



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

June 9, 2004 Calendar No. 23

N 040359 BDR

IN THE MATTER of an application submitted by the Department of Small Business Services on behalf of the Forest Avenue 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 Forest Avenue Business Improvement District, Borough of Staten Island, Community District 1.

On February 3, 2004, the Mayor authorized the preparation of a district plan for the Forest Avenue Business Improvement District (BID). On March 22, 2004, on behalf of the Forest Avenue District Management Association (DMA), the Department of Small Business Services (DSBS) submitted the district plan located in Community District 1 in the Borough of Staten Island.

BACKGROUND

The proposed Forest Avenue BID is located in the West Brighton area, in the Borough of Staten Island. The BID's boundaries extends along Forest Avenue from Hart Boulevard to Broadway. The Forest Avenue BID will be the first BID in Staten Island.

The district is characterized with low-rise , commercial buildings that are primarily used for retail and office space. There are 89 property owners and 131 businesses that includes restaurants, medical offices and banks.

The services of the expanded BID will primarily focus on sanitation, security, holiday lighting and marketing. Within the sanitation program the DMA plans to purchase trash receptacles that will include the BID logo. Special attention will be paid to overflowing trash receptacles and other sanitation issues that occur before businesses open. The BID anticipates to employ a sanitation crew of two persons, that will provide services 5 days a week. The program will supplement the existing municipal sanitation program.

The budget for the first year of the BID is projected to be \$150,000. The budget will allocate \$45,000 to sanitation, \$24,00 to holiday lighting, \$13,000 to marketing, \$48,500 to administration, \$18,000 to banners and hanging baskets and \$1,500 towards the contingency plan.

The BID assessment method is based upon linear front footage. Commercial properties will be assessed at a rate not to exceed \$28 per linear foot. Vacant or undeveloped lots will be assessed at a rate not to exceed \$14 per linear front foot, annually. Wholly residential properties will be assessed at \$1 annually, and public and/or not-for-profit properties will be exempt from the assessment. Public or not-for-profit properties used for commercial uses will be assessed the same as commercial properties.

Outreach to property owners, merchants and residents was done by the Forest Avenue BID Steering Committee. All property owners were informed of the approximate BID assessment for their properties. The outreach for the BID was documented and submitted to City Planning.

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 04SBS005R. 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 February 2, 2004.

LAND USE REVIEW

On March 22, 2004 the Department of Small Business Services submitted the district plan for the Forest Avenue 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 Staten Island Borough President, City Council Speaker, City Council Member of Community District 49 and Staten Island Community Board 1.

Community Board Public Hearing

On April 13, 2004, Community Board 1 adopted a resolution recommending approval of this application (N 040359 BDR) by a vote of 34 in favor, 0 opposed with 3 abstentions.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On April 28, 2004 (Calendar No. 8) the Commission scheduled May 12, 2004 for a public hearing on the district plan. On May 12, 2004 (Calendar No. 20), the hearing was duly held. There were three speakers in favor of the proposal and none in opposition.

The executive director of the West Brighton Community Local Development Corporation spoke about the Forest Avenue BID setting a precedent in the Borough of Staten Island, becoming the first BID there. She spoke about the number of public meetings, informational mailings and face-to-face meetings the steering committee conducted with the business and property owners. She also spoke about the BID having the support of 55% of the assessed value property owners.

A vice-president of a bank located within the District spoke in favor of the BID. He stated that the BID would be beneficial to the property and business owners in the area. He spoke about the sanitation problems that would be addressed with a BID in place.

A representative of the Council Member of District 49 stated that the BID had his full support.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

Consideration

The Commission believes that the proposal to create the Forest Avenue Business Improvement District in Staten Island is appropriate.

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

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

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 proposed district plan for the Forest Avenue Business Improvement District.

The above resolution duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on June 9, 2004 (Calendar No. 23) 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, AICP, Chair

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