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May 28, 2021

Section 432 Board of Advisors
and Interested Neighbors
c/o William Meyer
626 Chestnut Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

Re: **Mission Helpers Property**
1001 West Joppa Road

Dear Members of the Board of Advisors and Neighbors:

I am writing in response to your letter dated April 19, 2021. For purposes of this response, “Blakehurst Property” will refer to 1055 West Joppa Road, and “Mission Helpers Property” will refer to 1001 West Joppa Road.

Relationship between Blakehurst and Mission Helpers and Description of the Project

In 2019, the Chestnut Real Estate Partnership (“Chestnut”), legal owner of the Blakehurst Property, contracted with the Institute of Mission Helpers of Baltimore City to purchase the Mission Helpers Property. Chestnut assigned its rights under that contract to 1001 West Joppa Road, LLC. Chestnut and 1001 West Joppa Road, LLC share common ownership, which ownership includes Life Care Services (“LCS”), the operator of Blakehurst Senior Living (“Blakehurst”). 1001 West Joppa Road, LLC (“Developer”) will develop and own the Missions Helpers Property, and LCS will manage the Mission Helpers Property, including handling trash pickup, landscaping services, and other maintenance responsibilities.

The residential units proposed to be constructed on the Mission Helpers Property are really the second phase of Blakehurst. Blakehurst contains independent living units, assisted living units, and comprehensive care (nursing) beds. The type of units proposed on the Mission Helpers property are independent living units with two bedrooms each. Under a contract, qualifying residents¹ will pay an entrance fee and a monthly service fee, as do the existing residents of

¹ Independent living units or “Housing for the Elderly, Class B” are “restricted to persons 60 years of age or older or to couples where either the husband or wife is 60 years of age or older and to any person, regardless of age, who has a physical or developmental disability.” Section 101.1 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations.

May 28, 2021

Page 2

Blakehurst. There is a strong market for this type of unit, particularly as a stepping stone for residents (likely between the ages of 72-75 years old) who might not be ready to live on Blakehurst's main campus, where the average age is 82. Although the type and details of the contract have not yet been finalized, Developer anticipates that residents of the Mission Helpers Property may transition to the main campus should they desire. Certain services and resources on the Blakehurst main campus will be made available to residents of the new independent living units. However, in determining the extent and availability of those services and resources, consideration must be given to the needs of the existing Blakehurst residents.

A great deal of thought and design has gone into this project, and Developer does not believe that a reduction in the number of units is necessary to address the concerns raised. Instead, as discussed later in this letter, Developer has concentrated on addressing two main issues – access to Chestnut Avenue and building setbacks to Chestnut Avenue.

Restrictive Covenant Agreement

According to the terms of the Restrictive Covenant Agreement (“RCA”), all restrictions have expired with the exception of those that apply to that portion of the Blakehurst Property located south of Cemetery Road. Although the RCA has expired, Developer will still need to process an amended development plan (latest approved is the 6th Amended CRG Plan) and to request zoning relief to amend any applicable restrictions, such as the restriction on the maximum number of residents. The process to do so will be similar to that followed in the past, with the most recent amendment being approved in 2015 for the addition to Blakehurst's Health Center.

Traffic, Vehicular Access, and Pedestrian Connections

Developer has retained The Traffic Group to study existing traffic conditions (traffic counts were taken in November of 2019) and to evaluate projected impacts on area roads from the new independent living units. The new units are projected to generate 11 *new* morning peak hour trips and 13 *new* evening peak hour trips. (Trips associated with the existing convent facility were deducted from the total number of projected trips from the new units.) Based on its analysis of existing and projected conditions, all of the nearby intersections are currently operating at a Level of Service A during both the morning and evening peak hour (7:30-8:30 am and 5:00-6:00 pm), and, with the new units in place, all of the nearby intersections will continue to operate at a Level of Service A. Based on these results, Developer does not anticipate that the project will have any appreciable impact on traffic conditions in the area, and no improvements to area roads should be required.

May 28, 2021

Page 3

Even though Mission Helpers currently uses an existing driveway on Chestnut Avenue as its primary access into and out of the property, certain members of the community have expressed concern over the new project having a driveway in a similar location. After much consideration, Developer has agreed to eliminate the proposed vehicular connection to Chestnut Avenue. Vehicles will access the property directly from Mission Helpers Drive. Developer still proposes to install pedestrian walkways throughout the Mission Helpers Property, and a connection will be provided to the existing walkway located at the corner of Chestnut Avenue and Joppa Road. Developer does not anticipate placement of a gate between the Blakehurst Property and the Mission Helpers Property.

Layout and Anticipated Zoning Relief

In response to concerns raised by attendees of the last Board of Advisors meeting about building setbacks to Chestnut Avenue, Developer has shifted Buildings 1B and 2B (and other project infrastructure) slightly to the west in order to achieve the required 75 foot building setback. This shift also increased the amount of buffer that will be provided along Chestnut Avenue, although this area is still proposed to include certain infrastructure (identification sign, walking path, internal drive aisle, retaining wall, parking spaces, and stormwater management facilities). Otherwise, the buffer area will be heavily planted. This layout minimizes distances between buildings onsite and reduces proposed setbacks to the Blakehurst property line in an effort to minimize any impacts to adjacent residential properties.

During our last meeting, using the proposed site plan, we explained the zoning relief we believed would be necessary. With the building shift, we have been able to eliminate the request for a reduced building setback to Chestnut Avenue. The required 75 foot building setback will be maintained. In addition to special exception/special hearing relief related to utilization of the 40 residential units and removal of any inconsistent restrictions, Developer will request to modify the requirements within the residential transition area, including to allow for the above described infrastructure to be located within the buffer, to exceed the maximum permitted height of 35 feet, and to reduce setbacks between buildings and/or facing windows *within* the Mission Helpers Property. Developer will also request a variance, if necessary, to allow a reduced window setback for Building 3A to the joint property line between the Mission Helpers Property and the Blakehurst Property and to allow for reduced setbacks between the buildings located outside of the residential transition area but *within* the Mission Helpers Property. This list of requests is preliminary and, Developer may amend the requested relief prior to filing the required zoning petition.

May 28, 2021
Page 4

Developer would be glad to meet with you to review these responses and the revised site plan before filing its zoning and development submissions with Baltimore County. To that end, Developer has scheduled another virtual meeting for June 8th at 7:00 pm for any Board member or Neighbor who wishes to attend.

Meeting details are below:

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Phone one-tap: US: [+13017158592](tel:+13017158592),[4781011486#](tel:+14781011486) or [+12678310333](tel:+12678310333),[4781011486#](tel:+14781011486)

Meeting URL: <https://venable.zoom.us/j/4781011486?pwd=WlUrV2dUNGI0RnhFTG51WVdVUzR4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 478 101 1486

Password: 162706

We look forward to speaking with you again.

Very truly yours,



Patricia A. Malone

cc: Darwin Holder, President, West Towson
Neighborhood Association

Jamie Cahn, Zoning Chair
Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area
Improvement Association