

# FY 2020 Borough Budget Consultations

## Manhattan - Landmarks Preservation Commission

Meeting Date 9/12/2018

### AGENDA ITEM 1 : General Agency Funding Discussion:

The purpose of holding the Borough Budget Consultations is to provide Community Boards with important information to assist in drafting their statement of District Needs and Budget Priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. As you know, Community Board Members are volunteers who may not be familiar with the budget process and how agencies' programs are funded. At the same time, Community Board members are very knowledgeable about local service needs.

This year's Manhattan agendas have three sections:

I. Agencies begin the consultation with a presentation of their goals, funding decision process, and highlights of their funding needs.

II. Then, the agenda continues with Community Boards asking about specific program funding.

III. Lastly, the agendas include Boards' requests on district-specific budget questions. We request that the agency respond in writing, but have any further discussions on these items with the Community Boards outside of the consultation.

For the first section, please present on the four topics below for 10-15 minutes at the beginning of our Consultation. Also, please provide written responses or even a PowerPoint presentation that we can use to fully and accurately educate our Board Members.

1. What are your priorities and operational goals for FY19 and projected priorities and operational goals for FY20?
2. What are the current proposed FY19 and FY20 service and operational goals and proposed funding?
3. Which programs is the agency adding, dropping, or changing for FY19 and projected for FY20?
4. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

### AGENCY RESPONSE:

1. What are your priorities and operational goals for FY19 and projected priorities and operational goals for FY20?

LPC will continue to focus on equitable and inclusive service delivery through education and outreach efforts in communities across all five boroughs. These efforts include community meetings to inform diverse stakeholders including residents, property owners, business owners and community boards about the landmark designation process and its regulatory impact, and working with applicants from all backgrounds to provide technical advice and expedite applications for improvements and alterations to landmark properties.

2. What are the current proposed FY19 and FY20 service and operational goals and proposed funding?

Service and Operational Goals for FY19 and F20

1a - Identify and designate as landmarks, eligible individual buildings, interiors, scenic landmarks and historic districts.

1b - Facilitate appropriate work on landmark buildings through technical assistance and timely issuance of permits.

1c - Increase compliance with landmark regulations

1d - Evaluate potential impacts to archaeological resources in a timely manner

#### Adopted FY19 Budget

Personnel Services: \$5,827,525

Other Than Personal Services: \$857,911

Agency Total: \$6,685,436

#### Estimated FY 20 Budget

Personnel Services: \$5,899,270

Other Than Personal Services: \$628,647

Agency Total: \$6,527,917

3. Which programs is the agency adding, dropping, or changing for FY19 and projected for FY20?

None

4. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

LPC focuses on equitable and inclusive service delivery through education and outreach efforts in communities across all five boroughs. These efforts feature community meetings to inform diverse stakeholders including residents, property owners, business owners and community boards about the landmark designation process and its regulatory impact. The Commission is continuing to develop more multi-lingual accessibility to serve those same audiences. The agency works with applicants from all backgrounds to provide technical advice and expedite applications for improvements and alterations to landmark properties.

1a - Identify and designate as landmarks, eligible individual buildings, interiors, scenic landmarks and historic districts.

Targets:

- Designate 20 individual landmarks and historic districts each year.

1b - Facilitate appropriate work on landmark buildings through technical assistance and timely issuance of permits.

Targets:

- Issue 85% of Certificates of No Effect (CNE) within 10 business days each year.
- Issue 100% of Expedited Certificates of No Effect (XCNE) within 2 business days each year.

1c - Evaluate potential impacts to archaeological resources in a timely manner.

Target:

- Review 85% of all archaeology applications within 10 business days each year.

## **MEETING NOTES:**

### **COMMENTS:**

The agency is working to increase transparency. Many community meetings have taken place, and LPC has begun to attend the monthly Borough Cabinet Meetings. A lot of transparency work has also been done through the website, posting presentations from public hearings, introducing a portal to submit comments for public hearings, as well as adding a map on pending and issues permits.

In addition to the map showing all pending applications, LPC has also enhanced the search feature on the website.

LPC surveys thousands of properties per year. Last year, there were 114 requests from the public to survey other sites. Members of the public are able to request evaluations of specific locations. LPC values the relationship with community boards in their evaluation of locations.

## **FOLLOW-UP:**

Open Data has not been updated since Sept 16th, 2017. This data is incredibly useful for community boards in their review. LPC is working on having live data available.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2 : Staffing**

Please share with us the current level of LPC staffing; how many staff members are dedicated to: application review, research, violations, as well as any other functions related to community district landmarks issues. In which department would additional staff be most useful to achieve the agency goals? Was there a change in staffing between fiscal years '18 and '19? What were the changes? What changes in staffing do you project for FY20?

## **AGENCY RESPONSE:**

LPC has 85 authorized staff, which includes 77 full time and 8 part time staff. The agency received 4 new needs lines in FY19 – 3 Landmarks Preservationists in the Preservation Department and 1 Procurement Analyst in Administration. There are currently 11 vacancies that we are in the process of filling.

Breakdown by Departments:

- Executive: the agency has 17 executive staff who work on the community district landmarks issues, including designation and regulatory policy, the street sign and district marker program, outreach and training programs for properties owners in buildings and districts under consideration, as well as for property owners in districts that are already designated, and educational materials on the website, including technical fact sheets, property searches for designation and permit information, and walking tours and interactive maps. There are currently 3 vacancies (including LPC Chair) that we are in the process of filling.
- Research: total headcount is 17. We currently have 3 full time vacancies and 2 part time vacancies. One full time vacancy is for a Research Landmark Preservationist (LP) and the other 2 full-time vacancies are for a GIS Specialist and a Data Analyst. One part time vacancy is for an LP who is currently on child care leave. This department is responsible for identifying and proposing items for designation. LPC designates new individual landmarks and historic districts in the context of the agency's priorities and citywide equity agenda. LPC's Research Department has a detailed work plan to accomplish significant goals this FY in accordance with the agency's priorities.
- Preservation: Total headcount is 39. We currently have 1 vacancy. The department received 3 new needs lines for FY19, and processed over 14,000 applications last fiscal year.
- Enforcement: Total headcount is 6, 5 full time staff and 1 part time staff. We're in the process of filling 2 vacancies, one full time FOIL/Records Access Associate and one part time Compliance Associate. This department is currently larger than it has ever been in the Commission's history.
- Archeology/Environmental Review: Total headcount is 5, 3 full time and 2 part time staff. These departments are responsible for assessing architectural and archeological resources in areas where there are projects undergoing the environmental review process. They work closely with the Research Department to ensure our reviews are coordinated.
- HPGP: 1 part time staff. The LPC's Grant Program provides façade restoration grants to non-profit organizations and income-eligible owners of landmark buildings.

## **MEETING NOTES:**

### **COMMENTS:**

LPC believes that they are currently adequately staffed. The Preservation Dept. is now at its highest staffing level, at 39. Staff write the actual permits from 93-96% of the time; the other small percentage are reviewed by the board after a public hearing. One of the findings from last year's robust public hearing on rule changes was that there is a large consensus on many items. After reviewing comments, the proposal was revised and then brought to a public meeting on May 29th. It has not been voted on yet. The next public hearing is on October 16th.

Having clear rules will help make the staff's review of locations much more clear and efficient.

Regarding the Lower East Side Historic District, LPC is working on a designation framework on the immigration history. LPC believes this is not a matter of financial resources or staffing, but a need for a greater outreach strategy. LPC has fewer connections on the west side of CD 3, so they are working with Council members to increase outreach there.

Individual staff do individual landmark work.

LPC acknowledges every request. Some Districts take longer based on the topology or level of alterations.

CB 7 believes that the map is useful, but further notice to the community board could go a long way in notifying the community with where to look regarding work being done on buildings. This notice would ideally be similar to the public hearing notice.

LPC believes this is more of a technology issue than a staffing issue.

LPC also has an Environmental Review division. One of the priorities of the agency is to look at communities that have been rezoned. LPC has improved the coordination between reviews, with a more in-depth look at communities from different angles. Certain properties were looked at in the East Harlem rezoning, so those are opportunities that are able to be revisited.

#### **FOLLOW-UP:**

CB 4 would like to know the average turnaround time for each stage of the process.

CB 7 would appreciate a list by Community District notifying each board of pending applications. This would greatly help to notify the public. This is also related to moving toward the Open Data being live.

### **AGENDA ITEM 3 : Funding for Completing RFE's**

1. How many Requests for Evaluation (RFE) has LPC received in this fiscal year and FY 18?

2. For each fiscal year, how many RFEs has LPC initiated, worked on, and completed?

3. What funding is available for LPC staff to process RFEs for Historic District designation? What levels of expanded staffing would be necessary for LPC to process the average number of RFEs that come in each fiscal year to the satisfactions of the staff and the Commission?

#### **AGENCY RESPONSE:**

1. How many Requests for Evaluation (RFE) has LPC received in this fiscal year and FY 18?

LPC received 114 RFEs from members of the public during FY2018.

2. For each fiscal year, how many RFEs has LPC initiated, worked on, and completed?

LPC conducts surveys to identify historic resources and potential landmarks. In addition to Commission initiated surveys, LPC reviews RFEs from the public. In FY 2018, LPC surveyed 3,472 properties, in addition to reviewing the 114 RFEs from the public.

3. What funding is available for LPC staff to process RFEs for Historic District designation? What levels of expanded staffing would be necessary for LPC to process the average number of RFEs that come in each fiscal year to the satisfactions of the staff and the Commission?

- RFEs are requests by members of the public to the Commission to evaluate potential eligibility for designation, but they are not applications.

- The Commission identifies properties that may be eligible for future landmark consideration through our own internal surveys and from requests from the public.
- When we get an RFE, we review it to see if the property meets the minimum standards under the Landmarks Law, and in many cases, the determination is that it may pending more research. At that point, the property becomes part of our internal study materials and timing of any further research depends on agency priorities.
- There are many factors that determine whether the Commission will formally consider a property, including merit/architectural, historic or cultural significance, the importance of the resource in the context of similar and/or already designated resources, how it aligns with agency policies such as designating landmarks in all five boroughs, the level of threat, and the level of stakeholder support.
- LPC designates new individual landmarks and historic districts in the context of the agency's priorities and citywide equity agenda. LPC's Research Department, which is comprised of 17 fully funded staff, has a detailed work plan to accomplish significant designation work within this Fiscal Year in accordance with the agency's priorities.

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

LPC tries to get back to requests within a month. Districts sometimes take longer to address and evaluate.

**FOLLOW-UP:**

**AGENDA ITEM 4 : Staffing to Meet New Deadlines**

What changes to review procedures were ultimately enacted as a result of the recent proposed rule changes?

Specifically speaking, which types of items will be reviewed on a staff-level basis and what will be the budgetary impact on staffing levels from this change?

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

What changes to review procedures were ultimately enacted as a result of the recent proposed rule changes?

The proposed Rules Amendments have not yet been adopted. After the public hearing, the agency made several significant revisions to the proposal. The LPC has made the revised proposal available and will hold another public hearing in October. The application review procedures have not changed.

Specifically speaking, which types of items will be reviewed on a staff-level basis and what will be the budgetary impact on staffing levels from this change?

Currently 93-96% of all applications are approved at the staff level pursuant to the existing rules. The proposed rules amendments included reorganizing the rules to make them more intuitive and easier to follow, codifying work that is already approved at staff level, and delegating some work that is currently approved at Commission level to the staff.

The revised proposal removes the Commission’s delegation to staff for the removal of cast iron vault lights and also removes the delegation to staff for the simplification of historic window configuration and incremental matching of non-historic windows at visible secondary facades. The amendment will not change the size of the additions staff can approve and in some cases, may reduce the size the staff would otherwise be allowed to approve.

The proposed rules, however, will not increase the number of applications the staff will handle because they handle all applications, whether they are applications that can be approved at staff level or ones that require review by the full Commission at a public hearing. In fact, the applications that require full Commission review and a public hearing take up more of staff’s time because there are no established criteria to follow. The staff’s workload will likely decrease if the rules are adopted because the clear criteria will allow for more efficient and consistent review for both the staff and the applicant.

**MEETING NOTES:****COMMENTS:****FOLLOW-UP:****AGENDA ITEM 5 : Recommended Priorities for CB Support**

What budget priorities would you like the community board to request as part of the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Process

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

We believe that our budget well accommodates our strategic goals and what we aim to accomplish yearly. In determining which items to advance to the formal designation process, the agency prioritizes historic resources in light of many factors, including: our policy to diversify and designate historic resources in all five boroughs to ensure that all areas of the city are represented, and the importance of the resource in the context of similar and/or already designated resources. The agency is committed to advancing designations in areas that are less well-represented by landmarks within existing resources.

**MEETING NOTES:****COMMENTS:**

The specific issue with Open Data is that it is programmed to reload the entire data set every time it is opened. LPC believes that this is a technology issue, not a funding issue. Overall staff has increased 20% (regulation has increased 26%), so LPC believes that any time there has been an additional funding need, it has been filled.

**FOLLOW-UP:**



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Chair

**Sarah Carroll**  
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Lester Siegal  
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August 27, 2018

Dear Mr. Siegal:

This is to confirm that The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) will participate in the upcoming FY 2020 Manhattan Budget Consultation scheduled for September 20, 2018.

As requested, enclosed is LPC's Budget and Policy Statement. In addition, to facilitate productive dialogue with community representatives, I will be representing the agency at the borough consultation along with the following staff:

**Gardea Caphart, Budget Director**

Mr. Caphart is responsible for overseeing the agency's financial functions, including managing the agency's budget, conducting financial analysis, and serving as the agency's liaison to the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of the Comptroller.

**Ali Rasoulinejad, Director of Community and Intergovernmental Affairs**

Mr. Rasoulinejad serves as liaison between LPC and community and government organizations involved in planning and preservation, which includes serving as liaison to City Hall, the City Council, Community Boards, other city agencies, and advocacy groups. He also coordinates collection and distribution of information for City Council Hearings, including Budget Hearings, and conveying the Commission's goals and initiatives to community groups in all boroughs.

I can assure you that the staff listed above and I are fully prepared to discuss LPC's goals and funding decision process, and answer district specific budget questions representatives of the Manhattan Community Boards may have.

Sincerely,  
  
Sarah Carroll  
Executive Director



## LPC'S POLICY AND BUDGET STATEMENTS

The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) is responsible for protecting New York City's architecturally, historically, and culturally significant buildings and sites by granting them landmark or historic district status, and regulating them after designation. The agency is comprised of a panel of 11 commissioners who are appointed by the Mayor and supported by a staff of approximately 70 preservationists, researchers, architects, historians, attorneys, archaeologists, and administrative employees. There are more than 36,000 landmark properties in New York City, most of which are located in 144 historic districts and historic district extensions in all five boroughs. The total number of protected sites also includes 1,412 individual landmarks, 120 interior landmarks, and 11 scenic landmarks.

LPC's FY 2019 adopted budget is \$6.69 million which comprises \$6,089,453 in City funds and \$595,983 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Of the overall budget, 87% is allocated to personnel services (PS) and 13% is allocated to other than personnel services (OTPS).

The agency's total head count is 85 including 77 full time positions and 8 part time positions. There are, presently, a total of 74 staff members -- 69 full time staff and 5 part time staff. This administration has been very supportive and has approved 13 new positions (9 full-time and 4 part-time) for LPC since 2014. The total staff has increased by 18% since 2014 and is now higher than it has been since the early-1990s.

Of the CDBG funding, about 80% is allocated to personnel supporting critical community development-related functions; while about 20% or approximately \$115,000 is allocated for our Historic Preservation Grant Program. Our Grant Program provides modest grants to low and moderate-income homeowners and not-for-profit organizations to restore or repair the facades of their landmarked buildings. In FY 2018, the Program awarded three grants: one residential grant in the Prospect Park South Historic District in Brooklyn; and two not-for-profit grants to the Renee and Chaim Gross Foundation in the South





Village Historic District in Manhattan, and the Henry Street Settlement, individual landmarks in Manhattan.

LPC has also been actively pursuing more transparency, in part by using digital technology and our website to provide timely information on the Commission's work. Last year we launched the "Historic Building Data Project", in which we transferred information from 50 years of designation reports into a geographic information system database. In December 2017, we enhanced our Landmarks web-map, with building-by-building data all buildings within historic districts, and searchable information on the approximately 36,000 buildings and sites under the Commission's purview. We believe that this readily available information is invaluable to property owners, community groups, residents, and members of the public.

On our regulatory side, in May 2018 LPC launched Permit Application Finder, a new interactive web map that will for the first time allow the public to see geographically where LPC permits have been filed and issued and what that work entails. The Commission has also enhanced its online Permit Application Search, which now gives the public the ability to search by community district and work type. These new search tools are part of the agency's strategic plan to provide greater transparency and public access to the Commission's work.

The Permit Application Finder displays applications and permits issued since January 2016 for work on individual, interior and scenic landmarks, as well as historic district buildings in all five boroughs. The web map includes detailed up-to-date information on applications filed with the LPC as they go from filing to the issuance of the permit. This feature makes it easier for the public to find out what work is being done on designated buildings in their neighborhood and throughout the city. It also benefits applicants who can check on the status of their application. The web map also features a permit filter that lets users sort permit applications by community district, and for issued permits they can sort by Commission or staff-level approval, or by work type (e.g. window replacement).



LPC's Permit Application Search, launched in 2016, previously only allowed the public to search for applications by address, docket number, historic district and borough. Now, they can search by community district and work type, as well as Commission and staff-level approvals for issued permits. Additionally, the public will be able to access applications and permits issued since January 1, 2016, extending the two-year window of the earlier version of the search tool.