



Community Board 7

Borough of Queens

Bay Terrace, College Point, Beechhurst, Flushing
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Chairperson

Marilyn McAndrews

District Manager

Sharon Lee
Acting Queens Borough President

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
AUDIO AND VIDEO TELECONFERENCE

PRESENT

Charles Apelian
James Cervio
Kaily Cheng
Michael Cheng
Chin-Hsiang Chiang
Kim Cody
Nicholas Corrado
Arlene Fleishman
Richard Forman
Fred Fu
Doreen Gatanas
Vincent Gianelli
Pablo Hernandez
Jeff Huang
Lawrence Hughes
Eugene Kelty

Phil Konigsberg
Esther Lee
Wendy Louie
Frank Macchio
Betsy Mak
Rev. R. McEachern
Barbara McHugh
Michelle Miao
Selma Moses
Sergio Nicolich
Kim Ohanian
Millicent O'Meally
John Park
Yacov Pshtissky
Kris Ram
Paul Rifino

Belal Salim
Warren Schreiber
Kevin Shields
Matthew Silverstein
Joshua Sussman
Joseph Sweeney
John Tsavalos
Harpreet Singh Wahan
Clarissa Wong
Maggie Wong
Dian Yu
Linna Yu
Lei Zhao
Jie Zhu

ABSENT

*John Choe Terence Park
*Wensong Li Peter Tu

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager

Mary O'Neill, Community Associate

GUESTS

Elizabeth Bian-Queens Borough President's Office
Vanessa Ordonez-Queens Borough President's Office
Sandra Ung-Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office
Mabel Tso-Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Office

Joyce Choi-Councilman Peter Koo's office
John Liu State Senator
Amber Yoon-Assemblyman Edward Braunstein's Office
Daniel Blech-Assemblyman Daniel Rosenthal's Office
Vito Tautonico-Councilman Paul Vallone's Office

***Excused-Absent**

First Vice-Chair Chuck Apelian opened the **meeting at 5:00 p.m.** via audio and video teleconference and thanked all Board Members and expressed concern for everyone's health during COVID-19. Over Seventy participants were in attendance. Only **Board Members** will be allowed to ask questions during the hearing. The **public** can speak only during public participation, and will be limited to 3-minutes.

Roll Call Attendance was taken by the First-Vice Chair with (46) Present and (4) Absent.

The following announcements were read by First Vice-Chair Apelian. Our condolences to **Arthur Barrigan** on the passing of his wife **Mary** in April. Arthur was Chuck's Co-chair on Land Use for many years. If anyone wishes to reach out to Arthur, he currently is living at The Bristol in North Hills at 99 South Service Road, Apt. 365 or by telephone 917-797-5165. Our condolences to Jeff Huang on the loss of his mother this summer, and to the recent passing of Board Member **Marc Schiffman**. His wife **Eileen** contacted the board's office wishing everyone well. In August we also lost a great lady, **Claire Shulman**, our former Queens Borough President, the first woman to hold the post. She was incredibly smart and interpreted information quickly, understood how to solve problems and never wasted time. She was known for her passionate advocacy on economic development issues, airport disputes, the environment, the Borough's cultural institutions and the creation of 30,000 school seats for Queens students, to name a few. After ending her career in politics, she continued to be active by establishing the Flushing Willets Point Corona Local Development Corp. as President and CEO. She also was on the board of directors for NY Hospital Queens and St. Mary's Healthcare System for Children. She was 94.

Governor Cuomo ordered the requirement of masks when traveling on MTA buses and trains, subject to a fine of \$50.00 for non-compliance. Under Vision Zero, (9) major thoroughfares, including Northern Blvd. from 114th St. to the City line, have reduced travel to 25 mph limit. Compliance cameras are in place in school safety zones. If you exceed the limit, a \$50 fine or more will be given. DOT is changing all 1 hour meter parking to 2 hours at a graduated rate with no charge up to the first hour or less.

Elizabeth Bian will be moving to represent the office of District Attorney Melinda Katz. **Vanessa Ordonez** will be your new representative from the Borough President's Office. **State Senator John Liu**, briefly spoke and mentioned the need for federal, state and local government assistance for solutions for COVID-19, the need for another stimulus with small businesses closing, people losing their jobs and unable to pay their rent or mortgage, the need to open schools, the impact on our police, fire dept. and transit services, all combined are affecting our economy here and throughout our country. He hopes to have better news for us in October. He ended by wishing everyone to be as safe and as healthy as possible.

PUBLIC HEARING

136-18 MAPLE AVENUE, FLUSHING – BSA #2020-35-BZ – Committee Chair Lei Zhao – Application for special permit pursuant to NYC Zoning Resolution Section 73-66 to allow the construction of a new 20-story mixed residential and Commercial building on the above referenced site to exceed the height limits established under Zoning Resolution Section 61-21 (Restriction on Highest Projection of Building or Structure). The property is zoned R6 and R6/C1-2. Section ZR61-21 of the Zoning Resolution is to be varied.

Committee Chair Zhao explained the corner property in question was once a grocery store with an accessory parking lot with variances granted from 1954 to 1990. The parking lot continued to be used even after the variances expired until 2001 when the current owners sealed it off. The new owner now seeks to build a 20-story mixed use building with a 9-story community building adjacent to it on the two lots. The applicant already obtained FAA and PANYNJ determination of “No Hazard to Air Navigation” on the height of the 20 story building in question with obstruction lighting. The building will now require final approval from the BSA. Committee Chair Zhao introduced the applicant’s attorney, James Colgate, who had with him Timothy Sudweeks and Edwin Tang, Architects and Fran Huang, the Engineer on record. Discussion followed:

- Q. Yacov Pshtisky (YP) - Is the carbon footprint taken into consideration for this building?
- A. James Colgate (JC) -The local law that you cite sets certain carbon emissions standard. This building is compliant.
- Tim Sudweeks (TC) - We’re actually going for zone green, a high-performing building that’s better than most.
- A. Chuck Apelian (CA) - Local Law 97 is the energy efficiency law going into effect for new buildings filing after November 2019.
- Q. Warren Schreiber (WS) – Is this building exceeding the as-of-right by 100 feet?
- A. JC: 94.22’ above zoning approaching surface.
- Q. WS: Do you have the FAA and PANYNJ letters of approval?
- A. CA: Yes, we do.
- Q. John Tsavalos (JT) - What’s the existing as-of-right FAR?
- A. JC: 4.8 for a community facility, total maximum across the entire site. Residential is lower.
- A. CA: The maximum is 4.8.
- Q. JT: Are you going to build out in accordance with existing FAR?
- A. JC: Yes.
- Q. Nick Corrado (NC) – If it were not necessary for FAA approval, this wouldn’t need to come before the board?
- A. JC: Yes, if this building wasn’t in an airport area, it would not be an issue.
- Q. NC: I’d like to get an understanding, if there were a new owner, or ownership change, would they know they’d eventually have to go to the FAA and BSA?
- A. JC: This has been on the books since 1961. The DOB started enforcing it diligently the past 15 years. Everyone should know this is the requirement.
- A. CA: Whether the purchaser did or didn’t know about it is moot. The fact is when they took it to Design, they would have found out it’s the law.

Comment from NC: I don’t believe the BSA or the FAA is concerned with overcrowding of people and buildings getting higher and higher. The BSA isn’t looking into those things.

- A. JC: You are correct. The city planners have zoned this area as R-6 that allows a certain density and gives property owners the amount of floor area they can build. If the community board feels there is overdevelopment, the proper action is to petition for rezoning.

Comment from CA: This isn't a variance, or a Special Permit. There's not a lot of subjectivity about this. It's more an objective application where the criteria have to be met to proceed. The zoning isn't changing. It's a very low height on the zoning code. I think it's done to make sure when there is development, the FAA and PANYNJ can chime in. I understand your concerns about density and the impact on the community, but we've seen a number of these over the years similar to this.

Q. Bill Salim (BS) I was in the committee when this came up, but I don't remember if we asked if the zoning lot was one Tax Lot or was it combined at a later date?

A. JC: There originally was one tax lot for this zoning lot. The ownership has been fractured by a new tax lot line.

Comment from BC: You did a tax lot subdivision, even though there were 3 tax lots, and because it was one zoning lot, you could get that height as-of-right.

A. JC: Breaking up the tax lot still lets you build this way. There were existing businesses on Main Street, but no one wanted to move.

Comment from BC: My concern was you didn't combine the zoning lot to increase your height. It was always like that previously.

A. JC: Right. We didn't.

Q. JT: With separation of the lots, does it compromise the parking requirement for the Main St. lot?

A. JC: The Main St. lot has 11 required parking spaces. This is because the original building was constructed in 1961. Because there was a subsequent enlargement, an Alteration Type 2, it was occupied at the time.

Q. JT: Was the building illegally occupied?

A. JC: My understanding is yes, while owned by the old owner. The new owner is trying to resolve all of this now. There will be a parking facility that enters off Maple Avenue.

Q. JT: So, are they going for a variance to eliminate the required parking spots?

A. JC: Not to my knowledge, because we're constructing the required parking for their use.

Q. JC: Is there a proviso on the Certificate of Occupancy for the existing building on Main Street?

A. LZ: Yes, that's in the committee recommendation.

Comment from JC: The building on the Main Street side has to finish up their work so we can get our Certificate of Occupancy and the DOB needs to do their job.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frances Scanlon, Former Board member – PANY/NJ approved the World Trade Center. We know what happened to those structures. Her concern is how much steel is being used in proportion to the square footage. Also, how many staircases will be in the building?

JUDY DENSKY - Her concern is we are overbuilding without considering the need for more Schools, and the increase in sanitation and security needs for good of the community.

Committee Chair Zhao read his report. The lot in question is on the southeast corner of Maple Avenue and Main Street with an existing 2-story commercial building and an accessory parking lot. Variances for the parking lot were granted from 1954 to 1990. It continued to be used as a parking lot until recently, when the current new owners closed it. The new owner wants to now build a 20-story mixed use building and a 9-story community building on two of the three lots. They filed for a special permit in advance to exceed the allowable height by 94.22 feet, and secured both the FAA and PANYNJ Determination of No Hazard to Navigation. In all other aspects this building is As-Of-Right. Concerns were raised since the Zoning lot consists of two tax lots (with 2 owners). The 2-story property still has

outstanding violations but the proposed new building will **NOT**, since there's no commercial use overlapping the residential portion of the lot.

Committee Motion

The Committee approved the proposal with the request that BSA insist the neighboring building provide the required Certificate of Occupancy.

Comment from NC: I can't agree to this proposal because it will bring more people, more crowding and greater problems to an already overburdened community.

Comment from CA: I respect your vote, but this is largely a routine administrative situation. We've seen numerous applications similar to this and have probably done at least 10. If the letters of acceptance are in, the next step is approval.

The vote on the motion which included the request that BSA insist the neighboring building provide the required Certificate of Occupancy, was approved (32) For and (9) Against.

135-35 NORTHERN BLVD, FLSHING – BSA #127-15-BZ – RKO KEITH'S – Committee Chair Apelian
Application to amend the special permit pursuant to NYC Zoning Resolution Section 73-66, authorizing the construction of a 16-story mixed-use building which exceeds the maximum height limits around airports contrary to Zoning Resolution Section 61-21 and 61-22. The property is zoned R6 (C2-2) zoning district. In addition an application for a variance pursuant to NYC Zoning Resolution Section 72-21.

Committee Chair Apelian gave a quick background of the site as follows:

- Special permit for height, very similar to Maple Avenue procedure above but different height.
- The site goes back to 2003, over 17 years. In 2005 the variance was for a 200 unit, 17-story building with ground floor retail. They came back, made minor variance changes and took one floor off.
- 2010: There was an extension of time to 2015: New owner, new applicant, and second amendment to 2005 variance. Changed back from rental to condos, and redesign of building façade. Height waiver put in place and sold again.
- 2019: New owner, Xinyuan Development Group was granted extension of time to complete.
- 2020: New applicant to explain a newer, better building to be built.

The Land Use Counsel for the applicant, **Howard Goldman**, spoke and stated it is the 4th BSA application for this property. Because of the expired length of times since the original variance in 2005, the BSA asked that they file a new variance application, which is now before the board.

- Unlike zoning changes, a variance is a site-specific action that permits modification of the zoning resolution for unusual premium construction costs. The unique condition of this site is that it's an interior designated landmark, constructed in 1928 and vacant since 1986. Since 2005, three different owners invested in the property, obtained BSA approval and appeared before CB #7, but over time they eventually sold. None took steps to preserve the landmark or start construction.
- Because of the past failures, the current applicant reached out to CB #7 first before filing with BSA. The special permit insures the FAA signs off on the height of the building. The applicant agreed not to increase the FAR or height of the previous variance, limit retail to local businesses, record a restrictive covenant for homeless shelter use and dedicate some community facilities to nonprofits.
- They **cannot** agree to eliminate the proposed hotel, or significantly reduce retail or community

facility use, especially since COVID-19. The building will be 55% residential, the hotel 28% of the floor area and the remainder retail and community facilities. The building has been redesigned with first class restoration of the landmark, (already secured with a \$10 million bond and \$3 million spent already), improved public access, and an internal vehicular circulation system to lessen cars on the street. Hundreds of construction and permanent jobs will bring economic recovery to the City, Queens and Flushing. We will continue to speak with CB #7 until a satisfactory conclusion is reached by all.

- Xinyuan is a serious real estate developer known worldwide, the first to enter the U.S. market, has completed 60 projects in Asia, the U.S. and Great Britain, and trades on the U.S Stock Exchange.

Speak Lauren George (LG) of Constantinople & Vallone gave the presentation emphasizing the owner's commitment to see the project to completion. They've obtained the LPC's blessing to retain all the interior landmarks which will be part of the restaurant and hotel lobby. This is an important site at the Intersection of Main Street and Northern Blvd., the gateway to Flushing. The economic benefits spirit Include 991 jobs from construction and 268 permanent jobs from retail, community facilities and the restaurant.

Speaker Randy Garner (RG) Architect from Queens, just joined the fray. He remembers first hand this landmark treasure, concerned over past proposals, and happy to be a part of this undertaking. He listed the following components

1. Residential from Floors 8 to 16 with 173 condo units amounting to 177,000 Sq.ft.
2. Hotel from Floors 4 to 7– landmark accessibility to be part of the restaurant & hotel (90,000 sq.)
3. Anticipate 9,800 sq.ft. of retail in the lower level and restaurant component of 13,500 sq.ft.
4. Goal 7.5 FAR.
5. Proposing a building height of 194' and a 211' parapet. The main roof is less than the height of the previous application.
6. Parking: 12 queuing spots, attendant parking, with total 329 spaces. Waiver not required.

FLOOR PLANS –

1. Ground floor will have individual drop-off areas for the restaurant, hotel, and parking entrance.
2. Second floor has the restaurant and hotel lobby to be surrounded by the landmark and a large interior courtyard and garden.
3. The historic façade cannot be restored. However, it will be recreated faithfully in a way that reflects the decade of the future, as did the original façade 100 years ago, for Main Street and Northern Blvd.
4. Our purpose is to give Flushing back this important landmark by preserving the history and the future of Flushing.

HOTEL SELLING POINTS -

1. Hotel developers view Flushing as a prime market due to proximity to LaGuardia and occupancy on par with Manhattan. They are confident the hotel market will absorb these rooms in this area. In 2014 four hotels opened in Flushing with increasing occupancy and growth, and faltered only when the pandemic struck.
2. Flushing lacks a Marquee Hotel and the developer believes the hotel portion is key to the economic viability of the project. COVID 19 is a setback but the background growth is strong.

DISCUSSIONS

Q. CA: What floor is the A-shaped part?

A. HG: The hotel, floors 4-7

Q. WS: Over the years, hotel rooms have tripled. What happens to hotel if it can't survive as a hotel?

A. RG: Post 9/11, the hotel industry had about 55,000 rooms in NYC. Today it has about 110,000 rooms and consistently booked. After 9/11 we had 35 million visitors and now are almost at 60 million with NYC and Flushing still short, even though we have two times the visitors of Chicago, with the same room count.

Q. CA: What's the expected start on this project?

A. LG: Given the BSA calendar with restoration first, three years.

Q. CA: That's in progress now?

A. LG: The demolition is in progress and the artifacts are being restored. Part of this also depends on the BSA timeline, and as soon as we can.

A. HG: Total construction is three years!

Q. BM: Is the Landmark with the restaurant only open if you're a patron of the restaurant?

A. RG: I imagine you'll be able to come and view it.

Q. BM: The hotel will probably have tour buses. Where do you plan them to stop and pick-up passengers?

A. LG: We have an interior driveway designed to handle tour buses, trucks, large vans, etc. that can drive in, around and out.

Q. WS: Would a bus loading or unloading block the internal drive?

A. RG: It's a two-way driveway to and from the garage. If a bus is making a loop and you stop in the middle of the driveway, it will not affect the 2-way flow of the corridor. You may get 1 or 2 buses a day, but it's unlikely they'd stop at the edge, but they'd continue to the dock.

Comment by LG: The previous approved plan involved a mechanical turnabout, which had some risks and delays.

Q. CA: How do you explain all the traffic and parking with 1000 rooms opening up in your area?

A. LG: The bulk of that inventory count will be College Point Blvd. and Roosevelt Avenue, far from this property from a traffic perspective.

Comment from CA: We're talking about the immediate problem behind your site and a block east.

A. LG: Other hotels won't have as much parking or internal drive with two-way flow.

Q. KC: Will the entrance and exit to Northern Blvd. be regulated by a traffic light?

A. CA: No traffic control.

Q. KC: What happens when you have people waiting at the light?

A. CA: Coming out is not the issue. The bigger issue of concern is traffic backing up getting into the location. We held discussions about using Farrington Street to eliminate traffic circulating from Northern Blvd. We need more review on the subject.

Q. JS: What's the capacity to take deliveries at the location?

A. PHIL: We have two loading docks for deliveries. The loop has a width of 20 ft., so there's enough space for two large vehicles to fit side by side. Most of the traffic will be coming down from the freeway system and going back out. We are very fortunate that we're one block from the freeway. Deliveries for the building's residential component would be spread out with most deliveries in small trucks between 8 am and 12 noon. Also the restaurant will not always be at peak hour activity and the mixed use of this project diffuses traffic by the time of day.

Comment from CA: Joe Sweeney was also concerned over the increase in hotel traffic incurred daily and affecting the traffic crossing over Northern Blvd. and blocking the traffic flow alongside it considerably.

PUBLIC COMMENTS -

Speaker **Richard Thornhill** thanked the developer for the restoration aspects of the landmark, but makes the plea for the restoration of the theatre instead of adding the hotel portion. He mentioned a similar restoration of the Forest Hills Stadium with no public parking, a successful addition to Forest Hills, with the owner actually in the black now. He suggested even some affordable housing to the RKO plan.

Speaker **Tom Grech**, Queens Chamber of Commerce, supports the project. The developer, a NYSE company is beyond reproach, and based on their presentation, their activity to date, the \$10 Million bond, and commitment to this project, I endorse and support this project fully. The notion of public investment from the City over the next 5-10 years, you know is non-existent. We need this type of investment in this county because 3,000 restaurants will not come back from the pandemic.

Speaker **George Xu**, Local Developer the past 25 years, states he currently has a couple of projects within two blocks from this site, and thanks the developer for his proposal. His concerns are 1) the hotel proponent, with already 1000 rooms coming into the market, may saturate the area and reduce it to another homeless shelter. 2) There may not be enough off-street parking. 3) If the entrance/exit is only from Northern Blvd. and Main Street, traffic chaos will ensue.

Speaker **Frances Scanlon**, attorney and longtime resident of Flushing- applauded the developer and his team to see a sustainable project to benefit the entire borough, the site being the gateway to Queens. We look back and see what made this property a Landmark. It was a destination center with a theatre of entertainment. What we need today is a beacon that will attract more than a marginal economic spinoff. You have the capacity to do this. It would be a performance center in the heart of Queens to draw visitors, not only to the tri-state area, but from the globe, and it makes sense economically too and easily added to your use of the site. We do not need more hotel rooms. We want you to succeed, but listen to the wisdom being shared with you tonight.

Speaker **Judy Densky**, agrees with George Densky about the possibility the hotel can become a homeless shelter. She added the \$10 Million bond taken for the landmark was not to help the community. It was required by Landmark Preservation.

CONTINUATION OF BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS –

Q. Selma Moses (SM): How would a school bus go in and out?

A. LG: One or two school buses a day, is that what are you expecting? We have pedestrian access to both Northern and Farrington, and we can accommodate a bus internally.

Comment by CA: Sounds like you have some more work to do on this.

Q. Sergio Nicholas (SN): Because cars and trucks are allowed to park under the hotel, are you setting up security checks on all vehicles coming in? Also, if so, what about possible queuing problems?

A. LG: The ownership team will have an operational manager on site. I don't think this building is a target for terrorism.

Comment by CA: Sounds like you have some work to do here.

Q. Kris Ram (KR): Is there a provision for taxi parking? During events at Citi Field and US Open, there will be a lot of traffic. How will you handle this?

A. PHIL: As indicated before, our loop will hold several vehicles; for picking up, taxi, Uber etc. They would come in and loop through. I don't know how much need there will be for parking.

Comment by CA: I think you still have some more to do on this as well.

Q. Betsy Mak (BM): How would a bus make the turn around this loop?

A. LG: The middle of this loop is flush with the road surface and with no obstructions.

Comment by Arlene Fleishman (AF): I want to follow up on what Selma said. There are no zoned schools, so children can go to any school in the City, which means there can be many buses coming to pick up students. Aside from the height of the building, we need schools. Queens is still the only borough with overcrowded schools.

Comment by James Cervino (JC): Should we be approving another hotel, given the trend with hotels becoming homeless shelters? I'm for a lot of the attributes the developer proposed, but not the hotel.

Q. BM: Where's the dumpster going to be for the garbage?

A. LG: Garbage will come out from the truck docks.

Q. Pablo Hernandez (PH): I don't see a solution for parking. We've already expressed all these concerns about parking and traffic coming in. I don't see a plan that can address the issues that we have. What is the capacity of the vehicles that will be picking up passengers? Yellow cabs, Green cabs, Ubers? How many can they fit in the building?

A. PHIL: About six or seven could be held in an area almost the size of a city block, and it would have to be managed.

Q. BMc: Will trucks block traffic while they're backing in?

A. Phil: Yes, for about 15 seconds, but there won't be that many trucks per day.

Q. BMc: The two truck loading docks, can they hold tractor trailers?

A. PHIL: No,

Comment by CA: Can you explain why there's an NDA (non-disclosure agreement) on this project with Evergreen Architects, the preservation firm?

A. LG: We'll have to get back to you on that.

COMMITTEE REPORT BY COMMITTEE CHAIR APELIAN

In the 17 years listening to each applicant stating they had better plans than those before, no one I spoke to ever said, "don't build this building." We're not against something going on at this site, but we do have some frustrations. Originally it was intended as a residential space, and now added to it is 162 **hotel** rooms. You have the Marco Hotel and two others behind this site. There are actually seven hotels within a few blocks of this site, two under construction directly behind the RKO on 35th Avenue, one is about to begin construction at the old Sears site on the other side of Town Hall, and one about to start on the SE corner of Prince & Main Street. There's the One Boutique and The Ramada, not too far, and six more hotels in downtown Flushing with three or four more to be built in the Special Waterfront district. That means a total of 15 hotels in Flushing, not including the RKO Keiths. The owner of the Marco said their occupancy was under 70% at opening, but with Covid-19 it's down to 50%. The question is how these hotels will survive. Adding hotels will put pressure on the market, and we certainly don't want any hotel to become a homeless shelter where we live. In 2005 the FAR was 3.4 in this area, but we, at the time, were allowed to double the as- of-right FAR to 7.5 and maintain it today

since it was always considered to be a residential building with an economic hardship because of the landmark lobby with the rigid need to minimize the critical impact of vehicle and pedestrian traffic on
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Main Street and Northern Blvd., which goes to the questions posed by all the board members today. As for the community facility variance allowing for a senior center, we don't need it! Fifteen years ago there was a need. Today there is an overabundance of these facilities in our area, most not even being used for seniors. I think the applicant boxed themselves in with 35,000 sq. ft. of space without sufficient
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windows, light or airflow for the community benefit. The facility space, however, can be used as commercial space, such as a school, a business, medical office etc., which also translates to movement of more pedestrians, cars, traffic, etc. Some retail space in the lobby is an asset and the landmark lobby is an especially great thing. I don't think there's anyone who wouldn't want to dine in that space. However, there's also 9,000 sq. ft. of retail being proposed for the basement floor which means more cars, people shopping, etc., all without community benefit and does not count towards the FAR. Farrington street entrance was supposed to be designed for cars to go in from Northern Blvd. and come out through Farrington Street. Any queuing inside the building would not affect what's happening outside. However traffic coming out of the Farrington exit was to go left onto 35th Avenue or right towards Northern Blvd, then east or west. We now find you can only turn west going towards NYC. To go eastbound, you must loop over to College Point Blvd, U-turn around, the same again on Prince Street, then over to the Northern Blvd. bridge back onto Northern Blvd to go east. This must be discussed further. Covered ramp: We don't like the 16' covered ramp going down two floors, and consider it unsafe. If the parcel is not being used, it should be removed from the application. We have no objection to the residential parking unit count. We support the 2005 original requirement of 1 space per residential unit. Remember that hotel parking is one space: 8 keys. Right now they claim they have enough parking, but if the hotel use changes, then it's only fair that each resident should be able to have a dedicated parking space as part of their selling price. Landmark: We're happy to see them make progress on this work with LPC. We want them to successfully restore it to its glory. Security: We need clarification on homeland security, checking vehicles coming in and out, where and how, the size, bus number, driver's license, location of buses coming in for security purposes, the same with Taxicabs, Ubers, Green cabs, passenger cars. Also the outside/inside traffic effect, required turning radius needed, location of dumpsters, etc. that add to our concerns.

THIS IS A ZONING VARIANCE AND THERE ARE STILL FIVE FINDINGS:

- Uniqueness: this is the case for the Landmark, but not the financial side of it.
- Financial hardship: it must be by valuation to determine the purchase price.
- Character of neighborhood: Yes, because of increased vehicle traffic for a hotel we do not want and overuse of retail use.
- Self-imposed hardship: not a consideration.
- Minimum Variance: We believe there's a better solution than this. The owner inherited a plan, but developed their own and this version still doesn't meet the needs of the community.

We've had extensive discussions but nothing has really changed since day One. This is the position the developer has taken. They want to hear our comments and concerns and then take this application to the BSA. I'm sure this application will be coming back to us with some redesign and re-discussion.

DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION:

Joseph Sweeney- I believe this will have a serious negative impact on the community. I think they should come back to us with something that satisfies the board members.

THE MOTION TO DISAPPROVE THIS VARIANCE IS WITH A YES VOTE.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Motion carries with 40 Yes votes (1) abstain due to conflict (1) No vote

The Motion was disapproved!

SPECIAL PERMIT FOR HEIGHT WAIVER

1. FAA and PANY/NJ Approval Letters of Determination of No Hazard are not in hand and are expected in October. BSA should follow their guidance.

Q & A Discussions:

WS: The letters from the FAA are still not in hand. I have a hard time approving without it.

CA: Virtually no change in elevation since FAA letters are not in hand.

NC: Was there a time earlier that this was approved to go above the 100 ft. FAA Approval?

CA: I don't have that information. What's the zoning cap on this Howard?

HG: Don't recall.

LG: 150 feet.

Public Comment:

Richard Thornhill - What's taking this approval so long? Are they looking into something?

CA: I don't think there's anything to be concerned about.

MOTIONS:

The committee had no objection to approving a special permit for height if FAA and PANYNJ letters were submitted to BSA. VOTE TAKEN 17-0

Discussion on the Motion

NC: I cannot vote in favor of this. I realize this is just an administrative measure, but it is a way for the board to express that we are not in favor of these kinds of buildings.

WS: I'm concerned they don't have the letters, but understand how these could get held up. I'm going to vote in favor of this. If the letters don't materialize, they can't move forward on it either way.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Motion carries (32) Approve (5) Disapprove (1) abstain due to conflict

P U B L I C P A R T I C I P A T I O N

Maroua Richi, CCRB: I am an Outreach Coordinator for CCRB. We investigate and prosecute allegations of police misconduct. You can file complaints on our website or call our office. We are holding a special board meeting 9/17/20 which is open to the public. We'd like to get your thoughts and comments or share your testimony. We'll send invites to your board office.

Sharon Pope-Marshall, Director of Outreach at Bike, NY and board member of CB #8 Manhattan. We've cycled the streets of NY since 1977 and are announcing our virtual cycling event and invite all to ride every day in October. Contact information will be given you this evening to be sent to all your members. Hope to see some of you.

Mabel Tso from Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's office. Census is still counting. Throughout the summer we've been remembering those we've lost and celebrating those who have gone above and beyond during the pandemic. Write us if you want to celebrate someone you love, and our congresswoman will give you a shout out.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zuliani