



IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Sanitation 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 1155-1157 Commerce Avenue (Block 3840, Lot 23) for a vehicle maintenance and repair facility, Borough of the Bronx, Community District 9.

This application (C 190426 PCX) for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 1155-1157 Commerce Avenue (Block 3840, Lot 23) for use as a temporary vehicle maintenance and repair facility, was filed by the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) and the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) on April 29, 2019.

BACKGROUND

DSNY and DCAS are seeking the site selection and acquisition of privately-owned property for temporary use as a vehicle maintenance and repair facility. The site is located at 1155-1157 Commerce Avenue (Block 3840, Lot 23) in the Castle Hill section of Community District 9. It comprises a portion of the block bounded by Gleason Avenue to the north, Commerce Avenue to the east, Powell Avenue to the south and Zerega Avenue to the west.

The site is currently developed with two buildings. 1155 Commerce Avenue is an existing one-story, 17,736 square-foot brick structure that has been occupied by DSNY since 2014 under a license agreement. Four garage doors are located on the south side of the building, providing vehicle access to Commerce Avenue. 1157 Commerce Avenue, immediately adjacent to this building, is an existing one-story 7,750 square-foot warehouse structure, that is currently vacant.

The triangularly-shaped site is located in an M1-1 zoning district, which permits the proposed use as-of-right. M1-1 districts are typically developed with light industrial uses, such as warehouses, wholesale service and storage facilities. M1-1 districts allow a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0 and a maximum building height of 30 feet. The site is also located within the Zerega

Industrial Business Zone, intended to foster the development of industrial and manufacturing activities through tax credits and direct business assistance.

The site was formerly a part of the Zerega Avenue Urban Renewal Area (URA), which was adopted in 1968 and expired in 2008. The URA aimed to revitalize industrial character, eliminate impediments to land disposition and development, and create job opportunities in a high job deficit area. The urban renewal plan designated lots within the URA for industrial use and accessory uses.

The site is located approximately 0.25 miles north of the Cross Bronx and Bruckner expressways and approximately 0.25 miles west of the Hutchinson River Parkway, and is easily accessible by car and transit. The Castle Hill and Zerega Avenue stations that service the 6-subway train are located less than 0.25 miles north of the site. Several bus lines operate nearby, including the BX4, BX5 and BX22, which run east-west along Westchester Avenue providing service to other major thoroughfares.

DSNY operates a district garage for each of the city's 59 community districts, the boundaries of which are coterminous with DSNY service district boundaries. Where feasible, for operational efficiency, DSNY seeks to locate its district garages within the corresponding community districts they serve, though sometimes districts share facilities. DSNY's District 9/10/11 is one of the shared district garages, as this single facility serves Bronx Community Districts 9, 10 and 11. Currently, the garage is located at 800-850 Zerega Avenue, approximately seven blocks away from the proposed site. This City-owned garage was built in 1938 and contains approximately 154,532 square feet of floor area within four buildings, which all require rehabilitation because they are in a state of disrepair. The need for the proposed temporary facility was proposed and listed in the FY 2020-2021 Citywide Statement of Needs.

To accommodate the DSNY facility, minor modifications would be made to the interior of the existing building at 1155 Commerce Avenue, including the addition of six new repair bays. In addition, eight new accessory parking spaces would be added to the yard fronting on Commerce Avenue. The existing vacant building at 1157 Commerce Avenue would be demolished and

replaced by a new one-story building, which would have new offices, a new kitchen, locker room, bathrooms, and one wash bay for the vehicles that are being serviced. The facility would be operated in two shifts, each staffed by 12 DSNY employees from Monday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. In addition, 12 employees from DSNY'S Bureau of Building Management (BBM) would work out of 1157 Commerce Avenue and would serve the Borough of the Bronx. The facility would have a 10-year lease with an option to renew. DSNY has stated that they would be at this location for up to eight years, by which time they expect that reconstruction of 800-850 Zerega Avenue garage would be completed. At that time, they intend to vacate both buildings and relocate to the new District 9/10/11 garage at Zerega Avenue.

In addition to providing preventative maintenance and light repairs to the trucks and equipment that service the three Bronx Districts, the proposed facility would also provide service to approximately four to five vehicles daily from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Vehicles requiring more than just general maintenance or light repairs would continue to be sent to the Manhattan Borough Repair Shop located at 224 12th Avenue and 28th Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 190426 PCX) 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 Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The lead agency is DSNY. The designated CEQR number is 18DOS010X.

After a study of the potential impact of the proposed actions, a Negative Declaration was issued on June 13, 2018.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 190426 PCX) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on May 20, 2019 and was duly referred to Bronx Community Board 9 and the Bronx Borough President in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b).

Community Board Public Hearing

Bronx Community Board 9 held a public hearing on this application (C 190426 PCX) on June 20, 2019, and on that day, by a vote of 19 in favor, none opposed, and none abstaining, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. “Ensure Department vehicles and employee vehicles park in and on property ONLY.
2. Ensure Department vehicles and employee vehicles obey all street and traffic regulations in front of and in the vicinity of their facilities.”

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 190426 PCX) was considered by the Bronx Borough President, who on August 1, 2019, issued a recommendation to approve the application.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On July 31, 2019, (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled August 14, 2019 for a public hearing on this application (C 190426 PCX). The hearing was duly held on August 14, 2019 (Calendar No. 65). Two speakers testified in support of the application.

A representative from DSNY, speaking in favor, described the proposed project and the surrounding area. She also noted specifics of the existing facility, as well as plans for its redevelopment. She spoke to future plans for the Commerce Avenue facility, which include providing a permanent facility for the Bureau of Mechanics and Equipment (BME). She also briefly described the terms of the lease.

The applicant’s architect described the design of the proposed facility, noting that it would be reviewed by the Public Design Commission.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the site selection and acquisition of property for use as a DSNY vehicle maintenance and repair facility, located at 1155-1157 Commerce Avenue (Block 3840, Lot 23), is appropriate.

The proposed temporary facility will allow DSNY to continue to operate while its District 9/10/11 garage at 800-850 Zerega Avenue undergoes reconstruction. This garage is structurally unsound and lacks adequate space for the mechanics to repair agency vehicles. The Commission recognizes that DSNY has considered several sites in search of a suitable location for BME. The proposed location will allow DSNY to have better operational efficiency by maintaining the BME in close proximity to its catchment area, which covers Community Districts 9, 10 and 11.

The DSNY vehicle maintenance and repair facility will be located in an M1-1 zoning district, which allows the proposed use as-of-right. In response to a question raised by the Commission during certification of the application, DSNY stated that the proposed temporary facility is smaller than the space these maintenance and repair units occupied at the existing facility at 800-850 Zerega Avenue, but believes that it will have the capacity to continue to maintain and repair the same volume of vehicles. Therefore, the Commission believes that the site is adequate in size, is proximate to major roadways and existing DSNY facilities, and is compatible with the commercial, industrial, and warehousing facilities that exist in the immediate vicinity of the project site.

Regarding the applicant's decision to provide a buffer between their temporary facility and the baseball field, the Commission notes that the applicant has stated that trees will be planted along the western portion of their lot. The applicant will also provide street trees along the Gleason Avenue and Commerce Avenue frontages. The Commission notes that DSNY submitted a letter dated August 16, 2019, stating that they will be responsible for maintaining the tree pits.

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 this application submitted by the Department of Sanitation and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 1155-1157 Commerce Avenue (Block 3840, Lot 23) for use as a vehicle maintenance and repair facility, Borough of the Bronx, Community District 9, is approved.

The above resolution (C 190426 PCX), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on September 11, 2019 (Calendar No.1), 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. KNUCKES, ESQ., *Vice Chairman*

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LARISA ORTIZ, RAJ RAMPERSHAD**, *Commissioners*