

STATEMENT OF THE APPLICANT

This is an application for a minor subdivision of an 18,750 square foot lot owned by Temple Beth AM (the “Applicant”). The property, located at 105-119 Avenue B, currently consists of a synagogue building fronting Avenue B and a single-family home on the northwest corner of Avenue B and 43rd Street (fronting 43rd Street). The Applicant proposes subdividing the lot into two separate lots – one 14,730 square foot lot for the synagogue and a separate 4,020 square foot lot for the single-family home. As a result of the existing characteristics of the property, several bulk variances are being sought for the subdivision, as well as a variance due to the size of the proposed synagogue lot and its conditional use as a religious institution.

Many of the bulk variances required for the subdivision are necessary because of pre-existing, non-conforming conditions. For example, the Applicant is seeking parking variances for the proposed synagogue lot and the new lot for the single-family home. In both cases, however, the parking situation will remain exactly the same if the subdivision is approved. Similarly, the variance for minimum lot size for the proposed synagogue lot results from a pre-existing, non-conforming condition, i.e., the existing lot, at 18,750 square feet, already does not meet the 20,000 square foot minimum lot size for the conditional synagogue use.

Historically, the single-family home was used as the primary residence for the Rabbi of Temple Beth AM. However, since the retirement of its last Rabbi, the Applicant has had no use for the home. In fact, the home has remained vacant since December 2021, following a disastrous attempt to rent it that resulted in severe property damage and costly renovations. At this point, the home has become a burden and liability to the Applicant, which does not have the resources to manage or the financial ability to maintain the property. Hence, the Applicant is proposing the subdivision so that it can sell the single-family home to a purchaser who can make proper use of it.

It is important to note that the use of the property will remain the same following the proposed subdivision: religious services will continue at the synagogue lot and the other lot will continue to be used as a single-family home. In short, the subdivision will merely serve to formalize the separate historic uses of the property.