

## LAND USE COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES

June 4th, 2014

### Committee Members Present

Wayne Benjamin, Chair  
Anita Barberis, Asst. Chair  
Isaiah Bing  
Tamara Rivera  
Jason Miller  
Osi Kaminier  
Arlene Schulman

### Committee Members Absent

Steve Simon

### Board Members Present

Edith Prentis  
Richard Allman

### Public Member Present

Vivian Ducat

### Public Member Absent

Staff: Debra Blow

**Guests:** Rita Gorman, K O'Sullivan, *Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP*: Bob Flahive, *Edison Properties*: Marc Gellman, Jen Hong, *A-Squared*: Keri McClellan, Andrew Thompson, *Philip Habib & Associates*: Jeff Reuben

1. The Meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM. Land Use Committee ("Land Use" or the "Committee") Chair Wayne Benjamin began the meeting by introducing two new committee members, Arlene Schulman and Osi Kaminier, and welcoming committee members and guests.
2. Chair Benjamin introduced Bob Flahive of Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP representing Edison Properties in consideration of a BSA application for a zoning variance to allow the conversion of 290 Dyckman Street (Block 2246 / Lot 28) to a self-storage facility. Committee member Jason Miller stated that he is recusing himself from voting since he works for Edison. Chair Benjamin noted that Jason is still able to discuss the matter. The property is located at the corner of Henshaw Street and south side of Dyckman Street on a site that is split between two zoning districts - C8-3 and R7-2. The zoning district C8-3 permits the self-storage use as of right, the R7-2 zoning district does not. Mr. Flahive stated it is not economical feasible use to use the property as of right in conformance with both zoning districts. Edison considered parking and community facility uses, both conforming uses, but an existing interior masonry structural wall hinders the efficient layout of the property for parking and the cost of converting the property to community facility use exceeds its value for that use. A zoning variance is required from BSA to allow the self-storage use on the portion of the site that is covered by a R7-2 zoning, and because zoning requires a 14 foot minimum clearance at the loading berth but the existing clearance is only 12'6", and also because zoning prohibits curb cuts within 50 feet of an intersection, but there is an existing curb cut 50 feet of the intersection of Dyckman and Henshaw Street which will be increased in width.

Mr. Flahive explained the property has had multiple uses since it was built nearly 100 years ago. It started as a stable, later converted into a parking garage and in 1944 into carpet cleaning factory. The carpet cleaner was a non-conforming use, but it was not until 1961 when zoning was amended. In the early 1980's a wholesale bakery moved in and filed a five year variance. The variance was not renewed and therefore the Certificate of Occupancy was converted back to a carpet factory even though they remained in the space until 2007. Since 2007 the property has remained vacant.

Mr. Flahive introduced Andrew Thompson the architect that explained various changes that will be made to the building. Mr. Thompson explained that in addition to repairing the building, the frontage would be a glass façade providing additional lighting. The property will consist of smaller storage units to accommodate the local neighborhood and will be open for 15 hours per day. Board member, Edith Prentis stated her concerns about the current condition of the sidewalk on the building. Mr. Thompson stated they would look into the condition and make any alterations to the sidewalk.

Mr. Flahive informed the Committee that, assuming BSA approval is obtained, renovation of the building is expected to be complete within 9 to 12 months. The Committee commenced questions regarding the project, with an emphasis on local hiring. Committee member Jason Miller noted that he has outreached to CB12-M in the past concerning job openings at Edison’s property at 5030 Broadway. The renovation will include new exterior lighting.

After further discussion a motion was made (Anita Barberis) and seconded (Obie Bing) supporting the Application submitted to the Board of Standards and Appeals by Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP on behalf of 290 Dyckman Properties, LLC to permit conversion of 290 Dyckman Street to a self storage facility and urges 290 Dyckman Street LLC to outreach to CB12-M and to the local community with respect to hiring for construction and permanent jobs and recommends that it thoroughly review the condition of sidewalks around the Property to determine what repairs or reconstruction is needed and to undertake the necessary repairs or reconstruction. The motion passed based on the following votes:

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstaining</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Committee Members	6	0	1	1
Board Members	2	0	0	
Members of the Public	2	1	0	

3. The Committee further discussed the opportunity of working with an intensive graduate urban design program at Columbia University. Committee member, Jason Miller stated we can have them focus on the study of contextual zoning as we have discussed in length at other committee meetings. Chair Benjamin noted that contextual zoning can be coupled with modeling a few site to illustrate the impacts of alternative proposed zoning districts. Other committee members agreed, while a recommendation to have a walking tour of empty spaces in the neighborhood and identify what has changed since the last tour and seek out potential sites.
4. Further discussion on the affordable housing plan was tabled.
5. After further discussion the Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jason Miller and Wayne Benjamin