

# CITY OF JERSEY CITY

Department of Housing, Economic Development & Commerce  
Division of City Planning



Interdepartmental Memorandum

**DATE:** October 10, 2019

**TO:** Planning Board Commission

**FROM:** Timothy Krehel PP AICP, Principal Planner

**SUBJECT:** Staff report for P20-113, 532 Summit Avenue, 571-577 Pavonia Avenue  
Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Amendment with "c" Variances

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## DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- General Development Application, filed August 15, 2019
- Architectural Plans prepared by HLW Architects, LLC signed dated August 12, 2019 and revised October 10, 2019, August 14, 2020 signed and sealed by John P. Gering
- Civil Plans prepared by InSite Engineering LLC dated August 12, 2019, revised October 10, 2019, May 1, 2020, July 24, 2020, and August 14, 2020 signed and sealed by Eric Ballou, P.E.
- Landscape architecture plans prepared by Melillo + Bauer Associates dated August 12, 2019, revised October 10, 2019, August 14, 2020 and signed and sealed by Thomas Bauer, LA;
- Survey by InSite Surveying, LLC, signed and sealed by Justin J. Hedges, P.L.S., dated July 31, 2019
- Stormwater Analysis Report prepared by InSite Engineering, LLC, signed and sealed by Eric Ballou, P.E. dated August 12, 2019; *Original Application*
- Traffic, Access, and Circulation Study by Elizabeth Dolan, P.E. and Gary W. Dean, P.E., P.P. of Dolan & Dean dated August 12, 2019; *Original Application*
- Memo from Lichuan Wang, P.E., C.M.E. from the Division of Engineering, Traffic and Transportation; dated November 17, 2020

## PROPOSED ACTION *Original Application*

575 Pavonia LLC ("the applicant") seeks a Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan with "c" variances approval to construct a twenty-five (25) story mixed-use building containing 340 residential units, and 2,607 square feet of retail space with a sidewalk café at 532 Summit Avenue, 571-577 Pavonia Avenue (Block 9606; Lots 29, 32-35), located within Zone 3: Commercial Center of the Journal Square 2060 Redevelopment Plan ("the plan") area of the City of Jersey City.

## **SITE & PROJECT DESCRIPTION** *Original Application*

The project site is an irregularly shaped lot east of the Journal Square Transportation Center on the southeast corner of Pavonia Avenue and Summit Avenue. The project site's lot area is approximately 19,195 square feet with approximately 147 feet of frontage along Pavonia Avenue and 134 feet of frontage along Summit Avenue. The site is currently used as a surface parking lot.

The applicant proposes access to the residential lobby and ground floor retail space along Summit Avenue and loading/unloading for trucks and passenger pick-up/drop-off through a loading garage accessed from Pavonia Avenue. The ground floor retail space extends from Summit Avenue to Pavonia Avenue and is accessed from the interior of the building as well. The sidewalk café, also located along Summit Avenue is setback from Summit Avenue, and is adjacent to the residential lobby. The proposal also includes residential amenity spaces: a gym and a yoga room on the second floor and a pool and lounge space on the rooftop.

## **"c" VARIANCES REQUESTED (Site Plan Amendment)**

- A design waiver for relief from Section III.A.18 of the Redevelopment Plan that all storefront facades incorporate a minimum of 80% transparent glass (56% was previously approved, and 33.75% is now proposed).
- A deviation for relief from Section IV.B to permit (3) signs for the café/restaurant use.

## **REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR CONSIDERATION**

Per Section IV) General Administration Provisions (k) of The Plan:

All development projects ... subject to the Homestead Place ... Bonus Provisions, as may be approved by the Jersey City Planning Board, shall require as a condition of approval that the applicant shall enter into a redevelopment agreement with the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency. This agreement shall memorialize in detail all public easements to be granted to the City including the parties, schedule of conveyance, terms and conditions of use, maintenance, repair, snow removal, etc. of these easements. Nothing herein shall be construed to deprive or dispossess the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency of the discretionary exercise of its redevelopment powers enumerated in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq. including the designation of a redeveloper under the Act.

## **FINDINGS NEEDED FOR RELIEF**

According to The Plan, Section IV) General Administrative Provisions (J) Deviation Requests, the Planning Board may grant deviations from the regulations, where:

*by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property, or by reason of exceptional topographic conditions, pre-existing structures or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, the strict application of any area, yard, bulk or design objective or regulation adopted pursuant to this Redevelopment Plan, would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional and undue hardship upon, the developer of such property...The Planning Board may also grant relief...where the purposes of The Plan would be advanced by a deviation from the strict requirements of The Plan and the benefits of the deviation would outweigh any detriments.*

*Additionally, the Planning Board may not grant relief under the terms of this section unless such deviation or relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the Redevelopment Plan.*

## **STAFF COMMENTS**

- 1) Applicant's experts shall provide testimony regarding the proposed variances and provide a brief overview of the proposed development, highlighting the changes requiring an application for a Site Plan Amendment.
- 2) Applicant's experts shall provide a rendering of the proposed building.
- 3) Applicant's experts shall provide building material samples and create a verbal record of the materials to be used on the project.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

In the event a motion is made to approve this application, staff recommends the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant shall address and comply with all comments and recommendations of municipal review agents and will submit revised plans reflecting those comments to the Division of City Planning.
- 2) All materials and color selections shall be shown on Final Plans. No change to the façade and site design, including materials as well as any changes that may be required by the Office of Construction Code, shall be permitted without consultation with planning staff.
- 3) All testimony given by the applicant and their expert witnesses shall be binding.
- 4) Architect of record, HLW Architecture, LLC, shall submit a signed and sealed affidavit confirming that the building was constructed as approved, prior to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.