

Queens Borough President Recommendation

**APPLICATIONS: ULURP #220050 ZMQ
ULURP #N220051 ZRQ**

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q01

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

ULURP #220050 ZMQ – IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Eric Palatnik P.C. on behalf of Agayev Holding LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 9a:

1. changing from an R5 District to an M1-4/R7A District property bounded by Vernon Boulevard, 35th Avenue, 9th Street, and a line 175 feet southwesterly of 35th Avenue; and
2. establishing a Special Mixed Use District (MX-23) bounded by Vernon Boulevard, 35th Avenue, 9th Street, and a line 175 feet southwesterly of 35th Avenue;

Borough of Queens, Community District 1, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated January 3, 2022 and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-645. (Related ULURP #220051 ZRQ)

ULURP #220051 ZRQ – IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Eric Palatnik P.C. on behalf of Agayev Holding LLC 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 December 21, 2021, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-645. (Related ULURP #220050 ZMQ)

PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held by the Borough President via Zoom webinar and livestreamed on www.queensbp.org on Thursday, February 3, 2022 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 was one (1) speaker. The hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

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

- The lead application proposes a Zoning Map Amendment to change an area generally bounded by Vernon Boulevard, 35th Avenue, 9th Street, and Interior Lots 20 and 33 (Block 328 Lots 20, 23, p/o Lots 16 and 33) from an R5 District to R7A and M1-4 Districts as well as establish a Special Mixed-Use District “MX-23” overlay. The proposed actions would facilitate the development of a nine-story, mixed-use building and allow residential, commercial, and manufacturing uses in the same building;
- Another application (ULURP #220051 ZRQ) concurrently filed with the lead application proposes a Zoning Text Amendment to Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution to establish and map the Rezoning Area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Area;
- The Proposed Development is a 9-story, 95-foot, 117,525-SF (4.51 FAR) cellar and sub-cellar mixed-use building with 107 apartments, including 26 affordable units under Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Option 1 (25% of units @ 60% average AMI) to be administered by HANAC. The overall height would be broken up by setbacks: 10- and 15-foot setbacks at 7 stories along Vernon Boulevard and 9th Street respectively, a setback at 5 stories along Lot 33 pursuant to ZR Section 26-693, and a 10-foot setback at 7 stories along 35th Avenue with a 7th floor terraced recreational area. The building would include 7,923-SF ground floor commercial retail space, 18,059-SF office and light industrial “maker space” uses on the first and second floors, and 87,023 SF residential space on the third through ninth floors. The Applicant will provide 77 vehicle parking spaces throughout the sub-cellar, cellar, and first floor along and 58 bike parking spaces in the cellar. An OONEEPod would be installed on the curb for free public bike storage;
- The Rezoning Area (Block 328 Lots 20, 23, p/o Lots 16 and 33) is an area generally bounded by Vernon Boulevard, 35th Avenue, 9th Street, and Interior Lots 20 and 33. The Development Site (Lot 23) is a 26,058-SF, L-shaped lot mapped as an existing R5 District and currently occupied with a non-conforming two-story, ~44,800 SF automotive parts warehouse and distributor owned by E&Y Distributors. E&Y Distributors plans to relocate its operations and employees to larger facilities in the Bronx and Brooklyn;

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- The Proposed Development and Rezoning Area are located in the Ravenswood-Dutch Kills neighborhood. The site is adjacent to an M1-1 District to the west and diagonally across from an R7-1 District to the northwest. Other zoning districts within a 600-foot radius include M3-1 and R6A, and surrounding uses include 2-, 4-, 5- and 17-story residential buildings, commercial/retail, community facilities, light and heavy manufacturing including a ConEdison cooling station one block southwest from the Site. The nearest public transit options include the Q102 bus (along Vernon Boulevard), the N/R (36th Avenue/31st Avenue) and F (21st Street) subways, which are an approximate 1-mile walk from the Proposed Development. The Development is also within one block of the 36th Avenue Bridge that connects Queens to Roosevelt Island and subsequently Cornell Tech, a 5-acre Cornell University technology satellite campus, and two blocks from an elementary school (P.S. 76Q, The William Hallet School);
- Community Board 1 (CB 1) approved this application by a vote of twenty-three (23) in favor, ten (10) against, and two (2) abstaining at the monthly meeting held on January 18, 2021. CB 1 requested soundproofing around the 2nd floor to attenuate noise for residential tenants on the 3rd floor; a project breakdown of both market and MIH rents by AMI and apartment size; and that the Applicant connects with Cornell Tech and other local community groups to use the second floor light industrial space. In response to suggestions at an earlier Land Use Committee meeting, the Applicant revised the proposal by eliminating studios, adding more 2- and 3-bedrooms, and changing to MIH Option 1;
- At the Borough President's Land Use Public Hearing, the Applicant Team discussed community-led partnerships with the Proposed Development. Urban Upbound's Business Innovation Department would help place local entrepreneurs in the light-industrial maker space as well as facilitate job training. The Applicant Team also committed to 30% local and M/WBE business hiring, and the right of first refusal of retail space for local entrepreneurs. The Applicant Team showed a slide of the MIH affordable unit breakdown with respect to unit type, income levels and rent amounts. There was one (1) public speaker who read statements on behalf of two community members in favor of the project.

RECOMMENDATION

The Applicant has worked with the community board and local stakeholders to create a mixed-use development proposal that fits with the residential, commercial and industrial character of the surrounding neighborhood. The Proposed Development would facilitate local economic development and job placement as well as affordable housing needs. Based on the above consideration, I hereby recommend approval of this application with the following conditions:

- The Applicant should meet CB 1's requests to the best of their abilities;
- The Applicant, in relation to local hiring and community engagement, should explore discounted rents or other incentives for CB 1 local entrepreneurs and artists in the proposed maker space;
- In lieu of offering public space with the Proposed Development, the Applicant should meet and/or partner with P.S. 76Q to fund needs related to Spirit Playground, outdoor space or other necessary improvements;
- The Applicant should commit to knocking on doors of local residents to promote the Proposed Development and its community benefits and partnerships;
- There should be a goal of 30% for local hiring and use of M/WBE businesses in the construction and development of this project. There should also be quarterly reporting on the numbers of people hired and if the 30% hiring goal has been reached; and
- The Applicant should continue to partner with Urban Upbound and other local community-based organizations to host job fairs at NYCHA Ravenswood and Queensbridge and to bring awareness of upcoming job opportunities.



PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

02/22/2022

DATE