



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 10, 2013, Calendar No. 22

C 110254 MMK

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by The Department of Parks and Recreation and the Open Space Alliance of North Brooklyn pursuant to Sections 197-c and 199 of the New York City Charter and Section 5-430 *et seq.* of the New York City Administrative Code for an amendment to the City Map involving:

- the elimination, discontinuance and closing of Union Avenue from North 12th Street to Driggs Avenue;
- the elimination, discontinuance and closing of a portion of Driggs Avenue at its former intersection with North 13th Street;
- the establishment of an addition to McCarren Park;
- the adjustment of grades necessitated thereby;

including authorization for any acquisition or disposition of real property related thereto, in the Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 1, in accordance with Map Nos. X-2727 and X-2729 dated December 21, 2012 and signed by the Borough President.

The application (C 110254 MMK) for an amendment to the City Map involving the elimination, discontinuance and closing of Union Avenue between North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue; the elimination, discontinuance and closing of a portion of Driggs Avenue at its former intersection with North 13th Street; the establishment of a park addition to McCarren Park and the adjustment of grades necessitated thereby, including authorization for any acquisition or disposition of real property related thereto, was filed by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn on March 16, 2011, to facilitate the expansion of McCarren Park in the Greenpoint/Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn are proposing to eliminate, discontinue and close an approximately 380-foot-long segment of Union Avenue, mapped at a width of 80 feet and containing about 34,000 square feet of area. The segment of Union Avenue to be eliminated is owned by the City of New York and is currently improved and open, with two lanes of traffic (one in each direction) and approximately 34 curbside parking spaces. The street is located between McCarren Park, which is on the east side of Union Avenue, and T. Raymond Nulty Square, a mapped park located on

the west side of Union Avenue. The creation of the proposed park addition would improve the connectivity of the two existing park spaces by joining the small isolated T. Raymond Nulty Square to the larger McCarren Park, and would also increase the safety of pedestrians and visitors to McCarren Park. The T. Raymond Nulty Square is a small landscaped area with limited seating. Park visitors currently must cross the two-lane Union Avenue to traverse between the Square and the main body of McCarren Park. The subject street is shown on the City Tax Map as being part of Tax Lot 1, Block 2696, which is the same lot that comprises the adjacent mapped parks. However, the Department of Transportation (DOT) currently has jurisdiction over the open street. Jurisdiction would be transferred to DPR after the City Map change is completed.

McCarren Park comprises four separate tax blocks, separated from each other by the following streets: Bedford Avenue, Driggs Avenue and Lorimer Street. The park overall is generally bounded by Bayard Street, Union Avenue, North 12th Street, Berry Street, Nassau Avenue, Lorimer Street, Driggs Avenue, Manhattan Avenue and Leonard Street. Except for Union Avenue and Lorimer Avenue, which are two-way streets, all of the aforementioned streets conduct one-way traffic only.

Mature trees line the subject street's sidewalk and the perimeter of McCarren Park is defined by a continuous iron fence. The portion of Union Avenue proposed for elimination is currently closed every Saturday, year-round, to allow a farmers market to sell fresh produce in the neighborhood. The street is immediately adjacent to the area of McCarren Park that contains a community garden and compost project, and a dog run.

McCarren Park is a public park operated by DPR with assistance from the not-for-profit Open Space Alliance (OSA) for North Brooklyn. Serving as a vital open space and recreational area for the region, the 35 acre park contains facilities for softball/baseball/kickball, soccer/football, bocce, handball, basketball, tennis, skateboarding, a dog run, a ¼-mile running track and the Vincent V. Abate Playground. Frequented by the diverse residents of the neighborhood, McCarren Park hosts free movies, craft fairs, sculpture exhibitions, children's entertainment, a farmers market, free sports classes (in fitness, skateboarding, biking, tennis and yoga), athletic tournaments and many more cultural and athletic events.

Future uses for the park addition have not been finalized, but the street elimination/park establishment could allow for an extension of the operating days for the farmers market, an expansion of the adjacent dog run and community garden, or other parks uses, such as new park furniture, increasing landscaped areas, and additional open space for the residents of the neighborhood.

The subject street is located within an M1-2/R6 zoning district within the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Special Mixed Use District (MX-8). Predominant land uses around McCarren Park are primarily a mix of industrial/manufacturing, residential, and several religious and educational institutions. The area also includes parking facilities and mixed-use developments. Residential buildings in the area include recently built developments as well as older former manufacturing buildings. The Williamsburg Charter School and the Brooklyn Automotive High School are located within 400 feet of the site.

Affected agencies and utilities were polled by email on April 8, 2011. Currently, no city agencies have any objections to the proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 110254 MMK) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 *et seq.*, and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR Number is 11DPR014K. The lead is the Department of Parks and Recreation.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on September 20, 2011.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 110254 MMK), was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on February 19, 2013, and was duly referred to Brooklyn Community Board 1 and the Brooklyn Borough President in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b).

COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Community Board 1 held a public hearing on this application (C 110254 MMK) on March 12, 2013, and on April 9, 2013, by a vote of 38 to 0, with no abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application, with the following conditions:

- To address concerns about the loss of 34 parking spaces, DPR commits to providing the completed survey (to accommodate all of the parking that will be displaced by this action) prior to the end of CB#1's ULURP clock which is April 29th.
- The Parks Department is to commit in writing to involve Community Board No. 1 prior to and during the design of the long term use.
- OSA is to commit to in writing to involve Community Board No. 1 prior to and during the design for an interim use.
- The existing successful uses (including the dog run, Green Market and Green Dome Garden) are to be preserved.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION

This application (C 110254 MMK) was considered by the Borough President of Brooklyn, who on May 24, 2013 issued a recommendation approving the application, with the following conditions:

- Interim and permanent park designs are developed in coordination with CB 1 and OSA and that interim plans are implemented in tandem with DOT's implementation of the street closing.
- DOT immediately updates area signage to provide the 40 additional spaces along Bedford Avenue.
- That the following be implemented in tandem with the closing of Union Avenue:
 1. The curb extension at North 12 Street be removed and it's street furniture be incorporated into the new parkland.

2. A pedestrian crosswalk with traffic control signage is established on North 12th Street.
3. Community Board 1 take a position to determine if alternate side parking regulation along North 12 Street between Driggs Ave. and Union Street be changed to daytime hours and if so DOT should implement those changes.
4. Remove the striping and no parking signage from North 12th Street and Driggs Ave. near Union Street and establish curbside parking.
5. That the new park boundaries created along North 12th Street and Driggs Ave. be painted to serve as the equivalent of a curb and that striping for angled parking be provided along with “No Parking” from 6am to 6pm on Saturdays signage.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

On May 22, 2013 (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled June 5, 2013 for a public hearing on this application (C 110254 MMK). The hearing was duly held on June 5, 2013 (Calendar No. 6). There were two speakers in favor of the application and none in opposition.

A representative of the Department of Parks and Recreation described the proposed street elimination and park addition, and talked about how it would be beneficial to the existing McCarren Park. A representative of Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn described vehicular and pedestrian circulation around the park and talked about how the Department of Transportation could create additional on-street parking spaces in the vicinity of the proposed street elimination.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The City Planning Commission believes that this amendment to the City Map is appropriate.

The Commission notes that the proposed park addition would improve the connectivity of the two existing park spaces by joining the small isolated T. Raymond Nulty Square to the larger

McCarren Park, and would also increase the safety of pedestrians and visitors to McCarren Park. In addition, New York City's Department of Transportation had no objections to the proposal, deeming that the elimination of Union Avenue will have no adverse affect on traffic flow.

The Commission acknowledges the challenges posed by the loss of 34 existing parking spaces along Union Avenue and believes the proposed addition of 40 parking spaces along Bedford Avenue is an appropriate solution.

The Commission notes that Department of Parks and Recreation along with the Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn are to involve Community Board No. 1 prior to and during the design of the interim and long term uses for the park addition and that the existing successful uses including the dog run, Green Market and Green Dome Garden are to be preserved.

The Commission acknowledges the desire expressed by the Borough President to implement additional street modifications, including, the curb extension at North 12 Street be removed and it's street furniture be incorporated into the new parkland, a pedestrian crosswalk with traffic control signage is established on North 12th Street, Community Board 1 take a position to determine if alternate side parking regulation along North 12 Street between Driggs Avenue and Union Street be changed to daytime hours and if so DOT should implement those changes, remove the striping and no parking signage from North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue near Union Street and establish curbside parking, that the new park boundaries created along North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue be painted to serve as the equivalent of a curb and that striping for angled parking be provided along with "No Parking" from 6am to 6pm on Saturdays signage, in tandem with the closing of Union Avenue. The Commission believes that this recommendation is outside the scope of the application; however, the Commission encourages the Department of Parks and Recreation and Department of Transportation to continue to work with the Community Board and Borough President to address these larger concerns as the project advances.

RESOLUTION

Therefore, the City Planning Commission, deeming the proposed amendment to the City Map and any related acquisition or disposition to be appropriate, adopts the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant impact on the environment; and be it further

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Sections 197-c and 199 of the New York City Charter, and Section 5-430 et seq. of the New York City Administrative Code, that based on the environmental determination and the consideration described in this report, the application (C 110254 MMK) for the amendment to the City Map involving:

- the elimination, discontinuance and closing of Union Avenue from North 12th Street to Driggs Avenue;
- the elimination, discontinuance and closing of a portion of Driggs Avenue at its former intersection with North 13th Street;
- the establishment of an addition to McCarren Park;
- the adjustment of grades necessitated thereby;

including authorization for any acquisition or disposition of real property related thereto, in the Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 1, in accordance with Map Nos. X-2727 and X-2729 dated December 21, 2012 and signed by the Borough President, is approved; and be it further

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5-432 of the New York City Administrative Code, the City Planning Commission determines that “such closing or discontinuance will further the health, safety, pedestrian or vehicular circulation, housing, economic development or general welfare of the City”; and be it further

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5-433 of the New York City Administrative Code, the City Planning Commission adopts the legally required number of counterparts of Map Nos. X-2729 dated December 21, 2012 providing for the discontinuance and closing of Union Avenue from North 12th Street to Driggs Avenue; and a portion of Driggs Avenue at its former intersection with North 13th Street, said streets to be discontinued and closed being more particularly described as follows:

DISCONTINUANCE AND CLOSING OF UNION AVENUE FROM NORTH 12TH STREET
TO DRIGGS AVENUE

Starting at a Point of Beginning located at the intersection of the former easterly street line of

Union Avenue, discontinued and closed, and the southerly street line of Driggs Avenue, as those streets were hereinbefore laid out on the City Map;

1) Running thence southerly, along the former easterly street line of Union Avenue, discontinued and closed, 463.30 feet to its intersection with the newly established northerly street line of North 12th Street;

2) Running thence northwesterly, along said newly established northerly street line of North 12th Street, said course forming a deflection angle to the right with the last mentioned course of 136 degrees 24 minutes 00 seconds, 206.03 feet to its intersection with the former northerly street line of Union Avenue, discontinued and closed;

3) Running thence easterly, along said former northerly street line of Union Avenue, discontinued and closed, said course forming a deflection angle to the right with the last mentioned course of 133 degrees 36 minutes 00 seconds, 62.08 feet to its intersection with the former westerly street line of Union Avenue, discontinued and closed;

4) Running thence northerly, along said former westerly street line of Union Avenue, discontinued and closed, said course forming a deflection angle to the left with the last mentioned course of 90 degrees 00 minutes 00 seconds, 224.82 feet to its intersection with the southwesterly street line of Union Avenue, discontinued and closed;

5) Running thence northwesterly, along said former southwesterly street line of Union Avenue, discontinued and closed, said course forming a deflection angle to the left with the last mentioned course of 43 degrees 36 minutes 00 seconds, 28.20 feet to its intersection with the southerly street line of Driggs Avenue;

6) Running thence northeasterly, along the newly established southerly street line of Driggs Avenue, said course forming a deflection angle to the right with the last mentioned course of 89 degrees 59 minutes 10 seconds, 32.27 feet to an angle point in the newly established southerly street line of Driggs Avenue;

7) Running thence northeasterly, along said newly established southerly street line of Driggs Avenue, said course forming a deflection angle to the right with the last mentioned course of 12 degrees 07 minutes 55 seconds, 89.22 feet to the Point or Place of Beginning.

The area described above consists of 34,143.50 square feet or 0.783 acres.

DISCONTINUANCE AND CLOSING OF A PORTION OF DRIGGS AVENUE AT ITS FORMER INTERSECTION WITH NORTH 13TH STREET

Starting at a Point of Beginning located at the intersection of the westerly street line of Driggs Avenue and the former northerly street line of North 13th Street, discontinued and closed, as those streets were hereinbefore laid out on the City Map;

1) Running thence westerly, along said former northerly street line of North 13th Street, discontinued and closed, 4.59 feet to its intersection with the former westerly street line of Driggs Avenue, discontinued and closed;

2) Running thence southerly, along said former westerly street line of Driggs Avenue, discontinued and closed, said course forming a deflection angle to the left with the last mentioned course of 90 degrees 00 minutes 50 seconds, 21.37 feet to an angle point in the westerly street line of Driggs Avenue;

3) Running thence northerly, along the newly established westerly street line of Driggs Avenue, said course forming a deflection angle to the left with the last mentioned course of 167 degrees 52 minutes 05 seconds, 21.86 feet to the Point or Place of Beginning.

The area described above consists of 49.09 square feet.

RESOLVED that, pursuant to subdivision 1a of Section 5-433 of the New York City Administrative Code, public utility facilities within the subsurface of the streets cited herein which are to be discontinued and closed by this action, may be maintained in place or relocated

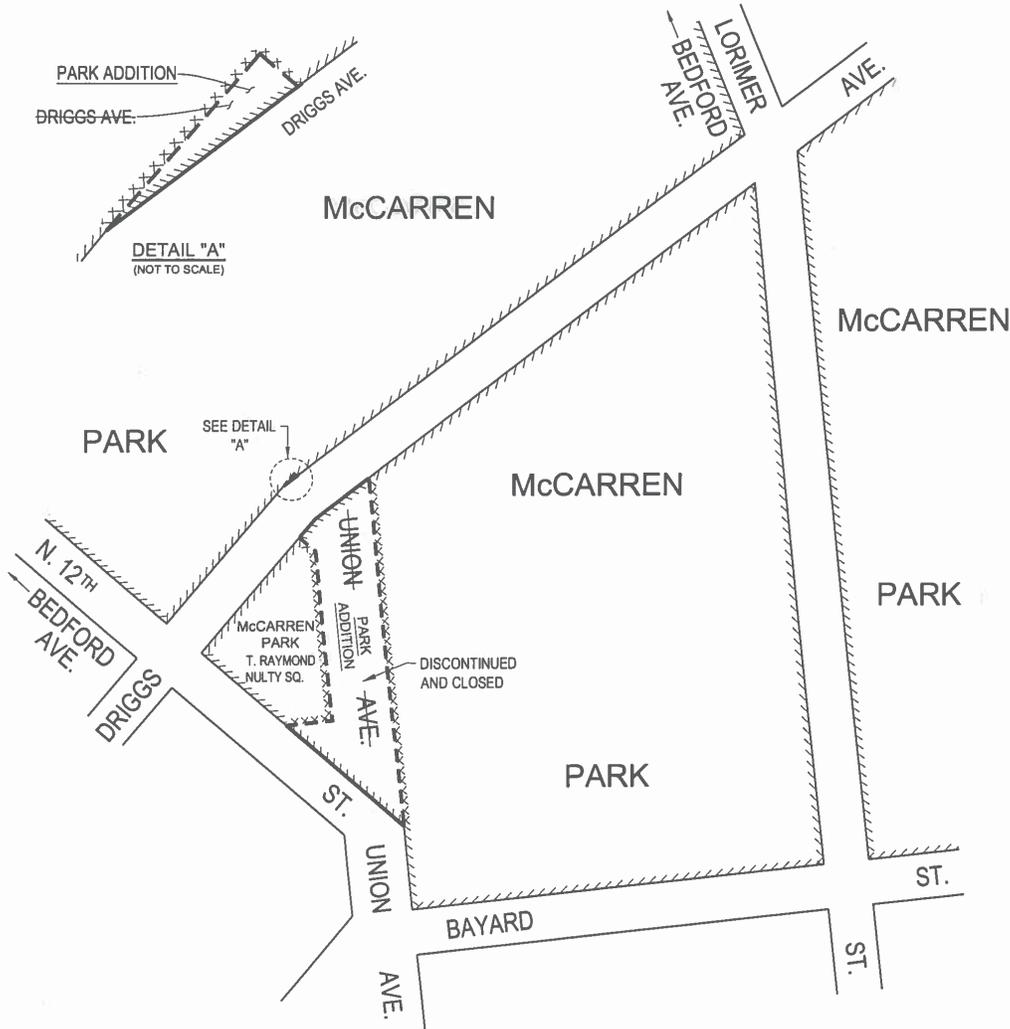
within such subsurface by the public utility, so that such maintenance in place or relocation of such facilities is consistent with the proposed use of the closed portion or portions of such subsurface, and the requirements of other facilities located therein;

All such approvals being subject to the following conditions:

- a. The subject amendment to the City Map shall take effect on the day following the day on which certified counterparts of Map Nos. X-2727 and Y-2729 are filed with the appropriate agencies in accordance with Section 198 subsection c of the New York City Charter and Section 5-435 of the New York City Administrative Code; and
- b. The subject street to be discontinued and closed shall be discontinued and closed on the day following the day on which such maps adopted by this resolution shall be filed in the offices specified by law.

The above resolution (C 110254 MMK), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on July 10, 2013 (Calendar No. 22), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council and the Borough President, in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair
KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice-Chairman
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,
ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, MICHELLE R. DE LA UZ,
MARIA M. DEL TORO, JOSEPH I. DOUEK, RICHARD W. EADDY,
ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN, Commissioners



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF NEW YORK
DIAGRAM SHOWING PROPOSED
MAP CHANGE
ON SECTIONAL MAP
13
BOROUGH OF
BROOKLYN

New York, Certification Date
FEBRUARY 19, 2013

Irene Sadko, P.E.
I. Sadko, P.E.
Chief Engineer



- NOTE:
- Indicates line of street legally adopted.
 - Indicates line of street proposed to be established.
 - - - - - Indicates line of street proposed to be eliminated.
 - ////// Indicates Park line heretofore established and hereby retained.
 - ////// Indicates Park line hereby established.
 - xxxxxx Indicates Park line heretofore established and hereby eliminated.
(Discontinuance and Closing is shown on B.P. Map No. X-2729).



COMMUNITY BOARD No. 1

435 GRAHAM AVENUE - BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11211-2429

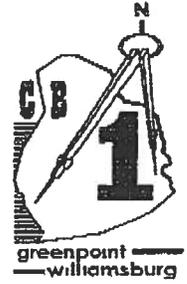
PHONE: (718) 389-0009

FAX: (718) 389-0098

Email: bk01@cb.nyc.gov

Website: www.nyc.gov/brooklyncb1

HON. MARTY MARKOWITZ
BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT



RABBI JOSEPH WEBER
FIRST VICE-CHAIRMAN

HEATHER ROSLUND
SECOND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

DEL TEAGUE
THIRD VICE-CHAIRPERSON

DEALICE FULLER
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

ISRAEL ROSARIO
RECORDING SECRETARY

PHILIP A. CAPONEGRO
MEMBER-AT-LARGE

CHRISTOPHER H. OLECHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

GERALD A. ESPOSITO
DISTRICT MANAGER

HON. STEPHEN T. LEVIN
COUNCILMEMBER, 33rd CD

HON. DIANA REYNA
COUNCILMEMBER, 34th CD

COMMUNITY BOARD NO.1 – BROOKLYN RECOMMENDATION APRIL 9, 2013

DCP – APPLICATION #C 110254 MMK, CEQR #11DPR014K: MAP CHANGE, UNION AVENUE/MCCARREN PARK, BROOKLYN NY - An application submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn pursuant to sections 197-c and 199 of the New York City Charter and Section 5-430 of the New York City Administrative Code for an amendment to the City Map involving

The discontinuance and closing of Union Avenue from N. 12th Street to Driggs Avenue;

The discontinuance and closing of portions of Driggs Avenue at its former intersection with N. 13th Street;

The establishment of an addition to McCarren park;

The adjustment of grades necessitated thereby

Including authorization for any acquisition or disposition of real property related thereto, in the Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 1, in accordance with Map Nos. X-2727 and X-2729 dated December 21, 2012 and signed by the Borough President.

Resolution

Whereas, the development of additional open space is a priority for the community, and

Whereas, this particular solution was suggested by the community during the 2005 Greenpoint-Williamsburg Rezoning, and

Whereas, The action was committed to and is memorialized in the "Points of Agreement" stemming from the 2005 Greenpoint-Williamsburg Rezoning,

Therefore, Community Board No. 1 APPROVES THE APPLICATION WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- To address concerns about the loss of 34 parking spaces, DPR commits to providing the completed survey (to accommodate all of the parking that will be displaced by this action) prior to the end of CB#1's ULURP clock which is April 29th.
- The Parks Department is to commit in writing to involve Community Board No. 1 prior to and during the design for the long term use.
- OSA is to commit to in writing to involve Community Board No. 1 prior to and during the design for an interim use.
- The existing successful uses (including the dog run, Green Market and Green Dome Garden) are to be preserved.

The vote was as follows:

38 "YES"; 0 "NO"; 0 "ABSTENTIONS"; 0 "RECUSALS".



NYC Parks

Ed Janoff
North Brooklyn
Administrator

City of New York
Parks & Recreation

Litchfield Villa
Prospect Park
Brooklyn, NY 11215
www.nyc.gov/parks

Friday, April 25, 2013

Gerald Esposito
District Manager
Community Board 1 – Brooklyn
435 Graham Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11211

Re: Union Avenue De-mapping

Dear Mr. Esposito,

The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn (OSA) have proposed an action to de-map Union Avenue between North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue at McCarren Park. The de-mapping action will add much needed open space to McCarren Park, but will also result in the elimination of 34 residential overnight on-street parking spaces. In an effort to replace these parking spaces, I participated in a review of parking regulations in the immediate vicinity with the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) to search for sites where residential overnight parking spaces could potentially be added.

The review identified the potential for creating up to 40 new parking spaces on the western side of Bedford Avenue between North 12th Street and Lorimer Street at McCarren Park, 1-2 blocks away from the site of the proposed action. Therefore it is our proposal that at such a time that Union Avenue between North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue is permanently closed to vehicular traffic following the de-mapping action, parking regulations on the west side of Bedford Avenue between North 12th Street and Lorimer Street be concurrently converted to residential overnight parking. DOT has expressed a willingness to make that conversion.

Following the de-mapping action, DPR would be committed to seeking capital funding for the reconstruction of the project site and working closely with the community on the design. In addition, DPR and OSA will work with the community to develop an acceptable interim plan for the closure of the street to vehicular traffic. This interim plan may include temporary enhancements such as paving treatments and movable furniture and landscaping. No significant modifications to the design or operation of the street beyond the map change action would be made without further review by the Community Board.

We would like to thank Community Board 1 for their continued support on this project. Please contact me at 718-384-6836 if you have any questions regarding this proposal.

Sincerely,

Ed Janoff

North Brooklyn Administrator, NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Executive Director, Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn

Cc: Heather Roslund, CB1
Kevin Jeffrey, DPR
Joshua Laird, DPR
Colleen Alderson, DPR
Joseph Palmieri, DOT
Steve Hindy, OSA



Department of Transportation

JANETTE SADIK-KHAN, Commissioner

April 26, 2013

Dear Mr. Janoff,

The Department of Transportation has explored opportunities for creating additional residential parking spaces in the vicinity of North 12th Street and Union Avenue. Based on our evaluation, we have determined that the west side of Bedford Avenue between North 12th Street and Lorimer Street could be converted from No Parking Anytime to residential overnight parking (with alternate side regulations for street cleaning).

The DOT is willing to make this conversion concurrent with the Parks Department's implementation of a permanent vehicular closure of Union Avenue between North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue, pending Community Board support. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact my office

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Palmieri".

Joseph Palmieri
Borough Commissioner



Brooklyn Borough President Recommendation

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

22 Reade Street, New York, NY 10007

FAX # (212) 720-3356

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Return this completed form with any attachments to the Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, Room 2E at the above address.

2. Send one copy with any attachments to the applicant's representatives as indicated on the Notice of Certification.

APPLICATION #: 110254 MMK

Union Avenue – McCarren Park Map Change

In the matter of an application submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn pursuant to Sections 197-c and 199 of the New York City Charter and Section 5-430 et seq. of the New York City Administrative Code for an amendment to the City Map involving the discontinuance and closing of Union Avenue from North 12th Street to Driggs Avenue and a portion of Driggs Avenue at its former intersection with North 13th Street; the establishment of an addition to McCarren Park; and, the adjustment of grades necessitated thereby including authorization for any acquisition or disposition of real property.

COMMUNITY DISTRICT NO.

1

BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN

RECOMMENDATION – 110254 MMK

APPROVE

DISAPPROVE

APPROVE WITH

DISAPPROVE WITH

MODIFICATIONS/CONDITIONS

MODIFICATIONS/CONDITIONS

BOROUGH PRESIDENT

May 24, 2013

DATE

**RECOMMENDATION FOR THE PROPOSED
City Map Amendment for Union Avenue/McCarren Park
110254 MMK**

This application by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn (OSA) requests approval for an amendment to the City Map that will officially demap approximately 33,800 square feet of Union Avenue between Driggs Avenue and North 12th Street and map this street bed as additional acreage of McCarren Park.

The Borough President held his public hearing on this application on April 17, 2013. He expressed a concern for the loss of parking within a community that has been gaining population as a result of the housing constructed pursuant to the 2005 rezoning of Williamsburg and Greenpoint. He expressed that parking is at a premium throughout the City and a portion of those families moving in will be car owners that will seek parking along public streets that have served as a parking resource for longtime residents. A representative for the application responded to the issue related to the loss of parking by noting the environmental analysis performed for the study area. The analysis disclosed that of the 1,740 parking spaces available, the total usage of these spots was around 85 percent. Further, the representative noted that OSA had begun a survey of the community to identify outdated signage as a way to gain additional parking spaces.

Subsequent to the public hearing, the Department of Transportation (DOT) issued the attached letter dated April 26, 2013 signifying that the 'No Parking Anytime' signs along Bedford Avenue between North 12th Street and Lorimer Street can be converted to residential overnight parking with alternate side parking regulations included.

CONSIDERATION

Community Board 1 (CB 1) voted to approve this application on the condition that the parking lost due to the de-mapping action is addressed by DOT through a survey to accommodate the displaced spots prior to the expiration of the Board's review period. Additionally, CB 1 recommended that the board be involved with the Parks Department and OSA in any interim and long term planning for the park and that the existing uses of the area will remain.

The proposed land use action to demap 380 feet of Union Avenue is the outcome of a commitment made by the Mayoral administration, as part of the Williamsburg/Greenpoint 2005 rezoning, to study the demapping of streets within McCarren Park as a means to provide for the park's expansion. This segment of Union Avenue, between North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue, currently separates two open spaces. On Saturdays between 6 am and 6pm, the street is closed off to traffic to enable the operation of a farmer's market. This action to provide more parkland is intended to establish overall continuity of the park by joining it with the isolated T. Raymond Nulty Square. As parkland, the space has the potential for such concepts as expanding the operating hours/days for the farmer's market, expanded and better integration of the adjacent dog run, establishing a community garden and/or introducing other park amenities.

As a result of the permanent closure of this segment of Union Avenue, approximately 34 curbside parking spaces, which serve area residents and park users, would be displaced. Studies conducted as part of the environmental review disclose that within ¼ mile of the proposed demapping, 261 spaces remained available during the weekday midday period. A number of potential residential development sites were also analyzed to forecast the impact on parking at a future time. It disclosed that on-street parking utilization was expected to increase to 88 percent (up from the current 85 percent), resulting in 216 available spaces during the weekday midday period.

Subsequent to the filing of this application, DOT implemented a large, interim traffic calming curb extension within the roadbed at the south side of North 12th Street where it intersects Union Avenue. This space includes several blocks of concrete as safety measures as well as movable tables and chairs. The alignment requires use of a section of the proposed demapped area of Union Avenue to be used for roadway purposes. As a result of these improvements, large trucks were observed having difficulty turning from northbound Union Avenue to westbound North 12th Street. Several trucks navigate this turn on a daily basis.

The Borough President supports those actions that seek to increase the amount of land devoted to open space use. McCarren Park's enviable location between Greenpoint and Williamsburg, make it the prime active and passive recreational resource for area residents. These communities have added much population and therefore deserve this opportunity to expand/connect McCarren Park. However, he has concerns regarding the lack of clarity for a number of issues including: the interim and permanent use of the intended parkland; failure to address the large curb extension at the southwest corner of North 12th Street and Union Avenue and its impact on the intended street grid; pedestrian consideration from the southwest corner of North 12th Street and Union Avenue to the northeast corner; and, concern for the loss of needed parking.

PARK PLANNING

The Borough President believes that it is important to explore all opportunities to increase the amount of open space, where appropriate. The Greenpoint and Williamsburg neighborhoods are experiencing residential development or conversions at a rapid rate. The decision to permanently close and de-map part of Union Avenue and thus connect the isolated Nulty Square to the rest of McCarren Park would be a positive step towards making efforts to increase open space access to the community. As this stretch of road currently functions as a farmer's market once a week, it has already been established that it functions as part of the park system during these hours.

However, CB 1 and the Borough President have been asked to approve this street closing/park mapping application without a clear vision for the future use of this open space. That vision should be created as part of a partnership between CB 1, OSA and the Parks Department in order to come up with a design that benefits the community. The Borough President agrees with CB 1 that there needs to be interim and long term designs developed for this newly created parkland. Therefore, OSA, Parks and CB 1 should engage in a design process as soon as practical and DOT should refrain from closing the street until an interim plan is ready to be simultaneously implemented.

REMOVAL OF INTERIM CURB EXTENSION

With the demapping of Union Avenue and its removal from the street grid, the North 12th Street right-of-way becomes compromised due to the recent installation of the curb extension at the southwest intersection of North 12th Street with Union Avenue. This extension contains physical features such as free-standing tables and chairs and concrete boulders along its boundaries. Should this demapping action occur, the Borough President believes the concrete boulders and movable tables and chairs should be relocated to the newly established parkland pursuant to an interim design done in consultation with CB 1 (see Sketch 1).

PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

The Borough President is concerned that there is no controlled pedestrian crossing at North 12th Street and Union Avenue to the park. He believes there should be a newly established street crosswalk with a stop sign established from the southwest corner of North 12th Street and Union Avenue to the newly established northeast corner of North 12th Street and Union Avenue (see Sketch 1).

PARKING

The Borough President is concerned that as a result of this de-mapping, an approximate 34 on-street parking spaces would be lost to the community. As population continues to increase, and the number of car owning families rises, he believes that any loss of on-street parking needs to be mitigated to the highest degree possible. Although the project's environmental assessment indicates that this loss will not adversely affect parking availability, the Borough President believes that those studies are outdated given the extensive development within the community. The environmental assessment lists several residential development projects that were expected to be completed prior to, or concurrent with, the proposed action. Of the 15 sites, an estimated 1,532 dwelling units were anticipated. However, there is no indication of the number of parking spaces that will result from these developments and whether car ownership would be accommodated by garages without negatively impacting the availability of on-street parking. The Borough President believes that within the last few years, increased development has created more demand for on-street parking availability as such parking does not have the cost premium associated with garage parking. With more development in the pipe-line, the competitiveness for such parking will also continue to increase.

The Borough President appreciates the willingness of DOT to identify 40 spaces along the western side of Bedford Avenue that can be provided through updated signage. He is supportive of these measures and believes DOT should take immediate steps to implement such signage changes prior to approval of this ULURP application. In light of the spaces not being in the immediate proximity to where the eliminated spaces would be, the Borough President was seeking additional remedies. The Borough President's staff has identified other signage changes that should be implemented. First, the overnight parking restrictions along North 12th Street opposite the park seem obsolete given the residential development now permitted on the south side of the street. He believes CB 1 should take a position to determine if alternate side parking regulations should be changed to daytime and if so, DOT should implement such changes (see Sketch 1).

Second, the Borough President also believes that an optimum number of spaces should be re-created in proximity to the proposed street closing of Union Avenue. He believes that

there should be both interim and permanent approaches to closing this section of Union Avenue to create both usable parkland and more street parking at the perimeter of the new section of park. Striping and 'No Parking' signs along Driggs Avenue at Union Street should be removed to restore a number of curbside parking spots. The Borough President further envisions for back-in angled parking to be incorporated along both North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue (see Sketch 1 & 2). Angled parking can be achieved by using the existing roadbed that is to remain city right-of-way by configuring the future sidewalk along the inside of the perimeter of the newly established parkland.

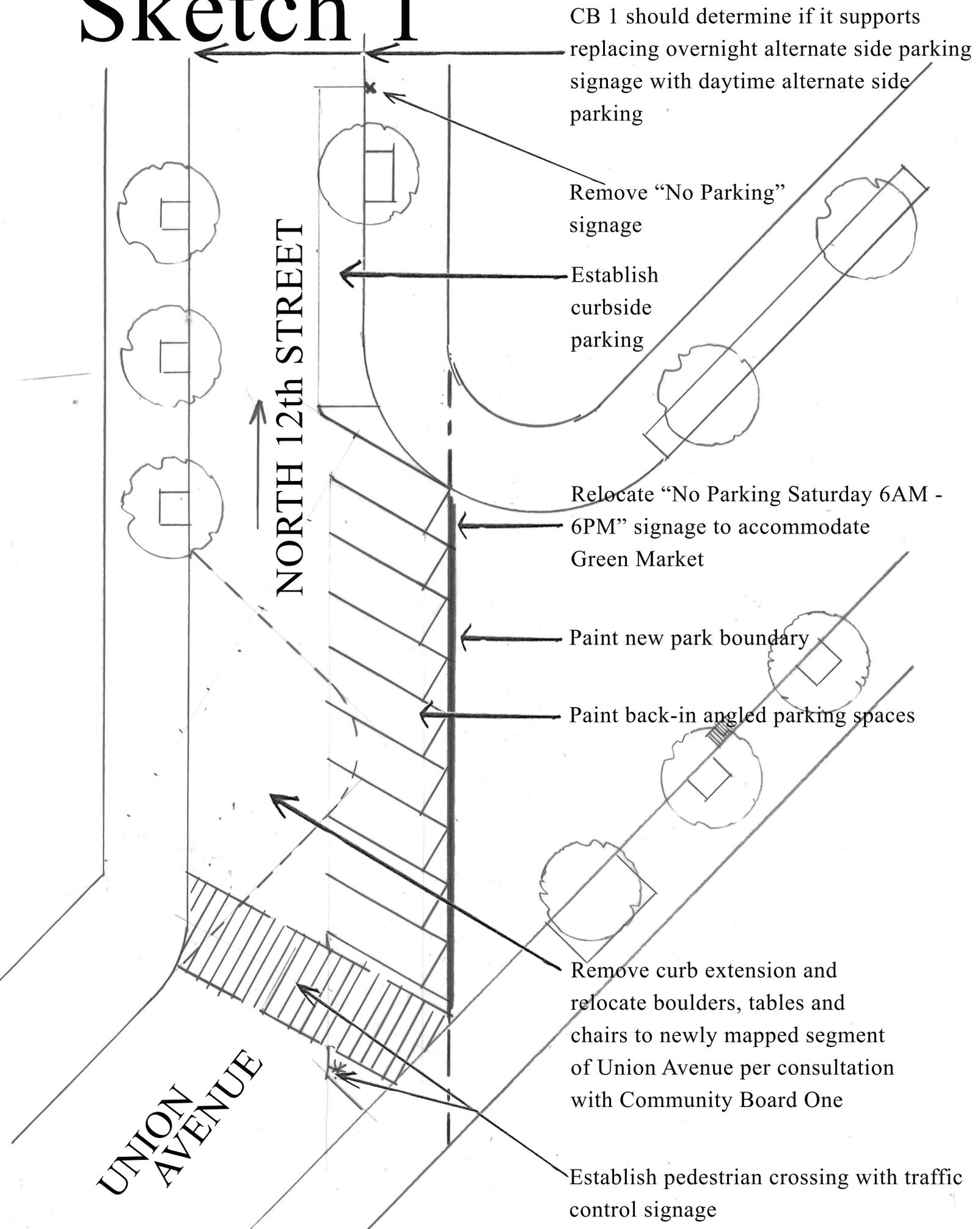
For the interim, he calls for the painting of a line on the boundaries of the newly established parkland along both Driggs Avenue and North 12th Street with painted lines for angled parking. The existing parking signage along Union Avenue that precludes parking on Saturdays from 6AM to 6PM should be incorporated with the painted lines designated for the new angled parking. This will ensure that green market vendors will have the proper access to the park during those times. DOT should agree to implement these improvements as a condition of closing the street to traffic in order to have newly available parking options in place at the same time as the loss of parking resulting from the demapping action (see Sketch 1 & 2).

RECOMMENDATION

Be it resolved that the Borough President of Brooklyn, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council approve the requested City Map amendment on condition that:

1. Interim and permanent park designs are developed in coordination with CB 1 and OSA and that interim plans are implemented in tandem with DOT's implementation of the street closing.
2. DOT immediately updates area signage to provide 40 additional spaces along Bedford Avenue.
3. That the following be implemented by DOT in tandem with the closing of Union Avenue between Driggs Avenue and North 12th Street:
 - a) The curb extension at North 12th Street and Union Avenue be eliminated with its street furniture incorporated into the newly added parkland in a design developed in consultation with CB 1
 - b) A pedestrian crosswalk is established with traffic control signage from the southwest corner of North 12th Street and Union Avenue to the newly created northeast corner (see Sketch 1)
 - c) That CB 1 take a position to determine if alternate side parking regulation along North 12th Street between Driggs Avenue and Union Street be changed to daytime hours and if so, DOT should implement such changes (see Sketch 1).
 - d) That striping of the parking boundary along North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue and the 'No Parking' signs in proximity to Union Avenue be removed (see Sketch 1 & 2)
 - e) That along the newly created park perimeter along North 12th Street and Driggs Avenue the street right-of-way/park boundary line be painted to serve as the equivalent of a curb and that angled parking designations be striped along with 'No Parking' from 6AM to 6PM on Saturday signs (see Sketch 1 & 2).

Sketch 1



CB 1 should determine if it supports replacing overnight alternate side parking signage with daytime alternate side parking

Remove "No Parking" signage

Establish curbside parking

Relocate "No Parking Saturday 6AM - 6PM" signage to accommodate Green Market

Paint new park boundary

Paint back-in angled parking spaces

Remove curb extension and relocate boulders, tables and chairs to newly mapped segment of Union Avenue per consultation with Community Board One

Establish pedestrian crossing with traffic control signage

NORTH 12th STREET

UNION AVENUE

Sketch 2

