



**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

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November 3, 2004 Calendar No. 18

N 050063 BDX

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**IN THE MATTER of an application submitted by the Department of Small Business Services on behalf of the 161<sup>st</sup> Street Business Improvement District pursuant to Section 25-405 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, as amended, concerning the formation of the Concourse Village Business Improvement District, Borough of the Bronx, Community District 4.**

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On August 7, 2004 the Mayor authorized the preparation of a district plan for the 161<sup>st</sup> Street Business Improvement District (BID). On August 16, 2004, on behalf of the 161<sup>st</sup> Street District Management Association (DMA), the Department of Small Business Services (DSBS) submitted the district plan located in Community District 4 in the Borough of The Bronx.

**BACKGROUND**

The proposed 161<sup>st</sup> Street BID is located in the Concourse Village section, in the Borough of the Bronx. The BID extends along 161st Street and is generally bounded by River Avenue on the west and Morris Avenue on the east.

161<sup>st</sup> Street is synonymous with Yankee Stadium and is also known for being the civic node of the Bronx, with the Bronx County, Family, Criminal courthouses located on 161<sup>st</sup> Street. A new Criminal Court Complex is being built next to the Family and Criminal Courthouse. There are three parks adjacent to the BID area (Franz Sigel,

Macombs Dam and John Mullaly parks). Joyce Kilmer Park is located within the BID's boundaries. The 161<sup>st</sup> Street Corridor has many one-story fast food restaurants that include McDonald's and Burger King; and a host of small retail stores.

The proposed BID will provide services that will primarily focus on sanitation and marketing. The sanitation program may include cleaning and sweeping of sidewalks and gutters, emptying garbage receptacles and removal of graffiti. The BID proposes to employ a team of sanitation workers that will operate 6 days a week. The program will supplement the existing municipal sanitation program.

The budget for the first year of the BID is projected to be \$190,000. The budget will allocate \$89,000 to a sanitation program; \$13,500 to marketing and promotion; \$59,000 to administration; \$10,000 to holiday decorations; \$5,000 to maintenance and miscellaneous and a contingency plan of \$13,500.

The BID assessment method is based upon a combination of linear front footage and assessed value of the properties. Commercial properties will be assessed at a rate not to exceed \$32.37 per individual property linear front foot (FF) plus not more than \$29 per \$1,000 dollars of individual property assessed valuation (AV). Wholly residential properties will pay an assessment of one dollar

annually. Properties that contain both commercial and residential uses shall be assessed one dollar for the residential portion and the commercial portion shall be assessed the same as the commercial properties. Properties that are government and/or not-for-profit owned shall be exempt from the assessment; however, if the government and/or not-for-profit owned properties are used commercially or for-profit, they will be assessed in the same manner as commercial properties.

Outreach to property owners, merchants and residents was documented and submitted to the City Planning Commission, by the Fordham Road BID Steering Committee. Eighty-four percent of the total assessed value property owners are in support of the BID and 1.7% of total assessed value property owners are opposed.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The district plan was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York State Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq., and the New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 04DBS012X. The lead agency is the Department of Small Business Services.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a negative declaration was issued on April 28, 2004.

#### **LAND USE REVIEW**

On August 16, 2004 the Department of Small Business Services submitted the district plan for the Fordham Road Business Improvement District (BID) to the Department of City Planning. The plan was then transmitted for review to the Office of the Mayor, Office of the Bronx Borough President, City Council Speaker, City Council Members of Council Districts 16 and 17 and Bronx Community Board 4.

#### Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 4 adopted a resolution recommending approval of this application (N 050063 BDX) on September 28, 2004, by a vote of 26 in favor; 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

#### City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On September 22, 2004 (Calendar No. 1) the Commission scheduled October 6, 2004 for a public hearing on the district plan. On October 6, 2004 (Calendar No. 9 ), the hearing was duly held. There were three speakers in favor of the proposal and none in opposition.

A consultant who worked on the 161<sup>st</sup> Street BID's Steering Committee, spoke in support of the BID. She stated the BID was nine years in the making and its boundaries captured the retail businesses in the area. She discussed the pedestrian and vehicular traffic brought on by the courts and how these conditions exacerbates the sanitation and security problems of the area. She stated that the BID is needed to address these problems. She further stated that the property owners and merchants were well-informed about the BID through mailings and public meetings.

An executive director of the Mid-Bronx Council spoke in support of the BID. She also addressed the issues of street and sidewalk congestion with both pedestrians and garbage. She explained how the steering committee developed the assessment formula and the services the BID would provide.

The representative of a management company spoke about how the BID would help revitalize the area and help the long-time business and properties owners by attracting more patrons and businesses.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

#### Consideration

The Commission believes that the proposal to establish the 161<sup>st</sup>

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Street Business Improvement District in the Bronx is appropriate. The 161<sup>st</sup> Street BID will be an effective economic development mechanism that will strengthen the existing businesses.

The Commission has carefully reviewed the documents that the proposed BID sponsor submitted regarding notification of constituents about the pending BID. It believes that these outreach efforts for the BID were adequate and satisfactory.

BID's are important to the City because they improve the business climate and aid in promoting economic development for the City. Creating a BID will help benefit the property owners and merchants of the area by creating a cleaner, more attractive area for shoppers and for businesses to locate.

#### Resolution

The Commission supports the proposed plan and has adopted the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission certifies its unqualified approval of the proposed district plan for the 16<sup>st</sup> Street Business Improvement District.

The above resolution duly adopted by the City Planning Commission

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on November 3, 2004 (Calendar No. 18) is filed with the City Council and the City Clerk pursuant to Section 25-405 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair

KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, *Esq.*, Vice Chairman,

ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, *P.E.*,

ANGELA R. CAVALUZZI, *R.A.*, RICHARD W. EADDY,

CHRISTOPHER KUI, KAREN A. PHILLIPS, JOHN MEROLO,

DOLLY WILLIAMS, Commissioners

ALFRED C. CERULLO, III abstained.