



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 27, 2003/Calendar No. 14

C 030253 GFK

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Maimonides Medical Center, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for a revocable consent to construct, maintain and use an enclosed two-story bridge over 48th Street between Fort Hamilton Parkway and 10th Avenue, approximately 167 ft. westerly of Fort Hamilton Parkway connecting the Garage Warehouse building on the northerly side to the intersection of the Gellman Pavilion and Aron Building addition on the southerly side, Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 12.

The application for a revocable consent was filed by Maimonides Medical Center (MMC) on December 12, 2002, to allow the construction of an enclosed two-story bridge over 48th Street between Fort Hamilton Parkway and 10th Avenue to connect MMC's Garage Warehouse building with the intersection of the Gellman Pavilion and a new nine-story building addition to the existing Aron Building. The proposed bridge will permit MMC to operate more efficiently and modernize its medical center.

RELATED ACTIONS

In addition to the revocable consent which is the subject of this report, implementation of the proposed development also requires action by the City Planning Commission on the following which is being considered concurrently with this application:

1. N 030252 ZAK: Authorization pursuant to ZR Section 79-21 for a waiver of height, setback and rear yard equivalent requirements and the distribution of floor area without regard to zoning lot lines permitting the erection of a vestibule connecting an enclosed two-story bridge to the Garage Warehouse building and a new building on Parcel G.

BACKGROUND

Maimonides Medical Center, a 705 bed, not-for-profit, acute care teaching institution, is located in the western section of Borough Park. The MMC complex is spread over five blocks that are generally bounded by Fort Hamilton Parkway on the east, 9th Avenue on the west, 47th Street on the north and 49th Street on the south. The property is zoned R6, however the blockfronts on Fort Hamilton Parkway between 48th and 49th streets also have a C1-3 overlay.

The immediate neighborhood is fully developed and characterized by 4 to 10 story apartment buildings and 2 to 3 story semi-attached and attached row houses. There are neighborhood retail uses along Fort Hamilton Parkway.

MMC is proposing to operate more efficiently by consolidating inpatient services while improving the physical appearance of the campus. To address MMC's operational inefficiencies, the medical center is proposing a new 9-story infill building which will add approximately 76,236 square feet of floor area to the existing Aron Building located at the southeast corner of Fort Hamilton Parkway and 48th Street.

MMC's modernization program also includes the internal renovation of the Garage Warehouse building located on the north side of the campus. The grade and basement levels would be renovated to accommodate additional services. The Ambulatory Surgery Center would be relocated to the ground floor level of the Garage Warehouse building on 48th Street. A proposed enclosed two-story bridge over 48th Street would create a critical internal link between the new

inpatient surgical suite in the new addition to the Aron Building and the new ambulatory surgical suite in the Garage Warehouse building.

The proposed 48th Street bridge would be located 43'-6" above the street level, two stories high (totaling approximately 30'-0") and 10'-10" wide. Each level of the bridge will be approximately 650 (gross) square feet. The bridge construction would feature structural insulated clear glazing on both sides with structural steel cross bracing and trusses visibly seen behind the glazing. The structural steel would be painted white. The steel trusses and cross bracing would be structurally connected to the proposed Aron Building addition and the Garage Warehouse building, thereby allowing 48th Street to be free of columns.

The interior passageway ceilings would be a suspended metal pan ceiling panel system with indirect lighting incorporated. Each passageway would have handrails on both sides. The lower level handrails would consist of stainless steel railing and high translucent glass side barriers. The translucent handrail would be set back from the glass curtain wall by 8 1/2". The reflective and light transmitting aspects of this material would permit a continuity of transparency and reflectiveness while simultaneously preserving patient privacy. The translucent glass is to provide privacy for the occasional patient transfer. The upper level handrail would be a stainless steel open railing and guardrails. Lighting would be placed in the passageway ceiling. The underside of the bridge would be painted white. The surface would be smooth, enclosing structural and mechanical elements.

The lower level of the bridge, which enters the fourth floor of the Medical Center directly into the inpatient operating room suite, would create an uninterrupted, direct linkage between the inpatient operating room suite and the ambulatory surgical suite. It would provide “clean” restricted access between the two operating room suites and would be intended only for the use of patients undergoing surgery and professional staff moving between the two operating room suites.

The upper level of the bridge, which enters the fifth floor of the Medical Center, would be less restricted. It would be used by clinicians and patients attended by clinical staff who do not need to go through the inpatient operating room suite.

In addition to the application for a revocable consent (C 030253 GFK) and the related application (N 030252 ZAK) for an authorization pursuant to Section 79-21, MMC received a variance from the Board of Standards and Appeals (262-02-BZ) on January 7, 2003 for Block 5362 (Parcel G), to allow additional lot coverage and waivers for height and setback requirements on Parcel G.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 030253 GFK), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C 030252 ZAK), 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 03BSA043K. The lead agency is the Board of Standards and Appeals.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on January 7, 2003.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 030253 GFK), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C 030252 ZAK), was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on March 31, 2003, and was duly referred to Community Board 12 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 12 held a public hearing on this application on May 27, 2003, and on that date by a vote of 33 to 1 with 1 abstention, 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 July 7, 2003.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On July 2, 2003 (Calendar No. 3), the City Planning Commission scheduled July 23, 2003, for a public hearing on this application (C 030253 GFK). The hearing was duly held on July 23, 2003 (Calendar No. 20). There were four speakers in favor of the application and none in opposition.

Those speaking in favor of the application were all representatives of the applicant, including the attorney, the architect, MMC's Vice-President for Planning and MMC's Vice-Chairman. They explained why approval of the revocable consent to construct, maintain and use an enclosed two-story bridge over 48th Street between Fort Hamilton Parkway and 10th Avenue is an important component of MMC's modernization program and expansion of the medical center.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the application for a revocable consent is appropriate.

The proposed bridge is part of Maimonides Medical Center's modernization program. The proposed bridge will create a critical internal link between the new inpatient surgical suite in the new addition to the Aron Building and the new ambulatory surgical suite in the Garage Warehouse building.

The two level bridge design is based on distinct and separate uses for each of the two levels.

The applicant sent a letter to the Commission dated August 5, 2003, in response to the Commission's concerns regarding the construction of and possible alternatives to the bridge, as well as the removal of the existing pedestrian bridge over Tenth Avenue. The letter explains that construction of the bridge is critical to MMC's modernization program. The proposed bridge would allow for direct and easy movement of hospital staff and supervised patients between the new inpatient surgical suite and the new ambulatory surgical suite.

The applicant describes that, in order to limit the visual impact of the proposed bridge on the street, the bridge construction would feature structural insulated clear glazing on both sides with structural steel cross bracing and trusses visibly seen behind the glazing. The structural steel would be painted white.

The applicant states a tunnel connection as an alternative to the proposed bridge was considered. There is an existing tunnel across 48th Street connecting the Garage Warehouse building and the inpatient campus. This tunnel provides a service connection presently used for the movement of bulk materials and supplies between the hospital warehouse and receiving dock and the entire medical center campus. The applicant further states that it would be inappropriate to use this service tunnel to transport patients between ambulatory surgery and the inpatient surgical suites for the following reasons. Firstly, the floor of the present tunnel features an elongated steep grade. Secondly, the tunnel population combines public and staff activities that would result in a

less clean and less protected environment for the patients.

The option of an additional, more appropriate tunnel connection was seriously considered.

However, underground 48th Street there are a variety of infrastructures such as electrical service vaults and an existing fuel oil tank that create significant physical obstacles to development of such an additional tunnel. In addition, the construction of a new tunnel is an extremely costly project that would have a significant impact on M.C.'s modernization program.

There is an existing pedestrian bridge over Tenth Avenue between the Eisenstadt Administration Building and the Kronish Pavilion that is no longer part of M.C.'s operation and is proposed to be removed as part of the overall modernization project. The applicant stated that the proposed new bridge is not a replacement for the old bridge. M.C. plans to remove the bridge at a very early stage of the modernization process and in advance of the erection of the proposed new bridge.

RESOLUTION

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 Sections 197-c and 364 (d) of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination, and the consideration

described in this report, the application (C 030253 GFK) submitted by Maimonides Medical Center for a revocable consent, to construct, maintain and use an enclosed two-story bridge over 48th Street between Fort Hamilton Parkway and 10th Avenue, approximately 167 feet westerly of Fort Hamilton Parkway connecting the Garage Warehouse building on the northerly side to the intersection of the Gellman Pavilion and Aron Building addition on the southerly side, Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 12, is approved.

The above resolution, duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on August 27, 2003 (Calendar No.14), 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, Vice-Chairman
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E., RICHARD W. EADDY,
ALEXANDER GARVIN, CHRISTOPHER KUI, JOHN MEROLO, KAREN A. PHILIPS,
DOLLY WILLIAMS, Commissioners