



August 12, 2022

Christopher Langston, Chair
Jersey City Planning Board
360 Martin Luther King Drive
Jersey City, N.J. 07302

**Re: Morris Canal Redevelopment Area Community Development Corporation
proposed amendments to the Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan**

Dear Chairman Langston and Members of the Planning Board:

On behalf of the Morris Canal Redevelopment Community Development Corporation (“Morris Canal CDC”), I am pleased to attach proposed amendments (the “Amendments”) to the Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan (the “Redevelopment Plan), pursuant to Article XIV permitting the Morris Canal CDC to propose such amendments without cost.

These Amendments, prepared by Jersey City’s former Senior Planner, Jeffrey Wenger, PP who was responsible for preparing the original Redevelopment Plan. Our proposed amendments speak specifically to the Berry Lane North Park Zone (the “Zone”), which has been the object of much controversy in the surrounding neighborhood and is currently in litigation. The community, with which Morris Canal CDC works and represents, has been opposed from the beginning to the previously adopted amendments to this Zone, because (i) of the insignificant amount of affordable housing included in the amendments and (ii) the fact that the height and scope of the project facilitated by the amendments is completely out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood consisting of 1 and 2 story homes.

I am also attaching for your consideration the presentation, which was prepared by Continuum Design, LLC. This presentation was used in community meetings convened by Morris Canal CDC, which included the designated redeveloper, Councilman Frank Gilmore, Stakeholders, neighborhood business owners, Morris Canal CDC members and other residents in the community. At these meetings, there was an attempt to reconcile the community’s desires regarding height and scale of the residential project with the redeveloper’s desired density.

We believe that the attached plan Amendments represent a fair compromise that satisfies the community’s desires regarding height and scale while satisfying the redeveloper’s desired density. Specifically, the Amendments are written to permit 8-story development on a large building footprint with wedding cake floor tiers on the upper floors. The required setbacks and building step backs, as well as the total units per acre and floor area ratios (FAR) are sufficient to

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allow up to 368 residential units (assuming an average of 800 square feet per unit) at a parking ratio near the minimum of .5 spaces per unit, or 319 units and a parking ratio around 1 to 1. 368 units is equivalent to 109 units per acre, which is just **over 3 times (3X) the permitted residential density of the R-1 Zone**, or of the residential density of the area surrounding the Berry Lane Park North Zone. A 3X density increase is quite significant and is easily sufficient to provide meaningful economic stimulus to the area without the necessity of a 17-story building. As a result, the Amendments proposed by Morris Canal CDC allows half the previously adopted building height, **but 88% of the previous residential density.**

We therefore request that Morris Canal CDC's proposed Amendments be placed on the August 23, 2022 agenda for a public hearing and discussion. Mr. Jeffrey Wenger, PP, will be presenting our proposal.

Thank you for your anticipated consideration of these Amendments.

Respectfully submitted,



June Jones
Executive Director