



## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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August 24, 2011 / Calendar No. 23

C110272HAQ

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**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD):

- 1.) pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:
  - a) the designation of property located at 58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard (Block 15926 Lot 44, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
  - b) an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area;
- 2.) pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the disposition of a portion of such property (Block 15926, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) to a developer to be selected by HPD;

to facilitate the rehabilitation of an existing two-story building for community facility use and accessory outdoor activity space in the Borough of Queens, Community District 14.

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Approval of three separate matters is required:

1. The designation of property located at 58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard (Block 15926 Lot 44, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
2. An Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
3. The disposition of a portion of such property (Block 15926, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) to a developer selected by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

The application for the Urban Development Action Area designation, project approval, and disposition of city-owned property was submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) on March 30, 2011.

Approval of this application would facilitate the rehabilitation of a two-story former firehouse for community facility use and accessory outdoor activity space.

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development states in its application that:

The project area consists of underutilized vacant property that tends to impair or arrest the sound development of the surrounding community, with or without tangible physical blight. Incentives are needed in order to induce the correction of these substandard,

insanitary, and blighting conditions. The project activities would protect and promote health and safety and would promote sound growth and development. The project area is therefore eligible to be an Urban Development Action Area and the proposed project is therefore eligible to be an Urban Development Action Area Project pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law.

## **RELATED ACTIONS**

In addition to the Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP) designation which is the subject of this report, implementation of the proposed development also requires action by the Chairperson of the City Planning Commission on the following which are being considered concurrently with this application:

**N 120040 ZCQ** Certification pursuant to Section 62-811 of the Zoning Resolution that there are no requirements for a waterfront public access area or visual corridor.

**N 120041 ZCQ** Certification pursuant to Section 62-812 of the Zoning Resolution for a zoning lot subdivision.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) seeks approval of an Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP) designation, project approval, and disposition of portions of two City-owned lots. The project site is an assemblage of all or portions of three City-owned lots (Block 15926, Lot 44, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) with a total area of 17,193 square feet located in the Arverne neighborhood of Queens Community District 14, within the Arverne Urban Renewal Area. The project site is zoned R6/C2-4 and is located on a block bounded by Rockaway Beach Boulevard to the north, Beach 59<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, the Rockaway Beach Boardwalk to the south, and Beach 56<sup>th</sup> Place to the east.

The project site is currently developed with a two-story, 7,200 square foot vacant firehouse (Block 15926, Lot 44). The firehouse was vacated in November, 2004, when FDNY Engine Company 265 and Ladder 121 relocated to a new facility approximately eight blocks to the east. The firehouse was previously approved for disposition by the City Planning Commission on April 9, 2007 (C070136PPQ) and by the City Council on May 30, 2007. The lot was subsequently transferred to HPD, a hold was placed on the property, and a community steering committee was formed to determine an appropriate reuse for the building. Initially, a vocational

school geared to the construction trades was contemplated for the site; however a viable operator could not be identified.

The proposed actions would facilitate the conversion of the existing building to community facility use. HPD intends to dispose the project site to the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance (RWA), a local not-for profit organization which was awarded the site in 2009. The Rockaway Waterfront Alliance is planning to rehabilitate the building to expand its existing community-based educational and recreational programming and add new initiatives including programs for seniors, film screenings, a weekly farmer's market, and green-collar job training.

In addition to Lot 44, the project site also includes approximately 7,896 square feet of Lot 100; and 2,505 square feet of Lot 200 that are proposed for disposition as a part of this application. Both lots are currently vacant and undeveloped, and under HPD jurisdiction and management.

Two certifications by the Chairperson of the City Planning Commission are also required to facilitate the proposed development. The first action (N 120040 ZCQ) is a certification that the proposed development of the project site is exempt from the waterfront public access area and visual corridor requirements. The second action (N 120041 ZCQ) is a certification to subdivide Lot 200 into two zoning lots.

The proposed rehabilitation plans would provide the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance with a flexible multi-purpose space for hosting events and exhibits on the first floor of the building and with classroom, lab, and office space on the second floor. The proposed plans also include an approximately 340 square foot enlargement of the existing building in the form of enclosed exterior stairways required as additional means of egress. The portions of the two adjacent City-owned lots proposed for disposition as a part of this application would be attractively landscaped as used as outdoor activity space.

The area surrounding the project site is primarily developed with a mix of one- and two-family buildings, multi-family apartment buildings, vacant land, and open space. Ocean Village, a 1,091-unit Mitchell Lama apartment complex, is located just south of the project site. The

project site is in close proximity to the natural and open space resources of the Rockaway Peninsula. Rockaway Beach and the Atlantic Ocean are located one block to the south of the site and Jamaica Bay is located three blocks to the north. The project site also has good access to mass transit. Mass transit access is provided by the elevated A train line and its Beach 60<sup>th</sup> Street Station, located across Rockaway Beach Boulevard from the project site.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C110272HAQ) 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 11HPD005Q. The lead agency is the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on February 4, 2011.

## **Uniform Land Use Review**

This application (C110272HAQ) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on April 11, 2011 and was duly referred to Community Board 14 and the Borough President, in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b).

## **Community Board Public Hearing**

Community Board 14 held a public hearing on this application on June 14, 2011, and on that date by a vote of 29 to 3 with 1 abstention, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application, subject to the following comment:

The Board would oppose RWA renting the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor space for unrelated uses. RWA added this use at the night of the Bd mtg. Our concern would be social service uses like homeless, drug, medical or mental health type uses. (Food pantry as well.)

### **Borough President Recommendation**

This application (C 110272 HAQ) was considered by the Queens Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving the application on June 21, 2011.

### **City Planning Commission Public Hearing**

On July 13, 2011 (Calendar No. 12), the City Planning Commission scheduled July 27, 2011, for a public hearing on this application (C110272HAQ). The hearing was duly held on July 27, 2011 (Calendar No. 10). There were two speakers in favor of the application and no speakers in opposition.

The speakers included a representative from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Director of the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance (RWA).

The representative from HPD spoke in favor of the application and described the selection process that awarded the project site to the RWA. The representative of HPD explained that while the Arverne Urban Renewal Plan does not restrict the type of community facility uses permitted on the site, none of the social service uses the community board mentioned in their recommendation as causes for concern were uses the RWA contemplated for the site. The Director of the RWA also spoke in favor of the application and described the resources the RWA currently provides to the community and how the proposed project would enhance and expand its programming.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

### **Waterfront Revitalization Program Consistency Review**

This application (C110272HAQ), was reviewed by the Department of City Planning for consistency with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP), as amended, approved by the New York City Council on October 13, 1999 and by the New York State Department of State on May 28, 2002, pursuant to the New York State Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act of 1981 (New York State Executive Law, Section 910 et seq.). The designated WRP number is 11-009.

The action was determined to be consistent with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program.

## **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that the approval of this application for an Urban Development Action Area designation and project approval, and the disposition of City-owned property, is appropriate.

The City Planning Commission notes that the application would facilitate the rehabilitation of a former firehouse and adjacent vacant land for community facility use and outdoor activity space. The Commission believes that the community facility use would be a resource to the Rockaway community providing a variety of recreational and educational programming including green collar job training.

The Commission acknowledges Queens Community Board 14's comment regarding the potential to sublease the second floor of the building and notes that some uses, other than the proposed community facility use, would be allowed as-of-right; however, the applicant is not proposing to rent the second floor at this time.

The Commission believes that the approval of the UDAAP for the project site would facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized City-owned property, returning it to an active, productive use while preserving the character and appearance of the former firehouse. The Commission further believes that the proposed project would be programmed with uses, including green collar job training that would serve the needs of Queens Community District 14 and the City of New York.

**RESOLUTION**

The City Planning Commission finds that the proposed disposition of city-owned property located at 58-03 Rockaway Boulevard (Block 15926, Lot 44, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) conforms to the objectives and provisions of the Arverne Urban Renewal Plan (C030509HUQ November 19, 2003).

**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**, that the City Planning Commission, in its capacity as the City Coastal Commission, has reviewed the waterfront aspects of this application and finds that the proposed action is consistent with WRP policies;

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has recommended the designation of property located at 58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard (Block 15926 Lot 44, part of Lot 100, and part of Lot 200), located in Community District 14, Borough of Queens as an Urban Development Action Area; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has also recommended the approval of an Urban Development Action Area Project for such property;

**THEREFORE**, be it **RESOLVED** that the City Planning Commission, after due consideration of the appropriateness of the actions, certifies its unqualified approval of the following matters pursuant to the Urban Development Action Area Act:

- a) The designation of property located at 58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard (Block 15926, Lot 44, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
- b) An Urban Development Action Area Project for such area;

**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 the consideration described in this report, the application of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development for the disposition of city-owned property located (within the Arverne Urban Renewal Area) at 58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard (Block 15926, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200), Community District 14, Borough of Queens, to a developer selected by HPD for the rehabilitation of an existing two-story building for community facility use and outdoor activity space, is approved.

The above resolution (C110272HAQ), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on August 24, 2011 (Calendar No. 23), 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

**RICHARD W. EADDY**, Vice Chairman


**ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,**

**ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, NATHAN LEVENTHAL, ANNA HAYES LEVIN,**

**SHIRLEY A. MCRAE, KAREN A. PHILLIPS**, Commissioners

**ORLANDO MARIN**, Commissioner Abstained



 <b>Community/Borough Board Recommendation</b> Pursuant to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure	
Application #: <b>C 110272 HAQ</b>  CEQR #: 11HPD005Q	Project Name: <b>Rockaway Firehouse</b>  Borough(s): Queens Community District Number(s) 14
Please use the above application number on all correspondence concerning this application.	

**SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

- Complete this form and return to the Department of City Planning by one of the following options:
  - EMAIL (recommended):** Send email to [CalendarOffice@planning.nyc.gov](mailto:CalendarOffice@planning.nyc.gov) and include the following subject line: (CB or BP) Recommendation + (application number, e.g., "CB Recommendation #C10000ZSQ")
  - MAIL:** Mail to Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, Room 2E, 22 Reade Street, New York, NY 10007
  - FAX:** Fax to (212) 720-3356 and note "Attention of the Calendar Office"
- Send one copy of the completed form with any attachments to the applicant's representative at the address listed below, one copy to the Borough President, and one copy to the Borough Board, when applicable.

**Docket Description:**

IN THE MATTER OF submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD):

1) pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:

- the designation of property located at 58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard (Block 5926, Lot 44, p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
- an Urban Development Action Area Project for such an area;

to facilitate the rehabilitation of an existing two-story building for community facility use and accessory outdoor activity space.

\* The Board would oppose RWA renting the 2nd floor space for unrelated uses. RWA added this use at the night of Bd mtg our concern would be. Social service uses like. Homeless, Dru medical or mental health type uses. (Food pantry as well.)

<b>Applicant(s):</b> NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development 100 Gold Street New York, New York 10038		<b>Applicant's Representative:</b> Michael Polo NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development 100 Gold Street New York, New York 10038	
<b>Recommendation submitted by:</b> Queens Community Board 14			
Date of public hearing: 06/14/2011		Location: <u>Knights of Columbus</u> <u>333 Beach 100 St 11693</u>	
Was a quorum present? YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		A public hearing requires a quorum of 20% of the appointed members of the board, but if no event fewer than seven such members.	
Date of Vote: 06/14/2011		Location: <u>333 Beach 100 Street</u>	
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve <u>with comment * ↑</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> Approve With Modifications/Conditions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove		<input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove With Modifications/Conditions	
Please attach any further explanation of the recommendation on additional sheets, as necessary.			
<b>Voting</b>			
# In Favor: <u>29</u>		# Against: <u>3</u>	
# Abstaining: <u>1</u>		Total members appointed to the board: <u>49</u>	
Name: <u>Jonathan Gaska</u>		Title: <u>District Manager</u>	
Date Click here to enter text: <u>06/14/2011</u>			

B. P. Van  
I. POY  
M. POLO

For Your Information  
Jonathan Gaska  
Community Board 14

# Queens Borough President Recommendation

APPLICATION: ULURP #110272 HAQ

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q14

## DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State and Section 197-c of the NYC Charter, for:

1. the designation of a property located at **58-03 Rockaway Beach Boulevard** (Block 5926, Lot 44 p/o Lot 100 and p/o Lot 200 as an Urban Development Action Area: and
  2. designation of an Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP) for such area:
- in an R6/C2-4 district, Zoning Map 30c, Rockaway, Borough of Queens.

## PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held in the Borough President's Conference Room at 120-55 Queens Boulevard on Thursday, June 16, 2011, at 10:30 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:

- HPD is proposing designation of three city-owned properties as an Urban Development Action Area and an Urban Development Action Area Project to facilitate renovation of a former firehouse for reuse as a community facility that will be used as an education and recreation center for the benefit of the entire Rockaway Peninsula. Some of the space would also be used as offices for not for profit community service providers;
- The site is composed of three city-owned properties located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Rockaway Beach Boulevard and Beach 59<sup>th</sup> Street. The parcels are also identified as Site 30 and part of Site 31 in the Arverne Urban Renewal Plan. The elevated subway track fronts the building to the north on Rockaway Beach Boulevard, the areas to the east, west and south are developed with a mix of low to higher density residences.;
- A steering committee formed by the Mayor's Office with the Borough President, local elected officials and Community Board 14 created the goals and outline of a Request for Proposals for the reuse of the former firehouse to serve the local community. Based upon the strength of their proposal and prior experience working with the Rockaway community, the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance was selected to rehabilitate the building for reuse as a community resource.;
- The Rockaway Waterfront Alliance is a not for profit organization that has been organizing and operating various waterfront awareness, environmental workshops and events in the Rockaway community for over five years. Their programs are geared towards everyone in the community. Some of the activities that are planned for the new facility include neighborhood film screenings, environmental and educational programs, extensive landscaping to provide new public open space, green collar job training;
- Community Board 14 (CB 14) approved this application by a vote of twenty-nine (29) in favor with three (3) against and one (1) abstention at a public hearing held on June 14, 2011. In their recommendation, CB 14 commented that they would oppose rental of second floor space for certain uses to provide services such as homeless, drug rehabilitation, medical, mental health or a food pantry.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above consideration, I hereby recommend approval of this application.

This project is a natural complement to the revitalization of Rockaway. The environmental and educational recreational activities centered at this facility will serve everyone in the community.

  
PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

  
DATE