

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION
ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 180460 PCX
Mobile Food Vendor Inspection Facility

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 1235 Zerega Avenue (Block 3831, Lot 40) for a mobile food vendor inspection facility.

BACKGROUND

Approving this application will facilitate the leasing of a privately owned site for a period of twenty years. The building site includes a vacant, one-story industrial building located at 1235 Zerega Avenue, (Block 3831, Lot 40). It is located on the northwest corner of Zerega Avenue at Ellis Avenue. This location was formally occupied by an automotive parts facility. This site is located in Bronx Community District #9. It is partially zoned M1-1 and R5.

In addition to site selection, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (the applicant) is seeking a Mayoral Zoning Override. Currently, 9,078 square feet of the accessory parking lot is in the R5 District. Zoning Resolution (ZR) 77-332 mandates that off street parking and loading for a particular use where a split zoning is in place, only allows for that function within the area of the lot allowing for that function. Given that the building is located within an M1-1 zone, but a portion of the parking lot is within the R5 zone, a Mayoral Override to ZR 77-332 is required if the parking lot's anticipated function will conform with zoning. This parking lot will be used as an access point for food carts and trucks as they access the building.

The proposed inspection facility will operate Monday-Saturday from 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. The final inspection appointment time would be scheduled for 4:45-4:30 p.m. All inspections are scheduled in advance. Consequently, delays, vehicular congestion and the need to wait indefinitely is minimized. Each inspection will approximate 50-75 minutes. During the spring and summer seasons which represents the peak season for inspections, this facility will be able to accommodate 75 inspections a day. Approximately 27 employees will be affiliated with this facility. As inspections will take place off site as well, it is not anticipated that the full number of employees will be present on site. A security guard will also be stationed on the premises. Employees will work eight hour shifts: 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Key factors associated with the 1235 Zerega Avenue site include:

- 1) Project site includes approximately 29,500 square feet of property
- 2) The existing building offers 16,260 gross square feet of interior space
- 3) Interior inspection space will approximate 12,180 square feet
- 4) The building will provide 4,080 square feet for administrative functions
- 5) The exterior off-street parking lot approximates 13,350 square feet.

- 6) Seven off-street spaces are for the public, six for employees
- 7) Eight interior inspection bays will be provided
- 8) The convenient location of this site with easy access to interstates and parkways
- 9) The overall condition of the building and its ability to accommodate the anticipated use is considered by the applicant to be “ideal.”

The corner location of this site will allow for all vehicles to enter the facility via Ellis Avenue and depart via Zerega Avenue. Consequently, vehicles will maintain a uniform direction, thereby eliminating time consuming congestion prompted by vehicles having to back up in order to depart following inspection.

Residential development in the adjacent community is located on both the north and south sides of Ellis Avenue. This development is typified by two-story, attached one-family homes. A chain link fence located on the property identified for the inspection facility defines the western and northern boundary lines of the site. Non-residential development is located on Zerega Avenue and is typified by one-story industrial type buildings. YAI, an organization that addresses the needs of those with mental and/development disabilities is located at 1241 Zerega Avenue. This building is adjacent to northern property line of the proposed inspection facility. Offices for Bronx Community School District #8 and a Department of Education Welcome Center are located at 1230 Zerega Avenue, which is situated on the northeast corner of Zerega and Ellis Avenues. The intersection of Zerega and Ellis Avenue is signalized.

Retail activity is situated on Westchester Avenue, approximately ¼ mile from the Zerega Avenue location. Access to the #6 subway which operates on Westchester Avenue is found at the Zerega Avenue station, approximately ¼ mile from the proposed inspection facility. Bus transportation via the Bx4, Bx22 and Q-44 SBS are also found within a ½ mile radius of the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

This application was reviewed pursuant to SEQRA and CEQR. It received a Negative Declaration. The City Planning Commission certified this application as complete on June 25, 2018.

BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT PUBLIC HEARING

Bronx Community Board #9's held a public hearing on this application on July 11, 2018. Given that the full board was not present, this matter was reviewed by the Land and Zoning Committee and the Executive Committee of Bronx Community Board #9. A vote recommending approval of this application was, six in favor, zero opposed and zero abstaining.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was convened by the Bronx Borough President on August 8, 2018. Representatives of the applicant were present and spoke in favor of this application. No other members of the public were in attendance and the hearing was closed.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

This application pertains to the relocation of a mobile food vendor inspection facility, which is currently located in Queens, to a vacant industrial-type building on Zerega Avenue in The Bronx. Needless to say, I am pleased to see the reuse of a vacant building, but I am especially pleased to note that approximately 27 employees earning living wages will now be working in my borough.

At my public hearing it was noted that this facility will operate Monday through Saturday, with employees arriving as early as 6:00 a.m. Given the presence of nearby residences, I appreciate the willingness of the applicant to install trees which will reduce the impact of both noise and vehicular activity on the adjacent community. So too, the removal of all chain link fencing and replacing it with more an alternative type of barrier has been agreed to. I acknowledge that during the cold weather season it is likely that the full compliment of days and hours of operation will likely be reduced and as such the impact of this plant on the adjacent neighborhood will be lessened.

I recommend approval of this application.