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January 10, 2025

Honorable Members of the City Council
One Roosevelt Square
Mount Vernon, New York 10550

(Through the Office of the City Clerk)

**Re: Request of the City Council to Approve the Conveyance of
0 Vernon Avenue, Mount Vernon, an adjoining vacant lot to
286 McClellan Avenue, Mount Vernon, to Myrtle Jones and to Authorize
the Mayor to execute a deed and all required documents for the transfer**

Dear Honorable Members of the City Council:

I respectfully request that this Honorable Body approve an ordinance to convey 0 Vernon Avenue, Mount Vernon, an adjoining vacant lot to 286 McClellan Avenue, Mount Vernon, to Myrtle Jones and to authorize the Mayor to execute any closing documents necessary to effectuate the conveyance. This long-standing matter needs to be rectified as soon as possible.

Ms. Myrtle Jones has been waiting for several years for the City to transfer the subject lot to her after her Partners Abstract Corp., her title company, initially made an error with the redemption by only paying for the lot with the house on it, but not for the lot with the additional adjoining land. The confusion likely occurred because 286 McClellan Avenue (the part of the lot with the house) and 0 Vernon Avenue (the adjacent vacant lot) have the same Block and Lot numbers, Block 4047, Lot 12. Attached for your review are photographs showing both parcels, the one with the house on it and the vacant land lot.)

By way of background, as outlined in the attached letter from Partners Abstract Corp., Ms. Jones originally bought the property in 2012. In January 2014, she received a letter and in rem notice from the Comptroller's office regarding Block 4047 Lot 12. McClellan Avenue, On January 27, 2014, Partners Abstract remitted payment for the back taxes to avoid the foreclosure and passing of title to the City of Mount Vernon.

As the delinquent taxes for the block and lot were paid before the deadline of February 10, 2014, the property should have been redeemed back to Ms. Jones. However, while 286 McClellan Avenue was redeemed back to her, it was later discovered that the vacant lot was not returned to her. I understand this is because the title company paid the taxes for only part

of the block and lot and did not realize that even though there is one block and lot number, two parcels make up the same lot.

Once this error was noticed, the title company remedied the situation by paying the remaining taxes, and Ms. Jones has been waiting for the City to complete the transfer. This conveyance has been stalled for many reasons, including the former Comptroller refusing action and, thereafter, the City's other pressing priorities.

In 2023, I wrote a letter to the Real Estate Committee requesting that it make a recommendation to the City Council that this error be corrected by allowing the City to convey 0 Vernon Avenue, Mount Vernon, an adjoining vacant lot to 286 McClellan Avenue to Ms. Myrtle Jones.

At its September 29, 2023, meeting, the Real Estate Committee Meeting entertained my request and voted to recommend this proposed transfer. It should be noted that this is a deed transfer request due to an error and not a real estate property sale.

I respectfully request that this Honorable Body approve an ordinance to convey 0 Vernon Avenue, Mount Vernon, an adjoining vacant lot to 286 McClellan Avenue, Mount Vernon, to Myrtle Jones and to authorize the Mayor to execute any closing documents necessary to effectuate this conveyance. Please see the attached supporting documents for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,



Brian G. Johnson
Corporation Counsel

Enclosures:

- (1) Photos of lot 286 McClennan Avenue and 0 Vernon Avenue
- (2) Real Estate Committee Meeting Minutes – September 29, 2023, item 9
Record of the Real Estate Committee recommendation vote
- (3) November 2023 Letter from Corporation Counsel recommending Real Estate Committee vote along with supporting documentation

cc: Shawyn Patterson-Howard, Mayor
Darren M. Morton, Comptroller
Danielle Browne, City Council President