



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 8, 2012/ Calendar No. 7

C 120271 PQK

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Brooklyn Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for acquisition of property located at 303 Avenue X (Block 7174, Lot 96) for continued use as a branch library in Community District 15, Borough of Brooklyn.

This application for acquisition of property was filed on April 16, 2012 by the Brooklyn Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services to facilitate the continued operation of the Gravesend Branch Public Library, in Brooklyn Community District 15.

BACKGROUND

The Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) seek approval for the acquisition of a single parcel of land at 303 Avenue X (Block 7174, Lot 96) in the Gravesend neighborhood of Brooklyn, Community District 15. The parcel has been the site of the Gravesend Branch Public Library since 1962, and the requested approvals would facilitate the continued operation of the branch library at this site.

The Gravesend Branch Public Library property is a 9,500-square-foot through lot fronting on Avenue X and extending 200 feet to Southgate Court between Stryker Street and West 1st Street. The Avenue X frontage is 70 feet wide and the Southgate Court frontage is 25 feet wide. The library fronts on Avenue X and is approximately 65 feet wide by 80 feet deep and 20 feet tall. It contains 7,176 square feet of floor area on ground, basement and mezzanine levels. The parcel is zoned R4 with a C1-2 commercial overlay.

The Gravesend Branch Library was built in 1962 and was renovated by BPL in 2001. The library is open Monday through Friday between either 10:00 am and 6:00 pm or 1:00 pm and

8:00 pm depending on the day. There are over 10,000 registered borrowers at the library who borrow over 100,000 items per year, which ranks it 17th out of 59 BPL branches in overall circulation and 14th in world language materials circulation. To serve the large number of Russian and Chinese speakers in the neighborhood, the branch provides access to the BPL's Russian and Chinese language collections. The library also hosts 111 programs per year and has free Wi-Fi and 12 computers that logged over 20,000 computer sessions in 2011. Lastly, the library is ADA-compliant and wheelchair accessible.

Since the library's construction, BPL has leased the property from its owner. The most recent lease (for 10 years) expired on June 30th of this year and BPL is currently leasing the property on a month-to-month basis. The requested approval would allow BPL to acquire the property and associated buildings for continued use as a branch library. No further improvements or development are planned for the site at this time.

Properties adjacent to the library include residential buildings to the north and mixed-use and commercial buildings along Avenue X. The broader area is characterized by 1- and 2-story detached, semi-detached, and attached houses. Along Avenue X, there are 1- and 2-story commercial and mixed-use buildings and along MacDonald Avenue and Shell Road to the west there is a mix of light industrial, auto-related, and commercial uses in 1- and 2-story buildings. The Avenue X stop on the F line is 1 block west, and the 86th Street stop on the N line is 5 blocks west, of the library. In addition, the B1 and B4 bus lines run within 2 blocks of the site, connecting the library to other South Brooklyn neighborhoods.

The surrounding area is zoned is R4, with a C1-2 overlay along the commercial strip on Avenue X. There are C8-1 and M1-1 zoning districts one block west of the library along McDonald Avenue and Shell Road and over the MTA rail yards to the southwest. The library and its vicinity are entirely within the Special Ocean Parkway District.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 120271 PQK) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), 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 CEQR number is 12BPL001K. The lead agency is the Brooklyn Public Library.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on January 20, 2012.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 120271 PQK) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on April 23, 2012, and was duly referred to Community Board 15 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 15 held a public hearing on this application on May 29, 2012, and on that

date, by a vote of 37 to 2 with no abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 120271 PQQ) was considered by the Brooklyn Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving this application on June 27, 2012.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On June 20, 2012 (Calendar No. 6), the City Planning Commission scheduled July 11, 2012, for a public hearing on this application (C 120271 PQQ). The hearing was duly held on July 11, 2012 (Calendar No. 16). There was one speaker in favor and none opposed. A representative from the Brooklyn Public Library appeared in favor of the proposal.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the acquisition of property located at 303 Avenue X (Block 7174, Lot 96) by the Brooklyn Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services is appropriate.

The City Planning Commission notes that the site has been operated as a library since 1962, serving over 10,000 registered borrowers and numerous other program attendees and computer

users in the Gravesend neighborhood of Brooklyn. The Commission believes that the facility is well located to serve the needs of Gravesend residents and notes that the facility is well served by public transportation.

The Commission is pleased to note that, in 2001, the Brooklyn Public Library invested \$1.5 million into the Gravesend Branch Public Library in a renovation that included a new lighting, furniture, shelving, art objects and 11 new public access computers

The Commission believes that the acquisition of this property will allow the library facility to continue to provide much needed educational, recreational, and social programs for the residents in this community.

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that this application submitted by the Brooklyn Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the acquisition of property located at 303 Avenue X (Block 7174, Lot 96), for continued use as a public library, is approved.

The above resolution (C 120271 PQK), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on August 8, 2012 (Calendar No. 7), 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
KENNETH J. KNUCKLES Esq., Vice Chair
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,
ALFRED C. CERULLO III, BETTY Y. CHEN, MICHELLE DE LA UZ,
MARIA M. DEL TORO, ANNA HAYES LEVIN,
ORLANDO MARIN, SHIRLEY A. MCRAE, Commissioners



Brooklyn Borough President Recommendation

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
22 Reade Street, New York, NY 10007
FAX # (212) 720-3356

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Return this completed form with any attachments to the Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, Room 2E at the above address.
2. Send one copy with any attachments to the applicant's representatives as indicated on the Notice of Certification.

APPLICATION # 120271 POK

Gravesend Branch Library

In the matter of an application submitted by the Brooklyn Public Library and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for acquisition of property located at 303 Avenue X for continued use as a branch library.

COMMUNITY DISTRICT NO.

15

BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE

DISAPPROVE

APPROVE WITH

DISAPPROVE WITH

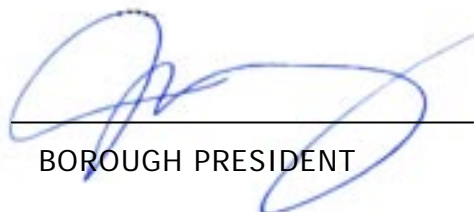
MODIFICATIONS/CONDITIONS

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The Borough President supports initiatives that facilitate the creation or continuation of education services to Brooklyn residents. As the cost increases to maintain public libraries as state-of-the-art facilities, it is important to explore all ways to most effectively manage the operating budget available for such institutions. Through the conversion of leased properties to city-owned properties, the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) will be able to allocate more of its funds to provide extended services to the Gravesend, and the greater Brooklyn community. In addition, BPL will be in a better position to pursue capital improvements for this branch due to city-ownership.

RECOMMENDATION

Be it resolved that the President of the Borough of Brooklyn, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, recommends that the City Planning Commission and the City Council approve the acquisition of property of this branch library.



BOROUGH PRESIDENT

June 27, 2012

DATE