

## **PRINCIPAL POINTS STATEMENT**

### **FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 143 COLUMBUS DRIVE, JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY BLOCK 12901, LOT 1 (AS SUBDIVIDED – NEW LOTS 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.04 AND 1.05)**

An application has been filed by 143 Columbus Drive Group LLC with the Jersey City Planning Board for Preliminary and Final Major Subdivision approval with a deviation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70(c) (lot size) for approval to subdivide the existing lot into five (5) lots with regard to the property located at 143 Columbus Drive, Jersey City, New Jersey, and also identified on the Jersey City Tax Maps as Block 12901, Lot 1 (the “Property”; as subdivided – to be new Lots 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.04 and 1.05). The property is located in the Columbus Corner Redevelopment Plan (“Redevelopment Plan”) area.

The purpose of the subdivision application is to facilitate the development of a project that will a) rehabilitate and develop the existing building with three (3) residential units and commercial uses on property that is located at the corner of Columbus Drive and Barrow Street and within the Historic District Rehabilitation District of the Redevelopment Plan; b) develop a new seven (7) story mixed use building with forty-four (44) parking spaces, and fifty (50) residential units on property that is located within the Mixed Use New Construction District of the Redevelopment Plan; and c) develop two (2) new townhouses containing 2 residential units, and a multi-Family building containing six (6) residential units, for a total of ten (10) residential units on property that is located within the Historic District New Construction District of the Redevelopment Plan.

The Property currently consists of the existing corner building used for commercial purposes and an adjacent commercial surface parking lot (a pre-existing non-conforming use). If approved, the surface parking lot will cease all operations and the parking lot use will be abandoned once the subdivision is perfected and the new lots are created.

The Applicant is seeking the following deviations and/or variances, exceptions and or waivers from the Columbus Corner Redevelopment Plan and/or the Jersey City Land Development Ordinance in connection with this application:

1. The Applicant is seeking relief from the minimum required lot areas for the new lots.
2. The Applicant is seeking relief for any other deviations and/or variances, exceptions and/or waivers that the Planning Board shall deem necessary in connection with this application.

The Redevelopment Plan consists of only Lot 1 in Block 12901. This Property has been historically used as a surface parking lot, and has an existing 4.5 story building on the corner. This lot/area

was also historically a split lot zoned area, which resulted in the creation of the Redevelopment Plan to hopefully encourage new development (see Section I of the Redevelopment Plan that discussed the problems and difficulties that resulted in a lack of development on this Property). The Redevelopment Plan, which was adopted in 2004, defines the “minimum lot size” as “The entire study area shall be developed comprehensively as one building.” So there is actually no defined minimum lot area, and instead, the intent is to have the “entire study area”, which is the entire Redevelopment Plan area and Lot 1, to be developed together. While the Redevelopment Plan states that the entire study area should be developed as “one building”, there are three distinct zoning districts within the one lot, all with different intents and requirements. One of these zones consists of only an existing building that is to be rehabilitated as part of any redevelopment. So while the Redevelopment Plan sets forth that the study area should be developed as comprehensively as one building, the building would be one building that is governed by three district zones. This is certainly a unique situation and unique zoning. The fact that nothing has been developed at this Property since 2004 is telling in that this creates a difficult development scenario.

It is submitted that the intent and goals of the Redevelopment Plan is to develop the Property in a comprehensive manner, but not necessarily restrict it to one building and one lot. The Introductory statement of the Redevelopment Plan provides that:

*The purpose of this Plan is to provide a comprehensive redevelopment plan that will allow and encourage the transition of the Study Area from an area of primarily vacant land to residential and ancillary commercial land uses consistent with the goals of the City and the Jersey City Master Plan as is now appropriate for the Study area. (Section I)*

The proposed subdivision of the existing lots into five (5) new lots will create development opportunities consistent with the respective zoning districts as the new lots will be created consistent with the boundaries of the zoning districts. The subdivision will then allow for these developments to occur separately, but also in a comprehensive manner. The characteristics and goals of the respective district can be addressed in a more effective and efficient manner as separate developments within the Redevelopment Plan. That being said, the proposed developments in connection with this subdivision will be inter-related as there will be a drive aisle to the proposed parking garage of the seven story mixed use building (in the Mixed Use New Construction District) through the lots that would face Barrow Street (the Historic New Construction District). This access to the parking garage along Barrow Street is consistent with the requirements of the Redevelopment Plan (See Section VII.C.5). The redevelopment of the Property will also be done in a comprehensive manner as it will facilitate obtaining financing and permitting separately, while continuing the development in a comprehensive phased manner.

This subdivision is also consistent with the proposed redevelopment actions set forth in the Redevelopment Plan in that it supports:

*The consolidation and re-subdivision of land within the Study Area in to suitable parcels for development for the new residential and commercial land uses. (Section IV.B; emphasis added)*

This subdivision will create more suitable parcels for development, and address the split lot zoning issue that was the reason for creating this Redevelopment Plan in the first instance. The current lot/Property is split zoned (not unlike the Property prior to the creation of the Redevelopment Plan) and creates development conflicts when trying to address the respective zones as one building/development. In that regard, while an approval was obtained many years ago for the redevelopment of the Property, it was never built. Therefore, it is submitted that the subdivision of the Property in to parcels consistent with the respective zones will create the suitable lots that will result in development that was envisioned by the Redevelopment Plan in each of these zones.

It is also noted in addition to the above that the Redevelopment Plan envisioned that a subdivision of the Property might occur as it set forth:

*Any subdivision of lots and parcels of land within the Study Area shall be in accordance with this Plan's requirements and the Jersey City Land Development Ordinance. (Section V.D; emphasis supplied)*

This subdivision will create more suitable lots for development consistent with the goals of creating a high density mixed use project along Columbus Drive; rehabilitating the corner building with complimentary uses to the new mixed use Columbus Drive building, and a development that transitions in to the adjacent Historic District along Barrow Street. While not in one building, the lots will create the opportunity for the respective separate developments that will result in a comprehensive redevelopment of the Property consistent with the goals of the Redevelopment Plan.

The benefits of granting relief to create the more suitable lots for development outweigh any substantial detriments. As this is a significant corridor in the downtown area, it will be a substantial benefit to the goals and intent of the Redevelopment Plan to terminate and eliminate the surface parking lot use at this Property. In that regard, it is noted that as a condition of any approval of this subdivision, the surface parking lot use would be required to be terminated and abandoned in order to perfect the subdivision approval through the recording of a subdivision map. The elimination of the surface parking lot will also help to promote the use of mass transit, which is also consistent with the objectives of the Redevelopment Plan (Section III.B). There are no substantial detriments as once the subdivision is perfected the parking surface lot use is terminated and construction of the proposed development could begin. At that time, it is presumed that the owner/developer would only perfect the subdivision, and abandon the surface parking lot use, if they intended on proceeding with the development. Accordingly, the requested relief to create new suitable development lots can be granted as the subdivision is

consistent with the intent and goals of the Redevelopment Plan that will result in a new comprehensive development of the Redevelopment Plan Property.