



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

October 7, 2008/Calendar No. 16

N 090020 BDM

IN THE MATTER of an application submitted by the Department of Small Business Services on behalf of the Hudson Square Business Improvement District pursuant to Section 25-405 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, as amended, concerning the formation of the Hudson Square Business Improvement District, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 2.

On June 13, 2008, the Mayor authorized the preparation of a district plan for the Hudson Square Business Improvement District (BID). On July 8, 2008, on behalf of the Hudson Square District Management Association (DMA), the Department of Small Business Services (DSBS) submitted the district plan for the BID, located in Community District 2 in the Borough of Manhattan.

BACKGROUND

The proposed Hudson Square BID is located in the Borough of Manhattan. The BID boundaries are West Houston Street to the north, Avenue of the Americas to the east, Canal Street to the south, and Greenwich Street to the west. The proposed district is within Community District 2 and City Council District 3.

The District represents 187 tax lots and 122 property owners. There are 49 residential properties and 18 not for profit/government properties that include the New York City Fire Museum. The area is comprised of a mix of advertising, architectural, graphic arts, media and entertainment businesses.

The services of the BID will primarily focus on traffic management and streetscape plans. It will also focus on a retail and marketing plan to attract businesses to the area.

The first year budget for the BID is projected to be \$2,500,000. The budget will allocate \$400,000 to traffic management; \$300,000 to streetscape; \$150,000 to retail and marketing; \$50,000 to sanitation; \$1,235,000 towards contingency and \$365,000 to administration.

The BID assessment method is based upon square footage. Commercial properties and parking lots will be assessed at \$0.19 per square foot. Residential and vacant properties will be assessed at one dollar annually. Government and not-for-profit owned property devoted in whole to public or not-for-profit use shall be exempt from assessment.

Outreach to property owners, merchants and residents was done by the Hudson Square Steering Committee. The BID has obtained support from 67 percent assessed value property owners.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The district plan 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 State Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq., and the New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 08SBS011M. The lead agency is the Department of Small Business Services.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a negative declaration was issued on July 3, 2008.

LAND USE REVIEW

On July 8, 2008 the Department of Small Business Services submitted the district plan for the Hudson Square Business Improvement District (BID) to the Department of City Planning. The plan was then transmitted for review to the Office of the Mayor, Office of the Manhattan Borough President, City Council Speaker, City Council Member of Council District 3 and Manhattan Community Board 2.

Community Board Public Hearing

On July 24, 2008, Community Board 2 adopted a resolution recommending approval of this application (N 090020 BDM), by a vote of 31 in favor, with 0 opposed and 4 abstentions.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On September 10, 2008, Calendar No. 2 the Commission scheduled September 24, 2008 for a public hearing on the district plan. On September 24, 2008 (Calendar No. 24), the hearing was duly held. There were four speakers in favor of the proposal and none in opposition.

The chair of the Hudson Square BID Steering Committee spoke about the outreach for the BID. She stated that the three major concerns of the property owners and commercial tenants were traffic issues, lack of retail options and the need for a streetscape plan. A BID consultant spoke about the underlying issues for why the BID is needed which included the high retail vacancy rate, lack of a brand or image and the need for a streetscape plan to bring the whole image of a vital business area together.

A property owner spoke about the history of the area and how he supports the BID. He stated that the BID would promote economic sustainability for the area. A business owner spoke about the need for a traffic and streetscape plan and how it would make the area more viable.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

Consideration

The Commission believes that the proposal to establish the Hudson Square Business Improvement District in Manhattan is appropriate.

The Commission has carefully reviewed the documents that the BID sponsor submitted regarding notification of stakeholders about the proposed BID and believes that these outreach efforts for the BID were satisfactory.

BIDs are important to the City because they promote healthy economic development for the City and help retain and attract businesses to the District.

Resolution

The Commission supports the proposed plan and has adopted the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission certifies its unqualified approval of the district plan for the Hudson Square Business Improvement District.

The above resolution duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on October 7, 2008 (Calendar No. 16) is filed with the City Council and the City Clerk pursuant to Section 25-405 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair

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