

## **PRINCIPAL POINTS STATEMENT**

### **WHITON PROPERTY, LLC 341 JOHNSTON AVENUE BLOCK 19001, LOTS 3, 4 AND 5**

The Applicant, Whiton Property, LLC, has filed an application with the Jersey City Planning Board for Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan approval with deviations (maximum building coverage; minimum off-street parking) with regard to the property located at 341 Johnston Avenue, also identified as Block 19001, Lots 3, 4 and 5 on the official Tax Map of the City of Jersey City (the "Property"). The Property is located within the boundaries of the Lafayette Park Redevelopment Plan (the "Redevelopment Plan"), adopted March 1979 and last amended on September 14, 2016 by way of Ordinance 16-127.

The Property is a corner lot approximately 7,250 sq. ft. in size at the corner of Johnston Avenue and Whiton Street. The Property currently contains a one-story body-shop situated on Lot 5 while the remainder of the Property is vacant land. Applicant intends to clear the Property and construct a six (6) story mixed-use building containing thirty-five (35) units, ten (10) off-street parking spaces, and approximately 853 sq. ft. of retail space (collectively, the "Project"). The Project will utilize the Redevelopment Plan's Affordable Housing Bonus by designating five (5) units as affordable housing units.

The Project meets several objectives of the Redevelopment Plan, including:

- Eliminating negative/blighting influences and by providing new construction and site improvements;
- Providing a variety of residential uses and housing types ... to meet the housing needs of low, moderate, and upper income households;
- Reducing automobile dependency by encouraging high density development in close proximity to mass transit and neighborhood services with low automobile parking and bicycle parking requirements.

In conjunction with the Site Plan Approval, Applicant requests that the Board grant the following deviations from the Redevelopment Plan:

1. Deviation from Section VII.E.(b).(i) of the Redevelopment Plan for maximum building coverage to permit a maximum building coverage of 85.7% whereas a maximum of 75% is permitted;
2. Deviation from Section VII.F.(a) of the Redevelopment Plan for minimum off-street parking

requirements to permit a total of ten (10) off-street parking spaces whereas eighteen (18) spaces are required;

3. Deviation pursuant to Section VII.D.(b) to permit a building height of 62.6 ft. whereas a maximum of 60 ft. is permitted; and
4. Any additional approvals, permits, variances, interpretations, waivers or exceptions reflected in the plans and materials filed (as same may be amended or revised from time to time without further notice) or determined to be necessary during the review and processing of this application.

Applicant intends to develop a permitted mixed-use building on the Property. These deviations are a function of the location of the Property as a corner lot, the location of the Property in relation to mass transit and public transportation, and the necessity to provide safe and habitable residential units.

### **Maximum Building Coverage**

The Project is proposing a maximum building coverage of 85.7% whereas the Redevelopment Plan provides for a maximum building coverage of 75% of the lot area. This deviation is caused by the Property's irregular shape and the conditions of the Property as a corner lot. The Redevelopment Plan requires a 25ft. minimum rear yard setback and the Project is proposing a rear yard setback of 25 ft. The Redevelopment Plan requires ground floor retail in buildings four or more stories for buildings within 25 ft. of Johnston Avenue. Here, the Project is proposing 853 sq. ft. of retail space along the ground floor. Due to the irregular nature of the Project site, the excess coverage is necessary to preserve the streetscape and to provide a continuous building line with the adjacent property. The additional lot coverage is therefore a function of the existing irregular shape of the Property.

### **Off-Street Parking**

The Project is proposing a total minimum off-street parking count of ten (10) parking spaces whereas the Redevelopment Plan requires a total of eighteen (18) parking spaces. The Project is situated near several mass transit options. The Project is located two blocks from the NJ Transit "Liberty State Park" light rail station, providing pedestrian access from the Project to the light rail system. In addition, there are bus stops located within the vicinity of the Project (Number 6 – Johnson Avenue and Monitor Street) (Number 1 and Number 6- Pacific Avenue and Johnston Avenue) (Number 1 – Pacific Avenue and Ash Street). Considering the readily accessible access to these mass transit options, most residents will not require garage parking and the relief can be accommodated in light of the Project's close proximity to mass transit options.

## **Building Height**

The Project is proposing a building height of 62.6 ft. whereas a maximum of 60 ft. is permitted by the Redevelopment Plan. A de minimis deviation of 2.6 ft. is the result of construction configurations along with the ability to provide sufficient floor to ceiling heights for both the commercial and residential aspects of the project. As will be testified to by the Applicant's professionals during the public hearing, the slight deviation in building height will not cause any negative impact to light and air for adjacent properties. Overall, the deviation will improve the overall appearance and aesthetic features of the Project, and will not cause a substantial detriment to the public good and will not substantially impair the intent and the purpose of the Master Plan or the JCLDO.

These Project improvements, as outlined in the Redevelopment Plan, will benefit and serve the immediate neighborhood and residents of Jersey City by providing essential services and affordable housing to the area.

The proposed Site plan Promotes the following purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law found within N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2:

- a.** To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this State, in a manner promoting the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;
- c.** To provide adequate light, air and open space; and
- i.** To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement.

The proposed development of the property is an appropriate development of the property that will benefit the immediate neighborhood and will promote the general welfare, promote appropriate population densities, and a desirable visual environment. The development will promote a desirable visual environment by providing a residential use appropriate for the neighborhood. The proposed use and the bulk of the project is an appropriate use of the land and an appropriate build out of the land, and the proposed project will not affect any permitted uses in the neighborhood.

The proposed deviations will not cause a substantial detriment to the public good, nor impairment to the intent and purpose of the Jersey City Zone Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The Applicant reserves the right to supplement its reasoning through expert testimony at the time of the hearing on this application.