

July 18, 2018

Mayor Nancy Shaver
Commissioner Roxanne Horvath
Commissioner Leanna Freeman
Commissioner Nancy Sikes-Klein
Commissioner Todd Neville
City of St. Augustine
75 King Street
St. Augustine, Florida 32084

**Re: Clarification of Material Misstatements in City Manager Memorandum
regarding Santa Maria Development Agreement dated July 17, 2018**

Dear Mayor Shaver and Commissioners:

I feel compelled to respond to City Manager Regan's Memorandum to you dated July 17, 2018 regarding my family's proposed redevelopment of the historic Santa Maria restaurant to correct a number of material misstatements.

My family purchased the Santa Maria property in March 2015. In late 2015 and early 2016, the City's Historic Architectural Review Board approved new building plans for the property. Since that time, we have attempted to work with City officials to obtain the remaining approvals necessary to build the new restaurant, with limited success. After more than two years of meetings with City officials and filing various draft vested rights documents and development agreements, we filed yet another application for a Development Agreement late last week and asked for City Commissioners' help to navigate City officials' roadblock and allow us to rebuild the Santa Maria.

Unfortunately, some City officials were offended by our application and have taken to social media and contacted the press in an attempt to discredit our efforts. This letter seeks to clarify the following material misstatements in the City Manager's July 17 memorandum:

1. We proposed the Development Agreement in lieu of our April/May 2017 vested rights determination at the request of City officials in order to address all issues related to the redevelopment of the Santa Maria, including docks. We are not trying to circumvent any City process or board.

2. We are not seeking to double the restaurant seating capacity, as the City Manager states. We are asking to increase the 198 historic seats (156 interior seats and 42 exterior seats) by 102 exterior seats (weather permitting). We will pay all utility connection fees and other costs related to the additional seats and will provide the required parking.

3. We are attempting to resolve issues related to submerged land ownership with the City in the Development Agreement, and are specifically waiving any rights to future litigation upon the City's approval of the docks requested in the Development Agreement.

4. The minimal docks proposed east of the restaurant will not interfere with navigability to the City Marina. There is plenty of room for good sea captains to navigate. The proposed docks will allow locals to arrive at the restaurant via boat, thus reducing traffic downtown.

5. During one of our numerous meetings, City officials suggested that we include open air music limitations and inquired about what type of music we might have at the Santa Maria. Our response was that it will be the same outdoor dinner music we currently have at O.C. White's. They also suggested that we include special event venue language in the Development Agreement if we wanted to host weddings at the Santa Maria. We said to them that we own the White Room across the street, so why would we want to compete with ourselves with another wedding venue? We explained that we are planning to host rehearsal dinners at the Santa Maria like we currently do at O.C. White's. Then City officials said if we want to have any rehearsal dinners or similar private events at all, we need to include event venue language in the Development Agreement since they could be private events. We further stated the Santa Maria will be a family-style restaurant like O.C. White's.

6. The City Manager's memo says the City will not benefit from the redevelopment of the Santa Maria. According to City officials, the new restaurant will generate at least \$100,000 in property and other taxes every year that benefit the City. It will also preserve the location of the City's only over-water restaurant. How are those not benefits?

We are disheartened that we have spent the last several years negotiating with the City Manager and other officials over these points, only to have them say that they see little value in our plan and are not willing to give us any docks for the restaurant. At this time, instead of continuing to negotiate with City officials, we are asking City Commissioners to help get this project underway and restore the waterfront charm that is St. Augustine.

Sincerely,



Jennifer White