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January 1, 2021

Dear Neighbors:

Happy new Year. Please find enclosed a notice of an application I have filed for a Dimensional Variance relating to my office building at 71 Main Street, Wakefield, RI 02879. The Dimensional Variance seeks permission to allow residential use on the 1st floor of the building. As you may or may not know, the town does not allow residential use of the 1st floor of buildings in the Commercial Downtown District where my building is located without getting a Dimensional Variance to allow it. Contrary to what the enclosed Town notice states the entire building has been used for office space since my father bought the building many, many years ago. My wife and I purchased the building 20-some years ago from my father and continued its use as a law office after he retired.

You may also know that Attorney Martha Day shared the office building with me for about 10 years until Covid-19 hit and forced her, like so many other small businesses like ours, to change how we do business. Neither Martha nor I need the amount of office space in the building. Martha and I both began working from home offices and you likely have seen the "For Rent" signs in front of the office building. After almost a year, I have been unable to find any business that was interested in renting the building for commercial use but have received interest from people wanting to use it as a residence and from many that wanted to use it as a residence with a home office.

I consulted with an architect to determine the feasibility of remodeling the building to accommodate residential use on the 2nd floor and commercial use on the 1st floor and it was determined that it would not be economically feasible to do so. The building was constructed as a single-family residence 90 years ago, has never been remodeled as commercial space and it cannot feasibly be reconfigured for residential use on the 2nd floor and commercial on the 1st floor--mainly because of fire and building code restrictions that would have to be met to allow mixed use of the building with residential on the 2nd floor and commercial on the 1st floor. I am therefore seeking permission to allow the 1st floor of the building to be used for residential purposes.

I want to keep the building because my son starts law school next year and it is likely he and I will want to once again use the building down the road as a law office but I need to make reasonable use of the building in the meantime.

If you have any questions, I would be happy to speak with you and feel free to contact me.

Thank you very much.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. G. Kehoe', written in a cursive style.

Christopher G. Kehoe, Esq.