

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPAL POINTS
68 Monitor Street – Block 15802, Lot 37
Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

October 28, 2021

An application has been filed for the above noted property with the Jersey City Planning Board for Site Plan Approval of a proposed six-story mixed-use building. The proposed development will consist of the adaptive re-use of an existing tall one-story industrial masonry structure, along with the new construction of a 6-story mixed-use residential and commercial building within and above the existing structure. Selective demolition will also occur to accommodate the new development, but architectural features of the building will be retained. The property is located in the T.O.D. West Zone of the Morris Canal Redevelopment Area, as well as within Adaptive Reuse Overlay Zone “A”.

The purpose of the T.O.D. Zone is to: provide for higher density mid-rise development and lower parking standards in proximity to the HBLRT station in order to take advantage of the mass transit opportunities afforded by the Hudson Bergen Light Rail and local bus routes. The proposed development is consistent with this purpose.

The purpose of the Adaptive Re-use Overlay Zone is to: provide options for property owners of certain significant and appropriate structures, and/or certain outmoded institutional and industrial structures, that existed at the time of adoption of this redevelopment plan to have greater flexibility in use than would be permitted by the underlying residential, retail or industrial district. One of the specific redevelopment actions within the redevelopment plan is to create “Adaptive Reuse Areas”, where certain structures of significance can be preserved and reused.

The proposed development has also been reviewed by the City’s Historic Preservation Specialist, Ms. Margaret O’Neill. She also noted that the subject site is in Adaptive Re-use Overlay Zone “A”, and that the Redevelopment Plan encourages that these buildings be re-used, rather than demolished. The proposed development is consistent with this aspect of the Redevelopment Plan as well.

The subject property is identified as Lot 37 on Block 15802. The street address is 68 Monitor Street. The property is located on the south-east corner of Monitor Street and Maple Street. Maple Street had been vacated, but has been re-opened in order to provide improved circulation and eventually more direct access to the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Station to the east. The property has 100 feet of frontage on both Maple Street and Monitor Street. The property is 10,000 square feet in area. The property is developed with a tall one-story masonry industrial structure. It has been estimated that the structure was constructed in the early 20th century, approximately 1915. The City’s Historic Preservation Specialist has found that the building is representative of a Romanesque Revival industrial application. She has further determined that because of its remaining design features, identifiable decorative features and presence in the neighborhood; its demolition would negatively impact the historic character of the area.

As such, the developer has decided to adaptively re-use the building and incorporate it into the proposed development.

As previously stated, the proposed project is a mixed-use mid-rise, primarily residential building. The proposed development is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Redevelopment Plan and specifically the purpose of the T.O.D. districts to provide higher density mid-rise development and lower parking standards in proximity to the HBLRT station. The proposed development will also provide three (3) units of moderate-income affordable housing, consistent with the Affordable Housing Criteria found in the T.O.D. West district requirements.

In total, the proposed building will be 6-stories tall. The ground floor will contain 2 commercial spaces totaling 3,298 square feet, the residential lobby, 5 parking spaces, bicycle storage and various utility and mechanical areas. The upper 5-stories will contain 39 dwelling units, including the 3 affordable units. Resident amenity spaces will also be provided on the 2nd floor and a roof deck and dog run will be provided on the upper roof.

The proposed development requires five (5) deviations from the Redevelopment Plan related to bulk and design criteria, all of which are a direct result of retaining and repurposing the existing building. There is also a deviation required from the Green Area Ratio Ordinance requirements; again, as a result of retaining the existing building.

Front Setback (Section XI.A.3.b.v.) – 5 feet is required, while zero feet is proposed. This is due to the existing building being located at the street line. Complying with this requirement would result in a significant hardship in that the existing building would have to be demolished. This would further be contrary to the intent and purpose of the Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan and the recommendations of the City's Historic Preservation Specialist. The granting of the requested deviation is a much better approach to the design and development of the property and the benefits of granting the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment.

Rear Setback, *at both the first level and above* (Section XI.A.3.b.vii.) – the required setback at the first level is 5 feet, the required setback above the first level is 15 feet. Zero feet is provided at the first level and 10 feet is provided above the first level. Similar to the front setback described above, complying with this requirement would result in a significant hardship in that the existing building would have to be demolished. This would further be contrary to the intent and purpose of the Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan and the recommendations of the City's Historic Preservation Specialist. The granting of the requested deviation is a much better approach to the design and development of the property and the benefits of granting the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment.

Height of Roof at Rear Setback (Section XI.A.3.b.vii.) – The permitted height of the roof at the rear setback is 10 feet, the proposed height is 12.9 feet. This is a rather diminimis deviation and is driven by the design of the building taking into account the adaptive re-use of the existing building and incorporating the structure into the new use and

development. The granting of the requested deviation is a much better approach to the design and development of the property and the benefits of granting the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment; and is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Redevelopment Plan.

Shopfront Design (Section XII.1.f.(2)) - The Redevelopment Plan requires that new shopfronts shall have windows with at least 70% of façade open to perpendicular view. However, in this case, such a requirement would result in additional demolition of the building and be out of character with the architectural qualities of the building. Further, this requirement may not be applicable to this specific condition; since while the commercial uses are new, the building is pre-existing. Reducing the window sizes will result in a design that better fits into the architectural character and design features of the existing building. The granting of the requested deviation is therefore a much better approach to the design and development of the property and the benefits of granting the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment; and is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Redevelopment Plan.

Green Area Ratio (Ord. 20-044) – The required green area ratio is 0.25, while 0.07 is proposed. This is again a result of preserving the building and limiting any demolition. The existing building covers the entire site and severely restricts the ability of the proposed development to provide green elements. The preservation and adaptive re-use of the building consistent with the intent of the Redevelopment Plan is a better approach to the design and development of the property and the benefits of granting the deviation will substantially outweigh any detriment.

There will be no detrimental impact to the public good or general welfare in that the front setbacks are consistent with what is existing. Monitor Street and re-opened Maple Street will provide adequate air and light. The lower-level rear setback is existing and the upper level setback of 10 feet is adequate to provide air and light to the adjacent property, which is a vacant area. The additional height of the rear roof over the parking is diminimis and is, at any rate adjacent to vacant land. The shop front design is appropriate to the design of the building and will still allow for views into the commercial areas as well as out to the street. The Green Area Ratio cannot be achieved without demolishing the building, which would result in a greater detriment to the public good through the loss of the existing building.

There will also be no significant detriment to the intent and purpose of the zone plan. The proposed adaptive re-use and expansion of the existing building promotes the purposes of the T.O.D. District to provide higher density mid-rise development as well as the intent of the Adaptive Re-use Overlay Zone to provide additional design flexibility and to encourage the re-use of buildings such as the subject building, rather than see these buildings be demolished. In addition, the proposed development will provide three (3) units of affordable housing.

Granting the requested deviation will also advance the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law and thereby promote the general welfare.

- The approval of the project and requested deviation will guide the appropriate use and development of the property in a manner that will promote the general welfare consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.a. through the provision of an appropriate multi-family mixed-use building consistent with the zoning of the area, including the development of three (3) affordable housing units;
- The proposed development promotes the establishment of an appropriate population density, consistent with the number of units permitted and in an area well served by public transportation; and will contribute to the well-being of the neighborhood and community.
- The proposed development also provides sufficient space in an appropriate location for the proposed multi-family building consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.g.; and
- The proposed development promotes a desirable visual environment consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.i. through the development of an attractive mixed-use multi-family building.
- The proposed development will promote the conservation and adaptive re-use of the existing building, prevent urban sprawl and the improper use of the land consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.j. through the adaptive re-use of the existing building.

The proposed project provides substantial benefits as described above in terms of advancing the purposes of zoning, the goals and objectives of the redevelopment plan, the purpose of the T.O.D. district and the Adaptive Re-use Overlay Zone; as well as providing affordable housing.

The granting of the deviations will not result in a substantial detriment to the intent and purpose of the redevelopment plan or zone plan, or a substantial detriment to the public good and general welfare.

As such, the positive and negative criteria for the granting of the deviations have been met pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.c.(2) wherein the benefits of granting the requested deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment.

The Applicant reserves the right to supplement the foregoing reasons with expert testimony at the Planning Board hearing.