

CITY OF UNION CITY
HUDSON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

----- :
REGULAR MEETING : TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
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Union City High School
Media Center
2500 Kennedy Boulevard
Union City, New Jersey

Thursday, February 12, 2026
Commencing at 6:15 p.m.

M E M B E R S P R E S E N T:

ANDRES GARCIA, Chairperson
VICTOR M. GRULLON, Vice Chairperson
GERALDINE PEREZ
VIVIAN O'DELL
MIGUEL ORTIZ
MINDRY WATLEY

M E M B E R S A B S E N T:

MARGARITA GUTIERREZ
ALTAGRACIA SAN MARTINO
ROSA PENA

A L S O P R E S E N T:

TOMAS PANEQUE, ESQ., Board Counsel
AGUSTIN PANEQUE, ESQ.
CARLOS VALLEJO, Board Secretary
DAVID SPATZ, PP, Consulting City Planner

STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY:
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Attorney for Applicant, Joseph Gaudio,
509-511 18th Street

ADOLFO LOPEZ, ESQ.
Attorney for Applicant, 512 19th Street LLC
512 19th Street

BIANCA PEREIRAS, ESQ.
Attorney for Applicant, Ihar Pikaliuk
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821 24th Street

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I N D E X

MAMDOUH MECHEAL
3125 Summit Avenue

WITNESSPAGE

JOSE CARBALLO

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(None)

I N D E X

JOSEPH GAUDIO
509-511 18th Street

WITNESSPAGE

(None)

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(None)

I N D E X

512 19TH STREET LLC
512 19th Street LLC

WITNESSPAGE

JOSE IZQUIERDO

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(None)

I N D E X

IHAR PIKALIUK
2412 New York Avenue

WITNESSPAGE

MANUEL PEREIRAS
ALEXANDER DOUGHERTY

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(None)

I N D E X

OMG HOLDINGS, LLC
821 24th Street

WITNESSPAGE

(None)

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(None)

1 **CALL TO ORDER/SALUTE TO FLAG/
2 STATEMENT-OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT/SUNSHINE LAW:**

3 MR. VALLEJO: May I have your attention,
4 please?

5 Please take notice that on Thursday,
6 January 8, 2026, a regular meeting is scheduled for
7 the Union City Zoning Board of Adjustment to be held
8 in the Union City High School located at 2500 John F.
9 Kennedy Boulevard, Union City.

10 Adequate notice of this meeting has been
11 provided as follows: Notice of the meeting setting
12 forth the time, date, location to the agenda was
13 forwarded to The Record, The Star Ledger, and has
14 been posted on the bulletin board in the Union City
15 City Clerk's Office bulletin board, also advertised
16 at ucnj.com.

17 Before roll call for tonight's meeting,
18 can everybody kindly rise to salute the flag, please?

19 * * *

20 (Whereupon the Pledge of Allegiance was
21 recited.)

22 * * *

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1 **ROLL CALL:**

2
3 MR. VALLEJO: Roll call for tonight's
4 meeting.

5 Mr. Garcia.

6 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Present.

7 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon is finding a
8 parking space. He's absent at this time.

9 Ms. Gutierrez is absent.

10 Mr. Ortiz.

11 MR. ORTIZ: Present.

12 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

13 MS. PEREZ: Here.

14 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

15 MS. WATLEY: Here.

16 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

17 MS. O'DELL: Here.

18 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Pena is absent.

19 Ms. San Martino is absent.

20 We have five members present.

21 * * *

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1 **ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

2
3 MR. VALLEJO: Approval of previous meeting
4 minutes for January 8, 2026. Can I have a motion?

5 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Motion.

6 MR. VALLEJO: Motion by Mr. Garcia.

7 Any second on the motion?

8 MS. WATLEY: Second.

9 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

10 Roll call on the motion.

11 Mr. Garcia.

12 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

13 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

14 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

15 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

16 MS. WATLEY: Yes.

17 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

18 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

19 MR. VALLEJO: Four in favor. Motion
20 passed.

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1 **PUBLIC HEARING:**

2 **MAMDOUH MECHEAL -**
3 **3125 Summit Avenue**
4 **Block: 173 Lots: 5-9, 12-14**

5 MR. VALLEJO: We're going to Hearing
6 No. 1, 3125 Summit Avenue, changes to the drawings.

7 Mr. Alonso, please.

8 MR. ALONSO: Good evening, Mr. Chairman,
9 Members of the Board. For the record, Alvaro Alonso
10 on behalf of the applicant.

11 As the board may recall, back in December
12 the board approved the application and asked us to
13 come back with revised plans for resolution purposes.
14 So I have Mr. Carballo here. So we filed the revised
15 plans at least 10 days prior to the hearing and is
16 here to present the revisions.

17 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Carlos, just for the
18 record, when did you receive the revised plans?

19 MR. VALLEJO: We received it January 14,
20 2026.

21 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: The revised one?

22 MR. VALLEJO: Yeah, the revise one. Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: All right. Thank
24 you.

25 MR. ALONSO: So Jose needs to be sworn in.

1 JOSE CARBALL0, after having been duly sworn, did
2 testify as follows:

3 MR. ALONSO: Mr. Carballo, when this
4 application was approved, it was approved with
5 certain conditions.

6 MR. CARBALL0: Correct.

7 MR. ALONSO: The board had asked us to
8 file revised plans and then present it to the board.
9 I'm going to ask you just to review what those
10 conditions were and to confirm that they're the new
11 plans.

12 MR. CARBALL0: Absolutely. So when we
13 first submitted to the board, we had 142 units. And
14 at the last meeting, when the building was approved,
15 we were asked to remove four two-bedroom units. So
16 what we did is we removed the four two-bedroom units
17 from this corner. So it's four like units here. And
18 those then became amenity spaces. So what we have on
19 this drawing, which is Drawing A-6, we show --

20 (Vice Chairperson Gullon enters room.)

21 MR. VALLEJO: One second, please. Let the
22 record show that Mr. Gullon joined the meeting. We
23 have six members now.

24 MR. CARBALL0: So on Drawing A-6, we still
25 show the floors that don't have the two-bedroom

1 units. But on the right-hand side, we show the floor
2 plan that's going to be above. So we removed the
3 first four units above the parking deck, and that
4 gets us down to 138 units.

5 The other thing that we actually did, you
6 know, aside from that, which is a request from the
7 board, is to eliminate all the enclosed dens that we
8 had. So all the dens are now open. They're just
9 open to the space. So we don't have any enclosed
10 dens that could become a second bedroom on those
11 units.

12 So I believe those were the changes that
13 were asked at the last meeting. I wasn't here, but I
14 understand those are the changes that were asked.

15 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I have a question. I
16 know that this was approved, but do we have the old
17 plans?

18 MR. VALLEJO: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I'm seeing something.

20 MR. CARBALLO: Absolutely.

21 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Do you have some
22 overhang section that was not in the previous?

23 MR. CARBALLO: It was. It's always been
24 there. There was overhang there in the building
25 right now. We have not done anything other than

1 change the number of units and that unit on the
2 corner. But if you're talking about these overhangs,
3 they've been there from the beginning. When I say
4 "the beginning," when it was first -- seven years
5 ago --

6 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I need to see -- with
7 all due respect, okay, you say that was there. I
8 don't recall. Can you tell me why? Because the
9 reason that we asked for some changes on the facade
10 is because what we saw of the building it's just like
11 a block.

12 MR. CARBALLO: Right.

13 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: That's why. So now
14 we're changing it, like those are like -- we
15 usually -- we're questioning also the overhang
16 because there is -- it's not really there, the
17 property line.

18 MR. CARBALLO: They are not on the
19 property line. They're pulled back. And those were
20 there when I first submitted the drawings, and those
21 were there when the building was first --

22 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I'm going to
23 request -- I mean, I'm going to need from there -- I
24 don't know if you have it.

25 MR. ALONSO: I don't have his revised

1 drawings.

2 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I don't recall. And
3 I don't recall rooftop.

4 MR. CARBALLO: That was there as well.

5 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: In the presentation.
6 I don't recall. No, no, I mean, I don't recall. You
7 have all your rights and I have my right too.
8 Probably I'm getting old, but I don't recall.

9 MR. CARBALLO: Okay. That's fine.

10 MR. VALLEJO: Can you send me a PDF?

11 MR. CARBALLO: On this one? On the
12 previous one? Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely.

13 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Also, that corner,
14 does it close the place out? No balcony, right?

15 MR. CARBALLO: That corner?

16 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

17 MR. CARBALLO: It does have a half a bath.

18 MR. A. PANEQUE: Balcony. Balcony.

19 MR. CARBALLO: No, there are no balconies.

20 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Everything is
21 enclosed?

22 MR. CARBALLO: Everything is within the
23 footprint of the building. Correct.

24 MR. VALLEJO: December 30th?

25 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: I know that for

1 the previous -- Mr. Carballo.

2 MR. CARBALLO: Yes.

3 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: When you
4 presented this first, my understanding is that it was
5 like a square box. We were looking to see, like, a
6 new design. This is a nice design. It's good, but
7 it has some difference from the other one. Those --
8 for overhang, maybe a balcony that is projecting out.
9 This is okay but it was not on the previous
10 application.

11 MR. CARBALLO: Yes, it was. Yes, it was.
12 We have not changed anything from the original
13 application.

14 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: The application is
15 approved. However, the facade, we need in order for
16 us to approve it, the facade. So, I mean, with all
17 due respect -- and I think you understand me,
18 right -- I don't have a previous one, and I don't
19 recall because I am always really -- I put a lot of
20 caution in the overhangs, especially in that volume
21 of --

22 MR. CARBALLO: Absolutely. You have to
23 make sure. Rest assured that whatever we have here,
24 as far as the exterior of the building, has not been
25 changed. There's no extra overhangs or balconies.

1 MR. VALLEJO: I don't have a PDF.

2 MR. CARBALLO: I'm sorry?

3 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I don't have a PDF.

4 MR. CARBALLO: From the old one? Al sent
5 it.

6 MR. VALLEJO: To me? Are you sure?

7 MR. ALONSO: Should have it here. What
8 date did you say?

9 MR. CARBALLO: The letter -- when we filed
10 the application, June 15, 2025. So it would have
11 been emailed around that time.

12 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Off the record,
13 please.

14 (Discussion was held off the record.)

15 * * *

16 (Mr. A. Paneque leaves room.)

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1 **JOSEPH GAUDIO -**
2 **509-511 18th Street**
3 **Block: 91, Lot: 10:**

4 MR. VALLEJO: Joseph Gaudio, 509-511 18th
5 Street. Ms. Vergara, please.

6 MS. VERGARA: How are you? I have the
7 notices. I made sure they were all there.

8 MR. T. PANEQUE: Let the record reflect as
9 follows, I've been provided by Ms. Vergara with the
10 following: I have an affidavit as to proof and
11 notice of publication signed by Ms. Vergara
12 indicating that notice of tonight's hearing with
13 respect to the property at 509-11 18th Street was
14 provided to all property owners within a 200-foot
15 radius of said property on January 20, 2026, as well
16 as having been published on the Bergen Record.

17 I have copies of the notices that went out
18 as well as a list from the Tax Assessor's Office
19 listing all property owners within a 200-foot radius
20 of block 91, lots 10 and 11, also known as
21 509-11 18th Street. This tax list from the Tax
22 Assessor's Office has a date of January 12, 2026. I
23 have copies of the notices that went out. Said
24 notices indicate that the board will be presented
25 with the application on this date at 6 p.m. at the

1 Union City High School, 2500 Kennedy Boulevard at
2 6 p.m. again.

3 I also have copies of the receipts that
4 have come back from the post office as well as a very
5 diligent tracking information. So, based on the
6 information that has been provided by Ms. Vergara,
7 this board has jurisdiction to proceed and hear this
8 matter.

9 Thank you, Ms. Vergara.

10 MS. VERGARA: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I have a question,
12 Mr. Paneque, here. We have the memo from the
13 department adjudicating that you have a two-unit
14 residential structure. This is an existing property
15 with three lots. This is consisting of four
16 residential units and one office, owner's use.
17 Proposed use to convert to six units plus one office.
18 And by the Building Department only two units.

19 MS. VERGARA: If I may, we were here
20 before -- I don't know if you recall.

21 I don't know if I should state my name for
22 the record. Christina Vergara.

23 -- in July, July 10, 2025, and this was
24 brought up. And there were records, apparently, the
25 records were back from the '70s and were not that

1 updated since then. I have since that time brought a
2 resolution -- actually, I did send it previously and
3 I have it with me here today -- with regards to the
4 back, the rear property that was approved and
5 eventually was converted into a two-family property.
6 I have that right here for you. Do you want them?

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: Yes. Thank you,
8 Ms. Vergara. I do have a light recollection of the
9 last meeting in July in which this issue did come up.
10 And the chairman just brought to my attention that
11 there are two addresses for this property, 509 as
12 well as 511.

13 MS. VERGARA: Correct.

14 MR. T. PANEQUE: The memo from the
15 Building Department only speaks as to 509. And
16 that's why that memo refers to a two-family home,
17 because it makes no mention to 511.

18 MS. VERGARA: Thank you.

19 MR. T. PANEQUE: And that's where the
20 discrepancy is. But this issue had come up
21 previously at the July meeting and it was resolved.

22 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yeah. But the thing
23 is we are going now from -- okay. The application is
24 we are now just from two units to what? What do they
25 want? They are requesting what? They're going to go

1 to six units and one office. So, in reality, it is
2 adding --

3 MS. VERGARA: No. I didn't mean to
4 interrupt you. The reason why this is confusing is
5 because there's two structures on the property since
6 it was two lots. And the 2016 resolution approved
7 the rear lot with two bedrooms -- I'm sorry -- two
8 units that are two bedrooms. In the front that was
9 preexisting there was one -- it's one bedroom and,
10 from my recollection, one, two.

11 Correct?

12 MR. IZQUIERDO: Uh-huh.

13 MS. VERGARA: One one-bedroom, one
14 two-bedroom, and a ground floor office which is used
15 for personal use. What we're doing here is adding on
16 top of the curb cut driveway that's currently there
17 and adding, which is now revised, two units which are
18 studios. Does that make sense?

19 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes. But thing is if
20 you are adding two, we are legalizing two, then we
21 are converting to four not to six, as per your
22 application. That's the point. Before we proceed I
23 think, Mr. Paneque, we need to see what we're adding.
24 In reality, okay, I'm going to say, yes. Let's say
25 we go with your application, we grant the application

1 with the two units. And then you're only going to
2 have four legal units, not six and one office.
3 That's my understanding.

4 MS. VERGARA: The issue, I guess -- and I
5 hear you. I understand what you're saying. But, I
6 guess, for purposes of how -- if you look up -- when
7 I made the request, for example, with the tax
8 assessor, it's 509-511 18th Street. So it's almost
9 one property, essentially. I understand what you're
10 saying. But I think it's more of a --

11 MR. T. PANEQUE: One second, Ms. Vergara.
12 I have a recollection of this. This property
13 presently has two separate structures. The front
14 structure which has the two units and the office,
15 which is the one that's listed as Number 511 --

16 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Correct.

17 MR. T. PANEQUE: -- and then the 509,
18 which is the two units, two-family. Yeah, here it is
19 . My recollection serves me. What they're planning
20 to do is on the existing apron now where they
21 actually parked four vehicles now, they're proposing
22 to put in a third building. So this property will
23 actually contain three separate structures on one
24 lot. So that would necessitate a variance because
25 we're not, under the current ordinance, permitted to

1 have more than two structures on one lot and we're
2 already exceeding that. So this would bring it to a
3 third structure.

4 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Okay. But we are
5 dealing with two legal units. There are four units,
6 right?

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: Well, technically, it's
8 two and two.

9 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Okay. But I don't
10 have the memo. Because what about if the memo from
11 511 says it's one legal unit, but then we are adding
12 two -- you know what I mean?

13 MR. T. PANEQUE: We don't have a memo
14 which makes reference to 511.

15 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: That's the situation.
16 Because the application clearly said proposed to use
17 to convert two -- I mean, six units plus one office.
18 And I don't know -- I know those two are legal. I
19 don't know if those two are legal.

20 MR. T. PANEQUE: And, furthermore, it's
21 technically not going to be a six-unit building.
22 It's going to be three separate structures with two
23 units on each structure and one of them containing an
24 office. They don't have any connection.

25 Mr. Izquierdo, unless I'm --

1 MR. IZQUIERDO: No. It is correct. It's
2 almost like a planned unit development where you have
3 two units here, two units here, and two units here
4 and they all lead into a common yard and a garden and
5 whatnot. So, yes, you're correct. What you're
6 saying is correct.

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: See, if we had -- the
8 application is saying we're going from four to two.

9 MR. IZQUIERDO: Four to six.

10 MR. T. PANEQUE: Four to six. If we had a
11 six-unit building here, other implications come into
12 effect, such as DCA registration, Department of
13 Community Affairs, inspections and so forth. The
14 fact that you have or are proposing to do three
15 separate two units keeps this out of the DCA
16 jurisdiction.

17 MR. IZQUIERDO: I don't think so.

18 MR. T. PANEQUE: It does. I've had this
19 matter come up in my office many times.

20 MR. IZQUIERDO: Oh, okay. Then you know.

21 MR. T. PANEQUE: If there is no connection
22 between the buildings, DCA doesn't have jurisdiction
23 to inspect. It has to be three and above. And over
24 here you have two and one office, so that doesn't
25 give DCA any jurisdiction. The rear is a two-family;

1 it doesn't give DCA jurisdiction. And the proposed
2 is also a two-family. However, in looking at your
3 diagram, there's no connection between any of those.
4 So the application, the way it's written, is that
5 you're going from a four- to a two- --

6 MR. IZQUIERDO: To a six- --

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: Again, I stand
8 corrected -- I sit corrected.

9 MR. IZQUIERDO: So what would constitute a
10 connection between the building? Would it be just a
11 structure, or would it be a physical function?

12 MR. T. PANEQUE: It has to be a physical
13 function connecting the properties, the two
14 structures, which does not exist at this point.

15 MR. IZQUIERDO: No, it does not.

16 MR. T. PANEQUE: So in the application
17 you're asking that you want to go from a four- to a
18 six-. What the actual application should have
19 read --

20 MR. IZQUIERDO: It's a two-.

21 MR. T. PANEQUE: It should have said we
22 are proposing a third two-unit building on this lot
23 which will then give us three separate two-unit
24 structures. Okay?

25 MR. IZQUIERDO: Understood.

1 MR. T. PANEQUE: I mean, we can address
2 that issue, unless the chairman has any objection. I
3 don't see a problem why we can't address that on the
4 record so that it would avoid having to go through
5 the entire very diligent notice process that was done
6 by Ms. Vergara's office.

7 But the other point raised by Mr. Garcia,
8 our chairman, is that before this board takes a vote,
9 we need to verify that the property at 511 is an
10 existing two-family with an office. Okay? Because
11 if it's not, then we have an issue that when this
12 board votes, it's going to leave a portion of this
13 property unaccounted for.

14 MR. IZQUIERDO: There's a way to connect
15 all three buildings just providing a common entrance
16 with a lobby so that all the stairs are connected
17 within that so with one common door. I can do that.

18 MR. T. PANEQUE: You may be opening up a
19 can of worms because then you would give DCA
20 jurisdiction to inspect these properties.

21 MR. IZQUIERDO: Would that be a problem,
22 DCA jurisdiction? I don't see that as improper. I
23 see that as eliminating one of the variances. I
24 understand you cannot have three buildings in one
25 lot. So if I create a common lobby, so you open the

1 doors and you access 511 over here and then you go
2 through and then you go 509 in the front and then you
3 continue -- it's just a roof. I can discuss that
4 with the client.

5 MR. T. PANEQUE: Yeah. If you were to
6 create a lobby right in the center --

7 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yeah. With sky lights, a
8 very nice lobby.

9 MR. T. PANEQUE: -- and connect the three
10 structures, then, technically, you would have a
11 connected property with six units if this board
12 approves it.

13 MR. IZQUIERDO: And eliminate one
14 variance, which is having three buildings in one lot.

15 MR. T. PANEQUE: Correct.

16 Mr. Spatz.

17 MR. SPATZ: Yeah. No, that is correct.
18 That is one of the variances, one of the use
19 variances.

20 MR. IZQUIERDO: So we can connect
21 everything. I mean, David, you would understand if I
22 connect the lobby and then you have a common door
23 with bells and everything. I don't see DCA
24 jurisdiction as a problem. I see it, actually, as a
25 good thing. I don't know. I see it as that.

1 MR. T. PANEQUE: That would be up to your
2 applicant, your client.

3 MR. PEREIRAS: It's just a roof.

4 MR. T. PANEQUE: The issue that I'm
5 foreseeing that this board is going to raise,
6 Mr. Izquierdo, is that currently you have four spaces
7 being provided. I don't know if there's any parking
8 being provided in the new application.

9 MR. IZQUIERDO: There are four spaces
10 being provided for the two studio apartments. The
11 other four units have no parking and will not have
12 any parking.

13 MR. T. PANEQUE: Yeah, but --

14 MR. IZQUIERDO: There's no possibility of
15 providing any other parking.

16 MR. T. PANEQUE: Okay.

17 MR. IZQUIERDO: But I'd stand waiting for
18 your instructions, your directions. I don't know.

19 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Personally, without a
20 complete memo, me personally -- I prefer to hear from
21 the members of the board -- I would not like to
22 proceed because I don't know what kind of
23 application --

24 MR. IZQUIERDO: Understood.

25 MS. VERGARA: It's not a memo. But for

1 what it's worth, I have to make my attempt. I have
2 here -- I mean, this was provided to me through OPRA
3 request. It's from the Tax Assessor's Office. If I
4 may approach? Just showing it for the record. I
5 mean it's 509-511, it's two buildings there
6 (indicating).

7 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: So the think is also
8 we don't want to have any conflict with the
9 department.

10 MS. VERGARA: I understand.

11 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I don't want to pass
12 over their authority.

13 MS. VERGARA: Just to have it on the
14 record.

15 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I want to hear the
16 opinion of the other members, if they agree with me,
17 but I will ask.

18 (Discussion held off the record.)

19 MR. T. PANEQUE: For purposes of, if you
20 want to preserve jurisdiction, we can adjourn it to
21 the next meeting. And then at the next meeting, if
22 you want to come back, we'll have the memo.

23 Mr. Vallejo, we need to get a memo for
24 511, right?

25 And then at that point, if you want to

1 modify your plans to show that center lobby
2 connecting the three structures, as long as it's
3 presented at least 10 days prior to the meeting, if
4 you do so, that would actually be more in keeping
5 with the notice that went out because then you're
6 going from a four- to a six- -- I said it right this
7 time -- whereas right now --

8 MR. IZQUIERDO: But otherwise we would
9 have to change the notice because then you would
10 be -- the notice would say that we are intending to
11 have a third building with two units. Right?

12 MR. T. PANEQUE: The way the plan is
13 drafted now doesn't match the notice.

14 MR. IZQUIERDO: Correct. I understand.

15 MR. T. PANEQUE: Because you're not going
16 from a four- to a six-. You're going from two
17 structures to three structures.

18 MR. IZQUIERDO: From two, two to three,
19 two. Yes. Yes. The office is also being added. So
20 any Building Department memo that you will receive at
21 511, it would only indicate that it's a two-unit
22 structure. The office is being proposed.

23 MR. T. PANEQUE: Okay.

24 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes.

25 MS. VERGARA: So, I mean, obviously, it's

1 up to the applicant as to whether or not, you know --
2 under the understanding as well that if that is not
3 the case, then we have to renote. I understand
4 that. But just for the record, the memo that sits
5 before the board right now from the Building
6 Department, it pertains to 509 or 511?

7 MR. IZQUIERDO: 509.

8 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: 509 18th.

9 MR. T. PANEQUE: 509 refers to two
10 residential units only.

11 MR. IZQUIERDO: So then, basically, we
12 have two options. We revise the drawings to have a
13 lobby connecting all three buildings and then the
14 notice does not get changed because the notice would
15 be proper. Otherwise, we don't change the drawings
16 and the notice has to change. Correct?

17 MS. VERGARA: Correct.

18 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes.

19 MR. T. PANEQUE: Now, Ms. Vergara, you did
20 mention that at one point there was a resolution
21 approving a two-family.

22 MS. VERGARA: Correct. 511 18th Street.

23 MR. T. PANEQUE: That's the resolution?

24 MR. IZQUIERDO: 509.

25 MS. VERGARA: See, the resolution says

1 511.

2 MR. T. PANEQUE: Okay.

3 MS. VERGARA: In the very beginning, it
4 says 509, and then if you look over there, it says
5 511.

6 MR. T. PANEQUE: Yeah.

7 MR. IZQUIERDO: But I believe it would
8 change from an industrial to a two-unit structure.

9 MS. VERGARA: And I believe they were
10 before the board at that point because of the parking
11 from what I recall from the minutes, which I have as
12 well.

13 MR. T. PANEQUE: So this resolution which
14 dates back to 2016 indicates that at the time at this
15 property, there is a two-family home which was known
16 as 511 18th Street, which is the front property, and
17 that the rear property, which consisted of some type
18 of, I guess, warehouse or something, was being
19 converted to a two-family home. Okay?

20 MS. VERGARA: Yes. That's correct.

21 MR. T. PANEQUE: And this resolution --

22 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: So the reality is
23 this one, this resolution was converting the
24 warehouse to a two-family?

25 MR. T. PANEQUE: Yes.

1 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: The warehouse was in
2 the rear, right?

3 MS. VERGARA: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: And straddles both
5 lots?

6 MR. T. PANEQUE: Yes. So paragraph 5 of
7 the resolution indicates: The applicant seeks site
8 plan approval to convert an existing vacant office
9 building in a two-family house. The property is
10 located at 509 18th Street, which is the rear one.
11 The property also has an existing two-family home
12 which is known as 511. So 509, back when they
13 presented this resolution, was being used as an
14 office. It might have been a warehouse at one point
15 or some kind of structure, and that was converted to
16 a two-family.

17 MR. IZQUIERDO: Correct. That's what
18 exists now.

19 MR. T. PANEQUE: Yeah. At the time 511
20 was only a two-family, but now you're showing it as a
21 two-family plus an office.

22 MR. IZQUIERDO: On the ground floor.

23 MR. T. PANEQUE: On the ground floor.

24 MR. IZQUIERDO: For the owner's use, yes.

25 MR. T. PANEQUE: Okay. So you're coming

1 in now to legalize that office at 511.

2 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes.

3 MR. T. PANEQUE: And, in addition, build a
4 third structure where the parking lot is.

5 MR. IZQUIERDO: Either that or six units.

6 (Discussion was held off the record.)

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: We need the memo for 511.

8 The resolution collaterally leads us to
9 the conclusion that 511 was a two-family home back in
10 2016, but we don't have the memo from the Building
11 Department. Okay.

12 So my suggestion, Ms. Vergara, would be to
13 adjourn this matter, and we will get the memo for
14 511, have it ready for the next meeting, and at the
15 same time you can meet with your client and
16 Mr. Izquierdo and decide whether you want to do a
17 vestibule here and connect the three properties,
18 therefore, going from a four- to a six-unit, and it
19 will be one structure because it will have a --

20 MR. IZQUIERDO: A common element.

21 MR. T. PANEQUE: -- combination. Yes.
22 But if you're going to keep it as you're trying to
23 present it today, then the notice is problematic
24 because you're not going from a four- to a six-.
25 You're going to three separate two-family structures.

1 MS. VERGARA: Thank you.

2 MR. IZQUIERDO: Thank you very much.

3 MR. T. PANEQUE: So for purposes of
4 tonight, are you consenting to adjourning this
5 matter?

6 MS. VERGARA: Yes, I am.

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: And you waive the
8 statutory time periods?

9 MS. VERGARA: Yes, we do.

10 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I make my motion to
11 adjourn this application for the March meeting.

12 MS. PEREZ: I second it.

13 MR. VALLEJO: March 12th.

14 MS. VERGARA: Thank you.

15 MR. VALLEJO: Motion on the table to
16 adjourn this application to March 12th by Mr. Garcia.

17 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

18 MR. VALLEJO: Any second on the motion?

19 MS. WATLEY: Second.

20 MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Ms. Watley.

21 Roll call on the motion.

22 Mr. Garcia.

23 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

24 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

25 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

1 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Ortiz.

2 MR. ORTIZ: Yes.

3 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

4 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

5 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

6 MS. WATLEY: Yes.

7 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

8 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

9 MR. VALLEJO: Seven in favor. Motion
10 passed. Let the record indicate that application
11 will be adjourned for March 12, 2026.

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1 **512 19TH STREET LLC -**
2 **512 19TH STREET**
3 **BLOCK: 103 LOT: 27:**

4 MR. VALLEJO: We're moving to the next
5 application on tonight's agenda, 512 19th Street LLC.

6 Mr. Lopez, please.

7 MR. LOPEZ: Mr. Chairman, Members of the
8 Board, good evening.

9 And, Mr. Paneque, just for purposes of the
10 record, jurisdiction has been previously acquired on
11 the original hearing of this application which was on
12 December 11th, I believe. Is that correct?

13 MR. T. PANEQUE: That is correct,
14 Mr. Lopez. Jurisdiction was established by this
15 board and the matter was carried with no further
16 notice.

17 MR. LOPEZ: There was a revision required
18 to the plan and we did so.

19 So, very briefly, by way of introduction,
20 this is an existing six-family structure that we are
21 seeking a variance to add two additional apartments.
22 Some additional background information, this had
23 always been an eight-family, but it was determined
24 that the two ground level units were illegal units.
25 They were completely removed at the request and

1 suggestion of the Building Department. There are
2 some issues according to the Building Department,
3 that they believe there may be some structural issues
4 with the property. So my architect will present,
5 obviously, all the technical information. But
6 there's a lot required here to fortify, underpin, and
7 fortify the structure. And in the process my client
8 is seeking these additional units to replace the ones
9 that had been eliminated previously.

10 My expert this evening is Mr. Izquierdo.
11 I would ask that he be admitted as an expert witness
12 having testified and been accepted as an expert
13 previously by this board.

14 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Pleasure,
15 Mr. Izquierdo, to have you here.

16 * * *

17 JOSE IZQUIERDO, after having been duly sworn, did
18 testify as follows:

19 MR. LOPEZ: Mr. Izquierdo, you are
20 familiar with the presentation and plans that are
21 before the board this evening; is that correct?

22 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes, I am.

23 MR. LOPEZ: These plans were prepared by
24 your office; is that right?

25 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes, they were.

1 MR. LOPEZ: Prior to the preparation of
2 these plans, did you make a site visit or several
3 visits to the property?

4 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes, I did.

5 MR. LOPEZ: Are you familiar with all the
6 conditions, not only of the property but of the
7 general area where the property is located?

8 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes, I am.

9 MR. LOPEZ: Can you describe what is being
10 proposed by this application and the scope of not
11 only the proposal before the board but the technical
12 requirements for work on the structure.

13 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes. Good evening,
14 Members of the Board. This building is presently a
15 six-unit building. It was previously occupied in the
16 basement or ground floor level, a couple of steps
17 below grade from 19th Street. By "two apartments" --
18 and those apartments were really very ill kept. That
19 was the condition that our clients purchased the
20 property. So, as a consequence of all the problems,
21 they removed all those apartments. They removed
22 everything, and they just turned it into a storage
23 space.

24 The application right now entails
25 legalizing those two previously existing apartments

1 into two one-bedroom units. They would be directly
2 accessible from 19th Street. And, actually, both
3 apartments now will have a rear door leading access
4 to the rear yard of the building, which is a rather
5 large rear yard. So these two units would be almost
6 like garden apartments, that they have a door in the
7 back and have access to the rear yard. The building
8 on the top.

9 MR. LOPEZ: Could you explain to the board
10 which of your drawings show those proposed
11 apartments?

12 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes. There were four
13 drawings submitted with the applications.
14 Drawing T-01 shows all the pertinent legal and zoning
15 criteria. T-02 has photos of the property and of the
16 surrounding neighborhood. Drawing A-01 shows the
17 existing condition of the basement as we saw it when
18 we physically visited the structure and also the
19 proposed apartments. And Drawing A-02 shows the
20 existing layouts of the apartments on the ground,
21 second, and third floor to fulfill site plan
22 approval.

23 Applicant is seeking site plan approval as
24 well as a (d)2 variance since multifamily use is not
25 allowed in the R use. It's an existing use.

1 Additionally, applicant is seeking parking variances
2 since there is no possibility of providing parking to
3 the site since the building is actually 6 feet
4 4 inches away from the property line. So there's no
5 way to provide parking.

6 However, the units would be independent of
7 the building [sic] upstairs. The building -- the
8 units would have a bedroom in the back with a window
9 facing the rear yard and also a rather large
10 living-dining area with a kitchen and a bathroom on
11 the ground floor.

12 The meter rooms and the mechanical rooms,
13 these units would be brought up to code by
14 underpinning the structure to create the required
15 8-foot space. It would require new underground
16 plumbing and would be fully sprinklered. The units
17 on the basement level will also be fire rated.

18 Other than the parking and the (d)2
19 variances, applicant is seeking a density variance
20 since the units are a little short of the required
21 square footage for a one-bedroom apartment. As an
22 alternate, we could convert those units to a studio
23 apartment and thereby eliminate the need for the (d)5
24 dwelling unit density variance.

25 MR. LOPEZ: Could you explain to the board

1 what the difference of square footage for one bedroom
2 and for studio apartments what would that be?

3 MR. IZQUIERDO: A studio apartment
4 according to City of Union City density requirement
5 are 400 square feet. Each of these apartments have
6 487.3 square feet, which is shy of the 550 required
7 for a one-bedroom apartment. So modifying our
8 application to show two studio apartments as opposed
9 to two one-bedroom apartments would eliminate the
10 (d)5 variance. However, the positive criteria for
11 the application is creating two units that previously
12 existed that were not up to code and now these units
13 are going to be up to code. They are directly
14 accessible from 19th Street. It's a very nice
15 residential neighborhood. It's right next to the
16 St. Paul's Monastery [sic]. It's a beautiful
17 neighborhood.

18 MR. LOPEZ: Could you, from a zoning
19 perspective, as a planner, could you go into some of
20 the positive and negative criteria associated with
21 the proposed project?

22 MR. IZQUIERDO: The positive criteria is
23 it creates two units within the existing development
24 of Union City. It does not require any extension of
25 public utilities or whatnot. It would be consistent

1 with other buildings in the area because the building
2 is not being enlarged. The negative criteria is that
3 we don't have any parking as well as none of the
4 properties in the surrounding area have any
5 properties since the structures are of an older
6 character.

7 MR. LOPEZ: The photographs that you show
8 on the second page of your plan --

9 MR. IZQUIERDO: They're all of the area.

10 MR. LOPEZ: -- they do, in fact, show
11 quite a few of the larger buildings.

12 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes. They're all very
13 similar. They're all very similar. There's not a
14 single structure that comes out other than the one --
15 they're four-story buildings and three-story frame
16 building.

17 MR. LOPEZ: So would it be fair to say
18 that many, many buildings on that block are
19 already -- are all in violation, basically, of what
20 the current zoning ordinance requires?

21 MR. IZQUIERDO: But what happens is they
22 were all built before the current zonings, so they're
23 not in violation. It's the existing framework upon
24 which we build. But the development would be
25 consistent with the existing development of the

1 neighborhood. And, in my opinion, as a planner, it
2 does not create any negative impact to the
3 neighborhood.

4 MR. LOPEZ: I have nothing else
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Mr. Izquierdo,
7 basically all the variance are preexisting?

8 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Are you intending to
10 do any construction --

11 MR. IZQUIERDO: Outside of the limits
12 of --

13 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: -- more outside of
14 limits.

15 MR. IZQUIERDO: No. We're not increasing
16 any square footage. If anything, we're just
17 improving the rear yard which is undeveloped and it's
18 not used by any unit. So this allows us the
19 opportunity of having these two apartment units on
20 the basement ground level to have access to the rear
21 yard so they can have a garden and whatnot. These
22 units would be directly accessible from 19 Street.

23 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: And you don't have
24 any way, like, to expand the units to comply and
25 eliminate the (d)5?

1 MR. IZQUIERDO: (No response.)

2 MR. LOPEZ: To eliminate the (d)5?

3 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: To bring it up to --

5 MR. IZQUIERDO: As a studio.

6 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I know that you
7 convert a studio; however, the layout I'm seeing
8 here, like, it's an open layout, I think that a
9 bedroom is going to be great for whoever lives there.
10 My question is if there's any way -- you can see the
11 mechanical room, whatever, there's not any way you
12 can expand it?

13 MR. IZQUIERDO: No.

14 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: No?

15 MR. IZQUIERDO: No. That would
16 necessitate an inordinate amount of utilities and it
17 would change everything on the peace and tranquility
18 of the six -- of tenants that we have there. The
19 unit as it is works very well as a one-bedroom. You
20 see the living room and the dining room has space for
21 the dining table and has space for the living room.
22 So even though it's a little shy of the 550 required,
23 I think it does meet the intent of the ordinance.

24 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: My question was --
25 because, yeah, I'm seeing the layout of the unit.

1 And no matter what, that you say, okay, do a studio
2 and eliminate the bedroom, whoever is living there is
3 going to convert it. Because you have the bathroom
4 in the middle, and you have to put a door in and your
5 closet. So it doesn't make sense to --

6 MR. IZQUIERDO: As a one-bedroom it does
7 work better because it affords the occupants there --
8 we don't expect a big family to be living there or
9 anything. We expect maybe a young couple or a single
10 individual there. And the layout as it is works very
11 well for the tenant.

12 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Are they going to
13 have new windows in the bedroom?

14 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes. Yes. Everything in
15 that level has to be done new, even the structure.
16 It has to be underpinned. The structure has to be
17 fortified and the structure is going to be brought up
18 to code.

19 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: And is there any way
20 you could have any -- I'm seeing the picture, but I
21 want to ask you because I always -- to add any
22 parking? No way to?

23 MR. IZQUIERDO: I have 6 feet 4 inches
24 from the curb line to the front wall. If I have
25 parking, it's going to encroach on the public right

1 of way. So I can be responsible and propose a
2 parking space there, but it's not going to improve
3 anything. It's just going to eliminate a parking on
4 the street and it's going to create a hazardous
5 condition for the travelers on the right of way.

6 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Do you know by any
7 chance, Mr. Lopez, for how long your client has this
8 property?

9 MR. LOPEZ: Since 2007. And at that time
10 it was purchased as eight units. Two turned out to
11 be illegal. And those were removed approximately two
12 and a half years ago.

13 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yeah. Correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I have no further
15 questions.

16 Any questions?

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: I don't know if
18 you mentioned it, but the height of the ceiling of
19 the basement.

20 MR. IZQUIERDO: It does not conform now.
21 That's one of the violations. And one of the things
22 that we're doing is we're underpinning the structure
23 so that it has the appropriate height.

24 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: In compliance?

25 MR. IZQUIERDO: Yes.

1 MR. LOPEZ: What height will it have?

2 MR. IZQUIERDO: 8 feet, as a new
3 apartment.

4 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Any other questions?
5 (No response.)

6 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Any member of the
7 public want to step forward?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Seeing none, closed
10 to the public.

11 Taking into consideration that the
12 intention of the applicant is to improve the quality
13 of life of those two units and also bring more
14 residential units -- we really need it now -- I'm
15 going to make a motion to grant this application.

16 MR. VALLEJO: Motion on the table to grant
17 the application by Mr. Garcia. Any second on the
18 motion?

19 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Second.

20 MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Mr. Grullon.
21 Roll call on the motion.

22 Mr. Garcia.

23 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

24 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

25 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

1 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Ortiz.

2 MR. ORTIZ: Yes.

3 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

4 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

5 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

6 MS. WATLEY: Yes.

7 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

8 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

9 MR. VALLEJO: Six in favor. Motion
10 passed.

11 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you, Members.

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1 MAMDOUH MOCHEAL -
2 3125 SUMMIT AVENUE
3 BLOCK: 1733 LOTS: 5-9, 12-14:

4 (Mr. A. Paneque returns to room.)

5 MR. VALLEJO: We're going back to
6 3125 Summit Avenue.

7 Mr. Alonso, please.

8 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Okay. First of all,
9 thank you, Agustin, for the exercise.

10 And, also, thank you, Mr. Alonso.

11 Thank you, Mr. Carballo.

12 Thank you for letting me compare both.
13 You're right. I apologize if I disagreed with you.

14 MR. CARBALLO: I understand.

15 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: But we always have
16 the right to do it.

17 MR. CARBALLO: I understand.

18 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I think it's not up
19 for vote. I just wanted to review it. And I also
20 want to thank you and also to your client to give the
21 consideration our recommendation to do some changes
22 on the facade, just for the beautification of the
23 structure.

24 What is next? Nothing?

25 MR. T. PANEQUE: That's it.

1 MR. VALLEJO: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Thank you. I hope to
3 see the building come up soon.

4 MR. ALONSO: Thank you. And I want to
5 personally thank Mr. Paneque for going above and
6 beyond.

7 MR. A. PANEQUE: You're welcome.

8 MR. CARBALLO: Thanks everyone for the
9 approval.

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1 provided by Ms. Pereiras, this board has jurisdiction
2 to proceed and hear this matter.

3 MS. PEREIRAS: Thank you very much,
4 Counsel. Good evening, Mr. Chairman, Members of the
5 Board. May it please the board, Bianca Pereiras on
6 behalf of the applicant for property at 2412 New York
7 Avenue.

8 On site we have an existing three-story,
9 three-family home. The application before the board
10 this evening is to legalize a fourth unit. We are
11 not modifying or expanding on this building at all.
12 No addition, no increase in heights, no alteration to
13 the exterior streetscape. What we're looking to do
14 is to make this unit legal and code compliant.

15 We have two experts to testify before the
16 board. And we'll begin our presentation with our
17 architect, Mr. Manuel Pereiras.

18 * * *

19 MANUEL PEREIRAS, after having been duly sworn, did
20 testify as follows:

21 MR. PEREIRAS: Manny Pereiras,
22 P-e-r-e-i-r-a-s, with Pereiras Architects Ubiquitous
23 located at 1116 Summit Avenue, Union City, New
24 Jersey.

25 MS. PEREIRAS: Can I ask that Mr. Pereiras

1 be recognized as an expert in the field of
2 architecture?

3 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Are you still on
4 Summit or you already moved to Bergenline Avenue?

5 MR. PEREIRAS: Not yet. We're under
6 construction.

7 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Always a pleasure.

8 MS. PEREIRAS: Mr. Pereira, are you
9 familiar with the property at 2412 New York Avenue?

10 MR. PEREIRAS: I am.

11 MS. PEREIRAS: And did you prepare the
12 drawings that are before the board this evening?

13 MR. PEREIRAS: I have.

14 MS. PEREIRAS: And would you kindly walk
15 the board through the legalization at issue.

16 MR. PEREIRAS: I'd be very happy to.

17 Hello, everyone. Glad to be here.

18 We have a slightly undersized lot. We are
19 25 feet wide. We are 99.75 feet in length, so we
20 have a preexisting non-conformity for lot area at
21 2,494 square feet, and preexisting non-conformity for
22 lot depth at 99.75.

23 As counsel said, we're not looking to make
24 any changes to the building itself. It's a
25 preexisting beautiful brick building on the block.

1 It has a preexisting side yard setback of zero. It
2 has a preexisting front yard setback that's a
3 variance as well. However, the rear yard is in
4 compliance at 36 feet 9 inches for the rear yard. So
5 we're fully compliant as far as rear yard and lot
6 coverage as well and building coverage.

7 We do have a preexisting non-conformity
8 for parking that we are expanding upon because the
9 building houses today three units. It is three
10 stories in height plus a basement. The basement
11 partially comes out above the ground. There are
12 steps to get to that front stoop. And we have one
13 apartment in each of the floors, the first floor,
14 second and third floor and what we're legalizing
15 today as the basement.

16 The drawings of this easel are the same
17 drawings that were submitted to the board. Turning
18 now to sheet Z-02, we see what's happening in that
19 basement. We have photographs in the top right-hand
20 corner. As you can see, it's a nice finished
21 basement. A nice family has been living in there
22 until very recently when the purchase happened of the
23 building, and the owner wants to legalize it.

24 What we see on the left-hand side is the
25 existing condition. What we have on the right-hand

1 side is the proposed condition. There are a few
2 critical things that we're doing to make this code
3 compliant, the first of which is that we're modifying
4 the bedroom so that it is going all the way to the
5 front of the building. That's very important for a
6 couple of reasons. Number one, it creates light and
7 air into the apartment. And, number two, it allows
8 for emergency escape window. I actually do want to
9 do one small modification. I want to include this
10 window with that bedroom as well so that we have a
11 second window from that bedroom. So that's another
12 small modification that we'd like to do.

13 The second bedroom that was previously
14 there does not qualify as a bedroom. It's
15 landlocked. So that's going to be used as a home
16 office or a den in that center space. And then we
17 have the existing living room-dining room area, which
18 is 9-foot-9 by 16-foot-10 in width. We have the
19 kitchen, which is 8 by 9-foot-6. We have the
20 existing bathroom that we're not modifying in any
21 way.

22 We do have a problem with the height in
23 this building. We are at 6-foot-9, so the floor has
24 to be dropped in order to have at least a 7-foot
25 ceiling that we're proposing. We're also separating

1 everything from a fire and safety standpoint. So the
2 hallway and common areas is going to have a one-hour
3 fire separation between the apartment. There's going
4 to be a two-hour fire separation between the
5 apartment and the level above as far as the ceiling
6 is concerned, and we're going to have a domestic line
7 sprinkler system in this unit as well as upgrading
8 the low voltage -- the alarm system in the common
9 areas to become a low voltage system.

10 To speak a little bit and to understand
11 what we have on the other floors, we have three other
12 floors with one apartment on each of those floors.
13 No changes are being proposed to any of those floors.
14 Our intervention is strictly legalizing that ground
15 floor apartment.

16 And that concludes my testimony.

17 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Mr. Pereiras, the
18 home office?

19 MR. PEREIRAS: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I know there's an
21 existing bedroom there according to your current
22 condition. However, I understand that this has to
23 be -- or open that to expand the existing living
24 area.

25 MR. PEREIRAS: Sorry?

1 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Open that wall there
2 and eliminate whatever is on --

3 MR. PEREIRAS: So this wall here is a
4 barrier wall. So what I'm thinking we should do is
5 eliminate the wall between the existing living room
6 and the home office, and that way the living room
7 actually becomes bigger and nicer. I don't think
8 there's going to be any problem with that. Our
9 client will no issues with that. And I'd like to
10 propose that change and the change to have the window
11 on the side over here as well, and we can come back
12 with revised drawings for that, pending approval.

13 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: And what size are the
14 units?

15 MR. PEREIRAS: It is 740 square feet. And
16 it's actually going to be a little bit bigger because
17 once I incorporate that window, we're probably going
18 to be past 750, which is compliant for a one-bedroom.

19 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: And you don't have
20 anyway to add a parking space?

21 MR. PEREIRAS: It's impossible,
22 unfortunately. There is no front yard setback. The
23 building's on the property line on both sides. So
24 there's no opportunity to add a parking space. We
25 are expanding on parking. However, we also can

1 understand that this is a preexisting condition. The
2 neighborhood has lived with this condition, and it's
3 being supported. So we ask for a variance in
4 parking.

5 And we have a planner to testify as well.

6 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I don't have further
7 questions.

8 MR. T. PANEQUE: Mr. Pereiras, before we
9 proceed, the front window, where is that being added?

10 MR. PEREIRAS: So we're not adding
11 windows. So there are two windows along the front of
12 the building in the bay. Right now we have -- my
13 drawings show a window well. And the one directly in
14 front, I'm going to be modifying that and putting
15 that window well and the one on the side. By doing
16 so, we're maintaining that window well within the
17 property line, which I assume is what you're getting
18 to. So, yeah, that's going to be simple.

19 MR. T. PANEQUE: So the proposed
20 modification is to create a window well on the --

21 MR. PEREIRAS: Within the property line.

22 MR. T. PANEQUE: Within the property line.
23 Okay.

24 MR. PEREIRAS: And to remove the wall
25 between the home office and the living room.

1 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Expanding the living
2 room.

3 MR. PEREIRAS: Expanding the living room
4 space.

5 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Okay.

6 MS. PEREIRAS: Our planner, Mr. Dougherty.

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: Before Mr. Dougherty
8 comes up, on the issue of the walls, Mr. Pereiras,
9 are you removing both walls including the barrier
10 wall.

11 MR. PEREIRAS: No. I'll keep the barrier
12 wall and remove just the wall between the living room
13 and the home office, and that way it's one big space.

14 MR. T. PANEQUE: Got it. Thank you so
15 much.

16 Mr. Dougherty.

17 * * *

18 ALEXANDER DOUGHERTY, after having been duly sworn,
19 did testify as follows:

20 MS. PEREIRAS: For purposes of the record,
21 if Mr. Dougherty can be accepted as an expert in the
22 field of planning?

23 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Mr. Dougherty.

24 MS. PEREIRAS: Thank you very much.

25 MR. DOUGHERTY: Thank you. Good to be

1 back.

2 So as Manny kind of articulated here, we
3 have a property, preexisting, non-conforming use
4 here. We have, essentially, three units. We're
5 asking for the fourth. The fourth has existed for
6 some time, you see through the existing conditions.
7 The existing conditions, essentially, have two
8 bedrooms with the recommendations from the board and
9 with the alterations are only down to one, so a much
10 less intensive operation.

11 We are asking to legalize that dwelling
12 unit in the basement. With that, we're striking what
13 we call (d)2, an expansion or intensification of a
14 preexisting non-conforming use. The use is there by
15 way of expansion intensification. It's all internal
16 programming, as you heard the architect, which I
17 think really promotes a lot of advances of a positive
18 criteria. We'll be able to bring this to code,
19 excavate the floor so it's an appropriate height, so
20 if there is an issue, we don't have to worry about
21 height clearances in that regard. We'll have the
22 appropriate windows and window wells on site as well
23 as bringing that overall unit into conformity with
24 the codes for the 750 square foot, as you've heard as
25 well.

1 There is no parking on site. I know
2 that's a big issue within Union City. We are on
3 New York Avenue. We are one block away from
4 Bergenline. Mass transit is at your feet, at your
5 disposal. All the amenities are right at your
6 doorstep. As the architect specified, this has been
7 here for some time. It's only picked up through a
8 real state transaction. Any issues related to
9 parking would, you know, have been felt. In fact, I
10 think the telltale here is the image with all the
11 bikes in the corridor. The preferred mode of
12 transportation is, you know, by bike, not everyone.

13 But we had to look at this type of
14 dwelling as a one-bedroom unit. This is not a family
15 nucleus. This is, you know, a young professional,
16 somebody out on their own, transient. This is not an
17 apartment where you grow roots. This is a
18 one-bedroom apartment. But with that being said,
19 that importance of parking and vehicle access, I
20 think the neighborhood has absorbed that. And anyone
21 looking at this unit would know there's no available
22 parking on site.

23 But with that, I think this application,
24 when we look at it, is positive criteria. And the
25 structure itself isn't changing. The exterior, it's

1 a good-looking property. The interior is going to be
2 to advance to building code. So advance Purpose A of
3 Municipal Land Use Law.

4 I think we can also advance Purpose E for
5 appropriate densities and appropriate locations. We
6 are on New York Avenue, one block away from
7 Bergenline Avenue. It is a one-bedroom unit, very
8 minor in nature. In the planning world, we call this
9 "the missing middle." You go right from one- or
10 two-bedroom units and then you go right to large
11 apartments. So there have been, you know, the
12 ability to have a two- or three- or four-unit in a
13 detached setting is a rarity. So we call this a
14 "missing middle." So we're advancing diversified
15 housing choices and options for a growing community,
16 hitting that missing middle.

17 Advancing Purpose I, because we're not
18 changing the exterior of the building. What's there
19 is what's going to remain. It's a good-looking
20 building.

21 And certainly the most important,
22 advancing Purpose A for the safety and the general
23 welfare of the community and those that are residing
24 there by bringing that unit up to code with all the
25 building standards.

1 So, with that, I conclude. I don't see
2 any negative criteria or effects here with this. I
3 see nothing but positives and an opportunity to bring
4 one more unit onto Union City's housing.

5 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I always ask you for
6 the record, did you have a chance to visit the area?

7 MR. DOUGHERTY: Yes. Yes. Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: And can you confirm
9 with me, like, is this the same -- I mean, that
10 house, is it almost the same character of the house
11 that's on New York Avenue?

12 MR. DOUGHERTY: It's a standard, yeah.

13 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: It's a standard?

14 MR. DOUGHERTY: Yeah. It's a standard
15 makeup, yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Except the building
17 on 24 New York, right?

18 MR. DOUGHERTY: The new building?

19 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: No. Except the
20 building at 24 New York Avenue, I think.

21 MR. DOUGHERTY: I don't know that address.

22 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: But most of them are
23 like the same --

24 MR. DOUGHERTY: It's a good-looking house.
25 So it's not changing the makeup of the neighborhood.

1 MR. PEREIRAS: And we came before this
2 board on that same block another house with exactly
3 the same conditions.

4 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Do you have any
5 questions?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Any member of the
8 public want to step forward?

9 (No response.)

10 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Seeing none, closed
11 to the public.

12 I make my motion to grant this application
13 with the condition of expanding -- eliminating the
14 home office, expanding the existing living room and
15 maintaining the wall. I make my motion.

16 MR. VALLEJO: Motion to grant the
17 application by Mr. Garcia.

18 MS. WATLEY: Second.

19 MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Ms. Watley.

20 Roll call on the motion.

21 Mr. Garcia.

22 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

23 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

24 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

25 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Ortiz.

1 MR. ORTIZ: Yes.

2 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

3 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

4 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

5 MS. WATLEY: Yes.

6 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

7 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

8 MR. VALLEJO: Six in favor. Motion

9 passed.

10 MS. PEREIRAS: Thank you all very much.

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1 **OMG HOLDINGS, LLC**
2 **821 24TH STREET**
3 **BLOCK: 131 LOT: 29:**

4 MR. VALLEJO: Item No. 5, OMG Holdings,
5 LLC, 821 24th Street.

6 Ms. Pereiras, please.

7 MR. T. PANEQUE: Let the record reflect as
8 follows: I've been provided with a certification as
9 to publication and service by Ms. Pereiras with
10 respect to the property at 821 245h Street indicating
11 that notice of tonight's hearing at this location was
12 provided to all property owners within a 200-foot
13 radius.

14 I've also been provided with an affidavit
15 of publication from The Bergen Record indicating that
16 notice was published on January 30, 2026, giving
17 notice of this hearing with respect to the property
18 in question at this location at 6 p.m.

19 Also, I've been provided with a copy of
20 the certified list from the Tax Assessor's Office.
21 That list has a date of January 21, 2026. And,
22 finally, I have the certified mail receipt with a
23 postmark date of January 23, 2026.

24 Based on the information that has been
25 provided, this board has jurisdiction to proceed and

1 hear this matter.

2 MS. PEREIRAS: Thank you, Counsel. Bianca
3 Pereiras on behalf of OMG Holdings, LLC for property
4 at 821 24th Street. Respectfully, board, the
5 applicants were very eager to be here this evening.
6 Unfortunately, due to some family circumstances, they
7 needed to travel out of state and were unavailable.
8 So with that, I ask if we could possibly adjourn this
9 matter so they can be here before the board at the
10 next meeting.

11 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Do you waive the
12 statutory?

13 MS. PEREIRAS: Of course, Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: I make my motion to
15 adjourn this application to March 12th.

16 MS. PEREIRAS: Thank you.

17 MR. VALLEJO: Motion on the table to
18 adjourn this application for March 12th by
19 Mr. Garcia.

20 MS. WATLEY: Second.

21 MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Ms. Watley.
22 Roll call on the motion.

23 Mr. Garcia.

24 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

25 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Gullon.

1 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

2 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Ortiz.

3 MR. ORTIZ: Yes.

4 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

5 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

6 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

7 MS. WATLEY: Yes.

8 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

9 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

10 MR. VALLEJO: Six in favor. Motion
11 passed.

12 MS. PEREIRAS: Thank you, everyone. Have
13 a good night.

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1 **ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:**

2 1. Jorvel, LLC, 512 8th Street, Block: 40.01 Lot: 3.
3 Construction of a new two -- family house. **Approved.**

4
5 MR. VALLEJO: We're moving to resolutions
6 right now. Resolution No. 1, 512 8th Street.

7 Can I have a motion?

8 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Motion.

9 MR. VALLEJO: Motion by Mr. Garcia.

10 MS. WATLEY: Second.

11 MR. VALLEJO: Second by Ms. Watley.

12 Roll call on the motion.

13 Mr. Garcia.

14 CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

15 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

16 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

17 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

18 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

19 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

20 MS. WATLEY: Yes.

21 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

22 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

23 MR. VALLEJO: Five in favor. Motion
24 passed.

25 * * *

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

1. Vulcan Capital Investment LLC, 804 Kennedy Blvd., Block: 43, Lot: 3. The applicant proposes to construct a third floor and addition to the rear of an existing mixed-use building and convert retail space on the ground floor to an apartment. There will be a total of three apartments; parking will not be provided. Approved.

MR. VALLEJO: We're going to Resolution No. 2, 804 Kennedy Boulevard.

Can I have a motion?

CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Motion.

MR. VALLEJO: Motion by Mr. Garcia.

MS. WATLEY: Second.

MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Ms. Watley.

Roll call on the motion.

Mr. Garcia.

CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

MS. PEREZ: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

MS. WATLEY: Yes.

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MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

MS. O'DELL: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Five in favor. Motion
passed.

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ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

1. B & V Investment LLC, 3810-14 32nd Street. The applicant proposes the construction of a new mixed-use building. Consisting of stories, 8 apartments, and 33 parking spaces. The approval resolution was memorialized on February 8, 2024. DYA Investments LLC requesting a one-year extension.

Approved.

MR. VALLEJO: Resolution No. 3,
3810-14 32nd Street.

Can I have a motion?

CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Motion.

MR. VALLEJO: Motion by Mr. Garcia.

MS. WATLEY: Second.

MR. VALLEJO: Second by Ms. Watley.

Roll call on the motion.

Mr. Garcia.

CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

MS. PEREZ: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

MS. WATLEY: Yes.

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MR. VALLEJO: Yes?

MS. WATLEY: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

MS. O'DELL: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Five in favor. Motion
passed.

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ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

1. Mamdouh Mecheal, 3125 Summit Avenue, Block: 173, Lots: 5-9, 12-14. Construction of a multifamily residential building. Approved.

MR. VALLEJO: Resolution No. 4,
3125 Summit Avenue.

Can I have a motion?

CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Motion by Mr. Garcia.

MS. WATLEY: Second.

MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Ms. Watley.

Roll call on the motion.

Mr. Garcia.

CHAIRPERSON GARCIA: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

MS. PEREZ: I can vote on that one? Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

MS. WATLEY: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

MS. O'DELL: Yes.

MR. VALLEJO: Five in favor. Motion
passed.

* * *

1 **ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:**

2 1. 64464638THUC LLC, 644-646 38th Street,
3 Block: 262, Lot: 7 & 8. The applicant proposes to
4 construct a six-unit multifamily building. Approved.

5
6 MR. VALLEJO: Resolution No. 5.,
7 64464638THUC LLC, 644-646 38th Street.

8 Can I have a motion?

9 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

10 MR. VALLEJO: Motion by Ms. O'Dell.

11 MS. WATLEY: Second.

12 MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Ms. Watley.

13 Roll call on the motion.

14 Mr. Garcia.

15 Yes.

16 MR. VALLEJO: Mr. Grullon.

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON GRULLON: Yes.

18 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Perez.

19 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

20 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. Watley.

21 MS. WATLEY: Yes.

22 MR. VALLEJO: Ms. O'Dell.

23 MS. O'DELL: Yes.

24 MR. VALLEJO: Five in favor. Motion
25 passed.

* * *

ADJOURNMENT:

MR. VALLEJO: There being no other application on tonight's agenda, can I have a motion to close tonight's meeting?

MS. O'DELL: Motion.

MR. VALLEJO: Motion by Ms. O'Dell.

MS. WATLEY: Second.

MR. VALLEJO: Seconded by Ms. Watley.

All in favor.

* * *

(Whereupon, all board members indicate in the affirmative.)

* * *

MR. VALLEJO: The ayes have it. Let the record show that the meeting has ended.

* * *

(Whereupon, the meeting concluded at 7:38 p.m.)

* * * *

CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the testimony and proceedings as taken stenographically by me at the time, place, and on the date hereinbefore set forth.

LILIANA THOMAS, CCR, RPR
LICENSE NO. 30XI00238800