



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

March 22, 2006/Calendar No. 16

C 060087 PCQ

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Queens Borough Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for site selection and acquisition of property located at 95-08-14 Astoria Boulevard, for an expansion of a library, Borough of Queens, Community District 3.

This application (C 060087 PCQ) was filed on August 17, 2005, by the Queens Borough Public Library (QBPL) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) for site selection and acquisition of property located at 95-08-14 Astoria Boulevard (Block 1375, Lot 5) in Community District 3, Borough of Queens to facilitate expansion of a library.

BACKGROUND

The Queens Borough Public Library (QBPL) proposes to expand an existing 7,500 square feet, one-story facility built in 1972, adding approximately 4,500 square feet of floor area, through the acquisition of an adjacent lot to allow room for a meeting space and computer related uses. This vacant parcel, located at 95-08-14 Astoria Boulevard (Block 1375, Lot 5), is approximately 5,640 square feet in area and currently used for the storage of derelict automobiles. Both the existing library building and proposed expansion site are zoned R3-2 and have a C1-2 overlay. Another public library (Langston Hughes Community Library) operated by QBPL is located approximately one-half mile to the south on Northern Boulevard.

The site is and is adjacent to the existing library building. Lots east of the parcel on Astoria Boulevard have been developed with mixed-use residential and retail buildings. The surrounding area is characterized by mixed-use development on Astoria Boulevard, semi-detached and attached one- and two-family buildings on local streets south of the site. North of the retail development on the boulevard, lots are developed with predominately detached, single-family homes.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 060087 PCQ) 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 New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 6QPL001Q. The lead agency is the Queens Borough Public Library.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a negative declaration was issued on July 26, 2005.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 060087 PCQ) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on October 31, 2005, and was duly referred to Community Board 3 and the Borough President of Queens in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 3 held a public hearing on this application (C 060087 PCQ) on February 16, 2006, and on that date, by a vote of 29 to 0, with no abstentions adopted a resolution recommending approval of this application with the condition that the “lot be cleaned up and the derelict cars removed as soon as the City takes possession of the property.”

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 060087 PCQ) was considered by the Borough President of Queens, who issued a recommendation approving this application on March 1, 2006.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On February 8, 2006 (Calendar No. 6), the City Planning Commission scheduled February 22, 2006, for a public hearing on this application. The hearing was duly held on February 22, 2006 (Calendar No. 32). A representative from the Queens Borough Public Library spoke on the behalf of the library expansion as the existing facility does not have adequate meeting space and is too small for student programs that require computers. There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

Consideration

The City Planning Commission believes that the application of the Queens Borough Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services for the acquisition of property located at 95-08-14 Astoria Boulevard (Block 1375, Lot 5), for the expansion of an existing library is appropriate.

The East Elmhurst Public Library which has operated at this location since 1972 and has an existing floor area of 7,500 square feet is of insufficient size for present day usage and prevents the library from having more programs and providing better service, including technological enhancements, for its users. The proposed acquisition of this parcel to allow a 4,500 square feet expansion to the existing building will provide the Queens Borough Public Library with an increased ability to better serve a growing, immigrant, bi-lingual community with expanded services and programs. Funding for this project by the Queens Borough

President's capital budget has been committed in FY 05-06 for the purposes of site acquisition, design and construction.

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 Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and consideration described in this report, the application submitted by the Queens Borough Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, for site selection and acquisition of property located at 95-08-14 Astoria Boulevard (Block 1375, Lot 5), Community District 3, Borough of Queens, for expansion of the existing library building, is approved.

The above resolution, duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on March 22, 2006 (Calendar No. 16), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President of Queens, in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair

KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice Chairman

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Commissioners