

Statement of Principle Points
89 Bright Street (Block 13905, Lot 11)
Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

An application has been filed for the above noted property with the Jersey City Planning Board for Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval; and approval of bulk “c” variances for maximum building height and building coverage pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.c.

The project site is identified as Lot 11 on Block 13905 and is located midblock on Bright Street between Jersey Avenue and Varick Street. The project site has approximately 25 feet of frontage on Bright Street, with a total lot area of approximately 2,500 square feet. Currently, Lot 11 is a vacant lot surrounded by residential townhouse developments. The project site is in the Van Vorst Historic District (H).

The purpose of this application is to construct a 4-story, 3-unit townhouse building. Each unit consists of a lower level and upper level. Unit 1 provides 3 bedrooms and 3.5 bathrooms and a total size of 1,669 square feet. Unit 2 consists of 2 bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms and a total of 1,260 square feet. Unit 3 offers 3 bedrooms and 3.5 bathrooms and a total of 2,159 square feet. The roof will contain a private rooftop deck for Unit 3 with approximately 693 square foot of space. Floors 1-3 will each contain an approximately 122-square-foot rear deck accessible from the living room of each unit.

The cellar level will contain dedicated storage space for each unit, six bicycle parking spaces, communal storage space, electric/mechanical equipment, and a garbage/recycle closet.

The requested bulk “c” variances can 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. The proposed project will develop a vacant lot with a 4-story, 3-unit townhouse building on a predominantly residential block in a historic district of downtown Jersey City. The proposed use is permitted and encouraged in the Van Vorst Park Historic District (H).

The proposed 4-story building will have a total building height of 41 feet, 9 inches, where a maximum of 40 feet is permitted. The proposed project complies with the maximum number of building stories (4 stories) but requires variance relief for the 1 foot, 9 inches above the maximum building height. The project proposes the 1st floor to be 2 feet above grade to ensure that the habitable living space meets the required design flood elevation (DFE) of 12 feet. Additionally, the project proposes a decorative cornice (subject to Jersey City Historic Preservation Officer approval) that will reinforce the historic characteristics. The proposed rooftop amenity space is setback approximately 5 feet more than the required 10-foot front façade setback. The rooftop deck does not propose an appurtenance as rooftop access will be provided via a hinged sky door. A proposed 3-foot, 9-inch parapet wall on the front façade will provide additional screening of the rooftop features. The private rooftop deck will not be visible from any point in the Bright Street right-of-way. The proposed additional setbacks will further minimize the visual impact of the requested variance for building height. The proposed front façade will include a mix of exterior materials including brick and stone and other architectural elements that will complement the historic status of the adjacent buildings on Block 13905. The proposed variance request is consistent with

the existing neighborhood as there are 5 buildings on Block 13905 (Lots 7, 9, 13, and 14) which exceed the maximum building height and are taller than the proposed building.

The proposed project will have a total building coverage of 70%, where a maximum building coverage of 60% is permitted. The proposed building is only slightly larger than the footprint typical of a townhouse in this district. Additionally, the increased building coverage is mitigated by the proposed on-site stormwater management system and the improved open space. The project proposes a 750-square-foot landscaped rear yard which will serve as a shared open space area. Furthermore, the proposed project complies with the lot coverage maximum of 80% and meets the required setbacks of the H District. The proposed rooftop deck will offset the increased building coverage by providing additional open space.

Granting the requested 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 residential townhouse building consistent with the surrounding development. The project proposes a 3-unit residential building that will promote the establishment of appropriate population densities consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.e. The proposed project will promote a more desirable visual environment through the creative development techniques consistent with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2.i. by constructing a new appropriately-scaled, 4-story building with the architectural style and elements to adhere to the historic nature of the District and a new street tree that will improve the streetscape.

Granting the requested variances will not result in a substantial detriment to the general welfare. The 4-story, residential building will be consistent with the surrounding properties in terms of scale and use. The proposed project will provide rear yard open space, bicycle parking, laundry facilities, storage lockers, private decks, and rooftop open space with landscaping.

Granting the requested variances will likewise not result in a substantial detriment to the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance. The proposed residential use is permitted in the Van Vorst Park Historic District (H) and will help advance the objectives of the District by providing an appropriately-scaled residential development that advances the historic character and respects the established development context of the District. The proposed project complies with all other bulk requirements of the District including setbacks, lot coverage, and density. The proposed project also advances the Jersey City Master Plan by redeveloping the property, which will provide an attractive, high-quality residential units that will attract residents and offer new housing and life-style choices.

The requested 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.