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Community Board No. 2

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Lisa Deller
Chairperson
Debra Markell Kleinert
District Manager

January 20, 2021

Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

This meeting was teleconferenced on Zoom

Land Use Committee Members Present

Lisa Deller
Christine Hunter
Thalia Batan
Tannia Chavez
Sally Frank
Kenneth Greenberg
Elliot Park
Lauren Springer

Land Use Committee Members Absent

Nicholas Berkowitz
Stephen Cooper
Benjamin Guttmann
Patrick O'Brien

NYC Department of City Planning

Teal Delys

Queens Borough President's Office

Vicky Garvey

Elected Officials/Representatives

Jack Bernatovicz, Representing Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer

Guests

Chase Villafana, Planet Fitness
Penny Lee, Dynamic Star
Brad Zackon
Jay Segal
Allison Curreria
Mark Weprin, Greenberg Traurig
Gil Lopez
Justin Green, Big Reuse

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

61-10 Queens Boulevard

Presentation for proposed Planet Fitness gyn at 61-10 Queens Boulevard. This was formally Gold's Gym. The applicant would like to discuss the need for a zoning map amendment.

Chase Villafana, Director of Construction PF Supreme, LLC discussed the following:

They are seeking a land use application to change the site's existing C1-2 commercial overlay to a district that will enable Planet Fitness to secure a PCE special permit form the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals at 61-10 Queens Boulevard. The space was formerly Gold's Gym and Big 6 Fitness. They recognize the need for fitness to continue in the community now more than ever. Planet Fitness has become one of the largest and fastest-growing franchisors and operators of fitness centers in the United States by number of members and locations. With more than 2,039 locations in 50 states, Canada, Australia and Latin America, Planet Fitness aims to provide an affordable, accessible, high-quality fitness experience in a welcoming and non-intimidating environment.

Mr. Villafana provided a power point presentation tour of a typical facility.

- The facility has approximately 15,000 square feet.
- They will have 2 to 6 employees per shift and a total of 14 employees
- The hours of operation were discussed.
- The site is a C1-3 commercial overlay and they are looking to change site's existing zoning to enable Planet Fitness to secure a PCE special permit from the BSA.
- The ULURP application was filed and they are doing some community outreach.
- It is a long and expensive process and will take approximately 24 to 30 months.
- They are seeking to operate prior to the full approval.
- They have not met with City Planning.

Ms. Deller advised there are many PCE establishments in the community and recommended they go through the necessary steps to obtain a special permit as required. Ms. Deller stated that they would want to hear from the community to see if the community wants a PCE in this area. Ms. Deller recommended they speak to the Department of City Planning and she encouraged that they should not be open before the establishment is legalized.

Questions were entertained and a discussion followed.

23-10 Queens Plaza South

Penny Lee, independent planning consultant for Dynamic Star, introduced the following individuals:

- Brad Zackon, owner and developer
- Jay Siegal
- Allie Correa
- Mark Weprin

Ms. Lee provided a power point presentation and discussed the following:

- The applicant attended the November 2019 Land Use Committee Meeting and they shared essentially the same presentation.
- Announced they have done more design development with the building.
- They have made progress with City Planning and have submitted a revised draft ULURP Application at the end of last year. They were advised they need to analyze more intersections for the traffic analysis. Certification depends on what the additional traffic analysis shows.
- They want to discuss zoning map and text amendments for 23-10 Queens Plaza South, the last Eagle building put back into useful economic purpose.
- The building is currently vacant and has been since 2000.
- The building is located on the corner of 23rd Street and Queens Plaza South, where the 7 Line curves near the Queens Plaza Subway Station, which is on the edge of the LIC special district, within the Queens Plaza Sub-district.
- Currently within Area B and it is zoned M15 R9. The current allowable FAR is 8
- The purpose of these ULURP Applications is a Zoning map amendment from M1-5 R9 to M1-6 R9, and it is in the special district. The proposal is to modify the Queens Plaza Subdistrict to establish Area D that would apply to the entire block.
- It would retain the same height and set back provisions that are currently in effect and it would establish an FAR of 15 for commercial and manufacturing uses, with an FAR of 10 for community facilities and 8 for residential uses, which would be the same as currently permitted.
- The City Planning Commission special permit would also. modify a required distance between buildings which currently requires 80 feet between the new building and the existing building.
- They want to reuse the existing Eagle Electric building and add an enlargement on top of it to create a new office building as opposed to an apartment building.
- The existing building is 105,000 square feet and the proposed new office building is approximately 217,000 square feet.
- Total height of the new building is approximately 383 feet and the bulkhead would be on top of that.
- They want to carve out space of approximately 2400 SF for a community use. The ceiling height may allow incorporation of a mezzanine space in addition to the the main level. They want to find out if there is any group who would potentially use the space.
- The entrance to the space would be on 23rd Street.
- Ms. Lee discussed the uses of the various spaces and stated there will be 60 bicycle parking spaces.
- Ms. Lee discussed the International Well Building Institute standard, which has struck a cord with them in light of the pandemic and will forward a copy of the booklet to CB 2.

Questions were entertained.

Brad Zackon stated the following:

- They will be donating the community facility space, which will be approximately 2400 SF on the main level and potentially 1200 upstairs. It will be rent free.
- It could be programmed for community meetings.
- They have signed an agreement with 32BJ to manage the building.
- Reached terms with union agreement for construction.
- Will work with 32BJ for workforce training and hiring for long term jobs in the building.

Ms. Deller discussed the potential for workforce development and collaboration with LaGuardia Community College.

Mr. Weprin stated there are many needs and is happy to discuss them moving forward.

Justin Green, Big Reuse

Mr. Green provided a power point presentation and Gil Lopez provided the following information.

- Big Re-use is a non-profit organization operating under the Queensborough Bridge,
- Located at Vernon Boulevard and Queens Plaza South.
- They do community scale composting.
- The effort has been driven by volunteers.
- The site was filled with garbage and they paved and landscaped the area. They removed 50 30-yard containers of debris.
- They have planted bushes and are building an education center at the front of the site.
- The compost goes back to community gardens, Jacob Riss Settlement House, street tree care, compost on street trees, planted bulbs and much of it goes to parks. They take food scraps and leaf and yard waste goes back to parks.
- They have a license agreement with parks but have been notified that it will not be renewed. The Parks Department is having a scoping hearing next week at 6:30.
- Justin discussed the redevelopment of Queensbridge Baby Park.
- The Parks Department redesign is planning to displace them and put Parks trailers there.
- Big Reuse is seeking community support to use the staff parking lot to host their operation.
- They are seeking to renew their license agreement and be creative about their use of space.
- They have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars of their own money and capital funding to improve it. They feel that to turn it into a parking lot and put trailers on it is a waste.
- They have a tremendous amount of support.
- They had a meeting at the Council and Council Member Van Bramer is a fierce advocate for the site and there are many elected officials and community groups who are big supporters.
- Big Reuse is requesting that CB 2 send a letter of support.
- Mr. Green is requesting that DPR move the Parks operations further down the street, keeping the Big Reuse site open and accessible for volunteers, community groups and school children.

Ms. Deller said that CB2 has been advocating for the renovation of Baby Park for many years. Ms. Deller reported there is a visioning meeting scheduled and the information was distributed and the Council

Member has shared the information on all social media platforms. Ms. Deller encouraged everyone to go to the meeting.

Jack Bernatovicz stated the Council Member is fully supportive of Big Reuse and he is advocating that composting should stay and is encouraging everyone to attend the meeting.

Questions were entertained.

Christine Hunter made a motion and it was seconded by Kenny Greenberg to send a letter of support, which would recommend extending the license agreement for the existing space for 5 years with an option to renew in the existing area they are currently using.

Karesia Batan amended the motion to state that Parks should consider another location for their vehicles.

All were in favor of the motion, with none opposed and no abstentions.

Ms. Deller announced the following visioning sessions:

- Share Your Ideas for Improving Woodside for Veterans Memorial Plaza, January 21, 2021, 6:00 pm, Zoom Meeting.
- Share Your Ideas for Queensbridge Baby Park online visioning session, Thursday, January 28, 2021, 6:30 pm.

City Planning Update

Teal Delys provided the following update:

- Announced that Phipps went to meeting at CPC. The vote will take place on February 17, 2021. All are welcome to submit written comments up until a week before the vote.
- Proposed 13 story site at 62-04 Roosevelt Avenue was sent to Community Board 2. Certification will take place on February 16, 2021.
- The next project for certification is for the Teamsters proposal to enlarge their existing building, creating a 4-story building at 48-18 Van Dam Street.

Phipps Improvement Plan

Ms. Deller provided an update on the Phipps Improvement Plan.

Ms. Deller announced that she was not able to participate in the meeting, however, she listened to the BP hearing later and there were not many residents that testified. Ms. Deller encouraged everyone to listen to the testimony.

Ms. Deller reported that on Friday there will be a meeting with the Tenants Association and she hopes to attend.

When Phipps came to the Board and the CB 2 meeting there was a long discussion about the 80% top AMI and Phipps said that they would agree to cap the AMI at 80%. When they went to the BP's hearing

the presentation still included the 90% tier. Ms. Deller asked Mr. Bernatovicz to keep an eye on this as it goes through the City Council hearing process.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:
MA Gurrado

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