



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

JESSE BODINE
District Manager

February 13, 2015

Carl Weisbrod, Chair
City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007

**Re: ULURP Application No. N 150110ZSM
Special Permit for 53-Space Public Parking Garage**

Dear Chair Weisbrod:

At its regularly scheduled Full Board Meeting on February 4, 2015, Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4), on the recommendation of its Chelsea Land Use Committee, voted 18 in favor, 15 opposed, 0 abstaining and 0 present not eligible to recommend approval of the Application for a special permit under ZR 13-45(a)(3) and ZR 13-451 for a 53 space public parking garage at 551 West 21st Street with the condition related to signage detailed below.

Background

The proposed development at 551 West 21st Street will be a mixed use building with an art gallery on the first and second floors and 44 residential units on floors three through 19. The zoning lot is composed of Block 683 lots 1, 8 and 64, and is located on the northeast corner of Eleventh Avenue and West 21st St., partially in Subarea D of the Special West Chelsea District, zoned C6-3, and partly in the adjacent M1-5 district (part of lot 8). The base FAR of 5.0 of the C6-3 portion of the lot has been increased to 7.5 through purchase from the High Line Transfer Corridor (ZR 98-30) and through the modified Inclusionary Housing Program (ZR 98-26). The building has been designed to be dry flood proof, watertight below the 10.35 foot Design Flood Elevation.

The proposed garage will occupy approximately 4,900 square feet on the ground level consisting of a motor court with room for five queued vehicles, one parking space for an ADA-modified vehicle and two automobile elevators. The northeastern area of the motor court in the M1-5 district will be open to the air. The garage also will occupy 6,800 square feet of the cellar, with 52 public parking spaces, including 20 double-height parking lifts, as well as five public bicycle parking spaces. Bicycle parking for residents will be located elsewhere in the building.

The proposed development will be permitted 12 accessory parking spaces as-of-right, nine to serve the 44 dwelling units and three to serve the art gallery. The applicant seeks a Special

Permit for a public parking garage with 53 spaces to serve residents and visitors to the building, as well as the growing demand for parking in the neighborhood.

A parking study provided by the applicant identified 27 residential developments within a one-third mile radius and notes that between 2003 and 2016 the number of dwelling units will have increased by approximately 2,600 while the number of licensed parking spaces will have decreased by approximately 1,650. While some of the new residential buildings contain parking, the ratio of change in residential parking spaces to change in residential units still would be three percent, below the 20 percent target growth parking ratio mandated by the Department of City Planning for the study area.

CB4 Recommendation

CB4 is a strong advocate of public transportation, but we recognize that the automobile will remain an important mode of transportation and believe that reasonable accommodations for parking must be made, especially in areas not well-served by public transportation.

We believe that the proposed garage's location - close to the West Side Highway, in the middle of the West Chelsea gallery district and adjacent to Chelsea Piers - and size make it appropriate and unlikely to increase traffic in the community significantly, especially with the change in direction of West 21st St. at Tenth Avenue.

CB4 recommends approval of the Special Permit with the conditions that all signage for the garage be located within the motor court or garage area and not on any street frontage.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair



J. Lee Compton
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee



Betty Mackintosh
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

CC: Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer