

Principal Points Statement
84-88 Beacon Avenue (Block 5705, Lots 26-28)
Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

An application has been filed for the above noted property with the Jersey City Zoning Board of Adjustment for Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan approval; approval of a use variance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.d.(1); a height variance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.d.(6); and bulk “c” variances for minimum rear yard setback, minimum side yard setback, maximum building coverage, maximum lot coverage, minimum drive aisle width, and maximum curb cut, driveway, and garage door width. The subject property is located in the One- and Two-Family (“R-1”) Housing District.

The subject property is identified as Lots 26, 27, and 28 on Block 5705 and is located at the corner of Beacon Avenue and Oakland Avenue. The subject property has a total of approximately 78 feet of frontage on Beacon Avenue and approximately 113 feet of frontage on Oakland Avenue with a total lot area of 8,821 square feet (0.20 acres). Lots 26 and 27 are currently enclosed by a 1-story brick wall which has two roll-up garage doors along Beacon Avenue, within the enclosed area is a 2-story commercial structure. Lot 26 is also currently developed with a 2-story, 3-unit residential building at the northeast corner along Oakland Avenue. Lot 28 is currently developed with a 2-story, 2-unit residential building.

The purpose of this application is to develop the property with a new 5-story, 24-unit residential building. The ground floor will consist of a residential lobby and lounge at the corner and along Oakland Avenue along with a 17-space parking garage with access from Beacon Avenue. The 2nd floor will consist of 7 residential units with a mix of 5 one-bedroom units, 1 two-bedroom units, and 1 three-bedroom unit. The units along the west side of the building will each have a private terrace space. The 3rd floor will consist of 7 residential units with a mix of 5 one-bedroom units and 2 two-bedroom units. The units on the west side of the building will each have access to a private balcony. The 4th floor will consist of 6 residential units with a mix of 4 one-bedroom units and 2 two-bedroom units. Two of the units along the west side of the building will have access to a private balcony and one of the units in the northwest corner will have access to a private terrace. The 5th floor will consist of 4 residential units with a mix of 3 one-bedroom units and 1 two-bedroom unit. The units along the west side of the building will have access to a private balcony and the units along Oakland Avenue and Beacon Avenue will have access to a private terrace. In total, there will be a mix of 17 one-bedroom units, 6 two-bedroom units, and 1 three-bedroom units. Of the 17 proposed residential units, 2 will be affordable housing units including 1 one-bedroom unit and 1 three-bedroom unit. The project is also proposing an approximate 1,823-square foot common roof deck and green roofing. The cellar of the building will contain amenity space and mechanical rooms.

In terms of the use variance, the proposed project will promote the general welfare as the subject property is particularly well-suited to accommodate the proposed multi-family residential building. The proposed project will

also carry out the purposes of zoning as defined by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2. The subject property is a corner lot located along Oakland Avenue, which is a north-south corridor in the Lower Heights area of Jersey City. A portion of the property is currently developed with an existing nonconforming commercial/industrial warehouse building, which is a more intense use than a multi-family building. In addition, the subject property at 8,821 square feet is substantially larger than the typical 2,500-square-foot lot size in the R-1 District. The corner lot location on a north-south corridor, the existing nonconforming commercial/industrial use, and the substantially larger lot size all are positive aspects that support the particular suitability of the property for a multi-family use consistent with the goals of the Lower Heights Small Area Vision Plan of the 2022 Jersey City Master Plan.

Overall, the surrounding area has a mix of residential uses including one-, two-, and multi-family buildings. The proposed 24-unit building is consistent with the number of units and density of other multi-family buildings in the surrounding area. The proposed 24 units on the 0.20-acre lot calculates a density of approximately 119 units per acre. The density of the identified multi-family buildings in the surrounding area with 6 or more units ranged from 61 units per acre to 213 units per acre with an average density of 114 units per acre. Comparable multi-family buildings in the surrounding area include a 17-unit building at 100 Beacon Avenue with a density of 140 units per acre, a 11-unit building at 95 Beacon Avenue with a density of 173 units per acre, a 95-unit building at 146 Oakland Avenue with a density of 104 units per acre, a 18-unit building at 62 Beacon Avenue with a density of 149 units per acre, and a 55-unit building at 76 St. Pauls Avenue with a density of 193 units per acre.

In addition, the substantial lot size of the subject property can accommodate a ground floor parking garage of 17 spaces, which calculates as approximately 0.7 spaces per unit. Providing an adequate number of parking spaces further supports the particular suitability of the subject property for the proposed multi-family use.

The granting of the variances will advance the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law and promote the general welfare. 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 consistent with the surrounding area. The project is also proposing a density that is consistent with other multi-family buildings located in the surrounding area, and therefore is promoting 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 will promote a more desirable visual development techniques consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.i. by developing a multi-family building that will anchor the corner of Beacon Avenue and Oakland Avenue and significantly improve the streetscape.

In terms of the height variance, the subject property can accommodate the increased height of the proposed building and is consistent with other buildings in the surrounding area. The project is proposing a building height of

5 stories and 59 feet, 4 inches where a maximum building height of 3 stories and 36 feet is permitted for flat roof buildings with 10-, 11- and 12-foot floor-to-floor heights. As mentioned, the subject property is significantly larger than the typical R-1 District lot. The project is proposing setbacks of 12 feet and 13 feet-1.75 inches on the 5th floor from the property frontages along Beacon Avenue and Oakland Avenue. The proposed setbacks will minimize any impact from the additional story when viewing from rights-of-way. The project is also proposing a setback of 10 feet in the northwest corner of the building on the 4th and 5th floors, which will allow for light and air into the interior of the block. Again, the increased setback will further reduce any impacts on the adjacent properties to the north and west. In addition, the project is proposing an accent metal panel material on the 5th story, which differs from the majority brick veneer façade material proposed on the 1st through 4th stories. From a visual perspective, the change in façade materials will also help mitigate impacts from the increased height.

The requested bulk “c” variances are applicable to one- and two-family buildings and therefore are subsumed within the use variance and can also be granted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.c.(2), wherein the benefits of the proposed project would substantially outweigh any detriments.

As stated, the subject property is a corner lot. Per the Jersey City Land Development Ordinance definitions, the front lot line is the south lot line along Beacon Avenue. The east lot line along Oakland Avenue and west lot line parallel to Oakland Avenue are both side lot lines. The north lot line perpendicular to Oakland Avenue is a rear lot line. The project is proposing 0-foot side yard setback from the east side lot line where a minimum of 2 feet is required. The project is proposing a minimum 3-foot, 1.75-inch setback from the west side lot line meeting the requirement. The project is proposing a minimum 0-foot rear yard setback where a minimum of 20 feet and combined front and rear yard setback of 35 feet is required. In this case, as the subject property is a corner lot, the rear lot line acts as a side lot line. As stated, the project is proposing setbacks on the upper floors to meet the intent of the setback requirements and provide for light, air, and open space. The benefits of the proposed 0-foot setbacks, which will provide for a complete streetscape along Beacon Avenue and Oakland Avenue while allowing for light and air into the interior of the block, would substantially outweigh the detriments.

The project is proposing an impervious lot coverage of approximately 94.9% where a maximum lot coverage of 85% is permitted. To mitigate any impacts from the increased lot coverage the project is proposing a stormwater detention system and 2,381 square feet of green roofing to manage stormwater runoff. The project is proposing a maximum building coverage of approximately 93.5% on the ground floor where 60% is permitted. The proposed building coverage on the 2nd and 3rd floors will be reduced to approximately 84.7%. The proposed building coverage on the 4th floor and 5th floors will be further reduced to approximately 78.9% and 56.3%. The increased building coverage on the ground floor will allow for the proposed ground floor parking garage area.

The project is proposing a curb cut width, driveway width, and garage door width of approximately 18.7 feet where a maximum of 10 feet is permitted. The proposed curb cut, driveway, and garage door width will allow for two-way circulation entering and existing the proposed 17-space garage parking area. The proposed curb cut will be replacing the two existing curb cuts along Beacon Avenue, which total approximately 33 feet in width. The benefits of the additional width for the curb cut, driveway and garage door would therefore substantially outweigh any detriments. The project is proposing a drive aisle width of 22 feet where 24 feet is required. The proposed drive aisle width is appropriately sized and will allow for vehicle maneuvering within the parking garage.

Granting the variances will not result in a substantial detriment to the general welfare. The proposed project will improve the general welfare by removing an existing nonconforming industrial/commercial use and creating a more conforming residential use. The proposed project is consistent with the residential neighborhood including the multi-family buildings in the surrounding area. The project is also proposing affordable housing units. As stated, the project is proposing adequate setbacks and stepbacks to allow for light, air, and open space. The project will also be adding landscaping in the west side yard, a stormwater detention system, and green roofing to improve the stormwater conditions on the property.

Granting the variances will likewise not result in a substantial detriment to the zoning ordinance or zone plan. The purposes of the R-1 District include “encouraging compatible in-fill development” and “preserving the integrity of residential neighborhoods.” The proposed project also advances the Jersey City Master Plan by enhancing residential neighborhoods and creating a balanced housing supply that meets the needs of all current and future city residents and complies with the Jersey City Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance with the provision of affordable units. The Lower Heights Small Area Vision Plan of the Land Use Element of the 2022 Jersey City Master Plan includes goals that were developed based on the community-identified issues and opportunities. Included in the development standard goals was to,

- **Goal 1:** *“Continue to prohibit high-rise development in the Lower Heights (larger than 5 stories).”*
- **Goal 2:** *“Limit development to 3 stories in the interior neighborhoods.”*
- **Goal 3:** *“Focus higher intensity development up to 5 stories) on north-south corridors.”*
- **Goal 7:** *“Establish front- and side-yard setbacks and lot coverage ratios to improve micro-climates and maintain access to light and air.”*

The proposed 5-story, multi-family building is consistent with the goals of the Lower Heights Small Area Vision Plan.

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