



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

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September 10, 2003/Calendar No. 27

C 030251 PCQ

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**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the New York City Police Department and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 49-49 30<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 291, Lot 15), Community District 2, Borough of Queens, for use as a warehouse facility.

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This application (C 030251 PCQ) was filed on December 12, 2002 by the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services. The site selection and acquisition would facilitate the relocation of the current NYPD barrier shop operations at Manhattan Pier 40 to an existing, privately-owned, vacant warehouse on a block bordered by 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Hunters Point Avenue, 30<sup>th</sup> Place, and Borden Avenue.

### **BACKGROUND**

The current NYPD barrier shop facility is located at Manhattan Pier 40 between West Houston Street and the Hudson River; it provides approximately 94,958 square feet of non-water dependent space for the storage, maintenance and distribution of all wooden and metal NYPD barriers used for crowd control and public safety purposes. Redevelopment of Hudson River Park necessitates the relocation to the proposed facility in Long Island City.

The NYPD proposes to relocate its current barrier shop operations to an existing, one-story, privately-owned vacant warehouse located at 49-49 30<sup>th</sup> Street between 30<sup>th</sup> Street, 30<sup>th</sup> Place, Hunters Point Avenue and Borden Avenue. The proposed site is located within an M2-1 zoning district which allows

the use. An M3-1 zoning district is located immediately to the west of the site across 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

These zoning districts allow a wide range of industrial and commercial uses. Accordingly, a variety of warehouses and distribution, construction, and industrial service centers predominate in the surrounding area. The proposed barrier shop would be proximate to the Queens Midtown Tunnel and would have ready access to arterial highways such as the Queens Midtown, Long Island and Brooklyn Queens expressways.

The warehouse has been vacant since December 2000. The Ryerson Tull Steel Company occupied the site from 1980 to 2000. Prior to that, the site served for over 25 years as a storage warehouse for the Thypin Steel Company which ceased its operations in 1980.

The proposed site would provide a total of up to 118,000 gross square feet of primarily ground floor warehouse space for the storage, maintenance and distribution of all wooden and metal NYPD barriers used for crowd control and public safety purposes. In addition to the storage of equipment and barriers, 24 Rack trucks would be stored on the ground floor of the warehouse facility. The trucks are used to transport the barriers and deploy officers to locations throughout the city. Measuring eight feet wide and approximately 20 feet long, each Rack truck can accommodate 60 metal barriers and four passengers and a driver.

The warehouse would accommodate parking for approximately 15 NYPD employee vehicles. In addition, on-street parking for employees is permitted along the westerly span of 30<sup>th</sup> Street opposite

the warehouse and the westerly span of 30<sup>th</sup> Place alongside the warehouse.

At present, there are 24 employees working at the Manhattan Pier 40 facility comprised of 17 police officers, two clerks, and five general laborers. It is expected that there would be the same number of employees at the proposed facility in Long Island City.

The proposed facility would be operational 24 hours each day. It is anticipated that trucks and employee vehicles would exit the proposed facility from 30<sup>th</sup> Street and travel one-half block southerly to Borden Avenue. From there, these vehicles may access the Queens Midtown Tunnel and the Queens Midtown Expressway. Arriving vehicles would take the same route, except they would use the northbound 30<sup>th</sup> Place to access the proposed facility.

The barrier shop at Manhattan Pier 40 currently handles 20 Rack trucks two times a day on non-event days. On an event day like the Columbus Day and Thanksgiving Day parades, the facility operates 24 trucks four to five times a day with 50 to 100 officers assigned to handle these events. Deployment and operations are expected to be similar at the proposed location in Long Island City.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 030251 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 designated CEQR number is 02-NYPD-002Q. The lead agency is the Administrative Services Division acting on behalf of the NYPD.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on April 8, 2003.

## **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 030251 PCQ) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on April 21, 2003, 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 June 5, 2003, and on that day, by a vote of 0 in favor, 38 opposed and 1 abstention for cause, failed to adopt a favorable resolution, with the following comments:

- Fair Share. Community Board 2 believes this district has more than its 'Fair Share' of community facilities.
- Incomplete ULURP application. The applicant listed 17 facilities within a ½ mile radius of the proposed site. However, 5 additional facilities were omitted from the application.
- The title owner of 49-49 30<sup>th</sup> Street owns an adjacent building that has an illegal billboard structure that is within 200' of an arterial roadway (i.e., the Queens Midtown Expressway). CB2 members oppose the City's use of the proposed site as the property owner has outstanding violations on other properties.
- The property owner does not maintain the property and building, arrange for regular cleaning of the sidewalks and exterior of the building; or remove graffiti that is prominent along the exterior

walls of the site.

-The proposed facility will increase the lack of on-street parking for the surrounding manufacturing/industrial businesses based in the area.

-This facility does not create economic growth for this community.

### **Borough President Recommendation**

This application was considered by the Borough President, who, on July 17, 2003, issued a

recommendation approving the application with the following conditions:

- The operations of the proposed NYPD Barrier Shop should be conducted in a manner that does not impact the surrounding community. Any loading or unloading activities on the street must be kept to a minimum to avoid the creation of any traffic disruptions. All efforts must be made to minimize any parking issues that may be related to the use of agency or employee vehicles;
- The proposed Barrier Shop facility would be a public building. The building will be used at various times by agency personnel and civilian employees. The building and the grounds around it must be maintained and operated to keep it clean and graffiti free.

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

On July 23, 2003 (Calendar No. 17), the City Planning Commission scheduled August 13, 2003, for a public hearing on this application (C 030251 PCQ). The hearing was duly held on August 13, 2003

(Calendar No. 7). There were two speakers representing the NYPD in favor of the application.

An NYPD representative stated that the NYPD has surveyed over 30 sites during a 10-year period.

He further explained advantages offered by the proposed site given its proximity to arterial highways which would provide easy access to all boroughs of the city.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

## **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that this application for site selection and acquisition of property located at 49-49 30<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 291, Lot 15) in Long Island City, Community District 2, Borough of Queens, for use as a warehouse facility is appropriate.

The Commission notes that the Citywide Statement of Needs for Fiscal Years 2003-2004 identified the need for this facility. The Commission further notes that the proposed relocation would remedy the NYPD's imperative to vacate its current facility on the waterfront at Manhattan Pier 40 to facilitate its redevelopment as part of Hudson River Park.

With regards to criteria set forth in the Citywide Statement of Needs for Fiscal Years 2003-2004, the Commission notes that the proposed barrier shop relocation is consistent with underlying zoning regulations and NYPD's siting criteria. The proposed warehouse use would be an as-of-right use in the M2-1 zoning district for which it is proposed, and the proposed site would provide sufficient warehouse space (118,000 sf) for the storage and maintenance of the NYPD barriers. Moreover, the Commission further notes that the proposed facility's proximity to the Queens Midtown Tunnel and arterial highways such as the Queens Midtown, Long Island, and Brooklyn Queens expressways provides an efficient, low-cost alternative to other sites throughout the city.

The Commission acknowledges that the NYPD has adequately addressed the issues of Community Board 2 and the conditions of Queens Borough President in a letter from the NYPD to the Department of City Planning Director dated August 8, 2003. In response to the issues of Community Board 2 and the conditions of the Queens Borough President regarding loading operations and parking, the NYPD states that “all loading and unloading of the barrier trucks will take place inside the facility” and that “there is ample space inside the facility for parking all 24 barrier trucks and for approximately 15 private employee vehicles.” Concerning on-street parking adequacy, the NYPD states that “there are only 24 employees permanently assigned to the shop, and both 30<sup>th</sup> Street and 30<sup>th</sup> Place between Borden and Hunters Point avenues provide approximately 80-100 available parking spaces.”

With regard to the concerns and conditions regarding building maintenance, the NYPD asserts that “the NYPD fully intends to keep the building clean and serviceable at all times. Also, there are no NYPD buildings with graffiti.” The NYPD adds later in the letter that “as part of the proposed lease, the owner will invest over \$1,000,000 for painting, repair and renovation of the facility.” Repairs would include paving of the ground floor and replacement of windows. Interior renovations to a three-level area located in a small interior corner of the warehouse would include modern administrative offices, locker rooms, an assembly room, rest/lounge areas, and lavatories.

Regarding Community Board 2's issue that the “district has more than its ‘Fair Share’ of community facilities,” the Commission notes that the NYPD adequately disclosed the city and non-city community facilities within the immediate area which include seven schools, a day care center, a fire house, a

correctional facility and several government offices. The Commission acknowledges that the proposed NYPD barrier shop would be a warehouse use and the only barrier shop facility in the city.

Accordingly, no other similar use operated by a city agency or non-city program is proximate to the proposed site.

## **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 Sections 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination, and the consideration and findings described in this report, the application of the New York City Police Department and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services for the site selection and acquisition of property, located at 49-49 30<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 291, Lot 15), Borough of Queens, Community District 2, is approved.

The above resolution (C 030251 PCQ), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on September 10, 2003 (Calendar No. 27), 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, AICP, Chair**

**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice Chair**

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**JOHN MEROLO, KAREN A. PHILLIPS, JOSEPH B. ROSE, DOLLY WILLIAMS,**

*Commissioners*