

Principal Points Statement
85 Monitor Street (Block 19003, Lots 10 and 11)
Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

September 22, 2023

An application has been filed for the above-noted property with the Jersey City Planning Board for Major Site Plan approval with 'c' variances including bulk variances for; 6th floor stepback, rooftop appurtenance coverage, and balcony dimensions. The subject property is located in the Transit Oriented Development -West ("TOD-W") of the Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan ("Redevelopment Plan").

The subject property at 85 Monitor Street is identified as Lots 10 and 11 on Block 19003. The subject property has a total lot size of 3,333 square feet (0.076 acres), with a lot width of 33.34 feet along Monitor Street, and a lot depth of 100 feet. Lots 10 and 11 are each currently improved with 2-story, single-family homes.

The purpose of this application is to demolish the existing 2-story residential buildings and construct a 6-story, 10-unit multi-family residential building spanning both parcels. The proposed first floor provides a 1,785 square foot retail space in addition to ancillary residential space such as the entry lobby, bike storage room, trash room, mechanical rooms and elevator to the upper floors. This level has 100% proposed lot coverage. The second through sixth floors propose a 25-foot rear-yard stepback and contain two (2) two-bedroom units each; one oriented towards the southeast fronting Monitor Street and one oriented to the northwest overlooking the rear yard. On the second floor, the rear unit opens to a private terrace of approximately 250 square feet above the first story. The terrace is set back 16 feet from the rear property line and the remainder of the first-story roof is a 501 square foot vegetative green roof system. Each of the rear units on floors three through six has a rear balcony spanning the unit. There is a common roof deck atop the 6th floor penthouse totaling 965 square feet. The deck is set back from the building line on all sides and has a 426-square-foot vegetative buffer spanning three sides of the property. There is an additional vegetative green roof system at the northern corner of the roof totaling 125 square feet.

The requested bulk deviations can be granted pursuant to the Redevelopment Plan and N.J.S.A. 40-55.D-70.c.(2) where the benefits of the proposed project would substantially outweigh any detriments and the purposes of the redevelopment plan would be advanced. The proposed project will develop the property into a 6-story, multi-family building that will contribute to the revitalization of the Morris Canal Redevelopment area consistent with the Redevelopment Plan goals.

- *Sixth Floor Stepback:* The project proposes a 0-foot stepback at the sixth-story penthouse level where the Redevelopment Plan requires a 5-foot stepback. The building design aligns the sixth floor with floors two through five, flush with the front property line. This arrangement allows the proposed project to maintain a consistent unit layout and mechanical system configuration through all residential floors of the structure. The proposed project is lower in total height than adjacent mixed-use multifamily buildings, including "The

Hazel” at 89 Monitor Street to the north, a six-story building that is approximately seventy feet in height at the street wall and, “The Bela” at 74 Maple Street to the south, an eight-story building which has a total height of approximately ninety feet. Similarly, the entire blockfront directly across Monitor Street is occupied by a five-story building, “295J” with a height of approximately sixty-eight feet; just slightly above the proposed height of sixty-four feet, nine inches at 85 Monitor Street. Despite the lack of stepback at the sixth story, the project does comply with the permitted height standards of the TOD-W bulk requirements. The variance for the stepback at the 6th floor can be granted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.c(2) as the proposed bulk is neither out of character with the surrounding context nor detrimental to the existing scale of the neighborhood or the intent of the Redevelopment Plan.

- *Maximum Rooftop Appurtenance Coverage:* The Jersey City Land Development Ordinance permits a maximum rooftop appurtenance coverage, inclusive of mechanical areas, of 20% of roof area. The project proposes a total appurtenance coverage of 32%. While the stair and elevator bulkheads and egress vestibule are compliant in size, the mechanical area of the rooftop requires more square footage than typical to accommodate a generator for the building as the property is located in the flood zone and the larger neighborhood is prone to flooding and associated power issues in significant storm conditions. The mechanical area is pushed to the rear of the roof area, falling twenty-five feet from the rear property and more than fifty feet from the front property line. The mechanical space has substantial screening and acoustic panels to buffer any visual or noise impacts of the equipment.
- *Balcony Dimensions:* The Jersey City Land Development Ordinance limits balconies to a maximum of five feet in depth and a width of not more than fifty percent (50%) of the building. The project proposes rear-yard balconies on floors two through six at a compliant depth of five feet. However, the balconies span the majority of the rear wall of the building for a total width of twenty-seven feet, ten inches, approximately 84% of the building width. Given that the balconies are compliant in depth and still set back from both side property lines, the extended width does not change the nature of the utilization or programming of the balconies, but rather allows for maximized access between numerous rooms within the units and the balconies given the interior layout.
- *Purposes of MLUL:* The granting of the deviations will advance the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law. Granting the requested variances 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 building in the Morris Canal neighborhood. The approval of this project would also promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities; consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.e. The proposed project, including the façade and the restored sidewalk, promote a desirable visual environment

through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement; consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.i.

Negative Criteria: Granting the requested variances will not result in a substantial impairment to public good, welfare, or safety. The project is consistent with and in fact lower in total height than the adjacent and larger-scale redevelopment and therefore the granting of the requested stepback deviation will not cause a substantial/detrimental increase in shadows on the adjacent properties, as the existing larger buildings already cast shade exceeding that of the proposed structure. Additionally, the roof deck atop the 6th floor is set back from the building line by approximately 4 feet and includes a vegetative buffer around the deck perimeter in addition to the substantial mechanical area screening to mitigate any noise or privacy impacts of the increased mechanical area on adjacent properties, therefore preserving public good and general welfare while prioritizing safety of the residents in providing an emergency generator.

The proposed project will also advance several of the Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan Goals including;

- *Provide opportunities for the growth of neighborhood level retail, services and community facilities for the Lafayette neighborhood.*

The project proposes a new ground floor retail space in a neighborhood that is experiencing significant rapid population growth as formerly industrial properties are being redeveloped with mid-high rise residential projects both in the Morris Canal Redevelopment Area and the adjacent Lafayette Park Redevelopment Area.

- *Ensure a positive land use impact and maximum benefits from the LRT by encouraging the redevelopment in the areas closer to the light-rail transit station as mixed-use and higher intensity development consistent with the principles of “Smart Growth” and the State’s “Transit Village Initiative”*

The project is located approximately a ¼ mile walk from the Liberty State Park Light Rail Station and therefore redeveloping the land in a manner that implements ten (10) units where two (2) units exist today, increasing density in an appropriate manner while promoting the objectives of smart growth policies by locating said density within a five-minute walk of a major transit node.

The redevelopment of the property as proposed advances several goals of the 2021 OURJC Jersey City Master Plan including;

- *Ensure the City’s available housing is balanced and meets the needs of all current and future city residents.*

The proposed redevelopment is an appropriate yet unique smaller-scale infill project that compliments the adjacent larger, highly amenitized multi-family structures that have been recently added to the neighborhood.

- *Make the City more walkable, bikeable, transit friendly, and less reliant on the automobile.*

The increase in density within a short walking distance of the HBLR as well as Liberty State Park recreation areas allows increased access to the City's essential services and open spaces without reliance on vehicular access.

The proposed project meets the required proofs and advances the goals of the Zone Plan as required by the NJ MLUL, and therefore the requested deviations and overall site plan can be approved by the Jersey City Planning Board. The Applicant reserves the right to supplement the foregoing reasons with expert testimony at the Planning Board hearing.