

# Queens Borough President Recommendation

APPLICATION: ULURP #190151 ZRQ

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q01

## DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Akerman LLP on behalf of Cipico Construction Inc. pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for a zoning text amendment to designate the Project Area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing ("MIH") area, Borough of Queens, Community District 1, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated April 22, 2109, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-518.

(Related ULURP #s100421 ZMQ, 190386 ZSQ)

## PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held in the Borough President's Conference Room at 120-55 Queens Boulevard on Thursday, June 13, 2019 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 was one other speaker. The hearing was closed.

## CONSIDERATION

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

- The applicant is proposing a zoning text amendment that would amend Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution to establish the rezoning area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area;
- Two other applications were concurrently filed with this application. ULURP #100421 ZMQ proposes to rezone a single block from M1-1 to R6B and R7X/C1-3 to facilitate a Large Scale General Development. The R6B District would be mapped to a depth of 100 feet north of 33<sup>rd</sup> Road. The remainder of the block would be mapped with an R7X District and an C1-3 commercial overlay. ULURP #190386 ZSQ is for a Special Permit for a Large Scale General Development that would allow the shifting of floor area and other modifications that would allow development that is more sensitive to the densities, heights and uses in the surrounding community;
- The proposed project would be a 334,083 sf development with three mixed-use buildings that includes 351 residential units of which 113 would be affordable (Option 2 - 30% of units @ 80% AMI), 11,236 sf ground floor commercial space, 6,881 sf community facility space, 166 parking spaces, 178 bike parking and landscaped private and public (16,546 sf) open space. The building heights would range from 4- to 12-stories with the lowest building heights on the southern portion of the site rising to the tallest heights to the northern portion of the site in consideration and relation to the building heights of the neighboring areas. Affordable housing and market rate units would be a part of each of the buildings identified as A, B and C;
- Block 315 is an approximate 1.77 acre site and is currently developed with a non-conforming one-story warehouse building and used for open storage of construction vehicles. The irregularly shaped site is bounded by 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Vernon Boulevard, Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Street and 33<sup>rd</sup> Road. The Noguchi Museum is located directly across the street on 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Other nearby uses includes Socrates Sculpture Park, Rainey Park, Costco, and light industrial uses. The NYCHA Ravenswood complex is located two blocks away, the areas to the south of the site are developed with some low-density housing. The areas north of Broadway are developed with low to medium density housing;
- The applicant met with the community board Land Use Committee prior to certification of the application. Concerns were raised at that meeting about the limited affordability for area residents of the proposed Option 2 affordable housing component and the disproportionate number of studios and one-bedroom units proposed. Other issues raised were the maintenance and operation of the public open space, traffic congestion and access to mass transit hubs, off street loading areas for deliveries, affordable commercial rents for local businesses, shadow impacts on the surrounding area, and parity of building fixtures and amenities for the market and affordable housing. The applicant responded to the Land Use Committee approximately three weeks before the scheduled public hearing: that Option 1 (25% of units @ 60% AMI) would be applied to Buildings A and B using the 40%-50%-80% AMI income bands, and that Option 2 would be applied to Building C using the 60%-80%-100% AMI income bands; the number of two- and three-bedroom units would be increased and that the number of total units (351 to 330) would be reduced to reflect those changes; they would look into provision or coordination of transportation service to mass transit links. These changes were presented by the applicant to the community board at the public hearing;

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- o Community Board 1 (CB1) approved this application by a vote of twenty-two (22) in favor with two (2) against and two (2) abstaining at a public hearing held on May 23, 2019. The CB 1 recommendation notes the applicant's efforts to make the development more affordable and strongly urged that the proposal to apply Option 1 in Buildings A and B, and Option 2 in Building C should be memorialized in subsequent agreements and in a restrictive declaration with the Departments of City Planning, and Housing Preservation and Development. CB 1 also noted appreciation for the graduated height design of the project, though not supported by all, that considers and is sensitive to the low-scale character and cultural uses in the surrounding neighborhood.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the above consideration, I hereby recommend approval of this application with the following conditions:

- the applicant should honor their commitments to the community board and that the changes as presented are memorialized with the Departments of City Planning, and Housing Preservation and Development as stipulated by Community Board 1 in their recommendation;
- the applicant should work with the building trades and service unions on agreements that would bring the skills and experience needed to build the project efficiently and safely during construction, and to assure the quality and success of the development upon completion.



**PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS**

7/15/19

**DATE**