

Queens Borough President Recommendation

APPLICATION: ULURP #210213 ZMQ

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q12

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by BG Sutphin LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 14d, by changing from a C4-5X District to a C6-3 District property bounded by 97th Avenue, 146th Street, a line 100 feet southeasterly of 97th Avenue and Waltham Street, Borough of Queens, Community District 12, dated August 30, 2021, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-639. (Related ULURP #N210214 ZRQ)

PUBLIC HEARING

A remote Public Hearing was held via Zoom webinar and livestreamed on the Queens Borough President's website on Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 9:30 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 eight speakers. 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:

- This application proposes a zoning map and text amendment changing an existing C4-5X District to an C6-3 District. The properties to be rezoned are Block 10030, Lots 1 and 6 located within the Special Downtown Jamaica District. The proposed rezoning would facilitate mixed-use redevelopment of the site. The applicants are Breaking Ground and the Community Health Network;
- Another application (ULURP #N210214 ZRQ) proposing text amendments to the NYC Zoning Resolution is concurrently under review with this application. The proposed zoning text amendments would establish and map the area to be rezoned in Appendix F as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area. Additionally, special bulk regulations within the Special Downtown Jamaica District would be modified and the existing Inclusionary Housing designated area would be removed from the district;
- The applicant is proposing to build a mixed-use fifteen-story 146,000 SF building for use as 173 units of affordable housing and an enlarged health clinic on the property. Seventy percent (70%) of the studio and one-bedroom units would be considered Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors (AIRS) housing. The AIRS units would be reserved for seniors aged 62 and up with annual incomes of 50% or less of Area Median Income. The remaining thirty percent (30%) of studio units would serve formerly homeless seniors with special needs who are aged 55 and up. One residential unit would be reserved for the building superintendent. The proposed building would also include an expanded medical health facility on the ground floor and cellar level, amenities for the residents that would include a fitness room, computer room and a community room. Breaking Ground is a not-for-profit organization that specializes in providing supportive and affordable housing and has been operating in New York City since the 1990s. Breaking Ground will manage and operate the housing to be built on this site;
- Community Health Network has operated a federally qualified medical health clinic on the site since 1978 in a 6600 SF facility. The proposed Community Health Network would continue to operate the enlarged 15,000 SF medical health clinic;
- The site is within the Special Downtown Jamaica District which was established in 2007 to build upon Jamaica's strengths as a multimodal transportation hub. The project lies within a highly populated area, with a high concentration of commerce in addition to several modes of public transportation (subway, buses, Long Island Rail Road), AirTrain. The area is dense, with both C-6 and R-6 zoning directly across from the project location. There are small homes in the area in addition to the taller residential buildings;
- The proposed site is a rectangular lot that is roughly 100 feet by 150 feet. The site sits on the corner of 97th Avenue and 146th Street. The abutting property, outside of the proposed location, is roughly 50 feet by 100 feet and sits on the corner of 97th Avenue and Waltham Street.
- Community Board 12 (CB 12) disapproved this application unanimously by a vote of forty (40) in favor, zero (0) against and zero (0) abstentions at the monthly meeting held on October 20, 2021. CB 12 had several issues with the plan, listed below:
 - Not enough parking.
 - The board is suggesting they only do 9 stories.
 - 50% local preference for apartments was too low.
 - 25% MWBE construction hiring was too low.
 - Not enough attention paid to the process of evictions, in similar buildings they feel people have been evicted unfairly.
 - CB12 felt there was no plan to address quality of life issues.

QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION

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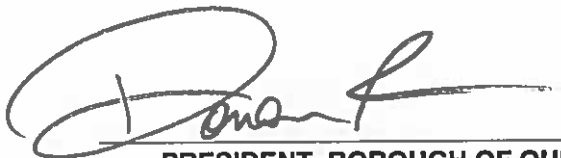
- At the Queens Borough President's Land Use Public Hearing on November 4, 2021, the applicant stated that proposed building will provide increased availability and expanded health care and medical services for the community at large as well as the senior residents of the project above. Breaking Ground also testified that an agreement had been recently reached with DC 37 for their employees to become members. The speakers who testified in favor of the project spoke about continued access to increased health and medical services from the provider already on the site and the need for affordable housing. In addition to the public speakers a representative for the local Councilmember read testimony in support of the application into the record.

RECOMMENDATION

There is a continuing pressing need both for quality medical health services and affordable housing. This project both expands increased medical health care and provides affordable housing for seniors.

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

- The applicant should commit to a target of 30% minimum rate during construction and post construction of working with locally owned business, MWBE firms, 50% local hiring, and locally community based organizations for capacity building and job fairs.
- There should be quarterly meetings with the Community Board 12 to report on the success of reaching these goals.



PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

12/2/2021

DATE