Columbia Heights Rezoning
Project Description (LR Item 3)

25 & 30-58 Columba Heights
Brooklyn, New York

October 14, 2025

1. Introduction

25-30 Columbia Heights (Brooklyn), LLC (the "Applicant"), is seeking a zoning map amendment and zoning text amendment to facilitate a mixed-use development consisting of the partial residential conversion and enlargement of two existing, underutilized commercial buildings (the "Proposed Development") located on two adjacent blocks (collectively, the "Development Site" or "Project Area") in Community District 2 of Brooklyn.

The Project Area consists of (i) the parcel located at 25 Columbia Heights (Block 204, Lot 1), comprising the block bounded by Columbia Heights, Vine Street, McKenny street, and Doughty Street ("25 Columbia Heights"), which contains an existing 12-story commercial building (the "25 Columbia Heights Building"), and (ii) the parcels located at 30-58 Columbia Heights (Block 208, Lots 1, 2, and 12), comprising the block bounded by Columbia Heights, Doughty Street, Furman Street, and Squibb Park (collectively, "30 Columbia Heights"), which contain an existing 13-story commercial building at the northern end of the zoning lot (the "Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building") and three smaller commercial buildings at the southern end of the zoning lot (the "Southern 30 Columbia Heights Buildings").[1]

The requested actions consist of the following:

a. A zoning map amendment to (i) change from an M2-1 zoning district to an M1-5A/R10A zoning district the block comprising 25 Columbia Heights and (ii) change from an M2-1 zoning district to an M1-5A/R8A zoning district the block comprising 30 Columbia Heights; and

b. A zoning text amendment to (i) modify Section 123-90 (SPECIAL MIXED USE DISTRICTS SPECIFIED) to establish Special Mixed Use District (MX-29) and (ii) modify Appendix F (Inclusionary Housing Designated Areas and Mandatory Inclusionary Housing areas) to designate a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area.

[1] To facilitate comparison between the existing and proposed conditions on the Development Site, all existing and proposed heights for the 25 Columbia Heights Building and the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building are based on the applicable base plane under the proposed district regulations.

The Applicant proposes to convert a portion of the 25 Columbia Heights Building to residential use and to enlarge the mixed-use building to a maximum height of 17 stories, and to convert a portion of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building to residential use and to enlarge the mixed-use building to a maximum height of 13 stories (with a 14th-story roof access vestibule). The Applicant does not propose any conversion or enlargement of the Southern 30 Columbia Heights Buildings, which would retain their existing bulk and be used for commercial use.

Following the completion of the Proposed Development, (i) 25 Columbia Heights would contain approximately 379,510 square feet of floor area (12.0 FAR), of which approximately 367,270 square feet (11.61 FAR) would be in residential use and of which approximately 12,240 square feet (0.39 FAR) would be in commercial and/or community facility use, and (ii) 30 Columbia Heights (inclusive of both the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building and the Southern Columbia Heights Buildings) would contain approximately 428,060 square feet of floor area (6.11 FAR), of which approximately 260,490 square feet (3.72 FAR) would be in residential use and of which approximately 167,570 square feet (2.39 FAR) would be in commercial use. 25 percent of the residential floor area in the Proposed Development would comprise affordable units, in accordance with Option 1 of the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing ("MIH") Program.

2. Background

The existing buildings in the Project Area have been a fixture of Brooklyn for decades. In the 1920s and 1930s, E.R. Squibb and Sons ("Squibb"), a pharmaceutical manufacturing company, constructed the northern portion of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building and the western portion of the 25 Columbia Heights Building as a centralized manufacturing plant for the company. In subsequent years, Squibb constructed the balance of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building and one or more of the Southern 30 Columbia Heights Buildings.

In 1969, Squibb closed its plant and sold the Project Area to the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. ("Watchtower"), a not-for-profit organization affiliated with Jehovah's Witnesses. Watchtower thereafter occupied the Project Area as its headquarters until 2016, when an affiliate of the Applicant acquired the properties. Public records indicate that Watchtower constructed the eastern portion of the 25 Columbia Heights Building, bringing that building to its current bulk, in or around 1980.

The Project Area has been located in an M2-1 zoning district since the December 15, 1961, effective date of the Zoning Resolution. In 1988, Watchtower filed an application proposing a rezoning of the Project Area from an M2-1 district to a C6-4 district (C 840362 ZMK). The application was subsequently revised to change the proposed district to a C6-3 district. The proposed rezoning was intended to facilitate the development of a 19-story dormitory building for Watchtower's workforce at 30 Columbia Heights. The application was approved by the City Planning Commission but subsequently denied by the Board of Estimate, leaving the M2-1 zoning district unchanged.

In 2020, an area to the east of the Project Area, generally bounded by Old Fulton Street to the north, Doughty Street and Poplar Street to the south, and Hicks Street to the east, was rezoned from an M2-1 zoning district to an M1-5 zoning district (C 190011 ZMK). The rezoning was intended to facilitate the development of a five-story commercial office and retail building in the rezoned area.

The 25 Columbia Heights Building and the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building are connected by an above-grade pedestrian bridge and a below-grade utility tunnel, both traversing Columbia Heights. The bridge is maintained pursuant to a New York City Department of Transportation ("DOT") revocable consent (R.P. No. 11A) that was initially granted in 1948 and renewed most recently for a 10-year term with an effective date of July 1, 2018. The tunnel is maintained pursuant to a DOT revocable consent (R.P. No. 11B) that was initially granted in 1924 and renewed most recently for a 10-year term with an effective date of July 1, 2015. The Applicant expects to seek a renewal of the tunnel revocable consent upon its expiration to allow for the continued maintenance of the tunnel.

30 Columbia Heights is the subject of an appeals decision by the Board of Standards and Appeals (the "BSA"), dated November 8, 2018 (Cal. No. 2018-63-A), which reversed a prior ZRD1 determination by the Department of Buildings that had denied the non-conforming status of two accessory illuminated signs located on the roof of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building. The BSA decision confirmed that the non-conforming signs may be structurally altered, reconstructed, or replaced with new accessory signs in accordance with ZR Section 52-82 (Non-Conforming Signs other than Advertising Signs).

3. Description of the Surrounding Area

The Project Area is located at the northern end of the Brooklyn Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn. The immediately surrounding area is defined by open spaces and transportation infrastructure, as well as significant changes in grade. The areas beyond are predominately residential or mixed-use in character, with a variety of building types and scales.

The blocks immediately adjacent to the Project Area are characterized by open spaces. Brooklyn Bridge Park is located to the west of 30 Columbia Heights, across Furman Street. The park, which spans over 1.3 miles of the Brooklyn waterfront and contains approximately 85 acres, is organized around a continuous promenade with six piers, providing visitors with views of Lower Manhattan and numerous recreational opportunities. The portion of the park located to the immediate west of the Project Area is occupied by Pierhouse, a 10-story, approximately 620,000-square-foot residential building constructed in 2015. Hillside Dog Park, which contains 1.37 acres, occupies the triangular block to the immediate south of 25 Columbia Heights and to the immediate east of 30 Columbia Heights. Squibb Park, a 0.63-acre park with playground, abuts 30 Columbia Heights to the immediate south. To the east of Squibb Park and the south of Hillside Dog Park, on the east side of Columbia Heights, is Harry Chapin Playground, a 0.30-acre park.

The immediately surrounding area is also defined by significant transportation infrastructure. The Brooklyn Queens Expressway (the "BQE") runs northeast-to-southeast along the southern boundaries of Hillside Dog Park and Squibb Park, before descending in elevation to run beneath the Brooklyn Heights Promenade to the south.[2] The Brooklyn Bridge and its approaches, a designated individual landmark, are located approximately one to two blocks to the northeast of the Project Area.

Columbia Heights is a sloping street, gradually rising in elevation as it runs south from Doughty Street to meet the higher elevation of the Brooklyn Heights neighborhood and Promenade. As a result of this condition, the ground floors of the 25 Columbia Heights Building and the 30 Columbia Heights Building at the northern end of the Project Area are approximately two stories lower than grade level at the southern end of 30 Columbia Heights. There is also a grade differential in an east-west direction at the southern end of the Project Area, with Columbia Heights and the neighborhood to the east of the Project Area being higher in elevation than Furman Street and Brooklyn Bridge Park to the west. Pedestrians are able to negotiate this grade differential via the recently constructed Squibb Park Bridge, which connects Squibb Park and the Brooklyn Bridge Park Greenway.

The blocks to the north of the Project Area, between Doughty Street and the Brooklyn Bridge, are characterized by a mix of residential and commercial uses. Building heights generally range from one to nine stories. The majority of this area is mapped within the New York City-designated Fulton Ferry Historic District. The Historic District includes Old Fulton Street, located one block to the north of the Project Area, which draws visitors to the area with its historic architecture, destination dining establishments, and direct access to Pier 1 and the Brooklyn Bridge Park. The area farther northeast, on the opposite side of the Brooklyn Bridge, encompasses a portion of Brooklyn's DUMBO neighborhood, which is similarly mixed-use in character.

The area to the south of the Project Area, beyond Squibb Park and the BQE, is predominately residential in character. Building heights generally range from two to five stories on the blocks bounded by Poplar Street to the north and Cranberry Street to the south. Farther south there are some taller residential buildings along Columbia Heights, including a 12-story building at the northeast corner of Columbia Heights and Orange Street (Block 219, Lot 7501), an 11-story building at the southeast corner of Columbia Heights and Orange Street (Block 224, Lot 5), and a 10-story building across the street at 128 Columbia Heights (Block 208, Lot 101). The residential neighborhood falls within the New York City-designated Brooklyn Heights Historic District, which generally extends south from the BQE and Old Fulton Street to Atlantic Avenue.

The area surrounding the Project Area is served by a number of public transit options. The B25 bus line runs along Old Fulton Street, with a stop located one block to the

[2] This stretch of the BQE is part of a longer section, extending from Atlantic Avenue to Sands Street, that the City of New York owns and that DOT has proposed to upgrade under its "BQE Central" initiative. DOT is expected to commence construction on the BQE within the vicinity of the Project Area in 2029.

northeast of the Project Area at the intersection of Old Fulton Street and Hicks Street. The A/C subway line has a station at High Street, approximately five blocks to the southeast of the Project Area, and the 2/3 subway line has a station farther south, at the intersection of Clark Street and Henry Street. The DUMBO stop on the NYC Ferry's East River route is located at the Fulton Ferry Landing in Brooklyn Bridge Park, approximately one block to the northwest of the Project Area. A Citi Bike docking station is located one block to the south of the Project Area, on the west side of Columbia Heights at its intersection with Middagh Street.

The Project Area is located in an M2-1 zoning district, which encompasses an area that extends approximately two blocks to the north, just beyond the Brooklyn Bridge, and a considerable distance to the south along the East River waterfront, to the west of Furman Street and the Brooklyn Heights Promenade. The M2-1 district is bounded to the north by an M3-1 district and to the east by an M1-5 district. The M2-1, M3-1, and M1-5 manufacturing districts generally allow a range of commercial and manufacturing uses in Use Groups IV through X, but they do not allow residential uses in Use Group II and allow only specified community facility uses in Use Groups I and III. The M2-1 and M3-1 districts allow a maximum floor area ratio ("FAR") of 2.0, and the M1-5 district allows a maximum FAR of 5.0. The height and setback regulations of these districts consist of sky exposure plane regulations, with additional tower regulations applicable in the M1-5 district. A portion of the M2-1 district to the south of the Project Area is also located within the Special Scenic View District (SV-1), which establishes special height controls intended to maintain westward scenic views from the Brooklyn Heights Promenade.

The areas to the south and east of the Project Area, generally comprising the Brooklyn Heights neighborhood, are located in R6, R7-1, and R8 districts. The R6 and R7-1 districts, which largely coincide with the aforementioned Brooklyn Heights Historic District, are mapped almost entirely in Limited Height District LH-1. (Only a portion of a block in the R7-1 district is located outside the Limited Height District.) In the R6(LH-1) district, the standard bulk regulations allow a maximum residential FAR of 2.20 and maximum building height of 50 feet for standard residences, and a maximum FAR of 3.9 and maximum building height of 85 feet (along a narrow street) for qualifying affordable housing or qualifying senior housing. In the R7-1(LH-1) district, the standard bulk regulations allow a maximum residential FAR of 3.44 and maximum building height of 50 feet (along a narrow street) for standard residences, and a maximum FAR of 3.9 and maximum building height of 105 feet (along a narrow street) for qualifying affordable housing or qualifying senior housing. The portion of the R7-1 district that is outside the Limited Height District is subject to these same regulations, except that the standard bulk regulations establish a maximum building height of 75 feet (along a narrow street) for standard residences, and that buildings may alternatively be developed pursuant to the sky exposure plane building regulations, which allow a maximum residential FAR of 0.87 to 3.44 depending on the applicable height factor. The R8 district also allows for utilization of standard bulk regulations or sky exposure plane regulations, with maximum residential FARs as high as 7.20 and maximum building heights as high as 175 feet, for qualifying affordable housing or qualifying senior housing located within 100 feet of a wide street.

Brooklyn's DUMBO neighborhood, located to the northeast of the Project Area on the opposite side of the Brooklyn Bridge, is zoned to allow a mix of residential, commercial, and light manufacturing uses at medium and high densities. This area was originally located in an M1-2 district, but beginning in 1998 it underwent a series of rezonings intended to facilitate the neighborhood's residential growth and reflect its mixed-use character. Two small blocks in this area, adjacent to the aforementioned M3-1 district, are mapped in a C6-2A district that was created in 1998. The C6-2A district is a contextual commercial district that allows maximum FARs of 6.02 (standard residences) and 7.2 (qualifying affordable housing or qualifying senior housing) for residential uses, 6.5 for community facility uses, and 6.0 for commercial uses, with maximum building heights of up to 145 feet. The balance of the area is located in Special Mixed Use District (MX-2), in which M1 districts are generally paired with contextual and non-contextual R8, R9, and R10 districts. The Special Mixed Use District which was originally mapped over a six-block area to the immediate south of the C6-2A district in 1999, and was then expanded to the east and northeast through multiple rezonings over a 10-year period. The paired underlying districts of the Special Mixed Use District allow mixed-use development at varying densities and scales, with maximum residential FARs ranging from 4.0 (in an M1-4/R7A zone located at the eastern end of the Special District) to 12.0 (in an M1-6/R10 zone located at the southern end of the Special District).

4. Description of Project Area

The Project Area is located in Community District 2 of Brooklyn and consists of (i) 25 Columbia Heights, which occupies the block bounded by Columbia Heights, Vine Street, McKenny street, and Doughty Street, and (ii) 30 Columbia Heights, which occupies the block bounded by Columbia Heights, Doughty Street, Furman Street, and Squibb Park. 25 Columbia Heights is located to the east of, and directly across Columbia Heights from, 30 Columbia Heights.

25 Columbia Heights is a single zoning lot with a lot area of approximately 31,630 square feet. It is irregular but roughly rectangular in shape, with frontages of approximately 92.42 feet on Columbia Heights, 335.92 feet on Doughty Street, 99 feet on McKenny Street, and 195.17 feet and 145.42 feet on Vine Street. Columbia Heights, Doughty Street, and Vine Street are all "narrow streets," and McKenny Street is a "wide street," as defined in Section 12-10 of the Zoning Resolution. The 25 Columbia Heights Building, which occupies nearly the entire parcel, is a 12-story building (including basement) containing approximately 253,400 square feet of floor area (8.01 FAR). The building was previously used by Watchtower as offices and contains an accessory parking garage with 125 parking spaces in a portion of the basement and four cellar levels. The Applicant acquired the property through an affiliate in 2016, after which it undertook significant alterations to upgrade the building for new office tenants. Efforts to lease the building have been unsuccessful, however. The certificate of occupancy for the 25 Columbia Heights Building allows Use Group VII offices on all floors, but the building is vacant today.

30 Columbia Heights is a single zoning lot with a lot area of approximately 70,090 square feet. Like 25 Columbia Heights, it is irregular but roughly rectangular in shape, with

frontages of approximately 479.34 feet on Columbia Heights, 127.92 feet on Doughty Street, and 519.75 feet on Furman Street. These streets are all "narrow streets," as defined in Section 12-10 of the Zoning Resolution. The northern portion of the zoning lot is occupied by the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building, a 13-story building (including basement and mezzanine). The roof of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building contains two prominent illuminated accessory signs (on a single sign structure), which are "non-conforming," as defined in Section 12-10 of the Zoning Resolution. The southern portion of the zoning lot is occupied by the Southern 30 Columbia Heights Buildings, which consist of three smaller buildings, known as 55 Furman Street, 50 Columbia Heights and 58 Columbia Heights, which range in height from 4 to 5 stories. The existing improvements on 30 Columbia Heights contain a total floor area of approximately 399,522 square feet (5.69 FAR). The buildings were used by Watchtower as offices, storage, a trade school, and a transient hotel. After acquiring the property through an affiliate in 2016, the Applicant made significant upgrades to the buildings with the intent of maintaining the existing hotel use, using the base of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building as retail, and using the other portions of the buildings as offices. As with 25 Columbia Heights, efforts to lease the building have been unsuccessful, leaving the buildings vacant today.

The 25 Columbia Heights Building and the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building are connected by an above-grade pedestrian bridge and a below-grade utility tunnel, both of which are maintained pursuant to DOT revocable consents as discussed above. The pedestrian bridge can be seen spanning Columbia Heights from points north and south along that street.

The Project Area is located in an M2-1 zoning district and in the Inner Transit Zone. The use regulations of the M2-1 district generally allow limited open and community facility uses in Use Groups I and III; commercial uses in Use Groups IV and VI through IX; and manufacturing uses in Use Group X. The applicable floor area regulations allow a maximum FAR of 2.0. The standard height and setback regulations establish a maximum front wall height of 60 feet or 4 stories, whichever is less, with an initial setback distance of 20 feet and sky exposure plane of 2.7 to 1 on narrow streets and an initial setback distance of 15 feet and sky exposure plane of 5.6 to 1 on wide streets.

The existing buildings at 25 Columbia Heights and 30 Columbia Heights are non-complying with respect to maximum FAR and height and setback regulations, owing to their construction prior to the adoption of the 1961 Zoning Resolution. Pursuant to the provisions of Article V, Chapter 4 (Non-Complying Buildings) of the Zoning Resolution, the existing buildings may be continued and may also be altered, provided that the alteration does not create a new non-compliance or increase the degree of an existing non-compliance.

5. Description of the Proposed Development

The Applicant proposes to convert portions of the 25 Columbia Heights Building and the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building to residential use and to vertically enlarge the buildings with new residential floors, resulting in mixed-use buildings that deliver

significant amounts of market-rate and affordable housing units and activate the streetscape with retail uses in appropriate locations.

A. 25 Columbia Heights

The 25 Columbia Heights Building would be converted partially to residential use and enlarged to a total floor area of approximately 379,510 square feet (12.0 FAR), consisting of approximately 367,270 square feet (11.61 FAR) in residential use and approximately 12,240 square feet (0.39 FAR) in commercial and/or community facility use.

The Proposed Development would increase the height of the 25 Columbia Heights Building from 12 stories to a maximum height of 17 stories, or approximately 210 feet. The enlarged building would set back at least 15 feet above the 12th story (at a height of approximately 145 feet) along Columbia Heights, Vine Street, and the western portion of Doughty Street (all "narrow streets," as defined in Section 12-10 of the Zoning Resolution). Along the eastern portion of the Doughty Street frontage, the 15-foot setback would begin above the existing fifth-story and sixth-story roofs (at heights of approximately 59 feet and 71 feet, respectively). The building would also set back 10 feet above the 12th story along McKenny Street (a "wide street," as defined in Section 12-10). The proposed setbacks are designed to comply with the height and setback regulations of the proposed M1-5A/R10A zoning district (discussed below), while maintaining the existing street walls of the 25 Columbia Heights Building, accommodating adequate residential floor plates, and preserving view corridors along Doughty Street.

The western portion of the building, closest to the commercial corridor of Old Fulton Street and to Brooklyn Bridge Park, would be occupied by commercial and/or community facility uses on its first floor and cellar level. (Because Doughty Street slopes downward in an east-to-west direction, the cellar level is accessible at grade at the western end of the zoning lot.) These spaces, which benefit from visibility from Old Fulton Street and other portions of the Fulton Ferry Historic District, are intended to be occupied by specialty retail tenants that are compatible with the existing commercial character of that area. The eastern portion of the building would continue to be occupied at the first floor and below-grade cellar level by an existing garage, containing approximately 165 permitted accessory parking spaces (increased from the existing permitted capacity of 125 spaces).

The second through 17th stories of the building would be occupied by residential uses. The proposed residential uses in the building would include affordable units in accordance with Option 1 of the MIH Program. Under Option 1, 25 percent of the residential floor area in an MIH development must be affordable at an average of 60 percent of the income index, provided that there are no more than three income bands and that at least 10 percent of floor area is affordable at 40 percent of the income index.

The entrances to the 25 Columbia Heights Building would be distributed to facilitate pedestrian and vehicular circulation around the zoning lot. The pedestrian entrances to the building's retail space would be located at the western end of the zoning lot, oriented toward existing pedestrian activity generated by Old Fulton Street and Brooklyn Bridge Park; the entrance to the residential lobby would be located on the south side of the zoning lot, on Vine Street, oriented toward Hillside Dog Park and the residential neighborhood of Brooklyn Heights; and vehicular access to the garage would be provided by an existing curb cut at the eastern end of the zoning lot, on McKenny Street, oriented toward the existing road network that provides connections to the Brooklyn Queens Expressway and the Brooklyn Bridge.

The proposed adaptive reuse would maintain the architectural character of the 25 Columbia Heights Building and, compared to a redevelopment of the zoning lot, would reduce construction-related disruption to surrounding residents. The enlarged portions of the building would be designed with materials and architectural details that are distinctive from, but referential to, those of the existing building. This approach to façade design, together with the proposed setbacks and building heights, would result in a harmonious design that respects the surrounding area while communicating the unique history of development in the Project Area.

B. 30 Columbia Heights

The Applicant proposes to partially convert the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building to residential use and to enlarge the building. The Southern 30 Columbia Heights Buildings would retain their existing bulk and be used for commercial uses. Following the completion of the Proposed Development, 30 Columbia Heights (inclusive of both the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building and the Southern Columbia Heights Buildings) would contain approximately 428,060 square feet of floor area (6.11 FAR), of which approximately 260,490 square feet (3.72 FAR) would be in residential use and approximately 167,570 square feet (2.39 FAR) would be in commercial use.

The Proposed Development would increase the maximum height of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building from 13 stories to 14 stories, or approximately 154 feet. However, the proposed 14th story would consist of a relatively small vestibule and support space for common roof access. The building would otherwise rise to a maximum height of 13 stories, or approximately 141 feet, matching the tallest portion of the existing building and allowing the building's existing non-conforming roof signs to be maintained.

The enlarged building would largely maintain the street wall recesses of the existing building. Along Columbia Heights, the enlarged building would maintain an existing recess above the fourth story, located toward the center of the street frontage and extending to a depth of approximately 18.4 feet, and would otherwise rise without setback to its full 13-story height. Farther south on Columbia Heights, the Proposed Development would maintain an existing at-grade area, bounded by the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building and the Southern 30 Columbia Heights Building, as a landscaped building entrance. Along Furman Street, the enlarged building would

maintain existing setbacks, ranging from approximately 6.9 feet to approximately 57.5 feet, above the first through third floors. At the northern end of this frontage, the deep setbacks above the first and second floors would be maintained as accessible roof terraces that connect to grade via a dramatic exterior stair, as in the existing conditions.

The building would contain commercial and/or community facility uses at its bottom three levels, where the existing deep floor plates are not suitable for residential use. Toward the northern end of the zoning lot, the building's visibility from Old Fulton Street would provide opportunities for specialty retail establishments. The dramatic exterior stair and roof terraces above the first and second floors would provide direct pedestrian access to the retail storefronts at these levels, creating a distinctive street-activating design element. At the southern end of the building's Furman Street frontage, closer to Brooklyn Heights, the first floor would contain neighborhood retail establishments. To the immediate south of this building frontage is an existing landscaped open area with vertical stair access to Columbia Heights, which the Applicant would maintain as a streetscape-enhancing element.

The enlarged building would also contain a new parking facility, accommodating approximately 23 permitted accessory parking spaces, and a loading dock on the first floor. These facilities would be accessed from an existing curb cut on Furman Street, that provides loading access to the existing building today. The curb cut is located toward the center of the zoning lot's street frontage, away from pedestrian activity on Doughty Street (to the north) and from the landscaped open area that provides vertical pedestrian access to Columbia Heights (to the south), making it well-situated for minimizing pedestrian conflicts.

The fourth through 13th stories of the enlarged Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building would be occupied by residential uses. The residential portion of the building would be accessible from an existing landscaped entrance area on Columbia Heights, described above. As with the 25 Columbia Heights Building, the proposed residential uses are proposed to include affordable units in accordance with Option 1 of the MIH Program.

The existing pedestrian bridge that spans Columbia Heights, connecting the 25 Columbia Heights Building and the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building, would be demolished in connection with the Proposed Development. With the demolition of the bridge, views of the waterfront, the Brooklyn Bridge, and the Manhattan Bridge would be restored from points south along Columbia Heights.

As with the 25 Columbia Heights Building, the proposed adaptive reuse would maintain the architectural character of the Northern 30 Columbia Heights Building and, compared to a redevelopment of the zoning lot, would reduce construction-related disruption to surrounding residents. By incorporating contextually appropriate materials and details into the enlarged portions of the building, and largely maintaining the existing building's height, the Proposed Development would create a harmonious design that respects the surrounding area while communicating the unique history of development in the Project Area.

6. Actions Necessary to Facilitate the Project

The Proposed Development requires an amendment to Zoning Map 12d to rezone the Project Area. The proposed amendment would (i) change from an M2-1 zoning district to an M1-5A/R10A zoning district property bounded by Columbia Heights, Doughty Street, McKenny Street, and Vine Street and (ii) change from an M2-1 zoning district to an M1-5A/R8A zoning district property bounded by Furman Street, Doughty Street, Columbia Heights, and Edward Robinson Squibb Park. As an ancillary action to the proposed rezoning, a zoning text amendment is needed to (i) modify the provisions of Article XII, Chapter 3 (Special Mixed Use District) to establish Special Mixed Use District (MX-29) and (ii) modify Appendix F (Inclusionary Housing Designated Areas and Mandatory Inclusionary Housing areas) to designate the Project Area a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area that is subject to Option 1 of the MIH Program.

As discussed above, the Project Area is today located in an M2-1 zoning district, the regulations of which preclude the Proposed Development in two significant respects. First, the M2-1 district regulations do not allow residential uses, including affordable housing, which would constitute the primary use in the Proposed Development. Second, the floor area regulations and height and setback regulations of the M2-1 district—with respect to which the existing buildings in the Project Area are lawfully non-complying, as described above—preclude an enlargement of the existing buildings and the types of physical alterations to the buildings that are needed to accommodate the proposed residential uses.

The proposed zoning districts would allow residential uses in the Project Area at appropriate densities, in accordance with the maximum FARs of the R10A and R8A district components. They would also allow the Project Area's existing buildings to be maintained and enlarged pursuant to certain bulk controls of the M1-5A district—a new district created by City of Yes for Economic Opportunity (N 240011 ZRY) that facilitates mixed-use development by enabling more flexible, loft-like building forms. The proposed M1-5A/R10A(MX-29) district for 25 Columbia Heights would allow maximum FARs of 12.0 for residential use and 6.5 for commercial use, with a maximum base height of 155 feet and a maximum building height of 293 feet (increased from the standard maximum building height of 235 feet, since the zoning lot has a lot area of more than 20,000 square feet). The proposed M1-5A/R8A(MX-29) district for 30 Columbia Heights would allow maximum FARs of 7.2 for residential use and 6.5 for commercial use, with a maximum base height of 155 feet and a maximum building height of 256 feet (increased from the standard maximum building height of 205 feet, since the zoning lot has a lot area of more than 20,000 square feet). As noted above, with the proposed designation of the Project Area as an MIH Area, subject to Option 1 of the MIH Program, 25 percent of the residential floor area in the Proposed Development would be required to be affordable at an average of 60 percent of the income index.

The proposed actions would advance the City's planning policies by introducing a substantial amount of new housing, including affordable housing, and neighborhood-enhancing commercial uses to the Project Area. The Project Area is particularly well-suited to high-density residential use and neighborhood retail. It is adjacent to the

existing residential neighborhood Brooklyn Heights to the south, proximate to the existing mixed-use neighborhood of DUMBO to the northeast, and just one block from Old Fulton Street's commercial corridor. It is also adjacent to a number of open space resources, including Brooklyn Bridge Park, and to multiple modes of public transportation. The areas to the immediate north and south of the Project Area are designated as historic districts, as described above, leaving the Project Area as one of the very few opportunities in this part of Brooklyn to develop new housing at the scale that the Applicant is proposing.

Further, recent trends have proven that the existing M2-1 district, which has been in place since the Zoning Resolution was adopted in 1961, is no longer appropriate for the Project Area. As discussed above, the DUMBO neighborhood, located to the northeast of the Project Area on the opposite side of the Brooklyn Bridge, has evolved into a vibrant mixed-use community, owing to a series of rezonings from the neighborhood's original M1-2 designation that were adopted between 1998 and 2009. The Brooklyn Heights neighborhood, which extends to the south of the Project Area, has been mapped in residential districts since the adoption of the Zoning Resolution in 1961 and has been mapped as a New York City-designated historic district since 1965. The Project Area's M2-1 district is thus one of the few remaining upland pockets in the area in which the applicable zoning regulations do not allow residential use. To date, the Applicant has not been able to lease the Project Area's existing buildings for conforming uses, notwithstanding its substantial investments in building upgrades and good-faith leasing efforts.

The proposed actions and the Proposed Development are also appropriate from an urban design perspective. The Project Area's location among existing open spaces and elevated transportation infrastructure, including the Brooklyn Queens Expressway and the Brooklyn Bridge, make it well-suited for larger buildings, as evidenced by the existing 12-story buildings that occupy the Project Area. The Project Area's lower elevation relative to the Brooklyn Heights neighborhood would limit any visual impacts from the proposed vertical enlargements of the buildings. Further, the Applicant has specifically designed the Proposed Development so as to maintain existing view corridors, including views of the Brooklyn Bridge from the Brooklyn Heights Promenade. With the proposed residential conversion, the Applicant would also demolish the existing pedestrian bridge that spans Columbia Heights, opening up new views of the waterfront, the Brooklyn Bridge, and the Manhattan Bridge from points south along Columbia Heights.

7. Conclusion

The proposed land use actions would facilitate the Proposed Development, which would deliver significant amounts of market-rate and affordable housing units, activate the Project Area's streetscape with non-residential uses in appropriate locations, maintain the existing architectural character of the Project Area, and reinforce the vibrant, mixed-use character of the surrounding area. They would also advance the City's planning policies by facilitating significant housing production on two blocks that are underutilized today and that are well-situated for higher-density development.