

Statement of Principal Points  
253 Central Avenue (Block 3701, Lot 34)  
Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

An application has been filed for the above-noted property ("subject property") with the Jersey City Planning Board for Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval; and approval of a bulk "c" variance for the mechanical and other roof appurtenances pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.c.

The subject property at 253 Central Avenue is identified as Lot 34 on Block 3701 in the City of Jersey City. The subject property has an approximate lot size of 2,499 square feet (0.06 acre), with 25 feet of frontage along Central Avenue and an approximate lot depth of 100 feet. Currently, Lot 34 is improved with a 2-story mixed-use building. The subject property is in the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) District.

The purpose of this application is to demolish the existing 2-story building and to construct a 5-story mixed-use building, with ground-floor commercial use and 8 residential units on the second through fifth floors. Separate residential and commercial entrances are proposed. The ground floor will provide an approximate 1,091-square-foot commercial space and a patio. The basement will provide space for utilities, garbage, and a storage room for 8 bicycles. The second through fifth floor will provide 2 one-bedroom units at an average of 627 square feet. The four units facing the rear of the building will have access to a balcony. A 517-square-foot roof deck is proposed for common amenity use of future residents. Elevator and stair access are proposed to each floor and the roof. The existing curb and sidewalk will be replaced with new curb and sidewalk. The existing tree will be improved with a new tree pit.

*Positive Criteria:* The requested bulk "c" variance can be granted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.c.(2), wherein the benefits of the proposed project would outweigh any detriments and the purposes of land use planning are advanced.

*Mechanical & Other Roof Appurtenances and Structures:* A maximum rooftop structure coverage of 20% (394 square feet) of the roof area is permitted for buildings, where a roof structure coverage of 30.5% (612 square feet) is proposed. The variance request is for an additional 10.5% or 218 square feet of the roof area. The roof plan for the proposed project shows the elevator and stair bulkhead requirements are met, and they are necessary to provide access to the proposed common roof deck. The enclosed lobby provides access by Stair #1 and elevator which comply with ADA requirements to the roof deck. The second stairs lead directly to the roof deck. The 125-square-foot mechanical space consists of 8 HVAC compressors (one for each unit), which are necessary on the roof to minimize heat and noise disturbances in the units for future residents. The mechanical space will also be fenced so it will not affect the roof deck for future residents.

Overall, the benefits of the proposed project outweigh the detriments. The benefits consist of developing a vacant lot in a commercial neighborhood, replacing the existing curb and sidewalk with new curb and sidewalk, and

offering new commercial and residential opportunities for current and future residents of The Heights neighborhood.

The proposed project will advance and promote purposes of the *Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL)*. Granting the requested variances for this project will guide the appropriate use and development in a manner which will promote the public health and general welfare pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.a. through the development of a new mixed-use, commercial and residential building. The project will propose adequate light, air and open space to the surrounding properties consist with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.c. The proposed project will promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.i. through the new construction of the proposed building.

As stated in the Jersey City Master Plan, the purpose of the NC District *“is to recognize the existence and importance of neighborhood business districts and promote continued effects to strengthen and revitalize them. The NC district promotes low-scale, pedestrian-oriented development, with upper-story apartments over a wide range of commercial, office, and service uses.”* The proposed project meets and will promote the Jersey City Master Plan Goals and Objectives including:

- *“Strengthen neighborhood-oriented commercial areas.”*
- *“Ensure the City’s available housing is balanced and meets the needs of all current and future city residents.”*
- *“Promote the development of a diversified economy.”*

*Negative Criteria:* Granting the requested variances will not result in a substantial detriment to the public good or the general welfare. The proposed project is in character, in terms of use and bulk, with the existing uses and buildings within the surrounding area. The proposed project will provide newly constructed and sufficiently sized units for future residents. A common amenity space is proposed on the roof with 12 new planter boxes along the roof deck. The proposed project complies with the purpose of the Neighborhood Commercial District by revitalizing the site with a mixed use building that offers residential apartments and a variety of commercial uses.

Granting the requested variances will likewise not result in a substantial impairment to the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance. The project proposes a development that will promote the purpose of the NC District, *“to recognize the existence and importance of neighborhood business districts and provide ground floor commercial in mixed-use buildings to promote walkability.”* The project complies with all other bulk requirements including compliant front yard and side yard setbacks, and floor-to-ceiling heights. The project proposes open space for future residents including the common roof deck.

As such, the bulk variances necessary for the proposed project can be granted in that both the positive and negative criteria have been met pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.c. The Applicant reserves the right to supplement the foregoing reasons with expert testimony at the Planning Board hearing.