





Planning & Real Estate Consultants

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Redevelopment Plan for 7 Parker Avenue West Block 16.01 Lot 32 Maplewood Township

Prepared for:

Township of Maplewood

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The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 13:41-1.2

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I INTRODUCTION

I.A Statutory Basis

This Redevelopment Plan has been prepared for an area consisting of a single property located at 7 Parker Avenue West within the Township of Maplewood, Essex County, New Jersey (the "Redevelopment Area"). The Redevelopment Area is located north of the central business district of the Township of Maplewood, near the municipality's border with South Orange. It is designated as Block 16.01, Lot 32 on the Township's tax records and comprises 0.781 acres.

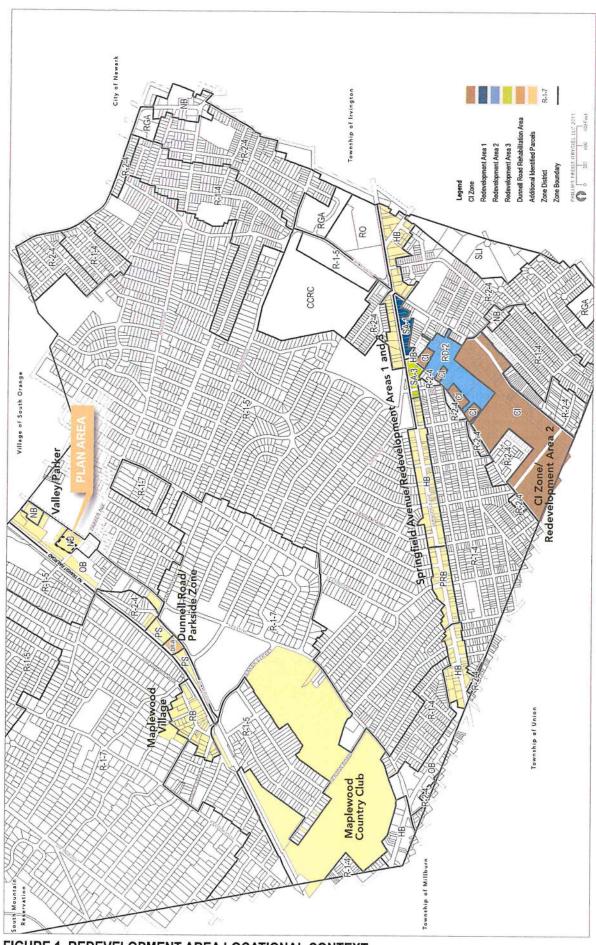
The Maplewood Township Committee, in Resolution #142-21 dated May 18, 2021, requested that the Planning Board undertake a preliminary investigation as to whether Block 16.01, Lot 32 identified in the resolution is an area in need of redevelopment, pursuant to the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-14. On behalf of the Planning Board, a "Non-condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment Investigation" was prepared by Colliers Engineering & Design, and was approved by the Maplewood Planning Board on October 12, 2021 and by the Maplewood Township Committee on October 19, 2021. The Maplewood Township Committee on October 12, 2021 determined by resolution that the Redevelopment Area qualified as an "area in need of redevelopment" in accordance with the criteria specified in LRHL. This Redevelopment Plan provides the development regulations and other standards to guide the redevelopment of this Redevelopment Area.

I.B Redevelopment Area Location & Boundaries

The Redevelopment Area is located near the center of the northern boundary of Maplewood. It consists of one parcel, Block 16.01 in Lot 32, measuring 34,016 square feet or 0.781 acres. The existing use on the site is a defunct dry-cleaning business in a building constructed in the 1920's. The property has approximately 144 feet of street frontage along its southern boundary, Parker Avenue West. The western boundary is the East Branch of the Rahway River. The eastern and northern boundaries of the Plan Area are other parcels with commercial uses. Refer to **Figure 1**.

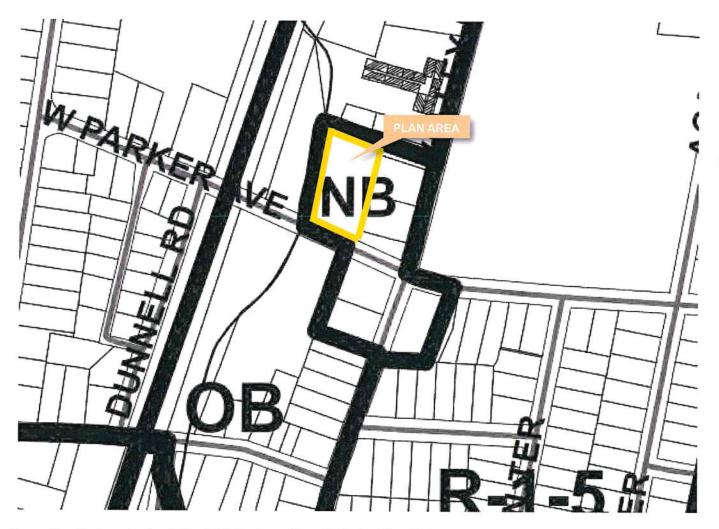
The Redevelopment Area lies within the NB, Neighborhood Business, Zone, a small zone centered around Parker Avenue and Valley Street. It is the only property in the NB Zone without direct frontage on Valley Street. To the north, west, and south, the property is surrounded by the OB, Office Business, zone. Refer to **Figure 2**.

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source: map of key properties from the Maplewood Master Plan Reexamination, 2011, by Phillips Preiss Grygiel Leheny Hughes LLC

FIGURE 1, REDEVELOPMENT AREA LOCATIONAL CONTEXT



Source: Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment Investigation by Colliers Engineering and Design, August 20, 2021

I.C Neighborhood Context

The property and the surrounding parcels are characterized by an abundance of paved surface parking areas and mostly lower-density development (see Figure 3). The closest side street is Valley Street to the east, separated from the Redevelopment Area by a line of parcels fronting on Valley. Several small-scale businesses and shops are along Valley Street, as well as a gas station at the southeast corner of Parker Ave West and a CVS pharmacy to the north. Columbia High School is across Valley Street to the east in a four-story building, and uses surface parking lots owned by the Board of Education that are located immediately west of the Redevelopment Plan area, on the west bank of the river, on both sides of Parker Avenue. The South Mountain YMCA is located to the south one block, across Parker Avenue. A neighborhood of chiefly single-family and duplex homes lies to the south as well. A new four-story apartment building is located at 479 Valley Street, immediately to the east of the site, while an older postwar seven-story apartment building sits further north along Valley Street.

Just beyond the river on the west side of the Plan Area are the train tracks of New Jersey Transit's Morristown Line and Gladstone Branch (the "Morris and Essex Lines"), which link Maplewood Station to Penn Station in New York City and other destinations. The site is a convenient walking distance to the Maplewood Train Station, located 0.6 miles to the south down Dunnell Road. Downtown Maplewood, known as "Maplewood Village," centers on the area just south of the train station, and there are stores and services on Valley Street, making the Plan Area a convenient location for walking to shopping, dining, the train, and other amenities.

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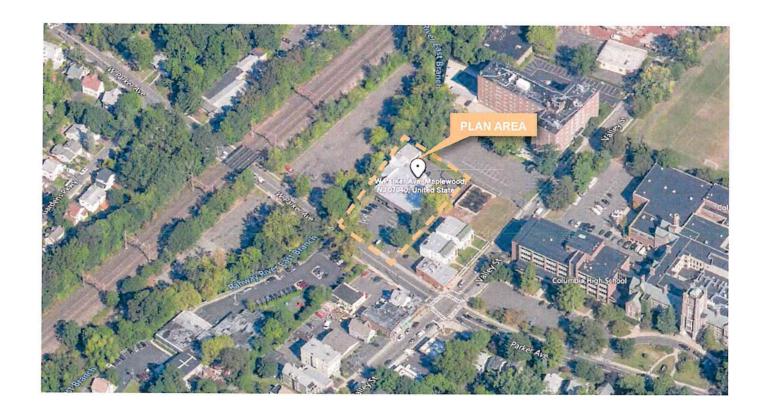




FIGURE 3, AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF PLAN AREA

I.D Existing Site Conditions

I.D.1 Building and Surface Paving

The existing use is a one-story, approximately 10,700 square foot building built as a laundry and dry-cleaning business in the 1920's and covering about 32 percent of the lot. Much of the remainder of the lot is paved over as surface parking, for a lot coverage of about 75 percent. The masonry building was expanded over the last century, but has been vacant for several years. The building shows signs of water damage, mold, and other neglect, and much of the property is overgrown with vegetation.

I.D.2 Contamination

Due to its history as a dry-cleaning operation, the property has environmental contamination issues. In 2018, NJDEP analyzed vapors found in the soil from volatile organic carbons (VOCs) in the Valley Street and Parker Avenue Groundwater Contamination Site. According to the Area in Need of Redevelopment Study (AINR) by Colliers¹ (page 19):

Concentrations of tetrachloroethene and trichloroethene above the NJDEP's Non-Residential Screening Levels were found in the sub-slab soil gas. No action was taken at this time but, it was noted that if the NJDEP finds that contamination of this kind could impact the building, additional sampling may be required. The present owner hired an LSRP (Licensed Site Remediation Professional) consultant to monitor and clean up the environmental contamination. Several Monitoring wells have been installed since 2018.

I.D.3 Flooding

The property is also subject to flooding risks. According to the *Environmental Report* for the *Application for Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit*², the majority of the property is located within the AE Zone (areas subject to inundation by the one-percent annual-chance flood event, also known as the 100-year flood hazard area), of the East Branch of the Rahway River. As shown in **Figure 4**, the floodway encroaches onto a large portion of the property. The *Environmental Report* states that the Design Flood Elevation (FEMA flood elevation plus one foot) is 132 feet (height above sea level, based on a 1988 reference datum). The ground / first floor of the proposed building is anticipated to have a finished floor elevation of 133 feet.

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¹ Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment Investigation, Block 16.01, Lot 32, Colliers Engineering & Design, August 20, 2021.

² Jarmel Kizel, Environmental Report, 7 Parker Avenue West, Application for Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit, Jarmel Kizel Project No. RNBCA-S-21-017, May 26, 2021, revised September 1, 2021, page 2.

LEGEND



SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS SUBJECT TO INUNDATION BY THE 1% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD EVENT

The 1% annual chance flood (100-year flood), also known as the base flood, is the flood that has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The Special Flood Hazard Area is the area subject to flooding by the 1% annual chance flood. Areas of Special Flood Hazard include Zones A, AE, AH, AD, AR, A99, V, and VE. The Bess Flood Elevation is the water surface elevation of the 1% annual chance flood.

ZONE A No base flood elevations determined. ZONE AE Base flood elevations determined.

FLOODWAY AREAS IN ZONE AE

The floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroschment so that the 1% annual chance flood can be carried without substantial incresses in flood heights.

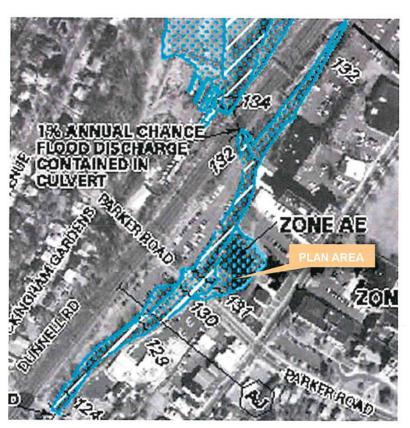
-----513-----Base Flood Elevation line and value; elevation in feet*

Base Flood Elevation value where uniform within zona; (EL 987)

elevation in feet*



Source: Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment Investigation by Colliers Engineering and Design, August 20, 2021



Source: FEMA FIRM 34013C0132F, effective 06/04/2007

^{*}Referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988

II GOALS AND RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL OBJECTIVES

II.A Purpose

The purpose of this Redevelopment Plan is to provide a predictable framework for the replacement of a vacant, underutilized, and decrepit commercial building with an apartment building providing market-rate and affordable housing. The redevelopment will provide the financial means for the developer to clean up longstanding contamination on the site and will improve the ability of the site to safely manage floodwaters, benefitting the environment. The proposed project is intended to create a more attractive and inviting presence along Parker Avenue West. The Redevelopment Plan provides measurable standards as well as more qualitative suggestions to guide development and ensure that the building's design meets the approach and intent shown in the concept plan and illustrative renderings.

II.B Goals and Objectives

The proposed project will help redevelop a vacant, underutilized, and defunct parcel located near downtown Maplewood. The project will provide much-needed housing units within walking distance of the Maplewood Train Station, helping contribute activity and vibrancy to the area. The project will follow design controls intended to create an attractive, high-quality building with a pedestrian-friendly and active frontage that enhances Parker Avenue West and the overall neighborhood.

An important goal for the project is to provide the means to clean up the contamination on the site from a longstanding dry-cleaning business:

- Provide the financial incentive for a developer to remediate the environmental damage from the site's history as a dry-cleaning business, and provide monitoring of cleanup results.
- Cap and contain known Historic Fill in order to avoid exposure of hazardous substances and/or solid waste.³

Another major goal of the project is to improve the flood control qualities of the site, including:

- Reduce the amount of impermeable surface on the site, helping to reduce the peak rate and volume of runoff.
- Provide a net increase in flood storage volume on the site by replacing the existing building that sits
 within the flood plain with a new building having living spaces raised above open areas.
- Reduce the amount of structure and paving located near the top of bank of the river and within the
 riparian zone. Restore all previously disturbed areas between the limits of the proposed development
 and the top of bank, adding vegetation and improving the appearance and natural functions of the site.
- Elevate parking areas on a raised slab, as necessary, so that "no elevation within the private drive and parking area will be greater than 12 inches below the design flood elevation⁴."

Given the site's location within the 100-year floodplain, new development is required to place all livable spaces above the Design Flood Elevation, or dry-floodproof any areas below the DFE. This requirement, combined with the need to clean up historic contamination on the site, makes it cost-prohibitive to include any ground-floor retail or single-story commercial uses. However, residential apartments over an open level of parking are an acceptable use in terms of floodplain regulations.

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³ Peak Environmental, letter to Robby Shah, regarding Historic Fill Evaluation, August 4, 2021.

⁴ Jarmel Kizel, Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit Application to NJDEP, Section 12, NJAC 7:13-12.6(e) & (f) Compliance Statement, May 26, 2021, revised August 11, 2021.

Finally, affordable housing is an important component of this project. The project is required to set aside 20 percent of ownership units and 15 percent of rental units on-site to be affordable to low- and moderate-income households, to help the Township of Maplewood to satisfy their affordable housing requirement.

II.C Relationship to Local Objectives

II.C.1 Maplewood Master Plan

The Township of Maplewood's current Master Plan was adopted by the Maplewood Planning Board in 2004, and a Master Plan Reexamination was adopted in July 2011 (the "2011 Reexamination"). A new Master Plan Update is currently in the process of being prepared.

The 2011 Reexamination's Chapter VI, Analysis of Reuse and Redevelopment Potential of Key Properties, considers the properties west of Valley Street, north of Parker Avenue, in the NB and OB zones, with the goal of allowing "additional development options for property owners." It notes that this area lacks any single-family homes and is therefore "appropriate for new development that could include a range of commercial and multi-family uses." It also points out that there is limited market for new office and retail uses in this location at the time. The Reexamination notes traffic issues in the area, generated primarily by Columbia High School, and states that the uses allowed in the existing OB zone tend to be those that would exacerbate the High School's traffic patterns. It suggests evaluating the zoning for portions of this area to allow alternative uses that could result in positive traffic impacts at critical times.

A number of other goals of the 2011 Reexamination are also relevant to this Redevelopment Plan, including:

- Promote the incorporation of sustainability in both building and site design of future development and redevelopment, and do so in a manner that maintains viable economic development.
- Protect and preserve Maplewood's natural physical environment, open spaces, and recreation facilities.
- Facilitate a broad range of housing options so as to attract and retain households of varying size and
 income, with emphasis on promoting smaller-scale housing to support the needs both of young
 families and the elderly.
- Promote market-rate residential development in such a manner that is not likely to pose an additional burden on the school system.

This Redevelopment Plan is substantially consistent with the goals and recommendations of the 2011 Reexamination. The successful implementation of this Plan will advance the above goals and objectives by enabling the productive redevelopment of the plan area with residential uses and affordable units, the cleaning up of longstanding contamination, and the improvement of the site's stormwater management potential.

II.C.2 Maplewood Zoning Ordinance

NB Neighborhood Business Zone

The Redevelopment Plan area lies within Maplewood's NB, Neighborhood Business, zone. The NB zone permits a variety of retail stores, restaurants, offices, dwellings over stores (i.e., mixed use buildings), and multiple dwellings. The Redevelopment Plan's proposed use complies with the uses permitted in zoning.

As summarized earlier in Section III.D.2, the NB zone has a maximum permitted height of 50 feet, measured in reference to average grade around the building. The proposed building's height exceeds this maximum height by several feet, because of the sloping grade and the need to elevate the first floor slightly above grade

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for flood protection. The zoning height definition also requires that the building height "shall not exceed the maximum allowed in the zoning district by more than five feet from the lowest elevation around the periphery of the foundation." As the site is fairly flat, it appears that the project complies with this height restriction at the lowest elevation. Finally, the proposed development complies with an additional height requirement of the NB zone, that buildings step back from the front lot line any portions above 30 feet height, one horizontal foot for every vertical foot above 30 feet.

The NB zone allows a maximum lot coverage of 90 percent and maximum building coverage of 50 percent. The proposed project exceeds the NB zone's maximum permitted building coverage.

Minimum setbacks allowed per NB zoning are: 0 feet front, 0 feet side, and 15 feet rear. Zoning requires larger setbacks for lots adjoining "transitional lots," but that does not apply in this case. The project complies with NB side yard setbacks, providing a five-foot setback on the east side and setbacks of more than 30 feet along the river border. The project does not comply with the rear yard setback, but rather has setbacks ranging from 8.22 feet to 14.86 feet.

No parking standards are provided specific to the NB zone, but zoning Section 271-50, Off-Street Parking and Loading, requires two spaces for each residential dwelling unit. The proposed project is far from meeting this standard, and requiring it would greatly reduce the potential number of units and therefore the economic viability of the project.

Zoning code, Section 271-56, Signs and Street Graphics, permits "wall graphic" signs in the NB zone of a size up to 20 percent of the "signable area" of the facade and a height up to two feet. The "signable area" refers to the part of the facade that is free of windows, doors, and major architectural detail. There is no restriction on the number of signs within this 20 percent maximum area. This Redevelopment Plan provides a stricter signage requirement (refer to **Section III.H**) that only permits one facade sign on the front facade.

Supersedes Zoning

This Redevelopment Plan shall supersede all provisions of the Zoning and Development Regulations of the Township of Maplewood regulating development in the Redevelopment Area. Where there is a conflict between the requirements of this Redevelopment Plan and the Zoning and Development Regulations, this Redevelopment Plan shall prevail. In all situations where zoning issues are not specifically addressed herein, the Maplewood Zoning and Development Regulations shall, however, remain in effect. Final adoption of this Plan by the Township Committee shall be considered an amendment of the Township of Maplewood Zoning Map.

III LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

III.A Notes on Plan Terminology

Throughout this Redevelopment Plan, a meaningful distinction is made in the regulations between "shall" and "should." "Shall" means that a developer is required to comply with the specific regulation, without deviation. "Should" means that a developer is encouraged to comply but is not required to do so. If the exact recommendation cannot be met, the Planning Board will entertain any modification that meets the underlying spirit and intent of the regulation and/or the Redevelopment Plan generally.

III.B Illustrative Conceptual Development Plans

The proposed project is a four-story building with 46 apartments, consisting of three levels of residences over a largely-open floor for parking. The design of the building places apartments at or above 147 feet elevation, well above the Design Flood Elevation of 132 feet. Parking spaces will be on a slightly-raised concrete slab at 133 feet elevation, with storage space under the slab for flood waters.

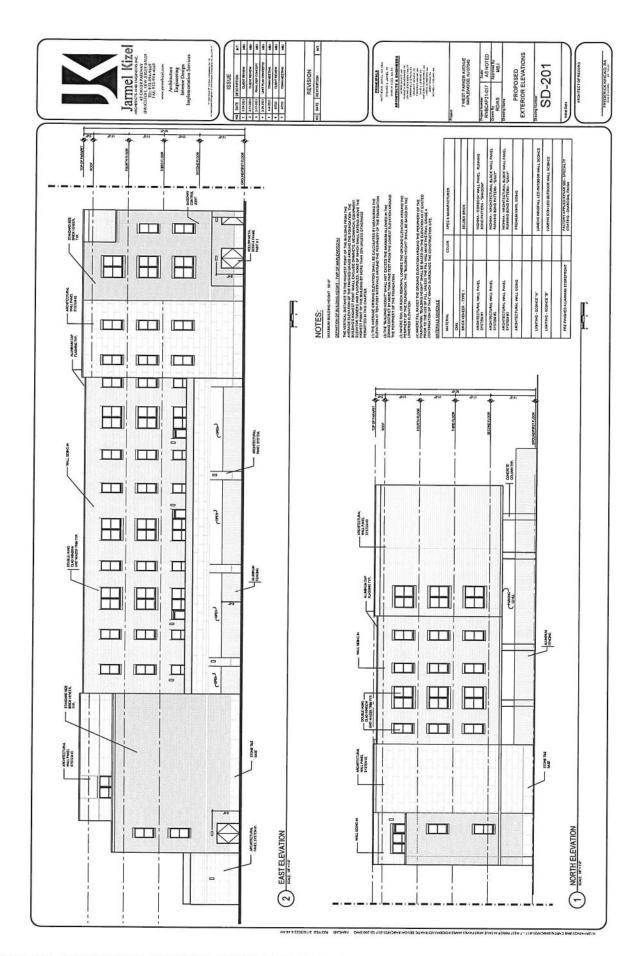
The ground floor of the front facade along Parker Avenue West includes a couple of enclosed spaces in order to help screen views of the open parking area; these spaces include the entry lobby with stairwell and elevator, as well as a utility room. The ground floor includes 65 parking spaces, for an average parking ratio of 1.4 spaces per unit. A portion of the parking area extends beyond the footprint of the upper floors, Refer to Figure 5, Conceptual Building Rendering; Figure 6, Conceptual Building Floor Plans; and Figures 7A and 7B, Conceptual Building Elevations.

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FIGURE 6, CONCEPTUAL BUILDING FLOOR PLANS



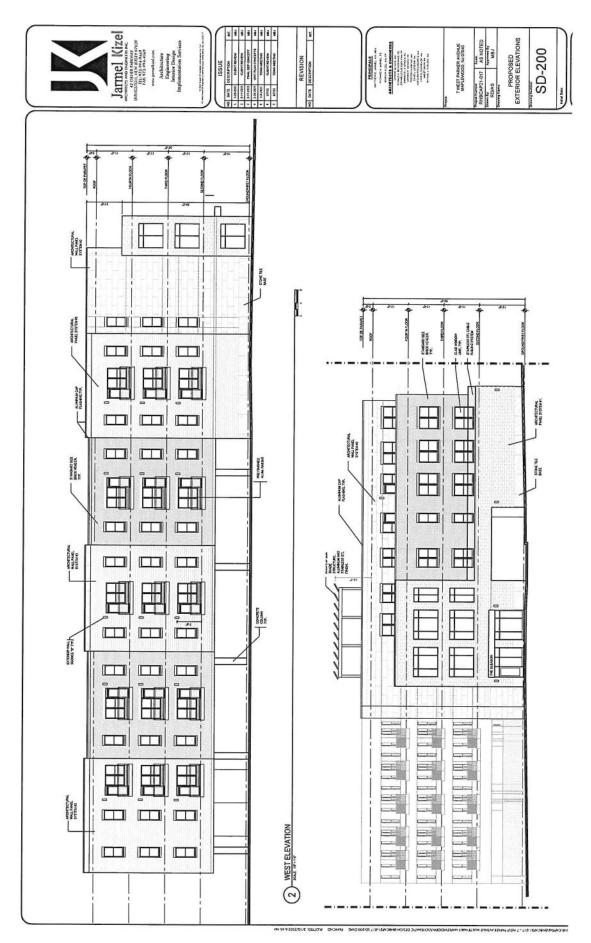


FIGURE 7B, CONCEPTUAL BUILDING ELEVATIONS (WEST & SOUTH)

III.C Permitted Uses

III.C.1 Principal Permitted Uses

The principal permitted use is multi-family residential dwellings, which shall only be located above the first or ground floor.

III.C.2 Accessory Permitted Uses

Permitted accessory uses are other uses that are customarily accessory to the permitted principal use, provided that they are subordinate to the principal use, do not change the character of the principal use, and serve only the principal use, and include but are not limited to:

- Lobbies on the ground level providing access to dwellings on upper floors.
- Parking as an accessory use to permitted principal uses in the redevelopment area.
- Fences not over six feet in height, and only within the rear and eastern side yard setbacks and along the perimeter of the building's ground floor along the side and rear facades.
- Loading spaces, recycling and refuse storage areas located entirely under the building on the ground floor
- Home-based businesses, as defined in the Zoning and Development Regulations of the Township of Maplewood, Section 271-3.
- Management offices, fitness centers, amenity rooms, and other uses customarily associated with the permitted uses, provided that such accessory uses are subordinate to the principal use and serve only the principal use.

III.D Bulk and Yield

III.D.1 Lot Standards

The following lot standards apply:

- Minimum lot area: 30,000 square feet.
- · Minimum lot width: 100 feet.
- Maximum lot coverage: 75 percent.
- Maximum building coverage: 65 percent.

III.D.2 Setbacks, Height, and Yield

Setbacks

Setbacks are shown in Figure 8, Site Plan. Minimum setbacks from property lines are as follows:

- Front: eight (8) feet.
- Side: five (5) feet from the eastern property line, 35 feet from the western (riverside) property line.
- Rear: eight (8) feet.

