Applicant: 4BL, LLC (Cecil Street Townhomes, 207 N. West Street)

Variance Request 1: Variance from Article 4, Section 4.2 on required lot depth for 4 townhome lots. The proposed configuration orients the new lots/homes with a lot depth of 84.5 feet in lieu of 100 feet. All building setbacks can be adhered to.

Variance Request 2: Variance from Article 4, Section 4.2 to allow minimum lot area of 2,366 square feet of lot area on the two center townhome lots from the minimum of 3,000 square feet.

Project Background Information: The project is located at the corner of North West Street and Cecil Street within Dover city limits. The existing site of 12,168 square feet previously contained a single-family home with a detached shed and a large concrete parking area. The prior occupant passed away, the home fell into disrepair, and it was recently demolished by the City of Dover.

The proposed re-development of the site entails division into 4 lots. 1,750 +/- square foot, two story townhouses with one car garages will be constructed. The intent is to create homes for young families that are within their financial reach.

The nature of the zone in which the property lies: The parcel is currently zoned RG-1 (General Residence Zone) The proposed use of townhouses is permitted as a conditional use.

The character of the immediate vicinity and the contained uses therein: The project lies on the fringe of Residential (RG-1) Zoning District to the east of North West Street, and Industrial/Manufacturing (M) to the west. The Senator Bikeway passes North/South on West Street. Immediately to the south is Mt. Carmel Church of the Living God. To the southwest is the Rail Haus Beer Garden and the former recycling center (now parking for the Rail Haus). To the west is Teal Construction's warehouse and equipment yard. To the north and east are single family residences in varying states of repair, generally trending toward improvement.

Whether, if the restriction upon the applicant's property were removed, such removal would seriously affect neighboring properties and uses: Allowing the 2 requested variances would not affect the use of neighboring properties. The new townhouses will be 2 story units, consistent with the height of the existing residences. Sixteen of the properties to the north

and east do not meet bulk standards for lot *width and/or lot area*, as they pre-date the standards. The average lot area of the proposed lots exceeds the minimum lot area of the RG-1 District; therefore, a slightly "non-conforming" arrangement will not be out of character for the neighborhood. Granting of the variance will allow for four tasteful, well-constructed, affordable homes in an area that was recently dominated by vacant properties.

Whether, if the restriction is not removed, the restriction would create unnecessary hardship or exceptional practical difficulty for the owner in his efforts to make normal improvements in the character of that use of the property that is a permitted use under the provisions of the zoning ordinance: A lot of this size is somewhat out of character in relation to the neighboring homes. To justify the cost of the parcel after the demolition and fines were absorbed, a very large single-family home would need to be constructed to make the project viable. A large single-family home would be very imposing, and frankly, not marketable.

Per Chapter 11 of the Dover 2019 Comprehensive Plan-

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1: Encourage Balanced Housing Opportunities for all Residents of the City

- *Promote adequate, safe, and affordable housing for all residents in the City.*

Recommendation 1: Encourage the Use of Mixed Housing Types

- *Evaluate the provisions of the Planned Neighborhood Design and the Senior Citizen Housing Option for residential development.*
- *Continue to encourage compact and diverse residential development throughout the City.*
- *Re-evaluate all residential zones development requirements and housing types in the City.*
- *Evaluate and update Codes to encourage compact and diverse development throughout the City.*
- *Amend the provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for the definition of "family" to remove undue restrictions for members of protected classes.*

Recommendation 2: Explore the Feasibility of Allowing Alternative Housing Units Options

• Develop zoning provisions to allow an accessory dwelling unit within one family residence zones for the use of family members.

• Develop zoning provisions for alternative housing options including group housing and transitional housing.

Recommendation 3: Encourage the Development of Affordable Housing

• Work with housing providers and developers to construct affordable rental housing options throughout the City including assessible housing for persons with disabilities.

• Work with housing providers to provide affordable housing to low income residents.

• Continue to work with housing providers to end homelessness and increase the number of permanent supportive housing for the homeless.

Recommendation 4: Promote Residential Development within the City

• Encourage mixed use of existing and new buildings.

• Encourage "in-fill" residential development.

• Encourage housing in the Downtown and other areas that are near transit and multi-modal routes, retail areas, employment and essential services.

The economics of providing affordable homes to working class families drives the need to divide the parcel. While a duplex configuration could be utilized, the opportunity to serve four families instead of two shouldn't be overlooked. The cost of building materials, mortgage rates, and groceries are taking the opportunity of home ownership off the table for Delawareans. Dividing the costs of the development, infrastructure, management and construction of the project by four will allow the homes to meet a price point that is reachable to young families.