

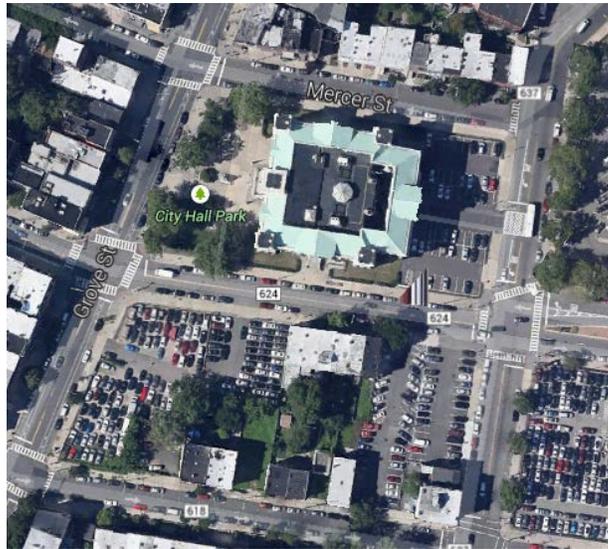
**Report Concerning the Determination of the
City Hall Study Area as a
“Non-Condensation Area in Need of Redevelopment”**



**Prepared by the City of Jersey City
Division of City Planning**

Adopted July 15, 2015 – Ord. 15-517





The purpose of this Redevelopment Study is to promote the historic restoration of City Hall and the appropriate development of the vacant land on its periphery.

Constructed in the late 19th Century, City Hall needs careful renovation in order to meet both the current and future needs of the City's residents as well as to be appointed with modern the technological advancements of the 21st Century. It must be made efficient and functionally sustainable in order to properly accommodate the demands of this fast growing mid-sized City and the residents that it serves.

INTRODUCTION: LOCAL SETTING AND BACKGROUND

The goal of this report is to specify whether or not the City Hall Study Area in Jersey City qualifies as a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment. The Study Area includes three (3) parcels on the Jersey City Tax Map equaling approximately 2.2 acres of real estate in Downtown Jersey City. The study area is located within the neighborhood know as Van Vorst Park and is at the edge of the Historic Newark Avenue & Grove Street Business Districts. The Study Area is dominated by the City Hall building, constructed in 1896. The marble and granite building was designed by Lewis Broome, also the architect of the Trenton Statehouse. Gardens and plaza space are located in front of City Hall, although the plaza has been significantly altered from its traditional appearance. Of the few remaining original components in the plaza, the most notable is a bronze monument by Philip Martiny. The memorial statue contains the inscription: "Erected by the People of Hudson County to Commemorate the Valor of the Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines of the Civil War." Given the lack of other traditional features, it is an important part of this historic site, although its specific placement may be inappropriate.

The neighborhoods to the north and west of City Hall has experienced a strong rebirth. It was initiated by the redevelopment of the Majestic Theater over 10 years ago and has since progressively improved. There are now renovated townhomes with occupied upper floors and ground floor businesses and restaurants along Grove Street, continuing around the corner on to

Mercer Street. This new vitality has produced a lively street frontage, enabling a pleasant and safe walk from surrounding neighborhoods to the Grove Street Path Station.

While the areas to the north and west of City Hall have seen significant revitalization, the areas to the east and south of City Hall have developed more slowly. Some of these areas are included within the subject of this study.

I. STATUTORY BASIS FOR THE DETERMINATION OF NEED

The Municipal Council of the City of Jersey City adopted Resolution 14.081 on February 11, 2014, authorizing the Jersey City Planning Board to:

- Conduct a preliminary investigation of the physical and economic conditions of an area known as the City Hall Study Area, (hereinafter the Study Area) to determine whether or not this Study Area meets the statutory criteria necessary to be declared a “Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment” as outlined in NJSA 40A:12A-5; and NJSA 40A:12A-6; and NJSA 40A:12A-14.

This study is written pursuant to Section 6 of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) P.L. 1992, c.79 (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq) which states:

“No area of a municipality shall be determined a redevelopment area unless the governing body of the municipality shall, by resolution, authorize the Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the proposed area is a redevelopment area according to the criteria set forth in Section 5 of P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-5). Such determination shall be made after public notice and public hearing as provided in subsection b. of this section. The governing body of a municipality shall assign the conduct of the investigation and hearing to the Planning Board of the municipality”.

The Planning Board acts in a fact-finding capacity prior to action by the City Council. It gathers facts and makes recommendations for the City Council to act upon. The New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, the state’s redevelopment statute, does not require that all property in the Study Area be in need of redevelopment prior to such a determination being made. The Study Area may include individual parcels that do not reflect any of the eligibility criteria listed in the statute. NJSA 40A:12A-3 states that a Redevelopment Area may include lands, buildings or improvements that in and of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part.

Recent statutory revisions have further emphasized a clarification of the criteria such that a redevelopment designation cannot be justified solely on the basis that a property is underutilized, unless the property otherwise meets additional stated criteria for determination that the area is in need of redevelopment.

II. STUDY AREA BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Study Area consists of Block 12904, Lot 1; Block 14102, Lot 12; and Block 14102, Lot 25, found on the City Hall Boundary Map dated February 4, 2014. The Study Area is bounded by Mercer Street to the north, Luis Munoz Marin Boulevard to the east, York Street to the south, and Grove Street to the west. The Boundary Map indicates the location and limits of the Study Area. The properties included in the Study Area are as follows:

	Block	Lot(s)	Address
1.	Block 12904	Lot 1	280 Grove Street
2.	Block 14102	Lot 12	179 Montgomery Street
3.	Block 14102	Lot 25	202 York Street

III. TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

The Study Area has unparalleled access to various mass transit facilities, as well as access to an extensive statewide roadway network. It is within a mile of Exit 14C of the New Jersey Turnpike Extension. The Study Area is situated along major north-south and east-west corridors and is serviced by many bus lines, as well as PATH rail service at Grove Street Station and Hudson-Bergen Light Rail service at the Luis Munoz Marin Station. The sidewalk network is complete throughout the Study Area, providing for a walkable neighborhood which can support a less auto-dependent development pattern. A taxi stand is also located nearby in addition several car share rental facilities and on-line rideshare reservation services by multiple companies is available.

IV. MASTER PLAN, ZONING, AND URBAN ENTERPRISE ZONE

The Jersey City Master Plan was adopted in May of 2000 and places the Study Area within the Historic District Land Use Area. The Van Vorst Park Historic District is the largest of the City's Historic Districts and has the most varied land uses. It contains the Jersey Avenue and Grove Street neighborhood shopping areas, City Hall, Van Vorst Park, and historic homes, many dating from the mid- to late-19th century.

The purpose of the historic district is to recognize the special significance of its neighborhoods and their varied and well-preserved historic character. They reflect Jersey City's past and its unique geographic location. Issues singled out by the Master Plan that must be addressed for any development or demolition within this district is as follows:

1. Adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
2. Compatibility of rehabilitation and new infill development with the scale and character of the historic district.
3. Enhancing the historic character of the districts through streetscape improvements.
4. Addressing the impact of adjacent redevelopment plans and projects on the character of the districts and vice versa.
5. Balancing redevelopment with the preservation of the historic districts.

6. Addressing district parking needs without compromising the historic character and streetscape.

The whole of Jersey City is designated within Metropolitan Planning Area 1 and as a *Smart Growth Area* and *Urban Center* by the New Jersey State Plan.

V. PHYSICAL SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The following methods are used in gathering information and preparing a physical condition survey of the Study Area.

- a. Parcel Ownership, land use, lot assignments, size and assessed value were obtained from the municipal tax records for the study area parcel. If necessary, land use categories were modified through field surveys.
- b. A physical survey of the property was conducted to determine the general physical condition for the parcel within the Study Area, and where necessary to modify characteristics obtained from the tax records. The criteria for the evaluation of the condition of buildings and properties consisted of those factors that would indicate the generality of active maintenance and investment, or the lack thereof, in the site or property surveyed. Building and property condition was determined by focusing on certain indicators such as the following: windows, entranceways, siding, brickwork, cornices, sidewalks and curbing, evident rubbish, foundations and retaining walls, fencing, arrangement of driveways, parking and loading areas, relationship of buildings and land use of the surrounding areas, condition of pavement and the grounds in general. Factors which weighed against a positive rating included: cracks and fissures in masonry or concrete, broken glass, rotted and poor maintenance of the grounds or lot areas, rusted or broken fencing elements, damaged or missing sidewalk areas and overcrowding or excessive coverage of buildings.

The following descriptive standards were used for evaluating the physical conditions of each of the buildings:

Good – A structure with no noticeable building code violations. However, it may need minimal improvements, e.g. painting, woodwork, replacing of windows sash.

Fair – A structure, which is beginning to deteriorate, noted by an urgent need for painting, replacement of windows, repair of fire escapes, steps and roof repairs.

Poor – Structure indicating several major maintenance problems or code violations. Such problems or code violations include electrical, plumbing, and/or heating, ventilating, air conditioning systems, etc. Other significant conditions are those deemed to be unsafe, unsanitary, obsolete or to possess any such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air or space as to be conducive to unwholesome human occupation.

Dilapidated – A structure in advanced stages of deterioration is considered to be substandard, unsafe, unsanitary or obsolete. These buildings possess major code violations and maintenance

problems so as not to be fit for human habitation or fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be not tenatable.

VI. STUDY AREA ANALYSIS

Below is a description of each property and a discussion as to which criteria each property meets to be designated as an area in need of redevelopment. Properties are listed as in Good, Fair, or Poor, or Dilapidated condition and are summarized in the conclusions below.

Block	Lot	Address	Prop. Class / Use	Assessed Value \$			Condition
				Land	Improve	Total	
12904	1	280 Grove St.	15C/ City Hall	683,300	3,409,500	4,092,800	poor
14102	12	179 Montgomery St.	15C/Parking Lot	233,500	0	233,500	poor
14102	25	202 York St.	4C/5 Unit Res.	26,300	58,700	85,000	poor

Block 12904, Lot 1 , 280 Grove Street

This lot contains City Hall, a historic structure that is in need of major system replacements and upgrades because of low investment over the past several decades. This need has been exacerbated due to several natural disasters, including a fire in the



1979 and a flood in 2013. Furthermore, the functions of City governance have far outgrown the spaces available within the building. Even though some attempts at modernization have been undertaken, these efforts fall far short of the total renovation that is necessary to accommodate the government of a fast-growing mid-sized modern city, aspiring to be the best in the country.

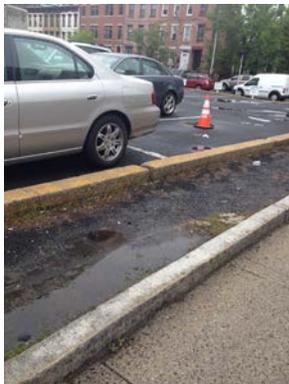
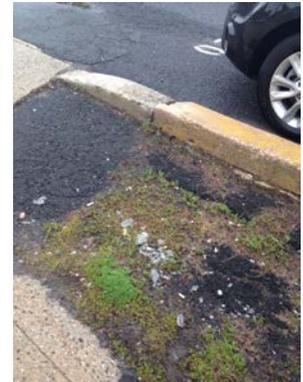


The building has begun to show signs of visible deterioration. It has damaged or missing roof-top and fascia elements. During super storm Sandy, it sustained hundreds of thousands of dollars of flood damage to the basement, elevator mechanism and utilities and was closed for several weeks with portions of the basement no longer fit for active use. Lower level windows remain boarded. A portion of the Montgomery Street foundation near the entry stair has begun to buckle causing significant cracks in the façade above. Cracks are readily apparent in the bluestone stairs at the front entrance. The blue stone has begun to spall and crumble with mortar cracking and flaking away requiring reconstruction and not mere re-pointing. Inside, the building lacks a sprinkler system, a modern handicapped accessible entrance (although a compliant access was recently reconstructed on Montgomery Street), up-dated electrical and lighting services, in addition to general cosmetic damage, examples of which include peeling paint and broken floor tiles.



The continual damage and systemic lack of repair has led to a need for extreme renovations. Those done to date have been but a temporary salve to maintain the building as a functioning facility. We find it to be in poor condition, with a pressing need for major investment and renovation to what is a valuable historic and cultural resource for the City of Jersey City. The building is representative of substandard conditions and clearly possesses obsolete features and design that have not been upgraded over the years to eliminate functional obsolescence. Some areas of the building are lacking in light, air and efficient space qualifying as unwholesome. The building can be classified as meeting criteria "a" and "d" as an area in need of redevelopment.

The rear parking area contains multiple layers of uneven and uncurbed asphalt. The front yard parking along Marin Boulevard encourages utilizing the full length of the public sidewalk for parking, creating a potentially unsafe situation for the sidewalk of Luis Munoz Marin Blvd. where cars sometimes back up and park over the sidewalk. This is a substandard, dangerous, and obsolete parking design. The parking lot layout with two parallel dead-end aisles entering Marin Boulevard only 20' from the intersection and 40' apart creates a hazardous traffic pattern within the ROW. The parking lot surface itself is severely uneven because of lack of asphalt milling before re-surfacing. It all lacks proper drainage, grading,



curbing, landscaping, and other elements common and necessary for the proper and safe function of a parking area. These facilities continue to be utilized for the convenience of the City Hall employees and some public visitors, but need to be redesigned to function in a way acceptable for prolonged use. The combination of obsolete and substandard design creates unsafe conditions and constitutes a potentially harmful or damaging condition conducive to unwholesome conditions for users of this parking lot and visitors to City Hall granted parking access. This parking lot can be classified as meeting criterion "d" as an area in need of redevelopment.

This property overall, comprised of both the building and parking area, meets criteria "a," and "d," as an area in need of redevelopment.

More Photographs can be found at the end of the report

Block 14102, Lot 12, 179 Montgomery Street

This lot contains a surface parking lot in poor condition. The parking area has some stripping although it is faded and it is only partially fenced; however, it does provide some onsite sheet flow drainage. Curbing, curb stops, adequate lighting and buffering landscaping, which are all common and necessary for



the safe and efficient function of a hi-use urban parking area are lacking. The fencing is damaged and, in some areas, only the frame of the fence remains, yielding a rundown and poorly maintained look. The parking area lacks proper drainage, grading, and other typical modern improvements intrinsic to a well developed and well designed parking facility. These parking



spaces continue to be utilized for the convenience of their parking, but they need to be redesigned to function in a way acceptable for prolonged public use. The condition of the parking lot constitutes a deleterious use detrimental to the safety and welfare of the community. This site meets criteria "d" and "h" as an "area in need of redevelopment."

More Photographs can be found at the end of the report

Block 14102, Lot 15, 202 York Street

This three-story, five-unit multifamily building is in poor condition. The exterior has a rear yard, strewn with trash and surrounded by a chain-link fence that is falling down. Inside, the building is dark, cramped, and lacks proper life safety updates. The generality of the building is of substandard design with small inefficient units. An exterior survey reveals a minimally maintained building with unidentifiable opening for possible venting and un-repaired patching. Loose and hanging wires, and wired entering and exiting the center, side and front walls. While the vinyl



siding appears new, it is impossible to determine the true condition of what it covers underneath. The visible façade that remains is a mix of stucco, brick face, tile and concrete.



The rear of the building, although it does contain a metal fire escape, requires some repairs to insure it is closed and secure. In its current state it appears to be approaching dilapidation and obsolescence. It possesses characteristics of lacking light, air, and space, in a manner conducive to unwholesome living conditions. Multiple windows a blocked by in window air-conditioning units, the front yard, contain as vent within the ROW indicating the presence of some underground

utility serving the building but within the City ROW. The chimney appears to need re-pointing. Both the front and the back of the building contain an undersized person door non-compliant to current building code or safety design standards.

This site can be found to meet criteria "a" as an "area in need of redevelopment."

More Photographs can be found at the end of the report

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINATION OF NEED FOR REDEVELOPMENT OR REHABILITATION

The purpose of the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) is to promote the physical development and improvement of “. . . conditions of deterioration in housing, commercial, and industrial installations, public services and facilities and other physical components and supports of community life, [which] without this public effort are not likely to be corrected or ameliorated by private effort”. The LRHL empowers local governments in their efforts to reverse these conditions and promote the advancement of community interests through programs of redevelopment, rehabilitation, and incentives to expand and improve commercial, industrial, residential and civic facilities.

In order to declare an area in need of redevelopment, the governing body of the municipality must conclude, after investigation and public hearing, that within the delineated area at least one of the following conditions set out in this statute must exist (NJSA: 40A: 12A-1, et seq.):

- A. The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air, or space, as to conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.
- B. The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.
- C. Land that is owned by the municipality, the county, a local housing authority, redevelopment agency or redevelopment entity, or unimproved vacant land that has remained so for a period of ten years prior to adoption of the resolution, and that by reason of its location, remoteness, lack of means of access to developed sections or portions of the municipality, or topography or nature of the soil, is not likely to be developed through the instrumentality of private capital.
- D. Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals or welfare of the community.

- E. A growing lack or total lack of proper utilization of areas caused by the condition of the title, diverse ownership of the real properties therein or other similar conditions which impede land assemblage or discourage the undertaking of improvements, resulting in a stagnant and unproductive condition of land potentially useful and valuable for contributing to and serving the public health, safety and welfare, which condition is presumed to be having a negative social or economic impact or otherwise being detrimental to the safety, health, morals or welfare of the surrounding area or the community in general.
- F. Areas, in excess of five contiguous acres, whereon buildings or improvements have been destroyed, consumed by fire, demolished or altered by the action of storm, fire, cyclone, tornado, earthquake or other casualty in such a way that the aggregate assessed value of the area has been materially depreciated.
- G. Areas in any municipality in which an enterprise zone has been designated pursuant to the “New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones Act,” P.L. 1983, c.303 (C.52:27H-60 et seq.) the execution of the actions prescribed in that act for the adoption by the municipality and approval by the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority of the zone development plan for the area of the enterprise zone shall be considered sufficient for the determination that the area is in need of redevelopment pursuant to sections 5 and 6 of P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-5 and 40A:12A-6) for the purpose of granting tax exemptions within the enterprise zone district pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 1991, c.431 (C.40A:20-1 et seq.) or the adoption of a tax abatement and exemption ordinance pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 1991, c.441 (C.40A:21-1 et seq.). The municipality shall not utilize any other redevelopment powers within the urban enterprise zone unless the municipal governing body and planning board have also taken the actions and fulfilled the requirements prescribed in P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1, et al.) for determining that the area is in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation and the municipal governing body has adopted a redevelopment plan ordinance including the area of the enterprise zone.
- H. The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to laws or regulation.

In addition, a redevelopment area may include individual parcels that do not reflect any of the eligibility criteria listed in the statute.

NJSA 40A:12A-3 states that a Redevelopment Area may include lands, buildings or improvements that in and of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

A review of the characteristics of the Study Area indicates that the Study Area qualifies as a “Non-Condensation Area in Need of Redevelopment” as defined in NJSA 40A: 12-5; because it meets the criteria of subsections “a”, “d”, and “h” of NJSA 40A:12A-5.

A. Statutory Criterion “a”

The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, obsolete or possess any such characteristics or are so lacking light, air, or space, as to conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.

The site is 2.2 acres in size. It contains the City Hall building, a 5 unit residential building and two ancillary parking lots. As described above, Criterion “a” relates to the generality of buildings being substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated or obsolescent. An obsolete building is defined as a building that, for one reason or another, has reached the end of its current useful life; or it is out of date; antiquated or obsolescent. When a structure meets this definition, then Criterion “a” is applicable.

Upon visual observation, the structures within the study area have various code impairments in accordance with today’s building design standards. The existing structures have deteriorated to a point where there is minimal fire protection capability insofar as modern fire suppression codes are concerned. In fact, the City Hall building suffered major damage from a significant fire in 1979 that destroyed a section of the interior of the structure. Therefore, the city hall building needs to be brought up to compliance with modern building codes within historic preservation parameters to insure a safe fire resistance rating (including walls, fire-stops, shaft enclosures, partitions, smoke barriers, floors, fire-resistive coatings and sprayed fire-resistive materials applied to structural members and fire-resistive joint systems). The small 3-story frame 5-unit building may need to be replaced in order to be up-dated to functionally accommodate modern fire safety improvements. Such elements must be properly repaired, restored, and replaced when damaged. This issue creates a potential fire safety hazard for all of its occupants and adjacent neighbors.

The existing City Hall structure and site also falls far short in terms of configuration and functionality given current public building design standards. Additionally, it does not follow current guidelines for energy efficiency and safety. Also, the existing site configuration is a series of add-on parking lots to the City Hall building that are poorly tied together. The two parallel existing parking aisle driveways are a hazard to pedestrians because of the multiple entrances across busy sidewalks that serve as the principle walkways for hundreds of residents and commuters on a daily basis.

Lastly, it must be emphasized that because of the historic nature of the City Hall building, every effort must be made to maintain and enhance its continued place as the seat of Jersey City’s government. The historic integrity of this late 19th Century structure must be sensitively upgraded to meet the needs of 21st Century governmental functions that house municipal staff and accommodate visits by the general public. Nothing in this Study should be taken as an excuse for ill-conceived demolition or substandard replacement of the historic fabric of the City Hall building. Rather, its current condition cries out for sensitive and historically accurate improvements that cure the existing structural deficiencies extant in the building today.

Based on these conditions of obsolescence and unsafe conditions, which ultimately defines this parcel as being in Poor condition, Criterion “a” is met.

B. Statutory Criterion “d”

Areas with the buildings or improvements which by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors are detrimental to the safety, health, morals or welfare of the community.

Criterion “d” states that if areas with buildings or improvements which by reason of dilapidation, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, deleterious land use or obsolete layout are detrimental to the safety, health, morals or welfare of the community, then the parcel is found to meet this criterion.

The parking lot adjacent to City Hall on Block 14102 now utilized for employees has been cobbled together by combining various small vacant lots once containing contributing occupied buildings. They were pieced together over 15-20 or more years in a haphazard fashion conceived without consideration to pedestrians or parking stall layout or even to parking lot users themselves. The design simply maximizes parking yield. There are no safety barriers to separate cars from the sidewalk and walking public around the parking lots periphery. Parked cars are hanging into the pedestrian sidewalk realm on Montgomery Street and Luis Munoz Marin Boulevard. On the lot behind City Hall many of the same faulty design characteristics exist. Cars have been known to be parked on the sidewalk of Luis Munoz Marin Blvd. adjacent to this lot. Although that practice has been stopped for now, the lot’s design still allows for it to re-occur in the future. Furthermore, a most dangerous condition exists whereby both lots are designed with side-by-side dual entrances and exits. Specifically, both lots also have dead-end perpendicular 2-way drive isles with curb cuts very close to one another other. The Block 14102 lot has a dual entrance and exit along Montgomery Street that is not configured according to current parking lot design standards. The curb cuts are within 20 feet of each other 20 feet of the intersection. They pose a dramatically unsafe condition to the welfare and safety of hundreds of pedestrians that utilize these sidewalks each day and interfere with the functioning of the Montgomery Street and Luis Munoz Marin Boulevard intersection that they are near. A similar condition exists for the parking lot to the south in the rear of City Hall where two entrances and exits occur within 40 feet of each other along Luis Munoz Marin Blvd. causing a similar unsafe condition to be created for pedestrians and vehicular traffic circulation at the same intersection. Additionally, both parking lots lack proper drainage, signage, curb stops, landscaping, fencing and lighting that result in a significant danger to the public health and safety of parking lot users and others who commute to or visit the City Hall building or neighborhood.

Because these sites contain a deleterious land use that poses a threat to the safety, health and welfare of the community, it meets Criterion “d”.

C. Statutory Criterion “h”

The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to laws or regulation.

Subsection "h" speaks to the “Smart Growth” principles of New Jersey. The State Planning Act (N.J.S.A 52:18A-196 et seq.), adopted in 1985, establishes the framework for State policies and regulations related to smart growth principles. One of the findings of the State Planning Act is that:

It is in the public interest to encourage development, redevelopment and economic growth in locations that are well situated with respect to present or anticipated public services and facilities, giving appropriate priority to the redevelopment, repair, rehabilitation or replacement of existing facilities and to discourage development where it may impair or destroy natural resources or environmental qualities that are vital to the health and well-being of the present and future citizens of this State;

The Study Area is part of a dense infrastructure network of existing streets, sidewalks, water and sewer systems, utility connections, is serviced by nearly all Hudson County bus lines, and most importantly, is situated only two blocks, (approximately 500 feet) from the PATH rail platform entrance providing a short rail commute to the Hoboken Train Station and Newark Penn Station, New York Pennsylvania Station and midtown Manhattan, the transpiration HUB of the World Trade Center and lower Manhattan’s financial district,. Additionally, the Study Area is a pedestrian friendly, walkable neighborhood where residents and visitors can walk to nearby stores, schools, restaurants, shops and other facilities. That such a well developed area should be allowed to sustain these unwholesome and deteriorated conditions squanders the many public and private investments made to the surrounding area to date. These many amenities and infrastructure have been provided at great public expense around the peripheral neighborhood. It is clearly within the public interest to encourage development, redevelopment and economic growth within this study area. This location is overwhelmingly well situated with respect to present or anticipated public services and facilities. The Study Area is designated to be within Metropolitan Planning Area 1 and as an "urban center" by the New Jersey State Plan and the Smart Growth Areas map.

The New Jersey's State Development and Redevelopment Plan defines *smart growth* planning initiatives of the State of New Jersey and recommends *smart growth principles* for local municipalities to follow and implement. The plan provides detailed policy recommendations, including to, "direct investment to priority areas, such as innovation corridors, major cities, transit-served communities, and ports, to capitalize on existing infrastructure and deliver jobs." The Study Area is clearly a transit served community within a neighborhood commercial core of New Jersey's second largest city. Redevelopment of this area capitalizes on the existing infrastructure where development potential is at its highest. The State Plan defines smart growth as:

“...well-planned, well-managed growth that adds new homes and creates new jobs, while preserving open space, farmland, and environmental resources. Smart Growth supports livable neighborhoods with a variety of housing types, price ranges and multi-modal forms of transportation. Smart Growth is an approach to land-use planning that targets

the State's resources and funding in ways that enhance the quality of life for residents in New Jersey.

Smart Growth principles include mixed-use development, walkable town centers and neighborhoods, mass transit accessibility, sustainable economic and social development and preserved green space. Smart Growth can be seen all around us: it is evident in larger cities such as Elizabeth and Jersey City; in smaller towns like Red Bank and Hoboken, and in the rural communities like Chesterfield and Hope.”

Clearly the redevelopment of deteriorated urban districts and the improvement of the built environment in this Study Area is consistent with Smart Growth principals and should be seen as promoting that agenda. The Study Area clearly meets the State's definition of a *smart growth area*, thereby satisfying the criterion of Subsection "h" for the entire area.

Based upon the conditions described herein relating to physical deterioration, faulty design, presence of unsafe conditions, as well as presence of circumstances illustrating lack of proper utilization and maintenance and design, and further noting the Study Area's designation within Metropolitan Planning Area 1; the preliminary investigation concludes that a lawful basis exists for declaring the entirety of the Study Area to be a "Non-Condensation Area in Need of Redevelopment" based upon the Criteria "a", "d", and "h" of NJSA 40A: 12A-5.

Therefore, it is recommended that the City Council of the City of Jersey City and Jersey City Planning Board, after public notice and hearing, make said determination according to law.

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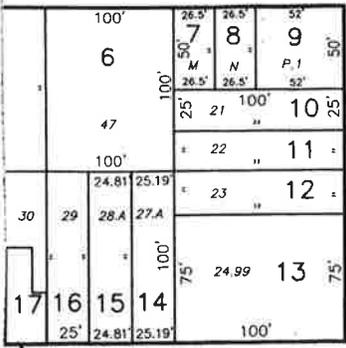
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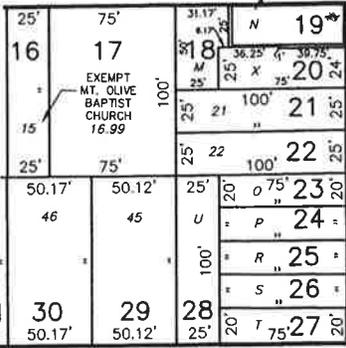
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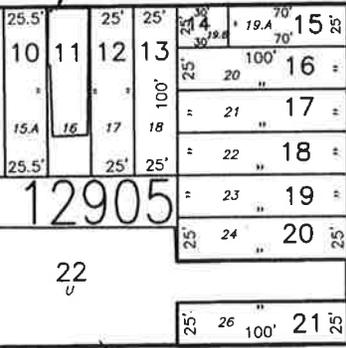


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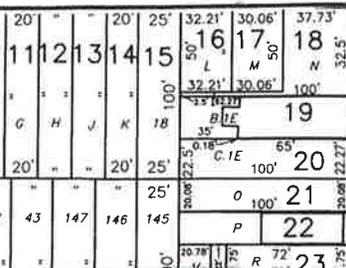
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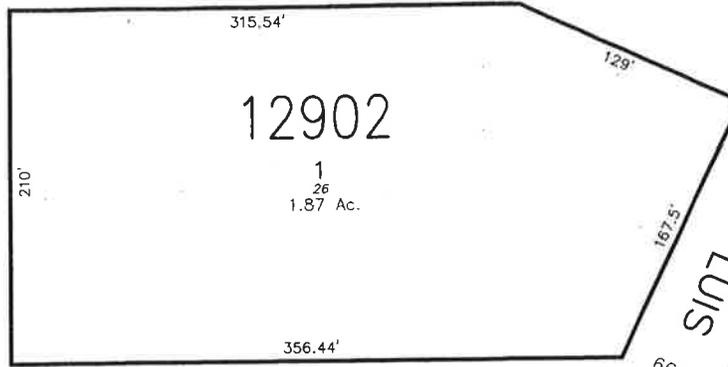
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88' STREET



STREET

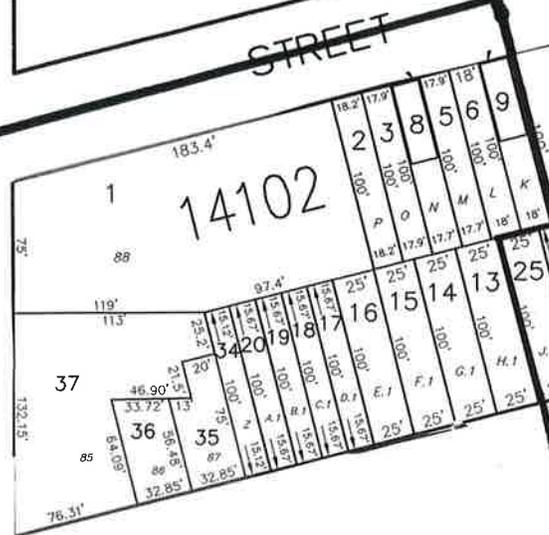


SEE SHEET 129.01

STREET



88' GROVE STREET



STREET

MUNOZ STREET

MARINI BLVD

60'

70.5'

70.5'

60'

60'



Jersey City Planning Division

City Hall Study Area
Boundary Map
 February 4, 2014

30 Montgomery Street Suite 1400
 Jersey City, NJ 07302-3821
 Phone: 201.547.5010
 Fax: 201.547.4323

City Hall Building and Property

*Photographs taken on
May 26, 2015 and in the
Winter of 2014*

Stair Condition



Basement
Window
Condition



Foundation Settlement



Entryway & Exit Conditions



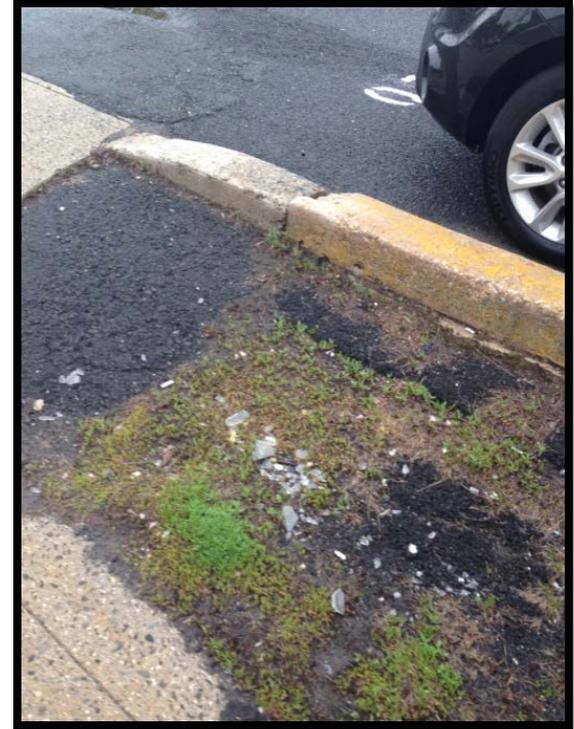
Plaza Conditions



Rear Parking Lot Conditions Luis Munoz Marin Blvd. Frontage



Rear Parking Lot Conditions Mercer St. Frontage



Marin/Montgomery/York Parking Lot and Surrounding Property

*Photographs taken on
May 26, 2015 and
Winter 2014*



Luis Munoz Marin Blvd. near York St



Luis Munoz Marin Blvd. Frontage



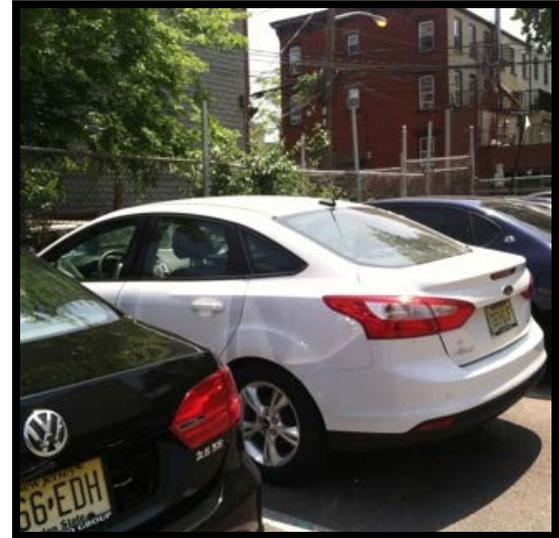
Montgomery Street Frontage



Double Driveway with parking between



Cobra overhead lighting from street



Dilapidated fencing



Dilapidated fencing



Edge condition



York Street entrance/exit



Infrastructure

Surrounding Properties



Adjacent Building outside Study Area



12Corner Building – Outside Study Area



Western View on North side of York Street



Western View on South Side of York St



Looking South across York Street from 202 York

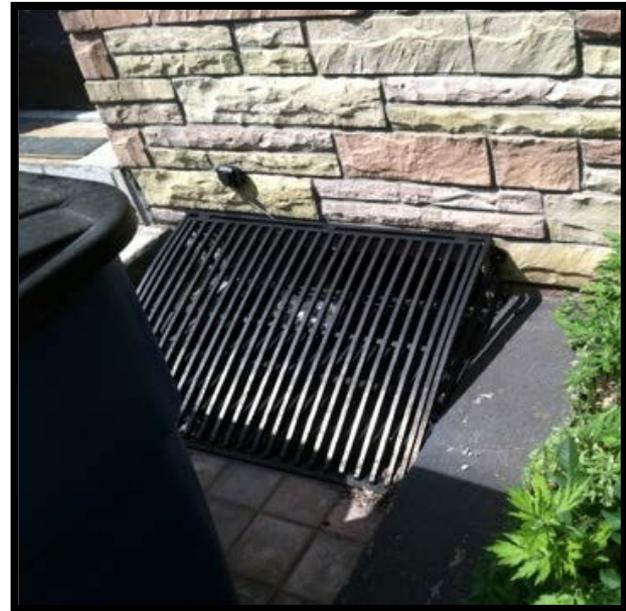


Looking South across York St. from Parking Lot

202 York Street

*Photographs taken on
May 26, 2015 and in the
Winter of 2014*

Front of House





East Side



West Side

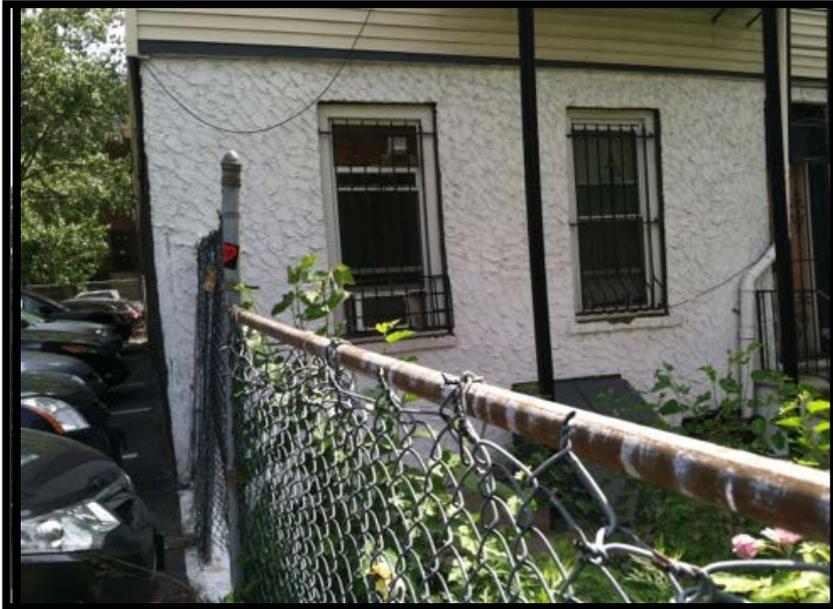


Sidewalk Condition



Rear Yard

Back of House



Utility Adjacent to the West