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October 7, 2020 / Calendar No. 5

C 200238 PCQ

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**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 31-11 20th Avenue (Block 850, p/o Lot 350) and 19th Avenue (Block 826, Lot 42) for a sanitation garage and salt shed facility.

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The applicants, the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) and the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), filed this application for a site selection and acquisition on January 15, 2020. The proposed action would facilitate the construction of a 93,775-gross-square-foot sanitation garage and a 20,000-square-foot enclosed salt storage shed in the Astoria Industrial Business Zone (IBZ) in Queens, Community District 1.

## **BACKGROUND**

The applicants seek a site selection and acquisition of the project area (Block 826, Lot 42 and a portion of Block 850, Lot 350) to facilitate the construction of a 93,775-gross-square-foot sanitation garage, 20,000-square-foot enclosed salt storage shed, and surface parking and fueling stations for DSNY vehicles at 31-11 20th Avenue. The proposed site is located on the western bank of Luyster Creek in the Ditmars Steinway neighborhood of Queens, Community District 1.

As required by the New York City Charter, DSNY operates a district garage for each of NYC's 59 community districts. DSNY service district boundaries are coterminous with community district boundaries and, where feasible, the garage is located within the corresponding community district that the garage serves. The proposed garage would replace the existing DSNY Queens 1 Garage located at 34-28 21st Street (Block 523, Lot 12), in the Ravenswood neighborhood of Community District 1.

Constructed in 1931, the existing DSNY Queens 1 Garage is a 36,900-square-foot, one-story, City-owned building on a 62,200-square-foot lot. The existing garage lacks sufficient interior

vehicle storage space within the garage. Accordingly, DSNY must store trucks outdoors next to residential and recreational uses and on residential streets, causing community complaints about noise and air pollution. To address these concerns, DSNY has temporarily parked these vehicles on a one-acre parcel off-site (Block 826, Lot 42), near the 19th Avenue entrance of the proposed Luyster Creek site, since April 2018.

The current Queens 1 salt facility is located on the East River waterfront in Long Island City on a mapped but unbuilt section of 43rd Avenue at Vernon Boulevard. The current facility, which has been in use since 1990, serves Queens Community District 1 and a small southwestern portion of Long Island City in Queens Community District 2. The unenclosed facility stores up to 10,000 tons of salt, which is protected by a tarp. DSNY salt spreader trucks currently travel from the Queens 1 garage in Ravenswood to the salt pile in Long Island City, 1.3 miles away, before distributing salt throughout the service area. The proposed salt storage facility would be relocated next to the proposed Queens 1 Garage to facilitate efficient salt spreader loading and winter emergency operations and to minimize spreader travel times.

The existing facility is surrounded by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Ravenswood Houses community. The area surrounding the proposed site is predominantly light industrial and commercial. Land uses to the north, east, and west of the proposed site are generally consistent with high-intensity industrial and commercial uses typically found in M3-1 zoning districts. Heavy industrial uses in the area include three gas-fired power plants (at 18-01 20th Avenue, 19-51 20th Ave, and 17-10 Steinway Street), the Bowery Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant at 4301 Berrian Boulevard, and the Steinway & Sons Piano Factory at 18-1 Steinway Place.

For decades, NYCHA residents, community advocates, and elected officials have requested that DSNY relocate the garage to a more suitable location. In 2014, the NYC Department of Design and Construction found the building to be structurally deficient and inadequate in size for current and future operations. These deficiencies prompted a request by DSNY in the City's fiscal year 2018-2019 Citywide Statement of Needs for an additional one-acre equipment storage space for the Queens 1 Garage at an off-site location and led to the subsequent listing of the facility in the

City's capital planning budget. In 2017, the Mayor committed \$130 million from the executive budget to construct a new garage.

Private recreational uses are located approximately 1,000 feet southeast of the project site, including Con Ed's Soccer Field and four baseball diamonds along 20th Avenue. A predominantly low- to medium-density residential neighborhood is located south of 20th Avenue, comprised of R4, R4-1, R5, R5B and R6A zoning districts. A C2-3 commercial overlay district is mapped on the south side of 20th Avenue, containing neighborhood-serving retail businesses, an auto mechanic shop, and a gas station. The Q100 bus line, connecting Long Island City to Rikers Island, has a stop at the intersection of 31st Street and 20th Avenue. The proposed site is located approximately one half-mile from the Astoria-Ditmars Boulevard subway station providing access to the N/W train.

The project area is located northeast of 20th Avenue, northwest of Steinway Street, southwest of Rikers Island, and southeast of the Con Edison Astoria Yard. The project area includes Block 826, Lot 42 and part of Block 850, Lot 350, and would be comprised of the development site, access lot, access driveway, and utilities easement that would be the subject of the proposed acquisition. Within the project area, the development site would be located on an approximately 9.8-acre area at the northern end of Lot 350. An approximately 0.8-acre access lot (Block 826, Lot 42) with frontage on 19th Avenue would provide DSNY with vehicular access to the development site, shared with a neighboring tenant. An access driveway would occupy a portion of Block 850, Lot 350 along its Luyster Creek shoreline between the access lot and the development site. Additionally, a utilities easement would extend between 20th Avenue and the development site.

Block 850, Lot 350 (including the development site, access driveway, and utilities easement) is located within an M3-1 zoning district. M3-1 zoning districts are heavy manufacturing zoning districts that, because of potential to generate noise, traffic or pollutants, are buffered from residential uses and require higher performance standards to mitigate nuisances. The access lot (Block 826, Lot 42) is located in both M3-1 and M1-1 zoning districts. Both lots are also within the Astoria IBZ. IBZs are delineated to preserve and foster industrial uses. The maximum Floor

Area Ratio (FAR) for M3-1 districts is 2.0. Additionally, M3-1 zoning districts require one accessory parking spot per 1,000 square feet of manufacturing use, or one per every three employees, whichever is larger.

A construction company occupies approximately one acre of Block 850, Lot 350, and is used for equipment storage under a short-term lease. As of July 2019, an e-commerce company occupies a portion of Lot 350. The e-commerce company occupies about 40% of Lot 350 and is using 19th Avenue for access to the site, which is shared with DSNY and situated on the western side of the property. The remainder of Lot 350 is currently vacant, but it has been used for the past two years as a construction yard for equipment and materials storage. Following the City's acquisition of part of Lot 350, remaining portions of the lot would continue to be used by private entities, as permitted by applicable zoning regulations.

DSNY currently occupies a one-acre portion (split between the access lot and Lot 350) to store equipment pursuant to a license agreement that began in 2018. The site is accessed through 19th Avenue. Power lines traverse the northern edge of the development site pursuant to an easement. The Federal Aviation Administration leases and maintains an antenna on the site, which will require relocation as part of DSNY's proposal. Tidal wetlands constitute approximately 31,000-square feet of the development site, including part of Luyster Creek, with a regulated adjacent area of approximately 32,450 square feet where development is restricted.

DSNY proposes to construct a new 93,775-gross-square-foot Queens 1 Garage on the northwest corner of the development site. The proposed building would be built for a 75-year lifecycle, with 20-year cycles for mechanical, electrical, and plumbing equipment, and would include storage for weather-sensitive large vehicles and other vehicles, as well as provide repair and wash bays, locker rooms, lavatories, and offices. Collection trucks, service vehicles, and salt plow attachments would be stored outdoors along with accessory parking for employees. The garage currently has 103 assigned vehicles and 145 assigned personnel, which is not expected to change. A 20,000-square-foot enclosed salt storage shed would be located on the southwestern edge of the development site. The new shed would have a 10,000-ton capacity for storage of road

salt for winter emergency use on the streets. DSNY vehicles would continue to access the development site from 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a local truck route east of Steinway Street. The garage facility would operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week, with a peak workweek day shift for 75 employees from 6 AM to 2 PM, and minimal operations on Sundays.

DSNY's light-duty vehicles are primarily hybrid gasoline-electric or all-electric. The garage would have multiple vehicle charging stations for light-duty vehicles. The new facility could be adapted to accommodate all-electric heavy-duty trucks in the future. DSNY would pursue Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification for the proposed garage. The facility would have an environmentally advanced filtration system to manage stormwater from the surface parking lot, and the treated stormwater would be discharged to Luyster Creek. DSNY would raise the elevation of the site and construct a retaining wall to meet design flood elevation. DSNY would also ensure the safety of its mechanical systems and an emergency generator by storing them on the upper levels of the building.

To facilitate the proposed development, the applicants seek to acquire all of Block 826, Lot 42 and part of Block 850, Lot 350. Additionally, the applicants seek a site selection for public facilities, including the proposed sanitation garage and salt storage shed, to be located within the acquisition area.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 200238 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 City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The lead is the City Planning Commission. The designated CEQR number is 18DOS008Q.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed actions, a Negative Declaration was issued on December 4, 2019.

## **WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM**

This application (C 200238 PCQ) 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 30, 2013 and by the New York State Department of State on February 3, 2016, 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 19-134. This action was determined to be consistent with the policies of the WRP.

## **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 200238 PCQ) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on January 21, 2020, and duly referred to Queens Community Board 1 and the Queens Borough President in accordance with Title 62 of the rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b).

## **Community Board Public Hearing**

Queens Community Board 1 held a public hearing on this application (C 200238 PCQ) on February 18, 2020, and on that date, by a vote of 31 in favor, one opposed, and one not voting for cause, voted to recommend approval of the application.

## **Borough President Recommendation**

The Queens Borough President held a public hearing on this application (C 200238 PCQ) on March 12, 2020, and on March 23, 2020, issued a recommendation to approve the application with the following conditions:

“When vacated, the city-owned DSNY CD1 Garage site is redeveloped to provide much needed affordable housing, particularly for seniors.

New public access to the waterfront should be provided around the proposed new DSNY facility.”

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

On August 19, 2020 (Calendar No. 8), the City Planning Commission scheduled September 2, 2020 for a public hearing on this application (C 200238 PCQ). The hearing was duly held on September 2, 2020 (Calendar No. 13). One speaker testified in favor of the application and one in opposition.

The DSNY Commissioner, spoke in favor of the application. The Commissioner spoke for the team and presented an overview of the application, including the conditions of the two existing sites, the reasons for relocating the facilities, and the proposed location and development. The Commissioner described the structural concerns regarding the existing Queens 1 Garage at NYCHA's Ravenswood Houses, as well as some of the environmental issues. She explained the design features of the proposed development and stated that the construction of the facility wouldn't preclude the construction of public waterfront access in the future.

A resident of the Rockaways spoke in opposition to the application, expressing concerns about the projected cost and design of the project.

There were no other speakers, and the hearing was closed.

### **CONSIDERATION**

The City Planning Commission believes that the application of DSNY and DCAS for site selection and acquisition of property is appropriate.

The proposed actions would allow for the construction of a state-of-the-art DSNY garage facility and salt storage facility that will meet DSNY's operational needs and provide for the relocation of its operations from the Ravenswood Houses and the Long Island City waterfront.

The Commission notes that an additional one-acre equipment storage space for the Queens 1 Garage at an off-site location was requested by DSNY in the City's fiscal year 2018-2019

Citywide Statement of Needs, which subsequently lead to the listing of the facility in the City's capital planning budget.

The proposed development will provide a critical service to the community by relocating to an opportune location that serves all of Community District 1. The proposed garage and salt shed complex will replace the current DSNY facilities in the Ravenswood Houses NYCHA campus, allowing for a safer and cleaner environment for Ravenswood residents. Relocating the existing salt shed from the Long Island City waterfront will remove a use that is unsuitable for the current location and allow the opportunity for a better use of a prime waterfront lot. The proposed facility will be larger, more modern, and will be located in an area that is more suitable for its use than the existing facility.

The Commission believes that the proposed location will facilitate the efficient dispatching of essential DSNY services. The site is located within the Astoria IBZ, where trucks can service their areas and the garage can be buffered from residents. Steinway Street, 19th Avenue and 20th Avenue are all local truck routes, making the site easily accessible to the areas of Community District 1 that need service and lessening the need for travel on residential streets to get to the facility.

The Commission commends the applicant for pursuing LEED certification, noting sustainable design features that will include low-flow water fixtures, recycled materials, and solar photovoltaic panels on the roof to provide electricity for the facility.

Regarding community requests for public waterfront access on the proposed site, DSNY has expressed a willingness to explore building a public waterfront access walkway in the future, and will reserve property for it, though there is no funding currently allocated for the design and construction of such a walkway.



**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, that having considered the Environmental Assessment Statement, for which a Negative Declaration was issued on December 4, 2019 with respect to this application (CEQR No. 18DOS008Q), 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, for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 31-11 20th Avenue (Block 850, p/o Lot 350) and 19th Avenue (Block 826, Lot 42) for a sanitation garage and salt shed facility.

The above resolution (C 200238 PCQ), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on October 7, 2020 (Calendar No. 5), 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.

**MARISA LAGO**, *CHAIR*

**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, ESQ.**, *VICE CHAIRMAN*

**DAVID J. BURNEY, FAIA; ALLEN P. CAPPELLI, ESQ.**,

**ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, MICHELLE DE LA UZ, JOSEPH DOUEK,**

**RICHARD W. EADDY, HOPE KNIGHT, ANNA HAYES LEVIN,**

**ORLANDO MARÍN, LARISA ORTIZ, RAJ RAMPERSHAD** *COMMISSIONERS*



# City of New York Community Board #1, Queens

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March 9, 2020

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

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**RE: C 200238 PCQ Site Selection and Acquisition of approximately 9.8 acres of privately-owned property in the Steinway Industrial Business Zone at 31-11 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 850, p/o Lot 350 and Block 826, Lot 42) to facilitate construction of a replacement sanitation garage and salt shed facility serving Queens Community District 1.**

Dear Chair Lago,

Community Board 1 Queens (CB1Q) held a public hearing for the referenced application on February 18, 2019. After the hearing, discussion and a Land Use Committee report, the Board voted 31 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 not voting for cause to recommend approval of the referenced site selection application.

### Background and Proposed Action

Co-Applicants NYC Dept. of Sanitation (DSNY) and NYC Dept. of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) filed an application to acquire approximately 9.8 acres of privately-owned land in the Steinway Industrial Business Zone for a replacement garage and a salt shed facility. The proposed site is zoned M3-1 and M1-1. Luyster Creek forms the eastern boundary of the site with a portion of the site designated regulated tidal wetlands and adjacent area.

The existing 36,900 SF, one-story garage (QW01) was constructed in 1931 on a city-owned site at 34-28 21<sup>st</sup> Street that was zoned R5 in 1961. Development surrounding the garage includes the Ravenswood Houses (31 NYCHA buildings with 2,167 rental units), Queensview and Queensview North Cooperative complexes (21 buildings with 1,090 apartments) that were all built and occupied in the 1950s.

In 2014 DCAS deemed QW01 to be structurally inadequate and undersized to accommodate 103 vehicles and 145 personnel currently assigned to QW01, forcing trucks and equipment to be stored on surrounding residential streets and sidewalks for many years. As a short-term solution, DSNY leased an acre of land for truck storage and a personnel trailer in 2018 adjacent to the current proposed site.

QW01 stores its supply of road salt on an unenclosed lot at Vernon Boulevard and 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (CD2Q). The lot must be relocated to allow for planned bulkhead repairs along that section of the waterfront.

#### Proposed Development

DSNY proposes to construct a two-story 93,775 GSF garage structure in the northwest corner of the proposed site to house equipment, repair areas and wash bays, personnel support areas and administrative offices. A 20,000 SF enclosed salt shed with a capacity for 10,000 tons of road salt is planned for the south end of the site. A fueling canopy, wind shear monitor and truck parking will be located in the open area between the two structures. Fleet and employee parking, above-ground fuel tanks and outdoor equipment will be stored in the area between the garage and Luyster Creek. All vehicular access and egress for the site will be via 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The new facility will have LEED Silver designation, rooftop solar photovoltaic and solar hot water panels. The site elevation will be raised to a flood elevation of 18 feet. Clean diesel fuel technology and particulate filters will be used for trucks, making it comparable to using natural gas- fueled trucks. Most vehicles will be hybrids or all-electric and charging stations will be provided. A biofiltration system will be installed to treat runoff from the parking area adjacent to Luyster Creek.

#### Community Review and Comments

The application was certified on January 21, 2020 and on February 5<sup>th</sup> nine representatives of DSNY, DCAS and HDR Consultants gave a comprehensive presentation to the Land Use Committee. On February 18, 2020 five speakers testified at the CBIQ public hearing about the urgent need to relocate the garage from the 21<sup>st</sup> Street site, the future use of the city-owned site for deeply affordable housing and support for placing the site in a community land trust to assure its future use for a public purpose.

Topics discussed during committee and CB review concerned alternative sites; truck routes and traffic impacts; vehicle fueling; preventing further ground contamination as well as salt and stormwater runoff into Luyster Creek; mitigating sound and vibration for current and future surrounding uses in the IBZ and an explanation of the proposed filtration system.

No issues were raised about siting the proposed garage in the Steinway IBZ. The proposed site is an adequate size to accommodate DSNY operations for QW01; the site provides convenient access to district service sectors for collection routes; it is distant from residential uses and is located within the district to be serviced. The proposed location of the salt shed near the new garage facility will better serve CD1Q. Collection trucks should, however, use only designated truck routes to reach collection sectors.

Aside from enabling the closure of a City facility that blighted the Ravenswood area for decades, the project also presents an opportunity for the City to tie into the development plans for community access to the Luyster Creek waterfront and to preserve and protect the adjacent wetlands area. It is also necessary to begin early, community-inclusive planning for the reuse of the 21<sup>st</sup> Street site.

The Community Board, therefore, supports integrating the following actions into the new QW01 garage design and construction project:

1. The DSNY's design and construction RFP should include community waterfront access, shore treatment and preservation of waterfront wetlands;
2. Allocate 1% of the project's construction budget under the City's Percent for Art Program to help fund design and construction of a new waterfront access to Luyster Creek that includes a shore walkway and boat launching site or boathouse for future recreational and educational programs;
3. Create a pedestrian access point to the Luyster Creek shoreline from 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue;
4. Coordinate a waterfront access plan with Steinway Piano Company and the proposed film Wildflower Studios on the south side of Luyster Creek;
5. Create a landscaped traffic separation and protection barrier on 19<sup>th</sup> avenue between the existing ballfields and street;
6. Upon completion of the QW01 garage, DSNY should outreach to local schools and coordinate educational tours and programs about solar roofs and other sustainability topics.
7. Begin community outreach for planning reuse of the vacated site in Ravenswood.

Although these matters go beyond the scope of the subject ULURP application, CB1Q would appreciate the Commission's support to link this capital project with achieving community goals for providing public access to the waterfront for environmental educational programs and passive recreation.

Sincerely,

  
Marie Torniali  
Chair

  
Elizabeth Erion  
Land Use and Zoning Committee Co-Chairs

  
Gerald Caliando  
Land Use and Zoning Committee Co-Chairs

cc: Honorable Sharon Lee, Acting Queens Borough President  
Honorable Michael Gianaris  
Honorable Jessica Ramos  
Honorable Aravella Simotas  
Honorable Catherine Nolan  
Honorable Brian Barnwell  
Honorable Costa Constantinides  
Honorable Jimmy Van Bramer  
Mr. Irving Poy, Director, Land Use, BPQ  
Mr. John Young, Director, Queens Office DCP  
Mr. Rafael A. Berges, Junior Urban Designer/Assistant Borough Planner, DCP  
Ms. Arlana L. Davis, Assistant Commissioner, DSNY–Office of Real Estate



# Queens Borough President Recommendation

APPLICATION: ULURP #200238 PCQ

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q01

## DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for site selection and acquisition of property, for construction of a sanitation garage and salt shed facility, located at 31-11 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 850, p/o Lot 350) and 35-00 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Block 826, Lot 42), Zoning Map Nos. 6D & 9C, Astoria, Borough of Queens, Community District 1.

## PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held at Queens Borough Hall, 120-55 Queens Boulevard in the Borough President's Conference Room on Thursday, March 12, 2020 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:

- The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) filed this application for site selection and acquisition of a privately-owned property adjacent to Luyster Creek in Astoria, as well as easements for vehicular and utility access, for the purposes of constructing a new sanitation garage and salt shed that would relocate and consolidate the operations of separate existing facilities servicing Queens Community District 1 (CD1) and a portion of Community District 2 (CD2);
- The proposed CD1 Garage and Salt Shed would be located at 31-11 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue next to Luyster Creek, also known as "Steinway Creek", within the Astoria Industrial Business Zone (IBZ). The new one-story 93,775 GSF garage would be used to store large weather-sensitive vehicles (mechanical brooms, salt spreaders, etc.) as well as other vehicles, repair bays, and a wash bay. A three-story, 31,500 SF portion of the building would house the personnel section with locker rooms, lavatories, and offices for DSNY staff use. Collection trucks, service/sedans/SUVs, and salt plow attachments will be stored outdoors along with accessory parking for employees. There would be a total of 103 vehicles and 145 personnel located on the new site. The garage would operate 24/7 with reduced operations on Sundays. The scheduled shifts are: 12AM-8AM with 9 employees; 6AM-2PM (main shift) with 77 employees; 7AM-3PM with 5 employees; 8AM-4PM with 6 employees; 4PM-12AM with 12 employees. The life cycle for the garage building is estimated to be 75 years. The mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems are expected to have 20 year life cycles. DSNY will pursue LEED Silver Certification for the proposed garage. The second proposed structure on the site would be an enclosed 20,000 SF salt shed with capacity to store 10,000 tons of road salt for winter use. A fueling station would be located the proposed garage building and salt shed. The fueling station with an overhead canopy would provide diesel and unleaded gas for DSNY vehicles. DSNY has also committed to exclusive use of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue as the access for entry and exiting the facility;
- DSNY has a \$130 million allocation in the budget committed for building and operating the proposed environmentally responsible facility. All fluids used by the wash bay would be captured by floor drains and processed through oil and water separators before discharge into the sanitary sewer. DSNY is committed to using cleaner and alternative fuel trucks throughout the fleet to attain lower emissions. Stormwater from the site would be directed into biofiltration and water separation infrastructure east of the new DSNY facility for treatment before discharge into Luyster Creek;
- The existing Queens CD1 62,000SF Garage is currently located at 34-28 21<sup>st</sup> Street (Block 523 Lot 12) in an R5 District in a mixed-use residential/commercial neighborhood of Astoria. The facility, formerly the site of a horse barn, was constructed in 1931 is a one-story 37,000SF building well below the average 80,000 SF size of DSNY district facilities. Some of the vehicles and equipment assigned to the 21<sup>st</sup> facility have been stored since February 2108 on leased land now subject to this site selection application;



QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION

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- The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Ravenswood Houses surround the existing facility. The garage is also adjacent to a park and playground. Space constraints has forced DSNY storage of vehicles on the surrounding streets impacting the area residential and commercial uses. NYCHA residents, community advocates, and elected officials have long requested DSNY to relocate the city-owned garage site and to have the site redeveloped for affordable housing;
- In 2014, following an inspection the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) found the 21<sup>st</sup> Garage to be structurally deficient and undersized for DSNY's daily operations. The report found floor slab deficiencies and two walls with major structural defects. There was a determination that the cost to rehabilitate the garage would not justify the short service life extension;
- Since 1990, the Queens 1 salt facility is currently located on the bed of a mapped street on the East River waterfront at 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Vernon Boulevard in CD2. The unenclosed salt pile, protected by a tarp, is located approximately 1.2 miles away from the existing garage. Within two years this site will no longer be available to DSNY due to scheduled bulkhead repairs and in close proximity to the proposed BQX route;
- The proposed DSNY site is a vacant 9.8 acre industrial parcel adjacent to Luyster Creek within the Astoria IBZ. The proposed garage and salt shed would be built on the northern edge of Block 850, p/o Lot 350 (M3-1 District) and include the access driveway and a utilities easement. An approximately 0.8 acre portion of Block 826, Lot 42 (M3-1 and M1-1 Districts) would be used by DSNY for all vehicular access onto the development site from 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The entire site lies within the Coastal Zone Boundary. Since April 2018, DSNY has stored 23 collection trucks, 2 service sedans, and 12 personnel vehicles on Block 826 Lot 42 to alleviate the space constraints at the existing Queens 1 Garage. Tidal wetlands constitute 31,000 SF of the development site, including part of Luyster Creek. Additionally, the FAA leases and maintains an antenna measuring wind shear on the site that would require relocation elsewhere on site;
- Uses in the surrounding area are predominantly light industrial and commercial. Immediately east, the property is bounded by Luyster Creek. The Astoria Generating Station operates an electricity generating plant west of the site while Con Edison operates a large campus to the northeast. South of the project area, Bolt Parking LGA provides an off-site parking lot and shuttle service to LaGuardia Airport. Across Luyster Creek to the east, are other industrial and commercial uses such as Astoria Energy LLC's electricity generating plant, piano manufacturer Steinway & Sons' factory and showroom, and Beersmiths Brewery. To the southeast of the project area, there are four baseball diamonds along 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a soccer field owned by Con Ed and operated by the Federation of Italian-American organizations of Queens. The soccer field borders a private access road into the project area to the north as well as Bolt Parking's location to the east. The area south of 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue are developed with predominantly low-rise housing;
- Community Board 1 (CB1) approved this application with conditions by a vote of thirty-one (31) in favor with one (1) against and one (1) abstention at the full board meeting held on February 18, 2020. CB1's conditions are as follows:
  1. The DSNY's design and construction RFP should include community waterfront access, shore treatment, and preservation of waterfront wetlands;
  2. Allocate 1% of the project's construction budget under the City's Percent for Art Program to help fund design and construction of a new waterfront access to Luyster Creek that includes a shore walkway and boat launching site or boathouse for future recreational and educational programs;
  3. Create a pedestrian access point to the Luyster Creek shoreline from 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue;
  4. Coordinate a waterfront access plan with Steinway Piano Company and the proposed film Wildflower Studios on the south side of Luyster Creek;
  5. Create a landscaped traffic separation and protection barrier on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue between the existing ballfields and street;
  6. Upon completion of the QW01 Garage, DSNY should outreach to local schools and coordinate educational tours and programs about solar roofs and other sustainability topics;
  7. Begin community outreach for planning reuse of the vacated site in Ravenswood;
- At the March 12, 2020 Borough President's Land Use Public Hearing, the DSNY representative said that the department is supportive of CB1's conditions for public waterfront access.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed DSNY Facility would replace the existing undersized and structurally unsound garage on 21<sup>st</sup> Street. The new site is large enough to contain onsite all DSNY vehicles, equipment and personnel servicing CD 1 with an opportunity to provide much needed open space and waterfront public access in an underserved area. Affordable housing especially for seniors remains an unmet need for Queens residents. This city-owned former garage site would significantly reduce the land cost of developing affordable housing.

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

- when vacated, the city-owned DSNY CD1 Garage site is redeveloped to provide much needed affordable housing, particularly for seniors;
- new public access to the waterfront should be provided around the proposed new DSNY facility.



PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

3/23/2020

DATE