

MARUCCI ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, LLC

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September 22, 2025

Honorable Chairman and
Members of the Zoning Board
Township of Bloomfield
One Municipal Plaza
Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Re: 117 North 16th Street
Map 3 Block 7 Lot 47
Romulo & Bercelia Miraval (owner/applicant)
Zone: R-2B, Two Family Residence District

Dear Chairman and Members of the Zoning Board,

This application requests variance relief to excavate the existing interior basement crawl space for the purpose of creating a basement playroom and entertainment area [living space].

My office has reviewed the following plans and documentation for the preparation of this report:

- + Standard Development Application
- + Property Survey prepared by Manno Surveying, Inc., Vincent Manno, PLS, dated February 20, 2025
- + Architectural Floor Plans prepared by Taja Design & Build, LLC, Qiong Wu, AIA, Architect of Record, dated August 10, 2024, with revisions through September 4, 2025

EXISTING CONDITION

This is a corner property located at the northwesterly intersection of North 16th Street with First Avenue.

The subject property contains a two (2) family residential dwelling with existing living space in the basement, first floor, second floor and attic level.

Residential Unit #1 consists of living space area on the first floor and basement.

Basement = 785 sf

First Floor = 1,128 sf

Residential Unit #2 consists of living space area on the second floor and attic.

Second Floor = 521 sf

Attic Floor = 165 sf

According to the floor plan, the dwelling contains the following existing square footage of living space:

Basement: 785 sf [Unit #1 residence]
First Floor: 1128 sf [Unit #1 residence]
Second Floor: 521 sf [Unit #2 residence]
Attic: 165 sf [Unit #2 residence]

Total: 2,599 sf

Existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR) = 0.69

The front entrance to the dwelling is situated on North 16th Street. The property has frontage of 37.67 feet along North 16th Street, and a depth of 100.00 feet along First Avenue.

In the existing condition, the basement is partially finished with a playroom, full bathroom, laundry room, and storage rooms.

The existing crawl space is located beneath the first-floor bedroom area.

Access to the basement is from the interior of the first-floor apartment, and also, from the northerly exterior side of the dwelling.

PROPOSED CONDITION

The application proposes to excavate and remove the concrete floor and soil within the existing crawl space beneath the first-floor bedrooms in order to create a basement with an eight (8) feet ceiling height, for use as a playroom/entertainment area.

The plan also proposes to excavate within the First Avenue front yard area in order to construct an exterior, open masonry staircase to access the proposed basement playroom.

The proposed masonry staircase will encroach into the front yard setback. The proposed front yard setback is [8 feet – 9 inches] or 8.75 feet, where a minimum 20 feet setback is required.

The basement, as proposed, will have two (2) means of ingress/egress from the exterior of the dwelling.

The proposal will increase the living space within the basement from 785 sf to 1,128 square feet, and the total floor area will increase to 2,942 sf, for a proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) = 0.0.78.

COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Class D-4 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) variance relief is required.
The existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR) = 0.69
The proposed Floor Area ratio (FAR) = 0.78
The maximum permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR) = 0.50
- Class C Bulk variance relief for Front Yard Setback
The existing front yard setback (First Avenue) = 13.06 feet
The proposed front yard setback (First Avenue) = 8.75 feet
The minimum required front yard setback = 20 feet
- Testimony shall be provided in support of the required variance relief.

The applicants provided a written statement as part of the proposed request.

The statement reads, in part:

“For a number of years, our home and other houses in the area have been affected by floods leading to water intrusion leading to damage in the basement walls, and potential mold growth”.

The applicants’ statement raises a few concerns:

- First, in my professional opinion, designing an exterior open staircase to the proposed basement playroom can only lead to additional drainage runoff entering the basement during major rain events.
- Secondly, since the basement currently contains a full bathroom and has access from the exterior on the northerly side of the dwelling, this proposed staircase may create the potential of a future third residential unit, by introducing a second means of egress.
- Third, the existing basement currently contains a playroom.
What is the purpose of a second playroom?

These concerns shall be addressed by the applicant and/or the applicant’s professionals.

My office has no further comments at this time.

However, my office reserves the opportunity for further comments/recommendations pending testimony received during the hearing process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A Marucci". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "A".

Anthony Marucci, PE-LS-PP
Zoning Board Engineer