

Queens Borough President Recommendation

**APPLICATIONS: ULURP #220169 ZMQ
ULURP #N220170 ZRQ**

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q01

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

ULURP #220169 ZMQ – IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Crescent Street Associates, LLC an application submitted by Crescent Street Associates, LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 9b:

1. changing from an M1-2/R5B District to an M1-2/R6A District property bounded by a line midway between Crescent Street and 27th Street, a line 100 feet southwesterly of 40th Avenue, 27th Street, and a line 100 feet northeasterly of 41st Avenue; and
2. changing from an M1-2/R5D District to an M1-2/R6A District property bounded by Crescent Street, a line 80 feet southwesterly of 40th Avenue, 27th Street, a line 100 feet southwesterly of 40th Avenue, a line midway between Crescent Street and 27th Street, and a line 100 feet northeasterly of 41st Avenue.

Borough of Queens, Community District 1, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated May 9, 2022, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-677. (Related ULURP #N220170 ZRQ)

ULURP #N220170 ZRQ – IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Crescent Street Associates, LLC an application submitted by Crescent Street Associates, LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for 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 May 9, 2022, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-677. (Related ULURP #220169 ZMQ)

PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held by the Queens Borough President via Zoom webinar and livestreamed on www.queensbp.org on Thursday, June 30, 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 were five (5) 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 is proposing to rezone an existing M1-2/R5B District to a M1-2/R6A District. The area to be rezoned (Block 406, Lots 9-12, 29, 38 and 40 and parts of Lots 1, 2, 8, 27, 28 and 1001-1004) is bounded by 40th Avenue to the east, 27th Street to the south, and 41st Avenue to the south. The proposed rezoning would facilitate construction of a new mixed-use development with affordable housing;
- The Applicant is proposing to develop a seven-story, 175,600 square-foot (SF) mixed-use building (3.88 FAR) on Lot 12 (the “Development Site”). With a base height of 65 feet, the proposed building would be comprised of three segments: 11,785 sf for manufacturing uses (water tank, cooling tower storage and testing operations), 5,510 sf for ground-floor local commercial retail, and approximately 158,305 sf for residential use. The proposed building would also provide approximately 233 dwelling units, of which 60 units would be affordable for low- to moderate-income households under MIH Option 1 (25% of residential floor area to be made affordable at an averaged 60% AMI). The three segments would form an interior courtyard for building residents adjacent to Lots 11 and 38, and the Development would include 118 vehicle parking spaces: 88 residential, 18 commercial, and 12 manufacturing;
- The Development Site is a 45,200-SF, mid-block lot with 255 feet of frontage on Crescent Street and 200 feet of frontage on 27th Street, and is improved with four one-story buildings: Orkin Exterminator Services office space, a storage facility for water testing and cooling tower products, and a parking lot. The Applicant is the current owner of the Development Site. Part of the lot was allocated to food vendor vehicle storage until recently – the vendor’s representative had a rent dispute with the Applicant, and subsequently the vendors relocated to another storage location a few blocks away from the Development Site;
- The surrounding blocks within a 600-foot radius of the Rezoning Area and Proposed Development are primarily zoned M1-2/R5B, M1-2/R5D, and M1-2/R6A. The surrounding uses range from mid-rise apartment buildings, public facilities, commercial and office buildings to light manufacturing. In terms of transit, the Development Site is served by the N, W, 7 and F subway lines (at Queensboro Plaza and 21st Street-Queensbridge stations respectively), and the Q69 and Q102 bus lines along 21st and 31st Streets. NYCHA-Queensbridge Houses, Queensbridge Park, and P.S. 166 Annex are all located just outside the 600-foot radius of the Rezoning Area;

- In 2001, the NYC Department of City Planning rezoned a 34-block area (including the Development Site) to become a “Special Long Island City (LIC) Mixed Use District,” which finalized a long-term effort to create a Central Business District in Long Island City and allowed more residential, manufacturing, commercial and office development around transit centers like Court Square and Hunters Point. Later in 2008, the 40-block Dutch Kills Rezoning was designed to encourage more residential density, expand the mix of uses in the area and create more cohesive development. This rezoning would further extend the existing M1-2/R6A District and create a balance of residential, office space and manufacturing uses. The Applicant is required to include Designated Uses in any development over 3.6 FAR – in this application, 0.12 FAR is reserved for manufacturing use (Use Groups 16A and 17A);
- Community Board 1 (CB 1) approved the application by a vote of eighteen (18) in favor and sixteen (16) opposed with one (1) abstention at a meeting on June 21, 2022. The following concerns were discussed:
 - The Applicant should increase the number of 2- and 3-bedroom units from 19% to 40% of the total dwelling units (*Applicant response*: more information about this increase will be made available as discussions with the NYC Department for Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the local Council Member progress);
 - The Applicant should include deeper levels of affordability, more affordable units overall, and a more localized tenant selection process for the affordable units (*Applicant response*: more information about housing affordability depth and scale will be made available as discussions with HPD and the local Council Member progress);
 - The Development Site’s vehicular access along Crescent Street should be redesigned for off-street commercial and manufacturing access, and residential vehicular access (for drop-off & deliveries) should be located along 27th Street to prevent potential bike lane blockage (*Applicant response*: they confirmed this change in their site plan design);
 - The Applicant will use required sustainable features and materials under Local Law as well as explore other sustainability features not required (e.g., solar roofing, electric vehicle charging stations, etc.) (*Applicant response*: they intend to use required materials and features, and will continue researching optional sustainable measures);
- At the Borough President’s Land Use Public Hearing, the Borough President asked about community benefits and sustainable infrastructure. On the topic of housing affordability, the Applicant reiterated that they will have more information when they are negotiating the regulatory agreement with the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). The Borough President specifically asked about M/WBE procurement, local and union hiring practices, to which the Applicant responded they had not hired a general contractor yet but will take these suggestions seriously. When asked about green roofs and infrastructure, the Applicant’s environmental consultant proposed a green roof on one of the segments with the possibility of extending it to the entire building roof. The Borough President also asked about the lack of community facility space included in the Development Site, to which the Applicant responded that they were focusing on jobs and local hiring as part of the project, but the Borough President made it clear that community facility space is a priority for local residents. On the topic of the street vendor issue, the Applicant gave a quick synopsis of the issue. The Borough President also asked the Applicant to address the following concerns: lack of trees on the current sidewalk, including a nonsmoking section of the building, and partnering with community-based organization(s);
- During the public testimony portion of the hearing, five (5) speakers testified against this application with the following concerns: real estate speculation and rent increases due to new development; lack of deeply affordable housing for existing residents in Community Board 1; and the lack of public access to the proposed building’s courtyard. The Office of the Queens Borough President did not receive any written testimony on this application.

RECOMMENDATION

The Applicant has demonstrated a willingness to compromise on some of the Community Board’s requests, and the mixed-use elements of the building are appropriate for this area. However, the Applicant could guarantee more community benefits in relation to their Proposed Development – Queens residents continue to need deeply affordable housing, sustainable buildings, community facility space, local hiring practices, and outdoor spaces.

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

- The Applicant should allocate approximately 10% of the Proposed Development’s affordable units to persons making 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), which equates to a one-person household making \$28,020 to a four-person household making \$40,020 gross income;
- The Applicant should commit to a minimum 30% hiring goal regarding M/WBE firms and local hiring. The Applicant should report these minimum 30% hiring goals quarterly to my office, Council Member and Community Board;
- The Applicant should commit to knocking on doors of local residents to promote the Proposed Development, its community benefits and partnerships;
- The Applicant should allocate square footage for community facility space and partner with local community-based organizations (CBOs) for office and/or meeting space;

- To the best of their ability, the Applicant should:
 - Implement green roofs throughout the entire Proposed Development's rooftop;
 - Use sustainable infrastructure and materials in the building's construction and lifetime, with special considerations to solar panels, HVAC systems, and overall LEED Gold or Silver certification standards;
 - Plant multiple trees along the Proposed Development's sidewalks to mitigate a heat island effect; and

- The Applicant should redesign the residential courtyard to allow for public access/egress. The public should be able to use the outdoor space at their leisure (within reason of the courtyard's regulations such as time appropriate uses).



PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

08/05/2022

DATE