



## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

May 9, 2007/Calendar No.20

C 070236 PSM

---

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services and the Department of Sanitation, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for site selection of property located at 2590 First Avenue (Block 1811, Lots 21 and 209) for use as a salt storage facility, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 11.

---

The application for site selection was filed by New York City Department of Sanitation (DOS) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) on December 11, 2006, in order to facilitate the construction of new salt storage facility at 2590 First Avenue, in Manhattan, Community District 11.

### **RELATED ACTION**

In addition to the site selection application, which is the subject of this report, implementation of the proposed project also requires action by the City Planning Commission on the following application which is being considered concurrently with this application:

**C 070235 ZMM:** Zoning Map Amendment to rezone Cuvillier Park from an R7-2 District to an M1-1 District.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Sanitation and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services request approval of a site selection application and zoning map amendment to facilitate the construction of a new salt storage facility in East Harlem. The new facility would be placed in Cuvillier Park, to replace an existing salt storage facility, located on the west bank of the Harlem River between the Willis Avenue and Triborough bridges.

The Department of Sanitation (DOS) stores road salt on the Harlem River waterfront, between the Triborough and Willis Avenue bridges. The existing salt storage facility, which is unenclosed, comprises a portion of a larger city-owned wharf that extends from East 125th to East 142nd streets.

The Department of Sanitation has operated the existing salt storage facility from its current waterfront location for thirty -years. The stored salt is used for DOS' winter salting operations along the Harlem River Drive and several neighboring streets in upper Manhattan. DOS must relocate this facility because the site will be used by the Department of Transportation as a construction staging area for the reconstruction of the Willis Avenue Bridge.

#### *Site Description*

Cuvillier Park is generally bounded by Paladino Avenue and East 125th street, First Avenue and the East River (FDR) Drive. The park, which is not a city-mapped park, comprises two tax lots (Block 1811, Lots 21 and 209) that total 165,749 square feet (approximately 3.8 acres). The Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority (TBTA) owns Lot 21, which comprises most of the site; Lot 209 is city-owned and currently assigned to the Department of Parks and Recreation. The city will require a permit from the TBTA to use the property for the new salt storage facility. Portions of the park are also used by the Parks and Police departments for vehicle storage. For many years, the park had been used as a play area. The Triborough Bridge access ramps are located above Cuvillier Park, blocking sunlight and casting shadows on large portions of the park's play area. The park is in poor condition and is now not heavily utilized by area residents. Neighboring uses include the Senator Robert F. Wagner Houses, a 2,162-unit, Housing

Authority-managed complex, bounded by East 120<sup>th</sup> and East 124<sup>th</sup> streets, Second and Paladino avenues. The Senator Robert F. Wagner Houses are located one block south of Cuvillier Park, on First Avenue between East 124<sup>th</sup> and East 125<sup>th</sup> streets. Triboro Bridge Park, a city playground,, is located opposite Cuvillier Park on First Avenue and East 124<sup>th</sup> Street.

### ***Proposed Salt Storage Facility***

The new salt storage facility would be an oval-shaped, one-story structure comprising white tented fabric that would be stretched over an aluminum frame. The structure would be 227 feet long, 98 feet wide and rise to a height of 58 feet. Approximately twenty-two trees would need to be cleared from Cuvillier Park to accommodate the proposed facility. The facility would also have two above-ground calcium chloride storage tanks (for deicing purposes) to be placed on nine-foot diameter concrete pads, and a sand storage bin.

Primary vehicle access would be provided from First Avenue, a major Manhattan truck route, with additional points of access/egress on East 125<sup>th</sup> Street and Paladino Avenue. The site also has direct access to and from the FDR Drive. The site would continue to provide parking for police vehicles (approximately 65 cars).

Salt spreaders from DOS garages in Manhattan Community Districts 8, 10 and 11 would load salt at the site. During the facility's peak operation period, two DOS employees would be assigned on-site; no DOS vehicles would be stored here.

### ***Zoning Map Amendment***

In addition to the requested site selection action, the applicants seek approval of a zoning map amendment to rezone Cuvillier Park from an R7-2 to a M1-1 zoning district. R7-2 districts allow residential development up to 3.44 FAR (4.0 FAR with the Quality Housing option) and community facility uses up to 6.5 FAR. Commercial and manufacturing uses are not allowed. Moreover, enclosed storage uses, such as the proposed salt storage facility, are not permitted.

M1-1 districts allow local retail, commercial and manufacturing uses up to 1.0 FAR. Certain community facility uses, such as houses of worship are permitted up to 4.8 FAR. M1-1 districts also allow enclosed storage uses such as the proposed salt storage facility. The requested rezoning action, from R7-2 to M1-1, would enable the Department of Sanitation to relocate the existing facility from the waterfront and build the new salt storage facility at Cuvillier Park.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 0703236 PSM), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C 070235 ZMM), 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 07-DOS-001M. The lead agency is the New York City Department of Sanitation.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on November 13, 2006.

## **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 070236 PSM), in conjunction with the application for the related action (C 070235 ZMM), was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on December 18, 2006, and was duly referred to Community Board 11 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

### **Community Board Public Hearing**

Community Board 11 held a public hearing on this application on March 20, 2007, and on that date, by a vote of 24 to 5 with one abstention, adopted a resolution recommending disapproval of the application with the following conditions:

The Department of Parks and Recreation must provide a detailed plan to replant the trees cut during the construction of the Salt Pile, including specific funding allocations and time table. The Department of Transportation must explain how their plans to replace the Willis Avenue Bridge will impact the area around the site.

### **Borough President Recommendation**

This application was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation on March 28, 2007 approving the application with the following conditions:

Therefore, the Manhattan Borough President recommends conditional approval of Application No. C 070235 ZMM and C 070236 PSM provided that the Department of Parks and Recreation provide a street tree replanting plan that details the amount of money required to replace the trees, the expected timetable, the placement of trees, and all other necessary implementation details. This plan should be generated with further input from the community, the Borough President's Office, and other local stakeholders. Any money from this project should be used to augment funds and efforts already targeted for implementing the Greening East Harlem Plan.

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

On March 28, 2007 (Calendar No. 6), the City Planning Commission scheduled April 11, 2007, for a public hearing on this application (C 070236 PSM). The hearing was duly held on April 11, 2007 (Calendar No. 28) in conjunction with the application for the related action (C 070235 ZMM). There were two speakers in favor of the application, and none in opposition.

The Director of Land Use for the Manhattan Borough President spoke in favor. He reiterated the Borough President's concern regarding landscaping plans for the site. He further stated that the Borough President requests that the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Sanitation should provide additional funds to advance the existing DPR greening plan for East Harlem, and that they provide specifics on how the money would be spent.

The Department of Sanitation's director of real estate spoke in favor. He stated that the existing salt storage facility in East Harlem is the largest unenclosed salt storage facility in Manhattan, providing storage for approximately 6,000 tons of salt at any given time. He described the new facility, the advantages of citing the facility in Cuvillier Park and the benefits of storing the salt within an enclosed facility. He further mentioned that the relocation of the existing salt storage facility from the waterfront would also facilitate future pedestrian improvements along the waterfront.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

### **Waterfront Revitalization Program Consistency Review**

This application 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 13, 1999 and by the New York State Department of State on May 28, 2002, 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 WRP 06-074.

This action was determined to be consistent with the policies of the New York City Revitalization Program.

### **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that the requested site selection application, with the related zoning map amendment, is appropriate.

The requested actions would facilitate the construction of a new Department of Sanitation salt storage facility in East Harlem. The new facility, would be placed in Cuvillier Park, located on the east side of First Avenue between East 125th Street and Paladino Avenue. Cuvillier Park is not a city-mapped park and is not heavily used by area residents.

The Commission believes that the requested site selection application is appropriate. At present, the Department of Sanitation stores road salt on the Harlem River waterfront, between the Triborough and Willis Avenue bridges. The existing salt storage facility, which is unenclosed, comprises a portion of a larger city-owned wharf that extends from East 125th to East 142nd streets. DOS must relocate this facility because it will be used by the Department of Transportation as a construction staging area for the reconstruction of the Willis Avenue Bridge.

The new facility would be an enclosed facility that has excellent access to the areas that would be served by the salt spreaders.

The Commission believes that the requested zoning map amendment, to rezone Cuvillier Park from R7-2 to M1-1, is appropriate. The existing R7-2 zoning district does not allow the proposed facility and the subject site, beneath the access ramps to the Triborough Bridge is not appropriate for residential use.

The Commission shares the concerns of the Community Board and Borough President with respect to landscaping and greening of the project site. Approximately 22 trees would need to be removed to accommodate the new salt storage facility. The Commission encourages the Sanitation, Parks and Police departments to jointly work toward an appropriate landscaping plan and to keep the Borough President and Community Board apprised of those plans. In addition, the Commission strongly urges the city agencies to locate any proposed fencing along Paladino and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenues away from the perimeter of the site. This would serve the dual purpose of allowing the proposed green area at the northeast corner of Paladino and 1<sup>st</sup> avenues to function as a buffer and visual amenity, as well as complementing the Greenplan for East Harlem, one of whose goals is a greener neighborhood for East Harlem residents.

The Commission notes that the new salt storage facility would enable the Department of Sanitation to continue its winter road salting operations in upper Manhattan and therefore believes that the requested site selection and zoning map amendment, are appropriate.



## **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 and 200 of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination, and the consideration described in this report, the application (C 070236 PSM) submitted by the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services and the Department of Sanitation , pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for site selection of property located at 2590 First Avenue (Block 1811, Lots 21 and 209) for use as a enclosed salt pile facility , Borough of Manhattan, Community District 11, is approved.

The above resolution (C 070236 PSM), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on May 9, 2007 (Calendar No. 20), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b).

**AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair**  
**IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E., ANGELA R. CAVALUZZI, RA., ALFRED C. CERULLO, III,**  
**BETTY CHEN, RICHARD W. EADDY, LISA A. GOMEZ, NATHAN LEVENTHAL**  
**JOHN MEROLO, KAREN A. PHILLIPS, DOLLY WILLIAMS, Commissioners**