

Statement of Principal Points  
34-36 Jones Street (Block 10704, Lot 36)  
Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

An application has been filed for the above-noted property with the Jersey City Planning Board for Site Plan Amendment approval, and approval of a bulk deviation for the conversion of an existing ground floor retail space to a residential unit.

The subject property at 34-36 Jones Street is identified as Lot 36 on Block 10704. The subject property is an irregularly shaped, interior lot with 50 feet of frontage on Jones Street and a lot area of 5,008 square feet. The subject property is currently improved with a 5-story, mixed-use building with a ground floor commercial space and 10 residential units. The subject property is located in Zone 4: Neighborhood Mixed-Use ("Zone 4") of the Journal Square 2060 Redevelopment Plan ("Redevelopment Plan").

The purpose of this site plan amendment application is to convert the existing ground floor retail space to a residential unit. The proposed residential unit will be an approximately 875-square-foot, one-bedroom unit. The existing hallways and lobby spaces within the building will remain. The proposed conversion of the existing ground floor retail space will involve the removal of the existing retail door, frame, and insulated glass units, and the removal of portions of the existing storefront insulated glass units and existing louvers. The storefront door and glass units that will be removed will be replaced with new residential windows within the existing storefront frame. An opaque film will be applied to the proposed and remaining storefront glass units. The project is also proposing new planters within the front setback area in front of the proposed residential unit.

The requested bulk deviation can be granted where the benefits of the proposed project would substantially outweigh any detriments and the purposes of the redevelopment plan would be advanced. The conversion of the existing ground floor retail space to a residential unit will require a deviation as ground floor residential units are required to either be raised 3 feet above sidewalk grade or set back from a front property line by 3 feet and screened with raised landscaping enclosed by a minimum 6x6 inch masonry curb. Zone 4 permits residential everywhere except as restricted on the ground floor of buildings utilizing a corner height bonus depicted on Map 3: Corner Lot Bonus Map. The project did not utilize a corner lot bonus and therefore residential is permitted on the ground floor. Map 4: Required Retail Use Map of the Redevelopment Plan identifies *Optional Retail* for the subject property. Therefore, retail is not required as a ground floor frontage on the subject property. The proposed ground floor residential use as a frontage maintains consistent with Map 4.

The purpose of the requirement for ground floor residential units to either be raised 3 feet above sidewalk grade or set back from a front property line by 3 feet and screened with raised landscaping enclosed by a minimum 6x6 inch masonry curb is to provide for increased safety, screening, and buffering of a front ground floor residential

unit from the public sidewalk. The project is meeting the intent of the ground floor residential unit requirements by providing an opaque screening on the frontage windows, which will block visibility into the unit from the sidewalk, while still providing for light and air into the residential unit. The front lot line of the subject property is angled, and the front building façade is setback approximately 0 feet to 5 feet. Due to the irregularity of the property and the orientation of the building the sidewalk width varies from approximately 11 feet to 16 feet. The project is proposing planters within the front setback area in front of the building. The proposed varying setback of the building with screening and separation by the proposed planters also meets the intent of the ground floor residential requirements. The proposed project will maintain the appearance of a ground floor retail use while providing a conversion of the retail space to a permitted residential use that is screened and buffered from the sidewalk.

The granting of the variances 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. with the conversion of the ground floor retail space to a permitted residential use. 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 project will promote a desirable visual environment consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.i. by maintaining an active use along the frontage.

Granting the requested deviations will not result in a substantial detriment to the public good or the general welfare. As discussed, the proposed conversion of the ground floor retail use to residential unit meets the intent of the ground floor residential requirements by providing safety, screening, and buffering from the sidewalk. The proposed project will also provide an additional ground floor ADA unit.

Granting the requested deviations will likewise not result in a substantial impairment to the intent and purpose of the zone plan or zoning ordinance. The proposed project will provide an additional residential unit within the building promoting the purpose of Zone 4,

*“[t]he purpose of this zone is to provide for new housing, office space, and other uses on parcels within a 10 minute walk of the Journal Square Transportation Center. This zone continues the existing pattern of mixed land uses and building types while providing for increased height limits on corner lots.”*

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.

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