



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

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SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

VIA E-MAIL (PDF)

Hon. William Bergman
Chairman
Zoning Board of Adjustment
One Parkway Building, 18th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

**Re: 4045-61 Main Street (corner of Shurs Lane)
ZBA Meeting Identification No. MI-2025-004704
Appeal Number HA-2025-002818
Zoning Permit Application No. ZP-2024-003395
Wednesday, September 17, 2025 ZBA Reconsideration Hearing (9:30 AM)**

Dear Chairman Bergman and Members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment ("ZBA"):

Thank you for the Board's extensive review of this very important case, along Manayunk's Main Street, in the heart of my councilmanic district. For years, I along with other stakeholders, have been striving to positively transform this area . . . and this project has the potential to finally do just that.

Following the ill effects of Hurricane Ida in 2021, the former G. J. Littlewood & Son, Inc. site at 4045-61 Main Street (the "Subject Property") has sat empty and desolate. The Subject Property has been under contract multiple times with different developers who attempted to devise viable development plans, yet none were successful. The current proposal is a game changer. The site is arguably one of the more challenging sites to redevelop in Manayunk, creating tremendous hardships for any developer, including:

- A significant flood elevation that extends higher than the height of a typical floor.
- The rear neighbor, 11 Shurs Lane, is markedly higher than the Subject Property, due to its position atop the bedrock and rock outcropping. Additionally, the rear of 4045-

61 Main Street is adjacent to an elevated railroad. These combined factors make rear-facing residences on the first and second floors of the Subject Property impossible.

- The Subject Property is located within the Manayunk/Main Street Historic District, requiring that the proposed development incorporates much of the existing Civil War era industrial façade, into the plans for state-of-the art, modern residences.

For these reasons and more, the pending request for variance relief to allow an additional 8'-9 ¼" in height is warranted and necessary.

Lower Main Street struggles with vacant retail storefronts, exacerbated by the impact of Hurricane Ida. The proposed redevelopment would be a "shot in the arm" for Main Street, bringing 163 dwelling units to patronize our stalwart businesses and to attract new businesses. The proposed project has the potential to jumpstart investment and development along Lower Main Street, which is desolate, isolated and by many accounts "depressed." Unlike other areas of Main Street, Lower Main Street struggles to attract investment and attention.

I firmly believe that the success of this project will encourage additional private investment along Lower Main Street; whereas, quashing this proposal would set back Lower Main Street even further, dissuading private investment and serving as a signal to developers that Lower Main Street is not worth the investment risk, compared to other areas in Philadelphia.

The project, as presented, has received an unprecedented amount of support from impacted near neighbors, including 48 impacted near neighbors within 500 feet of the Subject Property (residents, businesses, and a house of worship, located directly across the street from the Subject Property).

Thank you for the Board's continued consideration.

Sincerely,

Curtis Jones Jr.

Councilmember-4th District