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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Township Committee of the Township of Cranford

**FROM:** North Avenue Gateway RFEI Review Committee

**SUBJECT:** North Avenue Gateway Redevelopment Area

**DATE:** June 11, 2021

**CC:** Jamie Cryan, CPM, Township Administrator  
Ryan J. Cooper, Esq., Township Attorney  
Michael J. Ash, Esq., Special Redevelopment Counsel

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On February 9, 2021, by Resolution 2021-129, the Township authorized the solicitation of Expressions of Interest for the North Avenue Gateway Redevelopment Area (“RFEIs”). Those RFEI’s were received on April 6, 2021, and on April 27, 2021, Mayor Kathleen Prunty appointed a Review Committee of the following individuals to score those RFEI submissions and report back to the Township Committee:

1. Mayor Miller Prunty;
2. Jason Bottcher, AICP, CFM, Zoning Officer;
3. Donna Pedde, Planning Board representative; and
4. Anthony Durante, AICP, RSP, District Management Corporation representative.

### **RFEI Evaluation & Scores**

The RFEI Review Committee reviewed all three responses against the Evaluation Criteria included in the RFEI: Conceptual Design; Project Feasibility; Team Experience; and Affordable Housing. The Committee awarded each RFEI response the highest scores for exceeding the Evaluation Criteria; mid-level scores for satisfying the Evaluation Criteria; and lower scores for responses that did not meet the Evaluation Criteria. The maximum score was a 100.

As detailed in the attached Appendix A, the three respondents scored as follows:

1. TAG Development, LLC: *69*
2. Birchwood Developers Associates, LLC: *65*
3. Capodagli Property Company, LLC: *50*

The Review Committee therefore recommends that TAG Development, LLC and Birchwood Developers Associates, LLC be designated as finalists and qualified to submit a response to a formal Request for Proposals upon the Township’s adoption of a Redevelopment Plan for the redevelopment of the Redevelopment Area.

## **Potential North Avenue Gateway Redevelopment Plan**

After review of the RFEI submissions, the Review Committee recommends the Township prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the North Avenue Gateway Redevelopment Plan that includes the following:

1. A pedestrian plaza connecting North Union Avenue to North Avenue contiguous or proximate to the buildings and to be used as public space and for foot traffic should be a key element and public benefit in a redevelopment plan.
2. An architectural/gateway focal point at the corner of North Avenue and Springfield Avenue.
3. Architectural design that is varied in height, materials, fenestration, and style, and which perpetuates the architectural character present throughout the Downtown Core.
4. A site-wide density for residential development that is consistent with other redevelopment areas in the downtown.
5. A parking ratio that creates new parking while preserving existing parking, and which shall be based on an analysis of actual parking demand in the redevelopment areas in the downtown.
6. Lot 6.01 should be activated to redevelop the underutilized surface parking. Additional analysis should be completed to evaluate the best utilization of Lot 6.01 in the redevelopment.

The Review Committee also recommends the Township conduct an investigation study of lots on Block 195 for potential designation as an Area in Need of Redevelopment.

## Appendix A

### 1. TAG Development, LLC:

- Building A – 8,500sf retail / 40 residential units/ 50 parking spaces
- Building B – 3,500sf retail
- Building C – 6,500sf retail / 17,800sf office/ 33 parking spaces
  - Community/Pedestrian Plaza – 16,000 sf
  - Focal point on corner of North Ave and Springfield

EVALUATION CRITERIA – RFEI	MAXIMUM POINTS	AWARDED POINTS
Conceptual Design – Respondents will present a concept for development evaluated on the basis of innovation, suitability for the project, consistency with the stakeholders vision for the Township.	35	27
Project Feasibility – Respondents will submit a <i>pro forma</i> to develop the project, identify requirements and assumptions in the development concept and <i>pro forma</i> , and identify participation from the Respondent's proposed project team.	30	17
Team Experience – Respondents will provide evidence of development team experience, financial capacity, prior history of providing community benefits, and detailed information of recent developments completed by the Respondent and particularly, those projects completed in conjunction with the proposed project team.	25	16
Affordable Housing – respondent will develop the residential component of the project with inclusionary affordable housing units.	10	9
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS	100	69

## Appendix A

### 2. Capodagli Property Company, LLC:

- Lot 14 – 3,200sf retail space
- Lots 10, 11, 12, 13 – 13,500sf retail space
- 180 residential units on floors 2 – 6
- 40 grade level parking spaces to remain
- 6 story parking garage with 338 spaces
  - Farmer’s market on roof floor 6
  - Lot 6.01 Community plaza to remain

EVALUATION CRITERIA – RFEI	MAXIMUM POINTS	AWARDED POINTS
Conceptual Design – Respondents will present a concept for development evaluated on the basis of innovation, suitability for the project, consistency with the stakeholders vision for the Township.	35	13
Project Feasibility – Respondents will submit a <i>pro forma</i> to develop the project, identify requirements and assumptions in the development concept and <i>pro forma</i> , and identify participation from the Respondent's proposed project team.	30	12
Team Experience – Respondents will provide evidence of development team experience, financial capacity, prior history of providing community benefits, and detailed information of recent developments completed by the Respondent and particularly, those projects completed in conjunction with the proposed project team.	25	17
Affordable Housing – respondent will develop the residential component of the project with inclusionary affordable housing units.	10	8
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS	100	50

## Appendix A

### 3. Garden Communities/Birchwood Developers Associates LLC:

- 40 Residential Units and approximately 12,000sf of retail
- Phase 1 – Lot 14 redevelopment – 12 residential units over 6,000sf retail
- Phase 2A – Lot 10, 11 and 12 – 16 residential units over retail/parking
- Phase 2B – Lot 13 – 12 residential units over retail
  - Enhance community outdoor space on Lot 6.01
  - Focal point on corner of North Ave and Springfield
  - Suggestion for redevelopment designation of Block 195 (Swan Dry Cleaner/Carmine Auto)

EVALUATION CRITERIA – RFEI	MAXIMUM POINTS	AWARDED POINTS
Conceptual Design – Respondents will present a concept for development evaluated on the basis of innovation, suitability for the project, consistency with the stakeholders vision for the Township.	35	17
Project Feasibility – Respondents will submit a <i>pro forma</i> to develop the project, identify requirements and assumptions in the development concept and <i>pro forma</i> , and identify participation from the Respondent's proposed project team.	30	18
Team Experience – Respondents will provide evidence of development team experience, financial capacity, prior history of providing community benefits, and detailed information of recent developments completed by the Respondent and particularly, those projects completed in conjunction with the proposed project team.	25	23
Affordable Housing – respondent will develop the residential component of the project with inclusionary affordable housing units.	10	7
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS	100	65