

## STATEMENT OF PRINCIPAL POINTS

Applicant: Torch Investments, LLC

Address: 740 Ocean Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey 07305 Block: 21401, Lot: 52

The Applicant proposes to convert an existing and non-conforming four unit, two-story frame dwelling to an eight unit dwelling by adding an additional story, removing an existing incompatible rear building and providing three off-street parking spaces with various site improvements.

The proposed project exists in the R-1 Zoning District which amongst other things states that the purpose of this district is to accommodate existing housing and encourage compatible in-fill development. The rapid changes occurring in this neighborhood particularly in the Jackson Hill Redevelopment Area situated on the other side of Ocean Avenue allowing greater density surrounding the MLK Light Rail Station begs for this proposed type of in-fill housing. Development is expanding beyond the Redevelopment Area as housing development concentrates around the transportation station.

The award winning Jersey City Master Plan Circulation Element, Jersey City Mobility 2050 recommends that the City:

*Develop and implement smart growth strategies that locate new residential development within walking distance of bus stops and passenger rail stations, with the highest density zones located within walking distance of passenger rail stations; that mixes residential land use with commercial land use; Create meaningful public spaces that facilitate integration of the built environment with arterials and major transit routes; Parking space requirement maximums that reduce the number of permitted parking spaces in development near fixed rail transit stations in proportion to distance and inversely proportional to the intensity of development.*

The Applicant seeks variances for Use and Density and Building Height. The development site is located on the Eastern side of Ocean Avenue at the intersection with Virginia Avenue approximately one-half block away from the MLK Light Rail Station along Virginia Avenue a short walking distance. The granting of these variance meets the objectives of the aforementioned Master Plan Circulation Element. The City's new parking deck accessible on nearby Orient Avenue will be available for use by residents after work hours and on weekends. The adjacent Ocean Green Senior Apartment building is 5 stories in height and properties located at 720-730 Ocean Avenue are 4 stories as well as various apartment buildings in walking distance on the same side of the street, therefore the proposed height and setback is not incompatible with existing structures along Ocean Avenue. In fact new development projects across the street at the corner of Virginia Avenue are 4 stories and 5 stories at Kearney Avenue. The bulk variances for side yard is *de minimis* at best and necessary for driveway access in order to provide the 3 off-street parking spaces with enhanced site landscaping and rear yard access. The parking access and enhanced landscaping necessitates the requested variance for lot coverage as well. The nonconforming eyesore rear building will be removed resulting in a more attractive and zoning compatible. The neighborhood benefits from the removal of this eyesore with a rehabilitated building reflecting the improved appearance of the type of appropriate infill housing that is occurring not only on this street but throughout the neighborhood.

This proposed project advances those above-stated enumerated goals and begs for the granting of this parking variance.

Jersey City recently announced that it will implement the city's first Energy Savings Improvement Program (ESIP) by creating a self-sustainable municipal micro grid utilizing a solar panel array. Simultaneously, the City will contract with PSE & G to implement its Direct Install/ Energy Saver's program which amongst other things encourages water conservation methods. The micro grid and the entire ESIP program will serve as a national resiliency model saving taxpayers millions of dollars while significantly reducing the City's carbon footprint and improving air quality and the overall health and quality of the life of City residents.

The proposed project's use of solar panels and enhanced landscaping and bicycle room incorporated in its design is in furtherance of those same stated benefits and objectives.

This proposed project advances those above-stated enumerated goals and begs for the granting of this parking variance.