

Berkeley Heights Downtown Beautification Committee
29 Park Avenue
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922



Memo – September 23, 2020

To: Board of Adjustments
Subject: 391 Springfield Avenue

The Downtown Beautification Committee (DBC) is trying to create a cohesive, traditional feel in our small town of Berkeley Heights. We encourage high-quality design to create a greater visual impact and draw business and visitors to our small town. *In our downtown area, we strive to maintain a cohesive look.*

In short, Berkeley Heights is a small town that would like to maintain that “small town” feel. Specifically, “the Township of Berkeley Heights looks to incorporate specific downtown improvements that create a historic, traditional feel that will last through decades.” (taken from the Approved Part 19 Article 19.5.1 Applicability)

We would also like to state that we are unabashedly “pro-business” and want our Town’s businesses to flourish and be profitable. Successful businesses here in Berkeley Heights are vital to making our downtown a more inviting, charming and vibrant community. These attributes will draw more people to our downtown, which in turn will help all businesses thrive.

Specific comments that pertain to this property are as follows:

- I. Section 19.4.5 (stated below) of Part 19 specifically stated that residential units shall not be located at street grade level or below. We feel that the use variance should not be granted as it would directly conflict with the Multi-Use Building Standards for our Downtown. It is critical that we maintain consistency in zoning and design standards so that we have a cohesive look and feel throughout our downtown as stated in Section 19.5.4 (below).

As per the Municipal Code: Section 19.5.4 Urban Design Character and Consistency. The character of a zone, neighborhood, streetscape, district and community is created and maintained through the consistent use of compatible urban design and architectural design elements such as massing, scale, proportion, style, roof pitches, materials, colors, signage, building details, lamp posts and other lighting, fences, walls, shade trees and other landscaping, sidewalk and walkways materials and other groundscape treatments, benches, trash receptacles and other street furniture. Consistent use of compatible elements develops and reinforces design relationships and shall be encouraged. Architectural or streetscape elements that are incompatible with these guidelines shall be avoided.

Section 19.4.5 - Multi-Use Buildings

A. The following standards shall be applied to all multi-use structures.

B. Residential Uses within Multi-use Buildings.

1. Multi-use structures shall not contain a mix of housing and non-residential uses on any single floor.

2. Residential apartments shall be located on the upper floors of all proposed buildings. Such dwelling units may be either single-story flats or multi-level apartments with an internal stair. Residential units shall not be located at street grade level or below.

3. *Two (2) internal means of egress shall be provided for all units above the second floor level and all fire escapes shall be internalized.*

4. *Residential units, with the exception of age restricted units, shall contain the following minimum floor areas (in square feet):*

Minimum Floor Areas For Residential Units

Studio/Efficiency Apartments 500

One-Bedroom Apartments 650

Two-Bedroom Apartments 800

For each additional bedroom +150

The minimum floor areas of designated Affordable housing units are exempt from these standards, and would be regulated under the COAH bedroom size regulations

5. *Each residential unit shall be provided with a minimum storage area, not including normal interior closets, of three hundred fifty (350) cubic feet. Such storage area shall either be contained entirely within the residential building attached or located separately.*

6. *Each residential unit shall be provided with a private outdoor space consisting of a balcony or patio of not less than sixty four (64) square feet in area, with no individual dimension being less than six (6) feet in length. Such area shall be recessed inside the façade of the building if a balcony.*

7. *Minimally, one (1) low LED light of appropriate design shall be provided at each residential entry.*

8. *Roof lines of adjacent units may vary in height, although cornice lines and base course lines shall be continuous. Architectural embellishments to roofs, such as dormers, belvederes and chimneys, shall be encouraged.*

C. Non-residential Uses within Multi-use Buildings.

1. *Retail and service uses shall be located on the ground floor with direct access at grade level. Provision shall be made for handicapped accessibility.*

2. *Retail use shall be maximize display window frontage along pedestrian walkways. Displays windows shall be set above grade, at a minimum, by a two and one half (2 1/2) foot high kick plate, bulkhead or sill course and shall be capped by a lintel along the top of such window.*

3. *Office uses in multi-use buildings shall be located on the second floor or above. Only lobbies and entries which directly serve such offices may be located on the ground floor.*

(Ord. No. 9-2016, § 1, 6-14-2016)

Thank you for considering our recommendation.