



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

January 6, 2010/Calendar No. 18

C 100071 PCR

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 properties generally bounded by Nugent Street, Aultman and Lighthouse Avenues, and St. George Road (Block 2274, Lots 6, 8, 13, 24, 27, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38) for the storage and conveyance of storm water, Community District 2, Borough of Staten Island.

The application for site selection and acquisition of ten privately owned lots, totaling 1.29 acres, was filed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) on August 21, 2009, for the conveyance and storage of stormwater. On October 15, 2009, the application was revised to remove Block 2260, p/o Lot 71.

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. The Plan indicated that sewers would be located in streets mapped in the beds of streams which constitute the low points in the drainage basins. After more than 40 years, the Plan is obsolete.

Much of South Richmond, as well as parts of Mid-Staten Island, continue 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 (DCP) 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." 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 Richmondtown area, is part of this process and is within the Richmond Creek drainage system. This application is the third phase of actions involving Richmond Creek, the first of which was approved by the City Planning Commission on March 31, 1993 (C 920350 PCR) and the second of which was approved by the City Planning Commission on November 25, 1998 (C 980586 PCR). Neither of the first two phases had included the subject parcels of this application.

The Richmond Creek parcels, the subject of this application, are associated with the Richmond Creek watershed and covered by the Richmond Creek Drainage Plan. The application as certified, included property located on Block 2260, p/o Lot 71. The application was revised to remove this property because this lot was already protected by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation freshwater wetland status. The properties that are the subject of this application are all privately owned and vacant and range in size from 4,000 to 10,000 square feet. . The watershed includes the neighborhoods of Northern Great Kills, Richmondtown, Lighthouse Hill and Egbertville. The parcels are part of the Richmond Creek

Wetland System, AR-3. This application will ensure the preservation of important buffer properties immediately adjacent or across the street from existing DEP holdings in the Richmond Creek Bluebelt.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 100071 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 10DEP007R. 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 100071 PCR) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on September 21, 2009 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 October 20, 2009, and on that

date by a vote of 29 to 0 with 1 abstention, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application with the following modification:

” Block 2260, Lot 71 was excluded from the application when NYSDERC released their final site plan and showed the property to be acquired in a no disturbance area.”

Borough President Recommendation

This application was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving the application on November 2, 2009 with the following modification:

“It is my understanding that properties situated in Tax Block 2260, p/o Lot 71 and the bed of St. Andrew’s Road from Ascot Avenue to Call Street have been removed from the application.”

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On November 18, 2009 (Calendar No. 8), the City Planning Commission scheduled December 2, 2009, for a public hearing on this application (C 100071 PCR). The hearing was duly held on December 2, 2009 (Calendar No. 19).

There was one speaker in favor, a representative of DEP, who discussed this application. He noted the importance of acquiring these parcels for the Bluebelt. There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the application for site selection and acquisition of privately-owned property in Richmondtown 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 objective of the Richmond Creek stormwater management plan is 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 watershed 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 wetlands and streams of the watershed. This protects and preserves natural open space corridors while providing a cost effective stormwater 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 required immediate action due to development pressures while overall master planning for the Bluebelt proceeds. This application continues acquisition in the Richmond Creek watershed.

In the next two phases, a comprehensive stormwater management/ drainage plan will be redesigned to replace the previous plan for stormwater sewers with the current/new plan for a bluebelt system. It has already been completed for several individual drainage basins, including the first two acquisitions in the Richmond Creek watershed. 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 sites for stormwater management is consistent with the goals of DCP's 1989 report on the South Richmond Open Space Network, An Agenda for Action: Stormwater and Open Space Management. Therefore, the Commission believes this application for site selection and acquisition is appropriate.

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Sections 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination, and the consideration described in this report, the application, C 100071 PCR 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 properties generally bounded by Nugent Street, Aultman and Lighthouse Avenues, and St, George Road (Block 2274, Lots 6, 8, 13, 24, 27, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38), Community District 2, Borough of Staten Island for the storage

and conveyance of storm water, is approved.

The above resolution (C 100071 PCR), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on January 6, 2010 (Calendar No. 18), 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, FAICP., Chair

RAYANN BESSER, ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, BETTY Y. CHEN, MARIA M. DEL TORO,
RICHARD W. EADDY, SHIRLEY A. McCRAE, KAREN A. PHILLIPS,
Commissioners