec (HVAC, Elec, Water)	1,278
Janitor Closet.....	28
Video/Telephone Equipment Room	146
Storage.....	112
The Market Storage.....	50
Trash/Recycling.....	346
Miscellaneous (Engineering Office).....	152
Total.....	2,112
TOTAL BACK OF HOUSE	7,562

SUBTOTAL BACK OF HOUSE AREAS (NET SF)	7,562
CIRCULATION AND NET TO GROSS	5,052

A. TOTAL GSF – NON-GUESTROOM AREAS	23,738
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GUESTROOMS

1. King Room (11'-5.75" x 27'-6"=315 SF)	@ 72 Rooms	22,680
2. Queen/Queen Room (11'-5.75" x 27'-6"=315 SF)	@ 68 Rooms	21,420
3. King Alternate (11'-5.75" x 21'-1.5"=242 SF)	@ 8 Rooms	1,936

GUESTROOM Only NSF	46,036	(80.7%)
Keys = 148	311 NSF/Key	
Corridors, Stairs, Elevators, Shafts, HK, Storage	12,035	(19.3%)
Hydration/Vending		

B. TOTAL GSF – GUESTROOM AREAS	56,812	(100%)
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	GSF	GSF/Key @ 148 Keys
A. Public/Front of House/Back of House	23,738	160
B. Guestrooms	56,812	384
C. Total Hotel GSF	80,550	544

HOTEL ROOM SUMMARY

Level	K	Q/Q	King Alt	Total Keys
2 (Typical)	18	17	2	37
3-5 (x 3=)	54	51	6	111
TOTAL	72 (48.65%)	68 (45.95%)	8 (5.4%)	148 (100%)