

# Queens Borough President Recommendation

**APPLICATION:** 23-10 Queens Plaza South Rezoning and Special Permit  
**COMMUNITY BOARD:** Q02

## DOCKET DESCRIPTIONS

**ULURP #210317 ZMQ — IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by AAGS Holdings LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 9b, by changing from an M1-5/R9 District to an M1-6/R9 District property bounded by Queens Plaza South, 24th Street, 42nd Road, and 23rd Street, Borough of Queens, Community District 2, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated October 24, 2022, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-689. (Related ULURPs #210318 ZRQ and #210319 ZSQ).

**ULURP #N210318 ZRQ — IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by AAGS Holdings LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for zoning text amendments to Zoning Resolution Sections 117-50, 501, 502, 52, 521, 522, 53, 531, and 532 to establish a new Area D, coterminous with the Project Area, within the Queens Plaza Subdistrict of the Special Long Island City Mixed Use District; make such Area D subject to the applicable bulk regulations of the Subdistrict; and establish the maximum permitted floor area ratios (“FAR”) permitted by use in Area D. (Related ULURPs #210317 ZMQ and #210319 ZSQ).

**ULURP #210319 ZSQ — IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by AAGS Holdings LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the grant of a special permit pursuant to Section 117-533 of the Zoning Resolution to modify the distance between buildings requirements of Section 23-711 (Standard minimum distance between buildings), and the street wall location requirements of Section 117-531 (Street wall location), to facilitate a 22-story enlargement of an existing 4-story building on property located at 23-10 Queens Plaza South (Block 425, Lots 1 & 5), in an M1-6/R9 District, within the Special Long Island City Mixed Use District (Queens Plaza Subdistrict), Borough of Queens, Community District 2. (Related ULURPs #210317 ZMQ and #N210218 ZRQ).

## PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held by the Queens Borough President via Zoom webinar and livestreamed on [www.queensbp.org](http://www.queensbp.org) and held at Queens Borough Hall on Thursday, January 12, 2023 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 application and consideration of testimony received at the public hearing, the following issues and impacts have been identified:

- The Applicant is requesting a Zoning Map Amendment from an M1-5/R9 District to an M1-6/R9 District; to establish a new “Area D” within the Queens Plaza Subdistrict of the larger Special Long Island City Mixed Use District (“LIC District”) coterminous with Block 425, Lots 1 and 5 (the “Zoning Lot”); and a Special Permit to modify distance between buildings and street wall locations on the Zoning Lot within the Special Long Island City Mixed Use District;
- The Applicant is proposing to reuse and enlarge an existing four-story, former Eagle Electric industrial building on Lot 5 (the “Proposed Development”). These zoning actions would facilitate a 26-story (399-foot tall), 321,450-SF commercial building; 216,600 SF of new floor area would be built on top of the former Eagle Electric building with multiple setbacks at the 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> floors. Within the Proposed Development, 20,630 SF is proposed for local retail and exhibit use, and approximately 300,820 SF is proposed for office use. The Applicant plans to build a passive recreational terrace and a possible eating or drinking establishment on the 4th floor roof, as well as publicly-accessible 2,400-SF community facility space and an accessory gymnasium space in the basement. The entrance to the community space would be located along 23rd Street and the entrance to the retail space would be located along Queens Plaza South through a shared entrance with the ground floor retail. The ground floor would be occupied by local retail uses, an office lobby, an Eagle Electric exhibit to display the former building owner’s products and provide information about the company’s history, a loading area, and an accessory bicycle parking area;

- The rectangular Development Site has a total lot area size of 42,143 SF and is bounded by Queens Plaza South, 24<sup>th</sup> Street, 42<sup>nd</sup> Road and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. A Zoning Lot Development and Easement Agreement governing the Development Site was executed and recorded in 2018 (the “ZLDA”), allocating to Tax Lot 1 the existing floor area of a Residential Building, and allocating to Tax Lot 5 26,363 SF of the maximum allowed 26,448 SF of floor area allowed on the Development Site, plus any additional floor area obtained through an upzoning of the Development Site. The proposed Zoning Text Amendments for the Proposed Development would establish new FAR maximums for commercial and manufacturing SF at 15.0, community facility SF at 10.0, residential SF at 8.0 to allow for the enlarged office space, and to create a new Area D that would be subject to the applicable bulk regulations of the Queens Plaza Subdistrict. A Special Permit to modify bulk regulations would also allow the Proposed Development (above a height of 125 feet) to be located 60 feet from the existing Residential Building instead of 80 feet, and allow for the street wall to be set back from the street line at the 5<sup>th</sup> floor on all three street frontages to incorporate the proposed recreation space, proposed sign, and possible eating/drinking establishment;
- In 2001, the Queens Plaza South Subdistrict Areas A-1, A-2, B and C were established within the LIC District to promote office development along with residential, community facility and manufacturing uses. Zoning in the 600-ft surrounding area includes M1-5/R9, M-15/R7-3 and M1-5. The Project Area is adjacent to the Queensboro Bridge to the northeast, a public parking lot to the southwest, and a trade school to the west. The Project Area is located close to public transportation, including the E, G, M, N, R, W and 7 subway trains and the Q39, Q66 and Q69 bus lines;
- At a public hearing held on January 5, 2023, Community Board 2 (CB2) voted to unanimously approve the application with conditions by a vote of thirty-four (34) in favor, zero (0) opposed and zero (0) abstentions. On January 10, 2023, the Applicant wrote a letter to CB2 after the public hearing and vote, committing to the following conditions:
  1. The approximately 300,818-SF office use would create approximately 1,500 office jobs;
  2. 32BJ SEIU has signed an agreement for permanent building services;
  3. The 2,400-SF community facility space will include a Community Space which will include a publicly-accessible restroom. The Community Space will be well-lit and easily accessible from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street;
  4. 2,100 SF of the 5<sup>th</sup> floor outdoor space will be set aside for public use and include another public restroom;
  5. Amending the originally-proposed bicycle spaces to include 39 e-bike spaces and 23 “traditional” bike spaces for a total of 62 spaces, and providing outlets for scooter charging;
  6. Providing free WiFi in the Community Space and the 5<sup>th</sup> floor outdoor space (through NYC Mesh or another provider);
  7. The Applicant will work with CB2, the Long Island City Partnership, Queens Chamber of Commerce, Court Square Civic Association and local arts organizations to determine the appropriate types of tenants and square-footage for retail and service establishments; and
  8. The Proposed Development would retain and renovate the building envelope and façades of the Eagle Electric building and include a historical display in the lobby;
- At the Borough President’s Land Use Public Hearing, the Planning and Development Director chaired the hearing on behalf of the Borough President. After the Applicant’s presentation, the Director asked about the advertising of the public spaces within the Proposed Development, the maximum occupancy for the Community Space, and the possibility of opening the accessory gymnasium to the public on the weekends. The Applicants said they would send more information about the Community Space, and would explore the concepts related to advertising and opening the gym on weekends. There was one (1) speaker from the Long Island City Partnership who spoke in favor of the Proposed Development;
- The Office of the Queens Borough President has also received written testimony from the Building and Construction Trades Council in support of the Proposed Development, citing a commitment from the Applicant to hire union construction labor with area standard wages, medical and retirement benefits.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above consideration, I hereby recommend approval for this Proposed Development with the following conditions:

- There should be a minimum 30% goal to include M/WBE firms, hiring of local residents and working with locally-based organizations and community groups for outreach and job fairs when hiring and contracting for this project. There should be quarterly reporting of these hiring initiatives to the Borough President and Council Member until the hiring goal has been reached;
- The Applicant should follow through on all CB2 conditions as described in their January 10<sup>th</sup> letter;
- The Applicant should submit plans to the local Council Member and Borough President regarding advertising the outdoor recreation space and Community Space for the general public, including but not limited to outdoor signage and wayfinding that would encourage pedestrians to enter the building;
- In terms of sustainability and resiliency goals, the Applicant should add passive natural landscaping along the Development Site for better drainage as well as exploring LEED Platinum or Gold building certification;

- The Applicant should explore contacting local CB2 nonprofits and community-based organizations for discounted office space, and implementing CB2's condition of putting in a grocery store in part of the retail space;
- The Applicant should commit to reserving the accessory gymnasium located in the basement of the Proposed Development for the general public and/or local youth organizations on weekends, outside normal business hours;



**PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS**

01/18/2023

**DATE**