



Donovan Richards
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Community Board No. 2

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Lisa Deller

Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert

District Manager

December 16, 2020

Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

This meeting was teleconferenced on Zoom

Land Use Members - Present

Lisa Deller
Christine Hunter
Thalia Batan
Tannia Chavez
Kenneth Greenberg
Benjamin Guttmann
Elliot Park
Morry Galonoy
Lauren Springer
Julie Won

Land Use Members – Absent

Nick Berkowitz
Tannia Chavez
Stephen Cooper
Sally Frank
Patrick O'Brien

Community Board 2 Staff

Debra Markell Kleinert
MaryAnn Gurrado

Department of City Planning

Teal Delys, DCP
Vicky Garvey, QBP

Elected Officials/ Representatives

Jack Bernatovicz, Representing Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer

Guests

Suraj Sani, First Pioneer
Suresh Sani, First Pioneer
Moneesha Sani, First Pioneer
Neil Weisbard
Jack Robbins
James Coakley
Tyler Cukar
Bill Becker
Sam Pioneer
Benjamin Lucas, Woodside/Sunnyside Composting
Julie Forman
S. Bernstein

Ms. Deller welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced the meeting was being teleconferenced.

BSA Application No 2016-1185-A
45-26 51st Street, Tax Block 2283, Lots 53 and 54, Borough of Queens

Neil Weisbard, attorney for the applicant, Treasure Island of Asbury Park Self Storage LLC. introduced James Coakley, representative of Treasure Island.

Ms. Weisbard provided the following information:

- This application was originally filed with the BSA to build within the bed of a mapped street, 51st Street.
- The general City Law Section 35.
- They were before the Board in April of 2016 and obtained approval for the application.
- The proposal is to construct a self-storage facility on Tax Lots 53 and 54 on Tax Block 2283, Borough of Queens on 51st Street between 47th Avenue between Queens Boulevard.
- In 2016, the BSA approved the application and part of their resolution stated that all final signoffs had to be obtained by November 2020. The applicant had been in litigation with the seller. They are not the owner right now and this is why they were unable to move forward. The applicant needed more time with the BSA to complete construction. The owner of the property has approved them to file the application.
- The transfer should take place shortly. They are asking for an extension of time to start and complete construction and to get a C of O. They are asking the BSA for an additional 4 years, which was the original time. The hearing at the BSA is January 25 or 26, 2021 and are seeking it to be on the calendar so they can meet all the requirements. They did not receive any comments from the BSA.
- The applicant reported there are 7 parking spaces and two open loading birth areas. They have found that they do not need many parking spaces.

Mr. Coakley provided an update on the litigation.

Ms. Deller asked about greening and landscaping.

Ms. Deller requested the applicant attend the January 7, 2021 CB 2 Board Meeting.

Christine Hunter made a motion and it was seconded by Kenny Greenberg to approve the application for an extension. The vote was all in favor of the motion with none opposed and no abstentions.

34-09 Queens Boulevard

Presentation for proposed redevelopment by First Pioneer Team

Suresh Sani, Representative of First Pioneer discussed the following:

- This has been reviewed with DCP, LIC Partnership and Gail Mellow, Ex-President of LaGuardia Community College.
- Their focus has been on job creation.
- They plan to stay dedicated to the LIC Community.
- Introduced his team.

Suraj Sani, VP at First Pioneer discussed the family's history with Long Island City.

Tyler Cukar, Urban Designer discussed the following and spoke about the guiding principles for 34-09 Queens Boulevard which are listed as follows:

- Combine Manufacturing with other uses to promote industry.
- No Increase in density: Total FAR matches existing change in use only.
- Provide the allowable manufacturing SF, so rezoning avoids loss of industrial space.
- Local retail space along Queens Boulevard.
- Overall building height is in line with tall Queens Boulevard buildings and signage.

The following was discussed.

- Goals and Trends
 - Understanding IBZ's learning from past studies, today's business needs
- Existing zoning and IBIA zoning:
 - Existing zoning: Overview
 - M1-4 Zoning
 - Manufacturing FAR – 2
 - Community Facility FAR- 6.5. They are not looking for an increase in density.
- 34-09 Queens Boulevard Area
 - Existing Built Area: 149,121
- Allowable Area
 - Manufacturing 200,025 SF
 - Community Facility, 650,163 SF
- IBIA Text Amendment: Overview

- Small amount of retail on Queens Boulevard.
- Office space and light industry
- Development Proposal was discussed.
- The timeline was discussed.

Ms. Deller discussed the issue of community facility space and asked the applicant how this project would benefit the community in a more social way. The mix of office and industrial space could also include a portion of the additional FAR for community facility use such as arts, community-based non-profit and health related uses that would benefit the neighborhood.

Ms. Deller asked about the proposed loading zones and off-street collection of trash. She also asked about whether the developer proposed to hire union labor.

Christine Hunter discussed the current challenges for retail leasing, and suggested that community facility space could be incorporated at ground level facing 35th St. and at upper floors facing Queens Boulevard, for public visibility.

Kenny Greenberg discussed the Arts & Cultural Committee and the possibility of assisting with outreach to arts organizations. Mr. Greenberg stated that we are interested in companies and artisans that make real things.

Morry Galanoy discussed the concept and the possibility of an incubator and a curated space.

Karesia Batan discussed the many arts organizations that have been lost and requested that the developer reach out to those kinds of organizations to be housed in this project.

Ms. Deller spoke about the many local businesses that have been displaced in the area and asked about tiered levels of rent for businesses and to preserve local businesses that have been displaced due to residential development that is going on in LIC.

The applicant stated this development is three or four years away.

Ms. Deller requested that they come back when their project has made further progress with DCP.

23-10 Queens Plaza South

The applicant was not present at the meeting.

Woodside/Sunnyside Composting

Benjamin Lucas, Woodside/Sunnyside Composting presented a power point presentation.

- Mr. Lucas has been working in the community for a few years and he discussed the temporary Garden Farm Project, located on 50th Street and Barnett Avenue.
- They have been using land surrounding the Lt. Michael Davidson park and started a petition in early May to ask for a formal authorization to use the land to grow food as a temporary use.

- The Parks Department will take a minimum of 17 months before they construct a new park in this location.
- The Land is 0.23 square miles at the corner of 50th Street and 39th Avenue with two structures.
- He stated there are no rat sightings on the block of the community garden.
- His organization cleaned the space and installed beds.
- The goal is to temporarily grow food in a currently unutilized space to donate to Sunnyside Woodside Mutual Aid until the Parks Department has funding and is ready to break ground on the new park.
- They have no plans for retaining the space once ground is broken for a permanent installation.
- The crew consists of four core volunteers with direct experience in addition to two trained master composters, one person trained by the Rat Academy run by NYC DOH and one person with a degree in Agricultural Science. Cumulatively the four core volunteers have over 25 years of experience composting, gardening and rat abatement.
- There is an immediate urgent need for food.
- They have conducted two independent soil tests in July and November and analyzed by UCCENY and Brooklyn College and by an expert from Cornell Soil Lab. Both results found safe levels of lead and heavy metal contaminants.
- They are growing raised beds, mulching the surrounding area and washing all the produce.
- He stated that Council Member Van Bramer is in support of this project.

Ms. Deller stated we can reach out to Parks and try to bridge the dialogue.

Mr. Bernatovicz, representing Council Member Van Bramer reported they have been working with the Woodside Sunnyside Composting. The Council Member has been advocating on their behalf with Parks. Parks is not in the composting business and the Council Member's staff are continuing to advocate to see how their office can assist the group and make the neighborhood more sustainable.

Ms. Won stated she will work with Ben and reported that she volunteers her time at the site. They want to keep the composting going and the community wants to keep composting and a sustainable way of living.

Ms. Deller requested that they try to partner with a not-for-profit organization that would have insurance and an official standing to negotiate with Parks. Mr. Lucas was invited to attend the January 7th full board meeting.

Department of City Planning

Teal Delys provided an update on the following applications:

- 62-04 Roosevelt Avenue
- 48-18 Van Dam Street

Ms. Hunter asked if there will be information and additional drawings and material to make things clearer for the public and asked about the shadow study. She would like to see the shadow study so people can understand the impacts of what is being proposed.

Phipps Project

Ms. Deller discussed the Phipps Project and asked about the DCP hearing. Ms. Delys will look into it and get back to CB 2. Ms. Delys said that on 12/17 there would be a hearing at Borough President's Office. If anyone is interested in testifying, there is a link to the hearing on the BP's website.

Vicky Garvey stated everyone is welcome to register and are invited to testify and asked if people can spread the word. The BP's vote is advisory and there will be other opportunities to testify.

Ms. Deller discussed writing a letter about the lack of compliance with the BSA permitting process by physical cultural establishments: this will be tabled and put off until the January Meeting

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

MA Gurrado

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