



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

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August 27, 2003/Calendar No.23

C 030386 PCR

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**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for site selection and acquisition of four properties bounded by Stobe Avenue, Zoe and Cletus Streets, (Block 3544, Lot 1) and Stobe Avenue and Husson and Vera streets (Block 3550, Lots 1, 11, and 54), Borough of Staten Island, Community District 2, for the storage and conveyance of stormwater.

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The application for site selection and acquisition of four privately owned parcels totaling 1.5 acres was filed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) on March 13, 2003, for the conveyance and storage of stormwater.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 1961 the City of New York commissioned an Official Map and Drainage Plan for Staten Island that has never been fully implemented. The 1961 Official Map contains a conventional grid system engineered to provide gravity drainage to collector sewers. Sewers would be located in streets mapped in the beds of streams which constitute the low points in the drainage basins. After 41 years, the Plan is obsolete.

Most of South Richmond, as well as parts of Mid-Staten Island, continues to lack sanitary and/or storm sewers. As a solution for the need for infrastructure in this part of Staten Island, the Department of City Planning's 1989 report entitled South

Richmond's Open Space Network, An Agenda for Action: Stormwater and Open Space Management recommends that wetlands be used for stormwater management and open space.

The key stream corridors and wetlands found in South Richmond and other areas of Staten Island to be used for stormwater management are collectively called "the Bluebelt". The DEP began to implement the recommendations of the 1989 report in 1993. In response the City has proceeded to acquire property containing wetlands and streams while also developing management plans for selected drainage basins. The proposed action, site selection and acquisition of property in the Last Chance Pond area, is part of this process and is within the New Creek system.

The Last Chance Pond parcels (the subject of this proposal) are associated with the New Creek watershed and covered by the proposed New Creek Drainage Plan. They are part of the Last Chance Pond Wetland System (NA-8) and are located in the Dongan Hills area of Staten Island. The lots contain the headwaters of New Creek as well as adjacent floodplain area and a portion of Last Chance Pond itself. New Creek, the central channel of a former tidal marsh system, is the main conduit for stormwater conveyance in the existing drainage system that includes the neighborhoods of Midland Beach, Dongan Hills, Grant City and Todt Hill. Part of this wetland system is already city-owned (Department of Parks jurisdiction). Adjacent to this property

lies the 4 privately owned parcels which are to be acquired. All 4 parcels are mapped wetlands or wetlands adjacent area.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 030386 PCR) 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 03DEP069R. The lead agency is the Department of Environmental Protection.

This application was determined to be a Type II action which requires no further environmental review.

#### **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 030386 PCR) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on April 21, 2003, and was duly referred to Community Board 2 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

#### **Community Board Public Hearing**

Community Board 2 held a public hearing on this application on

May 6, 2003, and on May 20, 2003, by a vote of 27 in favor and 0 opposed with 2 abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

#### **Borough President Recommendation**

This application was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving the application on June 18, 2003.

#### **City Planning Commission Public Hearing**

On July 2, 2003 (Calendar No. 5 ), the City Planning Commission scheduled July 23, 2003, for a public hearing on this application (C 030386 PCR). The hearing was duly held on July 23, 2003 (Calendar No. 22).

A representative of the Department of Environmental Protection gave a brief description of the project, discussing the Bluebelt program, its implementation and expansion in the mid-island area, and coordination with other agencies. He also answered questions about the project and the program. 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), adopted by the Board of Estimate on

September 30, 1982 (Calendar No. 17), 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 WRP03-015.

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

#### **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that the application for site selection and acquisition of privately-owned property in Dongan Hills is appropriate.

The DCP's 1989 report entitled An Agenda for Action: Stormwater and Open Space Management identified the need for an alternative approach to traditional stormwater management methods. In 1993, DEP began the preparation of comprehensive sanitary and stormwater plans. The newest of these proposed subplans include the New Creek watershed. The objective of the New Creek stormwater management plan will be to collect and convey runoff in the watershed from storms up to the 5-year design storm without adversely affecting the hydrology and water quality of the Creek and its associated wetlands. The construction of storm sewers will collect street runoff and direct it to the Best Management Practices (BMP) sites prior to discharge into New Creek. This protects and preserves natural open space corridors

while providing a cost effective management system.

DEP, the agency charged with implementing the stormwater management program, has received approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to proceed with the redesign of the Official Drainage Plan for one of the last unsewered sections of New York City, the eastern and southern parts of Staten Island.

In the Bluebelt applications approved to date by the City Planning Commission, the first of a three phase plan of action has proceeded - preserving the major watersheds. Preserving these watersheds requires immediate action due to development pressures while overall master planning for the Bluebelt proceeds. This application continues acquisition in the New Creek watershed.

In the next two phases, a comprehensive stormwater management/drainage plan will be redesigned (it has already been completed for several individual drainage basins). Long term management and maintenance methods for the consolidated properties will be devised as part of the drainage plan revisions and carried out in the third phase.

The Commission believes that the use of this proposed acquisition site for stormwater management is consistent with the goals of the Department's 1989 report on the South Richmond Open Space

Network, An Agenda for Action: Stormwater and Open Space Management.

**RESOLUTION**

**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,** by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Sections 197-c and 200 of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination, and the consideration described in this report, the application submitted by the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for site selection and acquisition of four properties bounded by Stobe Avenue, Zoe and Cletus Streets, (Block 3544, Lot 1) and Stobe Avenue and Husson and Vera streets (Block 3550, Lots 1, 11, and 54), Borough of Staten Island, Community District 2, for the storage and conveyance of stormwater, is approved.

The above resolution (C 030386 PCR), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on August 27, 2003 (Calendar No.23 ), 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.

KENNETH J.KNUCKLES, ESQ., Vice-Chairman  
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.  
RICHARD W. EADDY, ALEXANDER GARVIN,  
CHRISTOPHER KUI, JOHN MEROLO, KAREN A. PHILLIPS,  
DOLLY WILLIAMS, Commissioners