

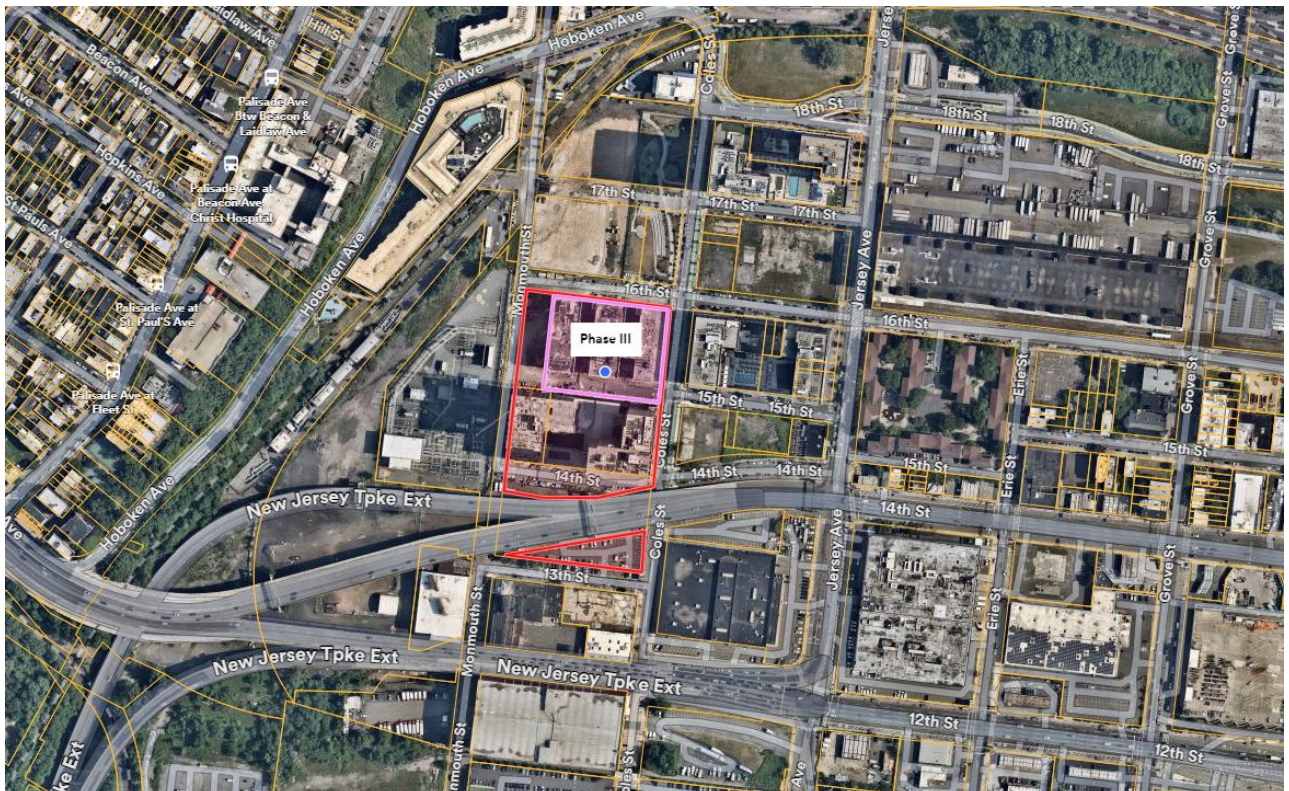
## DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REVIEW | STAFF REPORT

DATE : 02.07.2024  
TO : Planning Board Commissioners  
FROM : Matthew da Silva, Senior Planner  
Matt Ward, PP, AICP, Supervising Planner  
CASE : P23-0074  
PROJECT : 239-259 Coles Street (Emerson Lofts)  
Site Plan Amendment

### I. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- General Development Application Form
- Cover Letter by Thomas Leane, Esq. dated 09.29.2023
- Architectural Plan Set by Ronald J. Russell, RA. of Urban Architecture LLC, revised 11.08.2023
- Civil Plan Set by Jeffrey D. Reeves, PE of Urban Architecture LLC, revised 09.18.2023
- Stormwater Management & Engineer's Report by Jeffrey D. Reeves, PE of Urban Architecture LLC
- Visual Impact Assessment by Urban Architecture, LLC, dated 11.13.2023
- Boundary and Topographic Survey by Thomas J. Reeves of Dresdner Robin Inc., dated 09.09.2022
- Jersey City Planning Board Resolution #P19-187
- Letter from New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to Emerson Leasing Co. III, LLC, dated 08.27.2020

### II. APPLICATION BACKGROUND + PROPOSAL



- **Existing Approval:** Multi-phase mixed use development with the following components:
  - **Phase I (Complete)** – Construction of a 26-story mixed-use building with 350 units, 307 parking spaces, 11,096 sq. ft of retail and a public use facility.
  - **Phase II (Under Construction)** – Construction of a 26-story mixed-use building with 340 units and 128 parking spaces.
  - **Phase III (Under Construction)** – Renovation and adaptive re-use of vacant five-story factory building as a mixed-use building with 156 units, 60 parking spaces, and 19,000 sq. ft. of ground floor retail.
  - **Phase IV (Proposed)** – Construction of a 26-story mixed-use building with 253 units.
- **Proposed Amendment:** Phase III is being revised to remove the underground parking garage, reduce the unit count from 156 to 140, increase the amount of ground floor retail from 19,000 sq ft to 38,400 sq ft., and amend the façade and rooftop designs.
- **New Variances & Deviations:** None

### III. STAFF COMMENTS

The amendments proposed pertain only to Phases III and IV of the Emerson Lofts development. Phase III consists of the adaptive reuse portion of the project, rehabilitating the vacant Emerson Radio factory and renovating it into a mixed-use building. Phase IV is a proposed mixed-use building that will be constructed adjacent to and integrated into Phase III's structure.

The most substantial change is the removal of the parking component from this Phase, and the corresponding curb cut and parking ramp. This was necessitated by a determination by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection that the proposed basement parking garage does not meet the drainage standards of the Flood Hazard Area Control Act (N.J.A.C. 58:16A-50) and thus needs to be completely sealed off from potential stormwater runoff. This change will still leave the Emerson Lofts development with a total of 471 parking spots upon full buildout, 307 of which have already been built as part of Phase I of the project and will be available to accommodate parking demand created by the retail space in Phase III. Off-street parking requirements in the Jersey Avenue Park Redevelopment Plan only apply to new construction. As an adaptive re-use of an existing structure, parking is not required for Phase III. The removal of parking from Phase III is thus not a deviation from the Redevelopment Plan.

Several further changes are proposed. The unit count of the amended building will be reduced from 156 to 140 as residential space will be removed from the ground floor. Instead, ground floor retail space increased from 19,000 sq. ft. to 38,400 sq ft, creating opportunities for larger and more substantial retail tenants. A façade that was originally slated to be demolished will now be reconstructed. The 16 units removed from this phase will be added to Phase IV, maintaining the same total of 1,099 units in the entire development. Phase IV will now contain 269 units.

### STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

The staff recommends the applicant be bound by the following conditions to receive site plan approval:

1. All conditions from previous approvals shall continue to apply to this site plan.
2. All testimony given by the Applicant and their expert witnesses in accordance with this application shall be binding.

3. The Applicant shall address and/or comply with all comments and recommendations of municipal review agents and will submit revised plans to the Division of City Planning if necessary.
4. All materials and color selections shall be shown on Final Plans. No change to the facade and site design, including materials as well as any changes that may be required by the Office of Construction Code, shall be permitted without consultation and approval by planning staff.
5. The Applicant shall provide an affidavit from the architect of record representing that the constructed project is consistent with final approved plans prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO).
6. All street trees and landscaping shall be installed in accordance with the Jersey City Forestry Standards prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO).