

**The Blind Finch
Barbershop
205 Bartlett Street**

Applicants:

Kim Boualavong & Matthew Meyers

Owner authorization

March 8, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

We, Jeanne Freeze and Jeremy Riecks, the legal owners of the property at 205 Bartlett Street, Portsmouth, NH grant permission to Kim Boualavong and Matthew Meyers to use the premises for commercial purposes as a barbershop.

This authorization grants them permission to move forward with a variance application to continue to use our property as a commercial space. A barber shop is in keeping with the buildings' history, as it was Rogers Barber shop in the 1960's.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Freeze and Jeremy Riecks

Jeanne Freeze
Jeremy Riecks

Application for The Blind Finch

205 Bartlett Street

This application is requesting a zoning variance to open The Blind Finch Barbershop at 205 Bartlett Street. The applicants, Kim Boualavong and Matthew Meyers, are the tenants of this property.

The Blind Finch is a community-focused barbershop offering a welcoming space for the neighborhood to get great haircuts, wholesome conversations, and lasting friendships. We want to build relationships and support the local community in whatever ways we can.

Barbershops have long been hubs of gathering and conversation, sharing local news and history. We aim to uphold this tradition—whether for a quick hello or a fresh haircut for life’s big moments. As a 2 chair barbershop, we’re committed to staying small to provide high quality, personalized service to our clients.

The property at 205 Bartlett Street is in a GRA zoning district, but has primarily been used as a commercial space with its last tenant being West End Eyecare and prior to that, Creek Hill Upholstery. This space has a history of being used commercially despite its location in a residential neighborhood. A pre-inspection by the Inspection department was completed on March 3, 2025 and no major issues were identified.

If approved, our barbershop will bring:

- **Convenience** — a reliable, high-quality barbershop right in the neighborhood
- **Community connection** — a space where people come together, whether for a quick trim or great conversation
- **Aesthetic improvement** — a well-maintained business instead of an empty space/storefront

Analysis Criteria

We believe our application meets the criteria necessary for the Board to grant the requested variance:

- **The variance will not be contrary to the public interest;**
- **The spirit of the Ordinance will be observed**

The proposed Barbershop does not conflict with the explicit or implicit purpose of the ordinance. Using this property as a barbershop will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood, threaten public health, safety, or welfare, or injure "public rights". As barbershops are regulated and required to pass inspection by the Board of Barbering, Cosmetology, and Esthetics, we believe there is no threat to public health, safety or welfare.

- **Substantial justice will be done**

There is no harm to the general public or to other individuals. As a 2 chair, appointment-driven barbershop, the likelihood of enormous foot traffic or client traffic would be low. The shop will operate during reasonable hours as to not disrupt the neighborhood.

- **The values of surrounding properties will not be diminished**

Opening a barbershop in this location would not diminish the value of surrounding properties, but rather add an amenity to those in the neighborhood. This property has been primarily used as a commercial space and a barbershop would continue to enrich the neighborhood.

- **Literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would result in an unnecessary hardship.**

The property is burdened by the existing zoning restrictions in that it has been used primarily as a commercial space. In this neighborhood, other properties are already used as residences with a kitchen and full bathroom. This property cannot reasonably be used as a residence, for which it is currently zoned for, in its current state as there is no kitchen or full bathroom. To make it livable as a residence would require unnecessary hardship.

History of property

1923	Retail Grocer: Connor, John T. Co. 205 Bartlett Street & 181 Congress Street
1930 -	First National Stores Inc., gros.
1950	Effie's Yarn Shop
1952-1957	vacant
1959	Roger P. Emard
1961	Roger's Barber Shop 3 Clinton Street apartment built by Roger P. Emard
1965	Renter: Mrs Mary Mortimer
1967	Renter: Mrs Joyce V. Katatsanos
1968-1971	Roger P. Emard
1972	Elton Taylor
1973-1974	Verna Mackenzie
1976	Church/ Emanuel Church of Christ
1977	Rafael Reyes

Additional business information

Operating model

The Blind Finch will operate as an appointment-driven barbershop, meaning appointments will be preferred and walk-ins are taken on an availability basis.

Hours of operation

Our hours of operation will be reasonable as to not disrupt the neighborhood. We anticipate having the following hours:

Sunday & Monday: closed

Tuesday - Friday: 9:00am - 6:00pm

Saturday: 9:00am - 2:00pm

Parking

The parking requirement as defined by the City of Portsmouth is met for this property.

Barbers and clients on site

We will operate as a 2 chair barbershop. The shop will contain 2 barber stations and have 2 barbers working at a time. The most people we would expect to have in the shop are 6: 2 barbers working, 2 clients getting services done, and 2 clients waiting to have services done.

Services offered

As a traditional barbershop, we will offer:

- Haircuts
- Skin fades
- Beard trims
- Hot lather shaves

Pre-inspection Notes

A pre-inspection was done on March 3, 2025 by the City of Portsmouth Inspection Department and Fire Department by suggestion of the Planning Department.

No major issues were pointed out.

Things to take note of that will be addressed prior to opening are:

- Fire extinguisher will be in a visible and accessible area;
- Exit sign will be updated or replaced with a new battery;
- Smoke detector will be updated to a combination Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detector



158-11

158-10

158-9

Bartlett St

Clinton St

Clinton St

Clinton St

E

163-8

162-36

162-35

162-34

162-33

162-32

162-31

Bartlett St

162-67

162-66

Bartlett Ave

162-30

Bartlett St

162-43

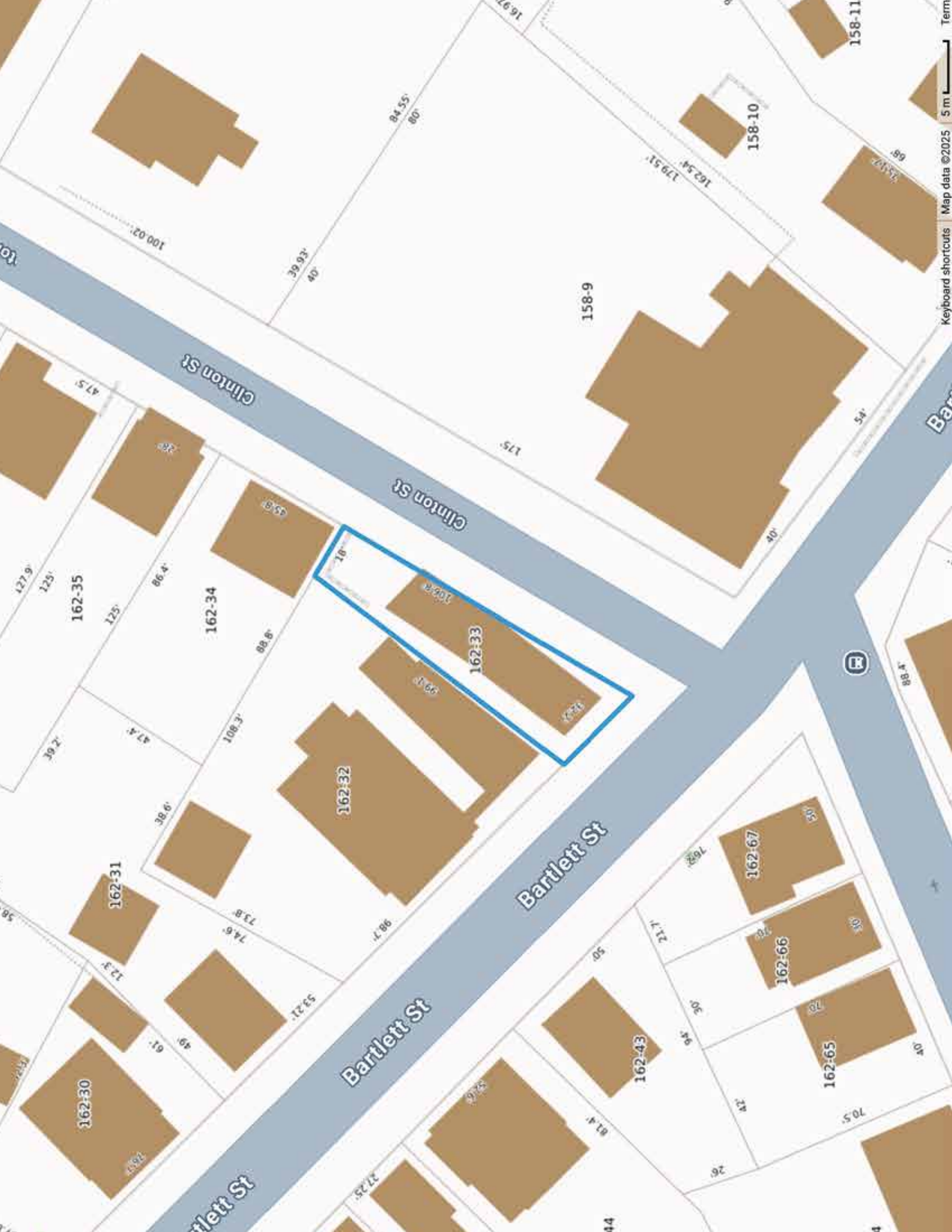
162-65

Bartlett St

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Clinton St

Clinton St

Bartlett St

Bartlett St

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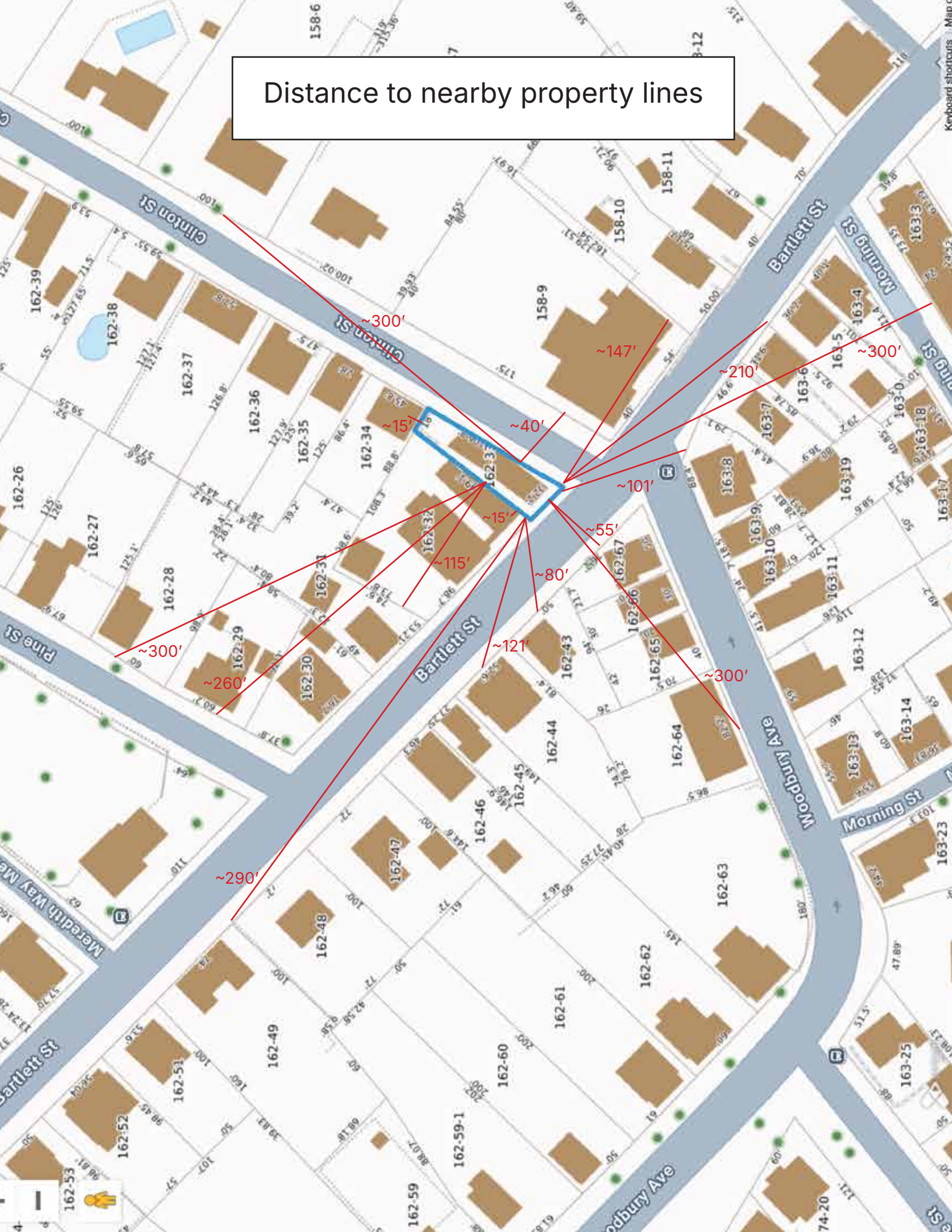
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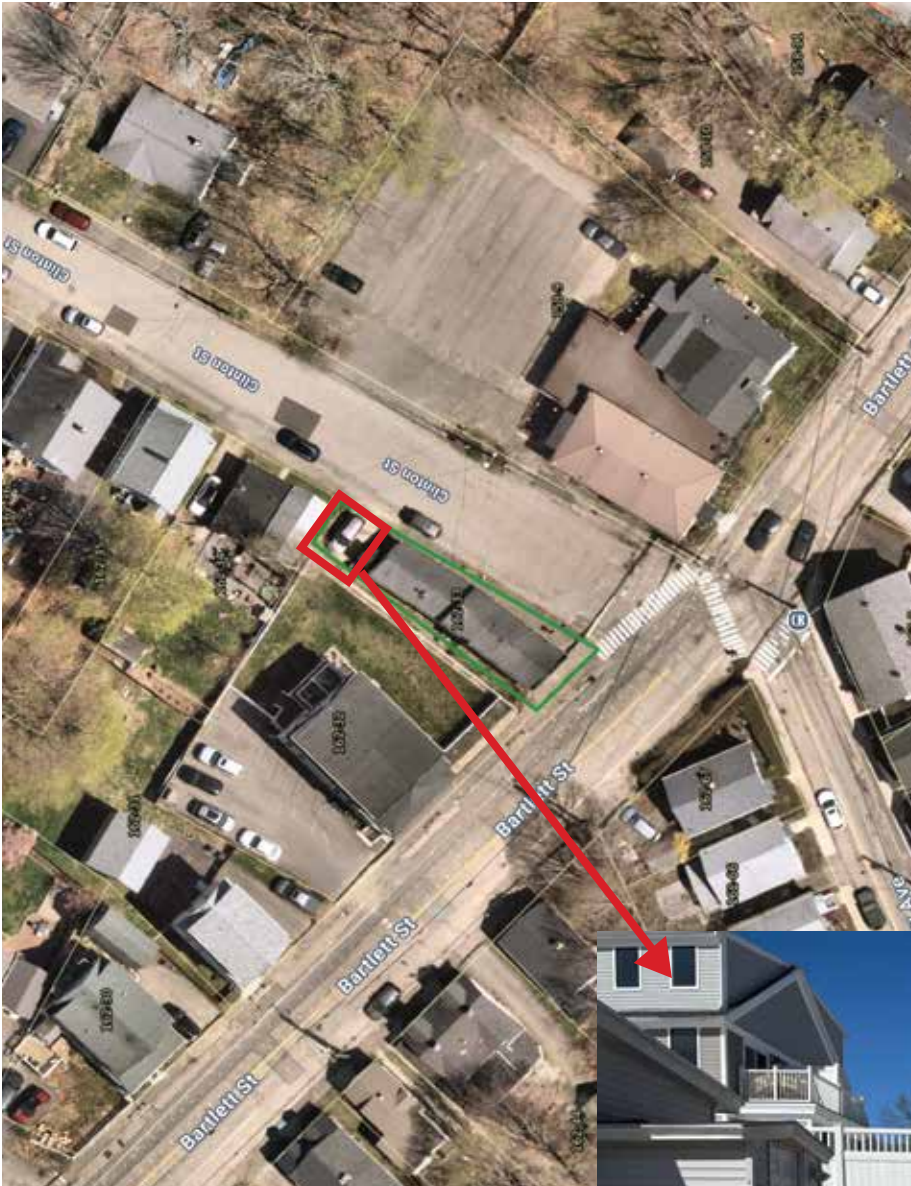
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Distance to nearby property lines



Off Street Parking Dimensions



Front of building, 205 Bartlett Street



Bartlett Street going toward Islington St



Bartlett Street going toward Thornton St
View from Woodbury Ave/Bartlett St intersection



15.6
205 BARTLETT ST.
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SHOP

15.6 x 16

WC
3x6

WALK-IN CLOSET
9.6 x 6

W/D

BATH

15.6 x 5

KITCHEN

DINING

15.6 x 31

LIVING

BEDROOM

15 x 12.5

70'5"

79 CLINTON ST.
↑

15