



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

September 22, 2021/Calendar No. 29

N 210457 ZAQ

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**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by WF Industrial IV LLC for the grant of an authorization pursuant to Section 62-822(a) of the Zoning Resolution to modify the area and dimensional requirements of Section 62-57 (Requirements for Supplemental Public Access Areas) in connection with the construction of an approximately 495,000-square-foot motion picture studio on property located at 1 Steinway Place a.k.a. 36-01 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 814, Lots 1 and 10), in an M3-1 District, Borough of Queens, Community District 1, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-627.

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**WHEREAS**, the City Planning Commission has received an application (N 210457 ZAQ) dated May 21, 2021 from WF Industrial IV LLC, for the grant of an authorization pursuant to Section 62-822(a) of the Zoning Resolution to modify the area and dimensional requirements of Section 62-57 (Requirements for Supplemental Public Access Areas), in connection with the construction of an approximately 495,000-square-foot motion picture studio on property located at 1 Steinway Place a.k.a. 36-01 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 814, Lots 1 and 10), in an M3-1 District, Borough of Queens, Community District 1.

**WHEREAS** implementation of the project also requires the following related approvals

**C 210459 ZSQ**      Zoning special permit pursuant to ZR Section 62-837(a) to modify bulk regulations on waterfront blocks

**N 210458 ZAQ**      Zoning authorization pursuant to ZR Section 62-822(b) for modification of waterfront public access area (WPAA) and supplemental public access area (SPAA) design requirements.

**WHEREAS**, this application (N 210457 ZAQ), in conjunction with the applications for the related approvals, was duly referred to Queens Community Board 1 on July 12, 2021 in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b); and

**WHEREAS**, this application (N 210457 ZAQ), in conjunction with the applications for the related actions (C 210459 ZSQ, N 210458 ZAQ, N 210460 ZCQ), 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 21DCP196Q.

**WHEREAS** the City Planning Commission hereby makes the following findings pursuant to Section 62-822(a) of the Zoning Resolution,

- (1) such #development# would be impracticable, physically or programmatically, due to site planning constraints such as the presence of existing buildings or other structure or elements having environmental, historic, or aesthetic value to the public; and
- (2) that the reduction or waiver of requirement is the minimum necessary; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission has determined that the application warrants approval, and therefore adopts the following 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, that based on the environmental determination described in the lead report, the application submitted by WF Industrial IV LLC for the grant of an authorization pursuant to Section 62-822(a) of the Zoning Resolution to modify the area and dimensional requirements of Section 62-57 (Requirements for Supplemental Public Access Areas), in connection with the construction of an approximately 495,000-square-foot motion picture studio on property located at 1 Steinway Place a.k.a. 36-01 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 814, Lots 1 and 10), in an M3-1 District, in the Borough of Queens, Community District 1.

1. The property that is the subject of this application (N 210457 ZAQ) shall be developed substantially in accordance with the dimensions, specifications, and zoning computations indicated on the following plans prepared by Dirtworks Landscape Architecture, PC, filed with this application and incorporated into this resolution:

<b><u>Drawing No.</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Last Date Revised</u></b>
L-001	WPAA ZONING CALCULATIONS 1	May 10, 2021
L-002	WPAA ZONING CALCULATIONS 2	May 10, 2021
L-100	WATERFRONT PUBLIC ACCESS AREA DIAGRAM	May 10, 2021
L-200	MATERIALS PLAN - SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
L-201	MATERIALS PLAN - PAA	May 10, 2021
L-202	LAYOUT PLAN - SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
L-203	LAYOUT PLAN - PAA	May 10, 2021
L-300	GRADING PLAN - SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
L-301	GRADING PLAN - PAA	May 10, 2021
L-400	PLANTING PLAN - SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
L-401	PLANTING PLAN - PAA	May 10, 2021
L-500	FURNISHING PLAN - SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
L-501	FURNISHING PLAN - PAA	May 10, 2021
L-600	DETAILS	May 10, 2021
L-601	DETAILS	May 10, 2021
L-602	DETAILS - SEATING STEPS	May 10, 2021
SG-001A	SIGN LOCATION PLAN: PAA	May 10, 2021
SG-001B	SIGN LOCATION PLAN: SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
SG-301	SIGNAGE DETAILS: PAA	May 10, 2021
SG-311	SIGNAGE DETAILS: SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
LT-100	SITE LIGHTING MASTER PLAN	May 10, 2021
LT-162	LIGHTING FOOT CANDLE DIAGRAM: PAA	May 10, 2021
LT-163	LIGHTING FOOT CANDLE DIAGRAM: SPW + SPAA	May 10, 2021
L-700	SITE SECTIONS - SPW + SPAA 1	May 10, 2021
L-701	SITE ELEVATIONS - SPW + SPAA 2	May 10, 2021
L-702	SITE ELEVATIONS – PAA 2	May 10, 2021

2. Such development shall conform to all applicable provisions of the Zoning Resolution, except for the modifications specifically granted in this resolution and shown on the plans listed above which have been filed with this application. All zoning computations are subject to verification and approval by the New York City Department of Buildings.
3. Such development shall conform to all applicable laws and regulations relating to their construction, operation and maintenance.
4. All leases, subleases, or other agreements for use or occupancy of space at the subject property shall give actual notice of this authorization to the lessee, sub-lessee or occupant.
5. No development pursuant to this resolution shall be permitted until the Restrictive Declaration dated September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and executed by Adam Gordon, as a condition of the Special Permit, as well as related authorizations and Certification, is recorded and filed in the Office of the Register of the City of New York, County of New York. Such restrictive declaration shall be deemed incorporated herein.
6. Upon the failure of any party having any right, title or interest in the property that is the subject of this application, or the failure of any heir, successor, assign, or legal representative of such party, to observe any of the covenants, restrictions, agreements, terms or conditions of this resolution whose provisions shall constitute conditions of the authorization hereby granted, the City Planning Commission may, without the consent of any party, revoke any portion of or all of said authorization. Such power of revocation shall be in addition to and not limited to any other powers of the City Planning Commission, or of any other agency or government, or any private person or entity. Any such failure as stated above, or any alteration in the development that is the subject of this application that departs from any of the conditions listed above, is grounds for the City

Planning Commission or the City Council, as applicable, to disapprove any application for modification, cancellation, or amendment of the authorization hereby granted.

7. Neither the City of New York nor its employees or agents shall have any liability for money damages by reason of the city's or such employee's or agent's failure to act in accordance with the provisions of this authorization.

The above resolution (C 210457 ZAQ), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on September 22, 2021 (Calendar No. 29), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President, in accordance with the requirements of Section 62-822(a) of the Zoning Resolution.

**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq.,** *Vice Chairman*  
**DAVID BURNEY, ALLEN P. CAPPELLI ESQ., ALFRED C. CERULLO III, JOSEPH I. DOUEK, RICHARD EADDY, HOPE KNIGHT, ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN, LARISA ORTIZ, RAJ RAMPERSHAD, *Commissioners***



## City of New York Community Board #1, Queens

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Maricela Cano  
*Director, Community Boards*  
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*Chairperson*  
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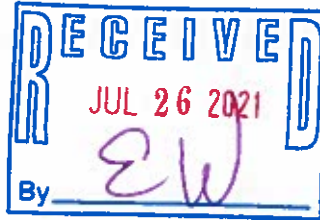
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July 19, 2021

Honorable Marisa Lago  
Chair  
NYC City Planning Commission  
120 Broadway, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10271



RE: **Wildflower Studios 35-15 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue**  
C210459 ZSQ Special Permit bulk modification on Waterfront Blocks  
N210457 ZAQ and N210458 ZAQ Authorizations modification of  
requirements for Waterfront Public Access Area.  
N210460 ZCQ CPC Chairperson Certification compliance of site plan with  
zoning regulations as modified.

Dear Chair Lago,

On June 15, 2021 Community Board 1 Queens (CB1Q) voted 35 in favor, 1 opposed, 0 abstentions and 1 present but not voting for cause on a motion to recommend approval of the four referenced actions that would facilitate the construction of a new media production facility and a Waterfront Public Access Area (WPAA) in the Steinway neighborhood of Queens Community District 1.

The Applicant, WF Industrial IV LLC, filed the following applications on May 21, 2021; The were certified and referred out for comment on June 7<sup>th</sup>:

- A CPC Special Permit (C 210459 ZSQ) to modify sections of the Zoning Resolution for lot coverage, base height and setback, maximum building height, maximum length of the building wall adjacent to a shoreline, distances between buildings and modification of ground floor streetscape requirements;
- Authorizations (N210457 ZAQ and N210458 ZAQ) to modify the size, configuration and design of the WPAA and
- A Chairperson's Certification (N210460 ZRY) that the site plan complies zoning regulations as modified.

### Project Description

The proposed Wildflower Studios will occupy a waterfront zoning lot located within the Steinway Industrial Business Zone (IBZ) immediately adjacent to Luyster (Steinway) Creek. The lot is bounded on the north by Bowery Bay, Steinway Place (38<sup>th</sup> Street) to the east and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the south and the creek to the west. The proposed project site and the Steinway Piano factory both occupy the same zoning lot that totals 491,612 SF and is zoned M3-1. The proposed studio use is classified as UG 10 motion picture, radio or television production studios.

If the applications are approved, the proposed 495,000 SF building would be 7 high stories (135 feet) and contain 11 sound stages. Uses accessory to the studios will occupy a central core of the building. Accessory parking (320 spaces) and loading areas (26 berths) would be enclosed on the ground level of the building with two vehicular and two pedestrian entrances to the building from 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

A 34,800 SF landscaped Waterfront Public Access Area (WPAA) will be constructed along Luyster Creek and along 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The open space would be accessible to the public, landscaped and contain seating areas. The WPAA will contain bioswales, coastal vegetation and multiple levels of plantings that will create a landscape for shore birds, safe nesting areas and pollinator-friendly plantings. Although there will be no physical access to the Creek due to SDEC tidal wetlands restrictions, wood-decking overlooks will be permitted for visual access to the water with signage placed at the shoreline providing information about plantings and wildlife. The proposed development expects to generate 1,100 jobs. Building foundation is expected to be completed September, 2021 with occupancy in 2023.

### Committee Review

The applicant met with the Land Use Committee February 3<sup>rd</sup>, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and June 2, 2021. The initial meeting focused on creating a joint effort to clean up Luyster Creek with the goal of increasing access to the water in this part of the District; coordinating with DSNY to extend the Luyster Creek WPAA to the Sanitation Garage site across the creek; designing an approach to the WPAA on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue that draws people toward the water and connects with the nearby Little League sports fields on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue at 37<sup>th</sup> Street;

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providing more educational and recreational programming along the waterfront and connecting with area technical schools and local artists; how Studio traffic will impact the Little League sports fields; increasing the size of the WPAA beyond the 40 ft. minimum; hours of access to open space and possible bulkhead treatments that would enhance remediation of the creek.

The Wildflower team responded to the Committee's issues in a letter dated February 16, 2021 and returned on March 3<sup>rd</sup> to give an update on their meetings with DSNY, DOT and DEP. They provided DSNY with plans for the WPAA, but DSNY claimed budget constraints prohibited a shoreline walkway into their project design. The team also described in more detail the sustainability measures for the building and justified the requested waivers as they related to the studio's program and building design. Suggestions were made to again work with DOT and the 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue owners to enhance the street-end treatment around the creek (remove concrete barrier) and join efforts with the community in the near future to get city support for extending the WPAA.

On June 2, 2021 the Committee was updated and passed a motion to recommend approval with no conditions 8 in favor, 1 opposed and 0 abstentions. The Committee also requested the Applicant's help in coordinating efforts with DEP, DOT, SDEC and DSNY to extend the WPAA around Luyster Creek and initiate cleanup of the waterway.

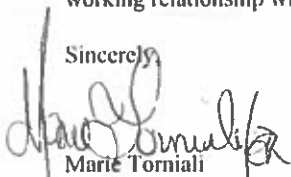
Expecting the applications to be certified and referred out for comment on June 7, 2021, the Applicant updated the Committee on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. On that date the Committee passed a motion with no conditions to recommend approval to the Board. Due to a technical issue, however, the applications were recertified on July 12, 2021 before the Board's June 15<sup>th</sup> public hearing. The delay did not alter the applications that were reviewed or advertised for public hearing by the Community Board.

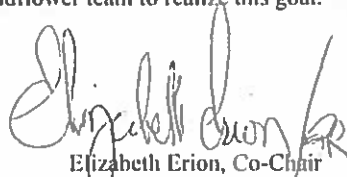
#### Community Board Public Hearing

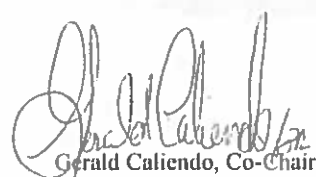
On June 15, 2021, the Wildflower Studio project team presented their proposal at the CB1Q public hearing. Board Members had received a written Land Use Committee report and after the presentation, one member made a statement in support of the project noting of the jobs generated, the off-street loading and that the applications for the waivers requested were reasonable. Four other Board Members asked questions about hiring local residents, wage scales and union coverage for jobs, security around the waterfront area, results of soil sample tests and mitigation measures and suggestions for shoreline treatments that would aid in clean up. There were no speakers from the general public and the hearing was closed.

The almost unanimous vote to approve the Wildflower Studios project was followed with a request to the Applicant to help coordinate community efforts with City agencies to devise a plan for extending the WPAA around Luyster Creek and initiating cleanup of the waterway. Creating new waterfront access points along the district's shoreline has long been a priority for the Board and local organizations. We believe the timing of the studio project with the design of the new QW1 Sanitation Garage across the Creek, present a unique opportunity for joint efforts that will ultimately benefit the community, the environment, Wildflower Studios and surrounding IBZ businesses. The Board and its committees look forward to establishing a long-lasting working relationship with the Wildflower team to realize this goal.

Sincerely,

  
Marie Tornali  
Chairperson

  
Elizabeth Erion, Co-Chair  
Land Use and Zoning Committee

  
Gerald Caliendo, Co-Chair  
Land Use and Zoning Committee

cc: Honorable Donovan Richards, Queens Borough President  
Honorable Michael Gianaris  
Honorable Jessica Ramos  
Honorable Zohran Mamdani  
Honorable Catherine Nolan  
Honorable Brian Barnwell  
Honorable Jimmy Van Bramer  
Mr. Frank B. Perez, New York City Council, District 22  
Mr. Irving Poy, Director, Land Use, BPQ  
Ms. Alexis Wheeler, Director, Queens Office DCP  
Ms. Sarit Platkin, DCP  
Ms. Maricela Cano, QBP, Director of Community Boards  
Mr. Joseph Nocerino, QBP, Office Representative  
Mr. Rafael DeNiro, WF Industrial IV LLC  
Mr. Alan Horton, WF Industrial IV LLC  
Mr. Daniel Sundlin, Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) Architecture  
Mr. Britt Zuckerman, Dirtworks Landscape Architecture  
Ms. Rachel Scall, GreenbergTraurig  
Mr. Nick Hockens, GreenbergTraurig

# Queens Borough President Recommendation

**APPLICATION: ULURP #210459 ZSQ**

**COMMUNITY BOARD: Q01**

**DOCKET DESCRIPTION**

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by WF Industrial IV LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the grant of a special permit pursuant to Section 62-837 of the Zoning Resolution to modify the height and setback, maximum width of walls facing shoreline and the ground floor streetscape requirements of Section 62-341 (Development on Land and Platforms), in connection with the construction of an approximately 495,000 square-foot motion picture studio, on property located at 1 Steinway Place a.k.a. 36-01 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 814, Lots 1 and 10) in an M3-1 District, Borough of Queens, Community District 1.

Plans for this proposal are on file with the City Planning Commission and may be seen at 120 Broadway, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor, New York, NY, 10271. (Related ULURP # 210457 ZAQ, 210458 ZAQ, 210460 ZCQ, 210461 LDQ);

**PUBLIC HEARING**

A hybrid Public Hearing was held by the Borough President at 120-55 Queens Boulevard and via Zoom webinar livestreamed on [www.queensbp.org](http://www.queensbp.org) on Thursday, July 1, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. pursuant to Section 82(5) of the New York City Charter and was duly advertised in the manner specified in Section 197-c (i) of the New York City Charter. The applicant made a presentation. There were no other speakers. The hearing was closed.

**CONSIDERATION**

Subsequent to a review of the application and consideration of testimony received at the public hearing, the following issues and impacts have been identified:

- This application is for a special permit which proposes a bulk modification to change minimum setback and maximum base height requirements ( Zoning Resolution Sections 62-341(a)(2) and 62-341(c)(1)) to allow a 135 foot building to rise without setbacks as well as modification of required maximum length of walls facing the shoreline in ZR Section 62-341(c)(5) to allow walls to exceed 100 feet by 320 feet on one side of the building and by 25 feet on the adjacent wall. The proposed actions would facilitate development of a 495,000 SF media production studio at 35-15 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, containing 11 sound stages and accessory facilities, with publicly accessible areas along 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Luyster Creek;
- ULURP #N210457 ZAQ concurrently filed with this application seeks a modification to change the required shore public walkway area in an M3-1 District from 15% of the site floor area to 7% and a modification to change the average width of supplemental publicly-accessible area (PAA) from 25 feet to 22 feet;
- ULURP #N210458 ZAQ concurrently filed with this application seeks a modification of design requirements within the Waterfront PAA and supplemental PAA to facilitate restoration of habitat, natural shoreline, and native plantings while still providing sufficient public access;
- ULURP #N210460 ZCQ seeks certification to confirm the site plan for the proposed project complies with ZR 62-50 and 62-60 as modified even with no visual corridors on site;
- ULURP #N210461 LDQ for a legal document from Steinway, Inc. (adjacent property owner) acknowledging the Wildflower Studio applications and stating ownership of 42,244 SF (Block 814, p/o Lot 1) that is included in the proposed project area;
- The proposed development is a 7-story, 495,000 SF media production studio with 11 sound stages vertically stacked two levels above one story of accessory off-street parking and loading space. Due to industry standards, each sound stage will each be roughly 18,000 SF. The building's core would house all accessory uses and approximately 33 freight elevators that directly connect each sound stage to loading berths. The ground floor would contain two lobbies, reception areas, and parking and loading spaces. Most of the ground floor would be wet flood-proofed except for the lobbies which would be dry flood-proofed. In total, there will be 310 parking spaces and 26 loading berths. Additionally, there would be two vehicular access points, both allowing ingress and egress to the site, on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue: a 60 foot wide curb cut located 480 feet west of Steinway Place and a 30 foot wide curb cut located 360 feet west of Steinway Place. A shuttle bus traveling to and from the Ditmars Boulevard Station to the proposed building's main entrance would run every 20 minutes during morning and evening rush hours plus additional times determined by demand. The application received an E-designation (E-627) for air quality and therefore will undergo remediation before any construction begins;
- There would be two publicly accessible areas (PAA) with a total area of 34,800 SF. An approximately 16 foot setback from the 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue sidewalk would contain a 4,200 SF Sidewalk PAA with paved pathway, 1,910 SF of plantings, and a seating area. The 30,600 SF Waterfront PAA is an approximately 40 foot wide walkway between the Luyster Creek waterfront and proposed building and includes 19,415 SF of planted area, an overlook of the creek, seating, bioswales, and educational signage;
- The project site is located within an existing M3-1 District and is bounded by Luyster Creek to the west, Bowery Bay to the north and east, and Berrian Boulevard and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the south. It is comprised of



QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION  
ULURP #210459 ZSQ

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two tax lots (Block 814 Lot 1 and 10) in a single zoning lot with a total area of 491,612 SF. The applicant owns Lot 10 which has an area of 228,693 SF and is currently unimproved. Lot 10 has ~435 feet of frontage along 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 475 feet of frontage along Luyster Creek. Lot 1 is instead owned by Steinway Inc. and has an area of 262,919 SF. It is improved with one to five-story buildings, including Steinway Piano Factory. There is 350 feet of frontage along 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 590 feet along Steinway Place. The applicant intends to acquire 42,244 SF of floor area from Steinway Inc. to use for the project. Steinway Inc. submitted a letter to Community Board 1 (CB 1) stating that Wildflower does not have the right to utilize that floor area unless Steinway Inc. agrees to its purchase and the closing of such acquisition has occurred. The existing site is situated both within the Steinway Industrial Business Zone (IBZ) and the 1% annual chance flood plain;

- The surrounding area within a 400 foot radius consists of a mix of industrial and manufacturing buildings ranging one to two stories. The area one block south of the development site, comprised of 238 blocks, underwent a rezoning in 2010. Nearby facilities include the Astoria Energy Power Plant north of the site, DEP Bowery Bay Wastewater Plant to the northeast, and approximately 8 acres of private soccer and baseball fields to the south. The site is situated close to the Q101 and Q100 bus stops and a mile from the N and W lines at Ditmars Station;
- Community Board 1's (CB 1) Land Use Committee (LUC) approved the application by a vote of eight (8) in favor, one (1) against, and none (0) abstaining on June 2, 2021. At their monthly meeting held on June 15, 2021, CB 1 approved the application with thirty-five (35) in favor, one (1) opposed, and one (1) abstaining. CB 1 stated they would like to work with the developers to coordinate waterfront cleanup and beautification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue sidewalk;
- In December 2020, the City Council approved a DSNY proposal to construct a new garage and salt shed across from the project site on the opposite side of Luyster Creek. CB 1 had requested that DSNY create publicly accessible area along the waterfront. Waterfront access is scarce in Community District 1 and therefore they would like to see both Wildflowers Studio and DSNY work together to create one connected waterfront pathway;
- At the Borough President's Land Use Public Hearing, the Borough President brought up questions regarding waterfront access, jobs, and community outreach. The Wildflowers Studio team stated they had previously met with DSNY. Although funding for DSNY's portion of the waterfront had been uncertain at their last meeting, Wildflowers remains ready and willing to work with DSNY, other city agencies, and CB 1 to join their waterfront areas. The Borough President stated that he would follow up with the agencies about getting funding in place for the waterfront access;
- The applicant team also estimated the creation of 600 construction jobs, and between 1000 to 1200 predominantly union employees per day once the building was fully operational. Regarding outreach to local community-based organizations, the applicant has already reached out to tenant groups in nearby NYCHA housing, Girls and Boys Club, Urban Upbound, as well as LaGuardia Community College and Frank Sinatra High School for the Arts to discuss potential internship opportunities. The Borough President invited Wildflowers to use events such as the Borough President's Office Virtual Queens Jobs Recruitment Fair to spread word of employment opportunities. The Borough President also recommended connecting with local restaurants and other nearby small business. Wildflowers Studio acknowledged and embraces their proximity to diverse food and amenities in Astoria and would strongly encourage employees to eat locally. They have already contacted United Community Civic Association to introduce them to local business owners;
- Council Member Constantinides submitted a letter to the Chair of Community Board 1 expressing his support for the project;

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above consideration, I hereby recommend approval of this application with the following conditions:

- There should be a minimum goal of 30% for local hiring and use of MWBE businesses in the construction and development of this project. There should also be quarterly reporting on the numbers of people hired and if the 30% is reached. The applicant has stated they will seek union labor and have already begun to work towards these goals and should continue to follow through with the agreements as they make further progress;
- Motion picture and television production together with all the ancillary support services are robust industries that are an important growing segment of the Queens and NYC economy. Wildflower Studios should offer internship opportunities for local public school and college students to assure that Queens and NYC residents study and are prepared with the skills and knowledge required to have careers in all aspects of motion picture and television production.



PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

July 29, 2021

DATE

WF Industrial IV LLC  
c/o Wildflower Ltd LLC  
80 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ste. 1602  
New York, New York 10011

August 17, 2021

**VIA EMAIL**

Honorable Donovan Richards  
Queens Borough President  
Queens Borough Hall  
120-55 Queens Boulevard  
Kew Gardens, New York 11424

Re: Wildflower Studios Special Permit, Authorizations and Certification (ULURP Nos. C210459ZSQ, N210457ZQA, N210458ZQA and N210460ZCQ)

Dear Borough President Richards:

We are the applicant with respect to the above-referenced actions seeking a special permit for bulk relief and waterfront authorizations and a certification related to waterfront public open space, required for construction of Wildflower Studios, a proposed 11-sound-stage, 495,000 sf film and television production studio to be located at 35-15 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 814, Lot 10) in Astoria. These applications were the subject of your public hearing on July 1, 2021, and we are receipt of your July 29, 2021 recommendation in favor of the applications. This letter responds to the two conditions upon which you based your favorable recommendation:

- *There should be a minimum goal of 30% for local hiring and use of MWBE businesses in the construction and development of this project. There should also be quarterly reporting on the numbers of people hired and if the 30% is reached. The applicant has stated they will seek union labor and have already begun to work towards these goals and should continue to follow through with the agreements as they make further progress.*

We are committed to the minimum goal of 30 percent local hiring and use of MWBE businesses in the construction of Wildflower Studios. Wildflower Studios will benefit from an ICAP property tax abatement. To be eligible for these benefits, we are required to comply with Local Law 67, which, among other things, requires that we reach out to and solicit a minimum three bids from MWBEs for all major construction contracts and subcontracts. Thus far we have awarded our site security contract to an MBE, and we are continuing to solicit bids from MWBEs, as well as local firms, as we prepare to move forward with construction of the Studio. We will provide your office with copies of our ICAP reporting documentation as we move forward with construction and work towards the goal of 30 percent local hiring and use of MWBE businesses.

To ensure local hiring, we are working with Urban Upbound to develop a workforce development program that will help local residents, with a focus on local NYCHA residents, obtain training to assist with job placement on our project and future local construction projects. We have also reached out to the Astoria Houses Tenant Association about their job fairs and recruiting opportunities, and anticipate further outreach to local NYCHA tenant associations through our work with Urban Upbound. We will also be sponsoring placement and tuition for local residents, with an emphasis on residents of NYCHA's western Queens campuses, in electrical and plumbing certificate programs at LaGuardia Community College.

We anticipate that the majority of the more than 1,000 permanent jobs at the Studio will be union jobs. This includes the building's 150 to 200 service workers, and we now have an agreement in place with 32BJ.

- *Motion picture and television production together with the ancillary support services are robust industries that are an important growing segment of the Queens and NYC economy. Wildflower Studios should offer internship opportunities for local public school and college students to assure that Queens and NYC residents study and are prepared with the skills and knowledge required to have careers in all aspects of motion picture and television production.*

We met with faculty of Frank Sinatra School of the Arts High School and with faculty from LaGuardia Community College's film and television program and adult continuing education to discuss how best we can provide meaningful opportunities to their students. As detailed in the enclosed letters, we are committed to working with Frank Sinatra's faculty to coordinate guest speakers and support internship programs and to work with LaGuardia's faculty to support the creation of a new production assistant training program targeting a diverse workforce.

Sincerely,

WF INDUSTRIAL IV LLC

  
By: Raphael De Niro

Cc: Chair Marisa Lago, City Planning Commission  
Sarit Platkin, Department of City Planning  
Alexis Wheeler, Department of City Planning  
Nick Hockens, Greenberg Traurig, LLP  
Rachel Scall, Greenberg Traurig, LLP

WF Industrial IV LLC  
c/o Wildflower Ltd LLC  
80 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ste. 1602  
New York, New York 10011

August 4, 2021

**VIA EMAIL**

Gideon Frankel, Principal  
Frank Sinatra School of the Arts High School  
35-12 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Queens, New York 11106

Re: Wildflower Studios

Dear Gideon,

It was a pleasure meeting with you and your colleagues last month and touring Frank Sinatra School of the Arts' impressive facility. Based on our discussions, we believe there are a number of ways in which Wildflower Studios can serve as a resource for Frank Sinatra students. In particular, we are excited to work with you and your colleagues to develop an on-going program of presentations and workshops at the School. We understand the importance, to your students and the School's mission, of helping students see a place for themselves in the arts and entertainment industries by hearing from experienced technical and backstage crew members and female and BIPOC industry leaders. We are also intrigued by your partnership with Local 52 to provide a real means of internship placement for your students and would like to support those continued efforts.

I look forward to returning to the School in the fall when classes are in session, and to helping celebrate the School's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Best regards,



Raphael De Niro

Cc: Queens Borough President Donovan Richards  
Chair Marisa Lago, City Planning Commission  
Nick Hockens, Greenberg Traurig, LLP

WF Industrial IV LLC  
c/o Wildflower Ltd LLC  
80 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ste. 1602  
New York, New York 10011

August 17, 2021

**VIA EMAIL**

LaGuardia Community College  
3110 Thomson Ave.  
Long Island City, NY 11101  
Attn: Sunil Gupta, Jason Schafer and David Stott

Re: Wildflower Studios

Dear Vice President Gupta and Professors Schafer and Stott,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with our team over the past two months to discuss LaGuardia Community College's Empire State Development grant proposal to create a production assistant training program that will provide full scholarship opportunities to local Queens residents looking to start a career in the media and entertainment industry. We agree that there is a pressing need for production training programs in Queens, where the number of film and television production opportunities continues to grow. This is especially true of training programs that will benefit a diverse workforce that has not always had access to these opportunities. We are excited that Wildflower Studios' 11 proposed sound stages will be opening at the same time your first cohort will be completing their training and hope we can help match students with their first jobs in the industry.

We also understand the importance of having industry professionals visit your campus to speak with students. Our team is happy to meet with your students to discuss what goes into the development of a new television and production studio. Once Wildflower Studios is up and running, we will work with you and users of the Studio to identify professionals from a range of disciplines and specialties who can come speak to LaGuardia's Film and Television Production students.

We look forward to speaking with you in the future and are excited to see the opportunities you will create for your future production assistant students.

Best regards,

WF Industrial IV LLC

By:   
Name: Raphael De Niro

Cc: Claudia Chan, LaGuardia Community College  
Queens Borough President Donovan Richards  
Chair Marisa Lago, City Planning Commission  
Nick Hockens, Greenberg Traurig, LLP  
Rachel Scall, Greenberg Traurig, LLP