

## STATEMENT OF THE APPLICANT

This is an application for preliminary and final site plan approval involving several bulk variances and a use variance for a ground floor residential apartment. The subject property is located at 161 Broadway and currently consists of a two-story, mixed-use building containing one ground floor commercial unit, one ground floor residential unit to the rear of the commercial unit, and two residential units on the second floor.

The Applicant proposes to renovate the property to include one ground floor commercial space and two residential duplex units - one spanning the rear of the first and second floors and one spanning the front of the second floor and the entire newly-constructed third floor. The renovations also include upgrading the façade of the building and adding roof decks to the structure. The proposed use conforms to the uses permitted within the Neighborhood Commercial District and the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Station Rehabilitation Area Plan, with the exception of the bedroom level of the rear duplex unit, which will be located on the ground floor behind the commercial space.

The property is an angled, rectangular-shaped lot directly abutting Broadway, having a width of 25 feet and running approximately 119 feet deep on the north side and 116 feet deep on the south side. The street on which the property is located, the west side of lower Broadway, is one of the key north/south roads in the City, housing a significant number of the commercial businesses in Bayonne. The project embraces the intent of the District as well as the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Station Rehabilitation Area Plan by maintaining a street-level commercial space directly on Broadway, together with modern residential units.

The property has experienced years of neglect and has fallen into disuse and disrepair. Indeed, the now-vacant structure is truly an eyesore in the otherwise upscale Bergen Point section of the City. Since the lot abuts Broadway, it is certainly not in the best interest of the neighborhood, or the City in general, to have such neglect continue.

Although the Applicant's proposed project includes bulk variances for minimum lot frontage, sideyard setbacks, and parking, these conditions currently exist and are not solely the result of the proposed renovations to the building. Additionally, while a use variance is being sought for the first floor of the rear duplex apartment, it will not eliminate the ground-level commercial use of the property along Broadway, thereby preserving the intent of the Zoning Ordinance for the District and the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Station Rehabilitation Area Plan.

In sum, the project, if approved, will aesthetically enhance the Bergen Point section of the City, provide quality housing stock near the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Light Rail Station, create modern storefront retail space along Broadway, and reduce the overall number of units (and bedrooms) at the property in the process.