

Queens Borough President Recommendation

APPLICATION: ULURP #N180448 ZRQ

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q06

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Eric Palatnik, Esq. on behalf of Auberge Grand Central LLC, pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the NYC Charter for a zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the NYC Zoning Resolution to designate the Project Area a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Designated Area (MIH), Borough of Queens, Community District 6, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated September 24, 2018, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-502. (Related item: ULURP #180447 ZMQ)

PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held in the Borough President's Conference Room at 120-55 Queens Boulevard on December 6, 2018 at 10:30 A.M. pursuant to Section 82(5) of the New York City Charter and was duly advertised in the manner specified in Section 197-c (i) of the New York City Charter. The applicant made a presentation. There were one (1) speaker in favor and one (1) speaker against the application. The hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

Subsequent to review of the application and consideration of testimony received at the public hearing, the following issues and impacts have been identified:

- The applicant is requesting a text amendment to Appendix F of the zoning resolution designate the Project Area a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Designated Area (MIHA);
- The applicant has filed a related ULURP application (#C180447 ZMQ) proposing a zoning map amendment to rezone an existing R1-2A District to R7A and R7X districts to facilitate renovation and enlargement of a former hospital building and the development of a multi-family residential building;
- The applicant's property (Block 2248, Lot 228) is a 57,035 sf (approximately 235' X 240') rectangular lot with frontages on both 113th Street and the Grand Central Parkway Service Road between 70th Road and 71st Avenue. The site is currently developed with the vacant six-story former Parkway Hospital building and parking lot. There is downward grade change of approximately 30 feet from 113th Street sloping down to the Grand Central Parkway Service Road. The area around the former hospital building (100' east of 113th Street) would be rezoned to an R7A District and the vacant parking lot (starting at 101' east of 113th Street) would be rezoned to an R7X District;
- The portion of Block 2248, Lot 100 to be rezoned (approximately 30' X 211' or 6% of the entire lot) abuts the south side of the applicant's site. A part of the existing three-story school building (PS 196) is located within the rezoning area. The zoning change on this parcel mirrors that of the applicant's property – a R7A District would be mapped approximately 83 feet east of 113th Street and a R7X District would begin at approximately 84 feet east of 113th Street ending at the Grand Central Parkway Service Road. There is no expected development potential on any part of Lot 100 which is developed with a school;
- Block 2246, Lot 11 is the eastern half of Block 2246 and is located across 113th Street from the applicant's development site and proposed to be rezoned from R1-2A to R7A District. This lot is developed with an existing six-story legally noncomplying apartment building and would be brought closer to compliance with the proposed rezoning. There is no expected development potential on Block 2246, Lot 11;
- The applicant is proposing to enlarge the existing former 6-story hospital building in the proposed R7A District and build a new 14-story residential building in the proposed R7X District. The combined buildings would result in a total of 302,691 sf (5.3 FAR) of mixed residential and community facility space. There would be a total of 351 residential units of which there would be 135 affordable and senior affordable units. The footprint of the existing 6-story former hospital building would not be enlarged. However, two-floors would be added to the top of the building. The enlarged 95,976 sf 8-story building would provide 68 affordable units and 67 AIRS units. The AIRS units will be offered to seniors with incomes between 70-80% AMI. Overall the 135 affordable and AIRS units will fall between 70-115% AMI fitting within the Workforce Option mandating 30% of units at 115% AMI. However, the applicant is working towards a overall average of 95% AMI for the project. The new approximately 206,715 sf, 14-story second building would be constructed in the R7X portion of the site formerly used as a parking lot. That building would rise to a base height of approximately 101 feet, then setback 10 feet before rising to its full 140 feet height. This building will include 216 market rate dwelling units and provide the required 180 accessory parking spaces on cellar and sub-cellar levels to meet the parking requirement for the entire development. The parking garage will be accessed from Grand Central Parkway Service Road;

- The immediate surrounding area is predominantly developed with multi-family apartment buildings and institutional uses and community facility uses including houses of worship, a nursing home, and several schools. Areas to the north and northwest of the rezoning area are mostly developed with one- to three-story single family houses. The area to the southwest of the rezoning area is zoned R7-1 District and predominantly developed with six-story apartment buildings. There is a R1-2A District immediately south of the rezoning area that is mostly developed with two- to three-story single family houses and further to the south there is an R6 District mostly developed with 6-story multi-family dwellings;
- CB 6 approved this application with a condition by a vote of thirty-three (33) in favor, three (3) against and one (1) abstaining at a community board meeting held on November 14, 2018. CB 6's condition of approval is that the applicant should hire union workers at the location;
- At the Queens Borough President's Land Use Public Hearing, a representative from 32BJ spoke against the project and stated that the applicant and 32BJ are still in negotiation for a labor agreement for prevailing waged jobs. A representative from New York City District Council of Carpenters spoke about the potential generation of quality construction jobs for the proposed project and support for the proposed project if those jobs were made available to skilled union workers.

RECOMMENDATION

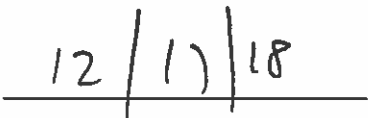
The Parkway Hospital site has been vacant for over ten years since its closing. Many efforts were undertaken to reopen the site as a health center to provide care and services for the neighborhood. However, due to the high costs and shifting economics of the health care industry those efforts were unsuccessful. Reuse of the site to provide new housing especially affordable housing and housing for seniors also meets a growing need of the community.

Based on the above considerations, I hereby recommend approval of this application with the following condition:

- Skilled tradesmen earning equitable salaries are essential in assuring a safe construction site that will result in a durable well-constructed building. As important are the building staff who provide services to maintain and keep buildings in good repair. The applicant should work with the building trades and labor unions that represent these workers to reach an agreement that would assure quality construction and success of the project.



PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS



DATE