



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

May 24, 2006 / Calendar No. 6

C 050419 HDQ

IN THE MATTER OF an application, submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the disposition to the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) of Block 16100 (Lots 31 and 38); Block 16103 (Lots 1 and 60); Block 16104 (Lots 1 and 28); Block 16105 (Lot 1); and Block 16106 (Lot 1), Site 1 within the Arverne Urban Renewal Area, Borough of Queens, Community District 14.

The application for the disposition of city-owned property was filed by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development on April 13, 2005, to dispose of city-owned property comprising Site 1 of the Arverne Urban Renewal Area. The proposed disposition would facilitate the development of the Federal Jeans Far Rockaway Clothing Assembly and Distribution Center.

RELATED ACTION

In addition to the application for the disposition of city-owned property, which is the subject of this report (C 050419 HDQ), implementation of the proposed development also requires action by the City Planning Commission on the following application which is being considered concurrently with this application:

C 050418 MMQ: Amendment to the City Map to eliminate, discontinue and close all or parts of six (6) mapped streets within the project area.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) requests disposition approval for eight city-owned properties, and a demapping action to eliminate all or parts of six city-owned streets. The property is to be disposed to the New York City Economic Development

Corporation (EDC), which intends to subsequently convey the property to the Federal Jeans Company. This will facilitate the development of the Federal Jeans Far Rockaway Clothing Assembly and Distribution Center in Queens, Community District 14.

The project site has a total area of 290,000 square feet which includes nine lots (one private) and the property in the beds of the streets proposed for demapping (C 050418 MMQ). The developer recently acquired a single lot, Block 16104 (Lot 25), from a private owner for inclusion in the project site.

The Federal Jeans Far Rockaway Clothing and Assembly Center will feature the development of a 154,000 square-foot warehouse facility. Wholesale denim goods will be received at the site where they will be prepared for distribution to local retailers. This process includes applying stickers, ticketing, labeling, and repackaging of the denim products. Shipping orders will be prepared and products will be palletized and shrink-wrapped in preparation for transport. This new facility will provide for the business expansion of the Federal Jeans Company, which currently operates a similar warehouse and distribution center in East New York. The Far Rockaway facility will create approximately 100 new entry-level jobs, with a large percentage coming directly from the local community. The disposition of city-owned property and an amendment to the city map are required to facilitate this proposal.

Property Disposition: (C 050419 HDQ)

Eight lots are city-owned and proposed for disposition: Block 16100 (Lots 31 and 38); Block 16103 (Lots 1 and 60); Block 16104 (Lots 1 and 28); Block 16105 (Lot 1); and Block 16106 (Lot 1). These city-owned lots have been designated Site 1 of the Arverne Urban Renewal Area and zoned M1-1 for industrial development. The Arverne Urban Renewal Plan permits only Use Group 17 manufacturing uses on Site 1. These uses have high performance standards and by

controlling objectionable influences can limit impact on surrounding residential neighborhoods. In addition, the urban renewal plan does not allow auto-related uses, including repairs, on the site. The site is bounded by Rockaway Freeway to the north, Beach Channel Drive (Hammels Boulevard) to the south, Beach 84th Street to the West and Beach 77th Street to the east. The M1-1 district in which the site is located extends north to Barbadoes Basin and east to Beach 72nd Street. Among other industrial uses, the Quadrozzi Concrete Plant and the Department of Sanitation District 14 Garage operate within this area. To the south of the site is an R6 district where the NYC Housing Authority's Hammel Houses, P.S. 183, and the Arverne-by-the-Sea condominium development are located. The A-line elevated subway runs along the north side of the property boundary with the closest station located at Beach 90th Street. A small mapped park is formed within a triangle created by the tracks.

City Map Change: (C 050418 MMQ)

The applicant is requesting a change in the City Map involving the elimination, discontinuance and closing of Beach 79th, Beach 80th, Beach 81st, Beach 82nd, Beach 83rd Streets and Finnard Avenue; change of grades necessitated thereby and any acquisition or disposition of real property related thereto, within an area bounded by Beach 77th Street, Beach Channel Drive, Beach 84th Street and Rockaway Freeway to facilitate the establishment of the Far Rockaway Clothing Assembly and Distribution Center.

All streets are city-owned. Beach 79th Street is mapped with an irregular width that ranges from 50 feet to 84 feet; it is partially improved and open for traffic. Beach 80th Street is 50 feet wide, partially improved and open for traffic. Beach 81st Street is 45 feet wide, partially improved and not open for traffic. Beach 82nd Street is 50 feet wide and unimproved. Beach 83rd Street is 45 feet wide, partially improved and not open for traffic. Finnard Avenue is 50 feet wide and unimproved.

The application also proposes the delineation of a permanent sewer easement in the bed of Beach 79th Street between Beach Channel Drive and Rockaway Freeway.

An interagency conference was held on May 10, 2005. No city agency expressed objections to the map change proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 050419 HDQ), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C050418 MMQ), 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 Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 *et seq.* and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 04DME008Q. The lead agency is the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on January 6, 2006.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 050419 HDQ), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C050418 MMQ), was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on January 9, 2006, and was duly referred to Community Board 14 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 14 held a public hearing on this application (C 050419 HDQ), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C050418 MMQ), on March 8, 2006. On that date, by

a vote of 29 to 2 with 0 abstentions, the board adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Beach 81st Street from Rockaway Beach Boulevard to Hammels Boulevard (Beach Channel Drive) shall be made a two way street.
- (2) Traffic lights shall be installed at the two (2) auto and truck access points at the Rockaway Freeway

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 050419 HDQ), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C050418 MMQ), was considered by the President of the Borough of Queens who issued a recommendation approving this application on April 26, 2006.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On April 5, 2006 (Calendar No. 5), the City Planning Commission scheduled April 26, 2006, for a public hearing on this application (C 050419 HDQ), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C050418 MMQ). The hearing was duly held on April 26, 2006 (Calendar No. 18).

There was one speaker in favor and none in opposition.

A representative from EDC, testified in favor of the project and the potential to provide much needed entry level jobs for the residents of the Far Rockaway peninsula.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM CONSISTENCY REVIEW

This application was reviewed by the Department of City Planning for consistency with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP), as amended, approved by the New York City Council on October 13, 1999, and by the New York State Department of

State on May 28, 2002, pursuant to The New York State Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act of 1981 (New York State Executive Law, Section 910 et seq.). The designated WRP number is 05-020.

This action was determined to be consistent with the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the application for the proposed disposition of city-owned property: Block 16100 (Lots 31 and 38); Block 16103 (Lots 1 and 60); Block 16104 (Lots 1 and 28); Block 16105 (Lot 1); and Block 16106 (Lot 1), is appropriate.

The requested action would facilitate the development of the Federal Jeans Far Rockaway Clothing and Assembly Center, a new warehouse and distribution facility. The Commission believes this project will provide a significant number of jobs for the residents of the Rockaways, and would also provide for the expansion and growth of the locally owned Federal Jeans Company. The Commission notes that the development will provide for sidewalk, landscaping and other streetscape improvements on property that has been vacant and underutilized for many years.

The Commission recognizes that Federal Jeans supports the Community Board 14 recommendation conditions regarding street traffic patterns and placement of traffic signals. The Department of Transportation (DOT) would be responsible for instituting any modifications to the traffic flow in the area. Federal Jeans has stated in a letter dated April 19, 2006, that they would be willing to assist DOT in this endeavor.

The Commission notes that the disposition area comprises Site 1 of the Arverne Urban Renewal Area. Site 1 is designated for manufacturing use and the proposed Federal Jeans project is consistent with the urban renewal plan.

The requested action is part of an ongoing city effort to redevelop vacant city-owned property and return it to productive use, while expanding economic and employment opportunities for Rockaway residents. The Commission, therefore, believes that the proposed disposition of city-owned property is appropriate.

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission finds that the proposed property disposition of Block 16100 (Lots 31, 38); Block 16103 (Lots 1, 60); Block 16104 (Lots 1, 28); Block 16105 (Lot 1); and Block 16106 (Lot 1) conforms to the objectives and provisions of the second amended Arverne Urban Renewal Plan, (C 030509 HUQ), approved by the City Planning Commission on November 3, 2003, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission, in its capacity as the City Coastal Commission, has reviewed the waterfront aspects of this application and finds that the proposed action is consistent with WRP policies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant impact on the environment; and be it further

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and the consideration described in this report, the application of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development for the disposition of city-owned property: Block 16100 (Lots 31 and 38); Block 16103 (Lots 1 and 60);

Block 16104 (Lots 1 and 28); Block 16105 (Lot 1); and Block 16106 (Lot 1), Site 1 within the Arverne Urban Renewal Area, Borough of Queens, Community District 14, to the Economic Development Corporation, is approved.

The above resolution (C 050419 HDQ), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on May 24, 2006 (Calendar No. 6), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair
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