



**STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW  
NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF  
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**DATE:** October 15, 2012

**SEQR PROJECT NO.:** 13-004

**LEAD AGENCY:** New York City School Construction Authority  
30-30 Thomson Avenue  
Long Island City, New York 11101-3045

Pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law) and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto (6 NYCRR Part 617), a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been prepared covering the action described below and is available for public inspection at the office of the Lead Agency and applicant as set forth below. Pursuant to §1730.2 of the Public Authorities Law, the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) is SEQR Lead Agency. The FEIS is also available at the SCA's website ([www.nycsca.org](http://www.nycsca.org)).

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed project was issued on August 22, 2012. A public hearing on the DEIS was held on September 10, 2012, at P.S. 305, located at 378 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, Queens, in order to accept comments from the public on the environmental issues considered therein. The public comment period remained open for fifteen (15) days following the hearing, and closed on September 25, 2012.

**NAME OF ACTION:** P.S. 320, Queens  
New, Approximately 472-Seat Primary School

**LOCATION:** 360 Seneca Avenue  
Tax Block 3425, Tax Lot 7

**SEQR STATUS:** Unlisted

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

On behalf of the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) proposes the design and construction of a new primary school facility in Community School District No. 24. The proposed new facility would contain a total of approximately 472 seats serving students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade.



The proposed school would serve Community School District (CSD) 24 and would accommodate children in pre-kindergarten through fifth grades. The project site, an approximately 29,000- square-foot (sf) lot located on the southwest side of Seneca Avenue between DeKalb Avenue and Stockholm Street (Block 3425, Lot 7), currently contains a two-story building that was formerly used as a parochial school.

Under the proposed project, the existing on-site structure would be demolished and a new public school facility would be constructed on the site. Although design plans for the new building have not been finalized, it is expected that the proposed school building would contain approximately 65,930 gross square feet (gsf) and would be four stories and approximately 69 feet in height (approximately 85 feet to the top of the bulkhead). It is anticipated that the main entrance to the school would be located on Seneca Avenue. At the rear of the building there would be two outdoor playground areas: a 12,000-sf outdoor playground area located near Stockholm Street, and a 3,000-sf early childhood center (ECC) outdoor playground area near DeKalb Avenue. Site acquisition and demolition would occur in late 2012, with student occupancy of the new building anticipated in 2015.

## **POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS**

### NOISE

The proposed school would not generate sufficient traffic to have the potential to cause a significant noise impact, and would incorporate design measures to meet indoor sound attenuation requirements for new building construction.

In addition, the potential noise impact of the school's playground on neighboring properties was assessed. With the proposed site plan, the change in noise levels at the school at 378 Seneca Avenue and residences at 1763 DeKalb Avenue during those portions of the school day when the playground is in use would not exceed the SCA impact threshold of 5 dBA. However, when the playground is in use, the change in noise levels at the residence at 1760 DeKalb Avenue would range from 8.1 dBA to 8.7 dBA. These noise-level increases would constitute a readily noticeable increase and would be considered significant under SCA criteria.

The change in noise levels at the residence at 459 Stockholm Street would range from 11.9 dBA to 12.6 dBA during those portions of the school day when the playground is being used. These noise level increases would constitute a perceived doubling of loudness and would be considered significant under SCA criteria.

The significant noise level increases predicted to occur at 1760 DeKalb Avenue and 459 Stockholm Street during the hours that the proposed playground is being used are primarily a result of the difference between the low, existing noise levels at these residences compared with the future predicted playground noise levels from the new school. The resultant noise levels at these properties during



the hours that the proposed playground is being used would be expected to be in the low 70s of dBA. These levels do constitute significant increases in noise level; however, they are moderate for locations in New York City near heavily trafficked roadways. Furthermore, the times when these elevated noise levels occur would be limited to the daytime school hours when the playground is in use, and would not occur during nighttime hours when people are generally sleeping and most sensitive to noise.

However, the potential for significant adverse noise impacts at 1760 DeKalb Avenue and 459 Stockholm Street could be fully mitigated by the installation of through-the-wall air conditioning units at 1760 Dekalb Avenue, and a window air conditioning unit at 459 Stockholm Street. Should these units not be installed, significant noise impacts would occur to these residences during periods when the playground is in use.

#### TRANSPORTATION

For the intersections bordering the project site, capacities at most of the approaches would be sufficient to accommodate these volume increases in the future. However, based on the CEQR impact criteria, the proposed project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at the following two intersection approaches during the peak periods analyzed:

- The northbound approach of Seneca Avenue and Stockholm Street during the weekday AM and PM peak hours; and
- The northbound approach of Cypress Avenue and Stockholm Street during the weekday AM peak hour.

As discussed above, two approaches/lane groups in the study area would experience significant adverse traffic impacts in the 2015 Build condition as a result of the project-generated traffic. The specific improvement measures proposed for the impacted intersections are summarized below:

#### *Seneca Avenue and Stockholm Street*

The impact at the northbound approach during the weekday AM and PM peak hours could be mitigated by changing the operation from a Two-Way to an All Way stop control at this intersection.

#### *Cypress Avenue and Stockholm Street*

The impact at the northbound approach during the weekday AM peak hour could be mitigated by changing the operation from a Two-Way to an All-Way stop control at this intersection.

With these improvement measures in place, all of the impacted intersection approaches and lane groups would operate at the same or at better service conditions than the No Build conditions, subject to review and approval by the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT).



#### SOIL AND GROUNDWATER CONDITIONS

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and a Phase II Environmental Site Investigation (ESI) were completed between February 2011 and July 2012 to evaluate the environmental conditions of the site. The site encompasses an area of approximately 29,000 square feet improved by a two-story building with a basement with a building footprint of approximately 11,200 square feet, and a fenced-in asphalt paved play area. The site was formerly occupied by the St. Aloysius parochial school, which ceased operations in 2011. Prior to construction of the parochial school building in 1966, the site was primarily undeveloped with the exception of a one-story building containing a store on the northwest corner of the property between 1936 and 1950.

The Phase I ESA was prepared by Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, P.C. (Langan) for the SCA in February 2011. The Phase I ESA identified on-site Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) related to a 10,000-gallon fuel oil underground storage tank (UST) with a closed, leaking tank incident, and suspect buried structures and construction debris associated with a former site building. Off-site RECs include open and closed spill cases at adjoining and surrounding properties; historical clothing manufacturing, knitting mills, and transit company facilities with repair operations at adjoining and surrounding properties; and petroleum bulk storage at surrounding properties. The Phase I ESA also revealed environmental concerns associated with suspect asbestos-containing materials (ACM), suspect interior and exterior lead-based paint (LBP), and suspect polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB)-containing light ballasts and caulking material.

A Phase II ESI was completed by TRC Engineers, Inc. (TRC) on behalf of the SCA in July 2012 to assess whether the RECs identified in the Phase I ESA have affected the suitability of the site for construction of a public school facility. Phase II ESI field activities consisted of a geophysical survey, the advancement of soil borings, and the collection and analysis of soil vapor and soil samples.

The results of the geophysical survey confirmed the presence of the 10,000-gallon UST under the site parking lot. No visual or olfactory indications of contamination were observed in any of the soil samples collected. Additionally, no elevated photoionization detector (PID) readings were detected during field screening of the soil. Soil samples did not contain concentrations of organic or inorganic constituents above regulatory criteria for unrestricted use with the exception of semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) in one sample. The concentrations of SVOCs can be attributed to the characteristics of fill material at the site since there was no evidence of contamination observed in the soil samples collected from this soil boring. The results of the analyses of the soil vapor samples revealed the presence of petroleum and chlorinated solvent related volatile organic compounds at concentrations exceeding published background indoor air levels. However, there were no compounds detected in soil vapor at concentrations greater than the corresponding New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Air Guideline Values (AGVs). The specific

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compounds detected in soil vapor above published background indoor air levels were not detected at concentrations exceeding their respective regulatory standards in soil samples collected at the site. Therefore, the compounds detected in soil vapor are attributed to an off-site source in the surrounding area.

The proposed project would not result in impacts from contaminated media and building materials. As a preventative measure, a soil vapor barrier would be installed under the new school building. Any suspect ACM, LBP, and PCB-containing materials affected by the preparation of the site for use as a public school would be identified prior to construction and properly managed during construction activities. The 10,000-gallon UST, access vault, all associated piping and petroleum-contaminated soil (if any) would be excavated, decommissioned, and/or disposed of in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations, and the NYSDEC Petroleum Bulk Storage (PBS) registration would be updated to reflect the closed status of the tank. All soil excavated during building construction would be properly managed in accordance with all applicable local, State and Federal regulations. For areas of the site where exposed soil may exist after building construction (i.e., landscaped areas), a two-foot thick layer of environmentally clean fill would be placed over the soil in these areas. In addition, to minimize the potential for exposure by construction workers and the surrounding public, standard industry practices, including appropriate health and safety measures, would be utilized.

#### **BENEFICIAL IMPACTS**

Development of the proposed project would provide approximately 472 additional permanent public school seats at the primary level to serve Community School District No. 24.

#### **CONTACT:**

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Lorraine Grillo  
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October 15, 2012  
Date