

Narrative Statement of Applicant

41-43 West 19th Street is currently a non-conforming commercial use on a 50' X 102' lot, in the middle of a residential block in the R-2 zone. It was formerly used by a landscaping company. The applicant seeks to demolish the existing commercial structure, subdivide the lot into two 25' X 102' lots, and construct an attractive new 2-family house on each of these lots.

Use Variance for Stories (But Not for Height)

Due to recent zoning ordinance changes to the definition of a story, a variance is now required for construction of a typical 2-family house like this one with a garage on the first floor. This is because the first floor now counts as an entire floor and only 2.5 floors are allowed in this zone. What used to be considered 2.5 stories is now considered 3. Therefore applicant seeks a variance allowing its proposed construction of 3 stories instead of the 2.5 that is technically required in this zone. It should be noted that the applicant does not require a height variance, since it will be 35' high and R-2 allows for up to 35' height. Furthermore the proposed construction will be of similar stories and character as other construction in the neighborhood, including the existing properties directly neighboring the subject lot.

Bulk Variances for Minimum Lot Width and Area

R-2 currently requires a 30' frontage for conforming lots and 3000 square feet of area. The subject property, with 50' frontage, would have likely previously been a conforming double lot but it now requires variances for lot frontage and lot area in order to subdivide into two 25' X 102' lots per the applicant's proposal. As can be seen by the tax map which is incorporated into the site plan, this need for a variance is mitigated by the fact that most other lots on the same block as the subject property are 25' wide. So the proposed construction would fit in well with the rest of the block.

The need for variances is further mitigated by the fact that the existing structure on the lot is commercial, non-conforming with the City's zoning plan and very much out of character with the residential nature of the rest of the block. It sticks out like a sore thumb. The proposed residential construction at the site will be of similar character to the rest of the block, and will bring the property much closer to conformity with the City's zoning plan than its current use.