



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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BURT LAZARIN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

March 8, 2018

Marisa Lago, Chair
New York City Planning Commission
120 Broadway
31st Floor
New York, NY 10271

re: Amendment to 180127 ZMM; N 180128 ZRM; 180129 ZSM – 601-613 West 29th Street, 391-315 Eleventh Avenue and 600-602 West 30th Street – Block 675 Lots 12, 29 and 36 – (“A-Text”)

Dear Chair Lago:

On the recommendation of its Chelsea Land Use Committee, Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) on March 7, 2018, by a vote of 35 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote, voted to recommend denial of the proposed amendment (“A-Text”) to applications 180127 ZMM; N 180128 ZRM; 180129 ZSM (the “Applications”) – 601-613 West 29th Street, 391-315 Eleventh Avenue and 600-602 West 30th Street; Block 675 Lots 12, 29 and 36 – in order to facilitate the siting of an Emergency Medical Services (“EMS”) station on a portion of 601-613 West 29th Street, Block 675, Lot 12 (the “Site”), unless the conditions in our letter of February 5, 2017 on the original applications, attached, are met. CB4 also recommends a contingency plan if the EMS facility is not located on the Site.

Background

Fire Department of New York (FDNY) Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Station 7 has been temporarily located at 512 West 23rd Street, under the High Line Park since 2011 when St. Vincent’s Hospital closed. The current unenclosed facility on a 5,000 sf site is unsuitable for a residential block with noise from sirens and exhaust from idling vehicles disturbing nearby residents. The FDNY cannot make substantial improvements such as enclosing the facility to address neighborhood impacts or enlarging it to provide additional services for the growing neighborhoods in Chelsea, Hell’s Kitchen and Hudson Yards.

CB4 identified a portion of the Site as a potential location for the relocation of Station 7 during preliminary discussions with the owner regarding the proposed development of 601-613 West 29th Street, 391-315 Eleventh Avenue and 600-602 West 30th Street (Block 675, Lots 12, 29 and

36) and has strongly advocated since 2015 for FDNY and the applicant to begin negotiations. The catchment area for EMS Station 7 extends far past the boundaries of Community District 4 and therefore is a significant borough-wide public safety need.

As a result of these discussions the owner identified a 12,000 sf site on the westernmost portion of the Site for an EMS station in the Applications certified on November 27, 2017 (C 180127ZMM, C 180129 ZSM and N 180128 ZRM); our letter, including recommendations and conditions, is attached. We believe this site would be ideal. It is one block from the Westside Highway; it would provide quick north and south access to the west side, would provide more space for vehicles and would allow for expansion of services.

As a result of discussions with the Mayor's Office, City Council Speaker Corey Johnson and his staff, FDNY, Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), Department of City Planning (DCP), CB4, and the applicant, a solution was crafted to satisfy FDNY's space needs on the identified site. The applicant and FDNY have tentatively agreed on a design for a 16,500 to 18,500 square-foot EMS station. The facility would have 12,500 sf of ground floor space with a second story of 4,000 to 6,000 sf. The applicant's adjacent garage would reserve 18 parking spaces for EMS employees.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) has identified Block 675 Lot 1 and part of Lot 12 for the temporary construction staging area for the Hudson Tunnel Project. Since the applicant has proposed the EMS site on the part of Lot 12 designated for tunnel construction staging, discussions with PANYNJ will be required to resolve this conflict. Those discussions have recently started.

Description of Proposal

The A-Text amends the Applications, which are in the review process. It would permit the City Planning Commission to exempt floor space allocated to an ambulance station from the definition of floor area and increase the maximum number of accessory off-street parking spaces permitted for such a station.

The proposed change would not result in an increase in the floor area for the applicant's proposed development or a change in the number of affordable housing units. Therefore, the project remains within the scope of its DEIS.

CB4 Recommendation

Although we are optimistic that the EMS station will be relocated to the West 29th Street site, we are also realistic that a promising plan may not happen. The application states that retail uses or parking would be located on the site identified for the EMS station in the event that the EMS facility is not relocated there. CB4 requests that if the City and the applicant do not reach an agreement on siting an EMS Station on the Site by the time of City Council review, the City Council condition its approval of the application that the site identified by the applicant for the EMS Station be reserved for another City or community facility with an exemption from floor

area. The applicant has agreed to this condition verbally as long as the floor space for the facility is exempt from the definition of floor area; we recommend approval.

CB4 is extremely pleased that it is now likely that a much-needed EMS facility of adequate size in an excellent location will be constructed. We commend the persistence, cooperation and creativity of the City Council Speaker and his staff, FDNY, DCAS, DCP and the applicant in their efforts to successfully address a challenging situation. We sincerely hope that the project will come to fruition, but we recommend denial of the applications unless the conditions in our letter of February 5, 2017 on the original applications are met.

Sincerely,



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



John Lee Compton, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee



Betty Mackintosh, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, City Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jerry Nadler, U.S. Congress
Hon. Brad Hoylman, New York State Senate
Hon. Richard Gottfried, New York State Assembly
Daniel A. Nigro, Commissioner, NYC FDNY
Lisette Camilo, Commissioner, NYC DCAS