



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

July 24, 2013/Calendar No. 14

C 130170 ZMQ

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**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by St. Francis Preparatory School pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section Nos. 10d and 11b, changing from an R3-2 District to an R4 District property bounded by the southeasterly service road of the Horace Harding Expressway, Francis Lewis Boulevard, the northeasterly centerline prolongation of 67th Avenue and Peck Avenue, Borough of Queens, Community District 8, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only), dated March 18, 2013, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-301.

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This application for an amendment of the Zoning Map was filed by St. Francis Preparatory School on January 24, 2013 to change one full block and one partial block from an R3-2 District to an R4 District to facilitate the expansion of a private high school in Fresh Meadows, Queens, Community District 8.

### **BACKGROUND**

The applicant, St. Francis Preparatory School, proposes a Zoning Map amendment to change, from an R3-2 District to an R4 District, property bounded by the southeasterly service road of the Horace Harding Expressway, Francis Lewis Boulevard, the northeasterly centerline prolongation of 67th Avenue and Peck Avenue. The proposed Zoning Map amendment would effectively extend an existing R4 District from its current boundary at Peck Avenue northward to the service road of the Horace Harding Expressway and eastward to Francis Lewis Boulevard.

With a current enrollment of approximately 2,750 students, St. Francis Preparatory School is the largest non-diocesan Catholic high school in the United States. The school acquired the current location in Fresh Meadows from the Diocese of Brooklyn in 1974, upon the dissolution of Bishop Reilly High School, the building's former occupant.

The proposed rezoning would facilitate a 42,271 square-foot expansion of the applicant's school building (the development site) to accommodate new science, music and physical education facilities. No new school seats are planned. In addition to the development site, the rezoning area also includes the site of a 115,000 square-foot public elementary school (PS 4) located to the south of St. Francis Prep along Peck Avenue. No changes to the elementary school are proposed under this application.

The St. Francis Prep development site is a 216,215 square-foot triangular lot containing a three-story, 214,614 square-foot high school. The floor area ratio (FAR) for the high school is 0.99. The zoning lot also includes an accessory parking lot with spaces for 152 vehicles. Curb cuts on the south service road of the Horace Harding Expressway and Francis Lewis Boulevard provide access to the parking lot. A paved Pedestrian Way within Kissena Corridor Park and through which the Brooklyn-Queens Greenway is routed borders the development site to the southwest.

Throughout the last six years, the school has been pursuing a master plan for upgrading its facilities. In 2010, some existing classrooms were upgraded, a former residence hall was converted to an arts education center, and a new fitness center was created above the existing gymnasium. Under the next phase of the master plan for the school, the applicant seeks to demolish existing locker rooms and enlarge the existing building by approximately 42,271 square feet, bringing the size of the school to 256,885 square feet, or 1.19 FAR. The enlargement would allow the school to expand and reconfigure its music, science, and physical education facilities. The proposed expansion would consist of horizontal enlargements to the front and rear of the building. The footprint of the existing parking lot would be reduced, but the lot would be reorganized to increase the capacity by 15 parking spaces.

The surrounding area consists of residential, recreational, and transportation uses. To the north of the project area is the Horace Harding (Long Island) Expressway and its service roads. Beyond this major roadway is a portion of Auburndale, a low-density residential neighborhood consisting of detached single-family homes. At its western edge, the rezoning area is directly adjacent to the Fresh Meadows housing development, a large garden apartment complex developed in the late 1940's by the New York Life Insurance Company and currently designated as a Special Planned Community Preservation District. Single-family attached buildings are located to the south of 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue. To the east of the project site is Francis Lewis Boulevard, a major north-south roadway, beyond which is the 358-acre Cunningham Park.

In order to facilitate the proposed enlargement, the applicant proposes a Zoning Map amendment to change a portion of the existing R3-2 district to an R4 district. The maximum allowable FAR for community facilities would be increased from 1.0 to 2.0, thereby, accommodating the

proposed enlargement on the development site. The maximum residential FAR would be increased from 0.6 to 0.9.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 130170 ZMQ) 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 New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 13DCP081Q. The lead agency is the Department of City Planning. After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on March 18, 2013. The proposed action includes an (E) designation (E-301) on the project site (Block 7128, Lot 2) in order to preclude future noise impacts, which could occur as a result of the proposed action. The (E) designation text related to noise is as follows:

In order to ensure an acceptable interior noise environment, future institutional expansions must provide a closed-window condition with minimum attenuation of 28 dB(A) window/wall attenuation on facades facing the Francis Lewis Boulevard and the Long Island Expressway Service Road in order to maintain an interior noise level of 45 dB(A). In order to maintain a closed-window condition, an alternate means of ventilation must also be provided. Alternate means of ventilation includes, but is not limited to, central air conditioning.

With this (E) designation in place, no significant adverse impacts related to noise are expected.

The Environmental Assessment and Review Division of the Department of City Planning, on behalf of the City Planning Commission, has completed its technical review of the Environmental Assessment Statement, dated December 26, 2012, prepared in connection with the ULURP Application (No. C 130170 ZMQ). The City Planning Commission has determined that the proposed action will have no significant effect on the quality of the environment.

The above determination is based on an environmental assessment which finds that:

1. The (E) designation for noise would ensure that the proposed action would not result in significant adverse impacts.
2. No other significant effects on the environment which would require an Environmental Impact Statement are foreseeable.

This Negative Declaration has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law 6NYCRR part 617.

### **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 130170 ZMQ) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on March 18, 2013, and was duly referred to Community Board 8 and the 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 8 held a public hearing on this application on April 22, 2013, and on May 8, 2013, by a vote of 36 to 0 with 0 abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of this application.

#### **Borough President**

This application was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving the application on June 17, 2013.

#### **City Planning Commission Public Hearing**

On June 5, 2013, (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled June 19, 2013 for a public hearing on this application (C 130170 ZMQ). The hearing was duly held on June 19, 2013 (Calendar No. 27). There were 3 speakers in favor of the application.

A representative of the applicant spoke in favor of the application. An employee of St. Francis Preparatory School described the ongoing efforts of the school to improve the building. The architect for the proposed enlargement offered to answer technical questions on the design.

There were no other speakers, and the hearing was closed.

## **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that this application (C 130170 ZMQ) for an amendment of the Zoning Map is appropriate.

The Commission notes that St. Francis Preparatory School is a large private educational facility that has served families in the City of New York since 1935. It has occupied its current location in Fresh Meadows since 1974.

The Commission believes that the proposed Zoning Map amendment will facilitate the planned expansion of St. Francis Preparatory School, which will allow the facility to better serve students. The Commission further believes that the extension of the existing R4 District is a reasonable change to the Zoning Map and that the additional bulk facilitated by the proposed amendment would be consistent with the scale and character of the existing high school building and appropriate to the context of the surrounding area. The Commission notes that the applicant does not propose to add any additional classroom capacity.

The Commission notes that the proposed Zoning Map amendment would also affect a nearby public school but that no changes are proposed for this community facility property.

## **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 200 of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination, and the consideration described in this report, the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York, effective as of December 15, 1961, and as subsequently modified, is further amended by changing the Zoning Map, Section Nos. 10d and 11b, by changing from an R3-2 District to an R4 District property bounded by the southeasterly service road of the Horace Harding Expressway, Francis Lewis Boulevard, the northeasterly centerline prolongation of 67th Avenue and Peck Avenue, Borough

of Queens, Community District 8, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only), dated March 18, 2013, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-301.

The above resolution (C 130170 ZMQ), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on July 24, 2013 (Calendar No. 14), 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, BETTY Y. CHEN, MICHELLE R. DE LA UZ,**  
**JOSEPH DOUEK, RICHARD W. EADDY, ANNA HAYES LEVIN,**  
**ORLANDO MARÍN, Commissioners**



# Community/Borough Board Recommendation

Pursuant to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure

Application #: **C 130170 ZMQ**

Project Name: **St. Francis Prep Rezoning**

CEQR Number: 13DCP081Q

Borough(s): Queens

Community District Number(s): 8

Please use the above application number on all correspondence concerning this application

## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- Complete this form and return to the Department of City Planning by one of the following options:
  - EMAIL (recommended):** Send email to [CalendarOffice@planning.nyc.gov](mailto:CalendarOffice@planning.nyc.gov) and include the following subject line: (CB or BP) Recommendation + (6-digit application number), e.g., "CB Recommendation #C10000ZSQ"
  - MAIL:** Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, Room 2E, 22 Reade Street, New York, NY 10007
  - FAX:** (212) 720-3356 and note "Attention of the Calendar Office"
- Send one copy of the completed form with any attachments to the applicant's representative at the address listed below, one copy to the Borough President, and one copy to the Borough Board, when applicable.

### Docket Description:

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by St. Francis Preparatory School pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning map, Section Nos. 10d and 11b, changing from an R3-2 District to an R4 District property bounded by the southeasterly service road of the Horace Harding Expressway, Francis Lewis Boulevard, the northeasterly center line prolongation of 67th Avenue and Peck Avenue, Borough of Queens, Community District 8, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only), dated March 18, 2013, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-301.

<b>Applicant(s):</b> St. Francis Preparatory School 61-00 Francis Lewis Boulevard Fresh Meadows, NY 11365 Phone: 718 423-8810 Fax: 718 224-2108		<b>Applicant's Representative:</b> Steven M. Sinacori Akerman Senterfitt LLP 335 Madison Avenue New York, NY 10017 Phone: 212 822-2212 / Fax:212 880-8965	
<b>Recommendation submitted by:</b> Queens                      Community Board 8			
<b>Date of public hearing:</b> April 22, 2013		<b>Location:</b> Hillcrest Manor - 188-11 Hillside Avenue, Hollis, NY 11423	
Was a quorum present? YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		<i>A public hearing requires a quorum of 20% of the appointed members of the board, but in no event fewer than seven such members.</i>	
<b>Date of Vote:</b> May 8, 2013		<b>Location:</b> Hillcrest Jewish Center 183-02 Union Turnpike	
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve		<input type="checkbox"/> Approve With Modifications/Conditions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove		<input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove With Modifications/Conditions	
<b>Please attach any further explanation of the recommendation on additional sheets, as necessary.</b>			
<b>Voting</b>			
# In Favor: 36		# Against:                      # Abstaining:                      Total members appointed to the board: 47	
<b>Name of CB/BB officer completing this form</b> Alvin Warshaviak		<b>Title</b> Chairman	<b>Date</b> 5/13/2013

# Queens Borough President Recommendation

APPLICATION: ULURP# 130170 ZMQ

COMMUNITY BOARD: Q08

## DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER of an application submitted by Akerman Senterfitt LLP on behalf of St. Francis Preparatory School, pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the NYC Charter, for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section Nos. 10d and 11b, changing from an R3-2 District to an R4 district bounded by the southeasterly service road of the Horace Harding Expressway, Francis Lewis Boulevard, the northeasterly center line prolongation of 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Peck Avenue, Borough of Queens, Community District 8, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated March 18, 2103, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-301.

## PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held in the Borough President's Conference Room at 120-55 Queens Boulevard on Thursday, May 16, 2013, at 10:30 A.M. pursuant to Section 82(5) of the New York City Charter and was duly advertised in the manner specified in Section 197-c (i) of the New York City Charter. The applicant made a presentation. There were no other speakers. The hearing was closed.

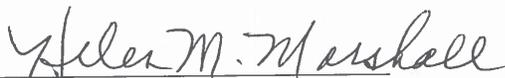
## CONSIDERATION

Subsequent to review of the application and consideration of testimony received at the public hearing, the following issues and impacts have been identified:

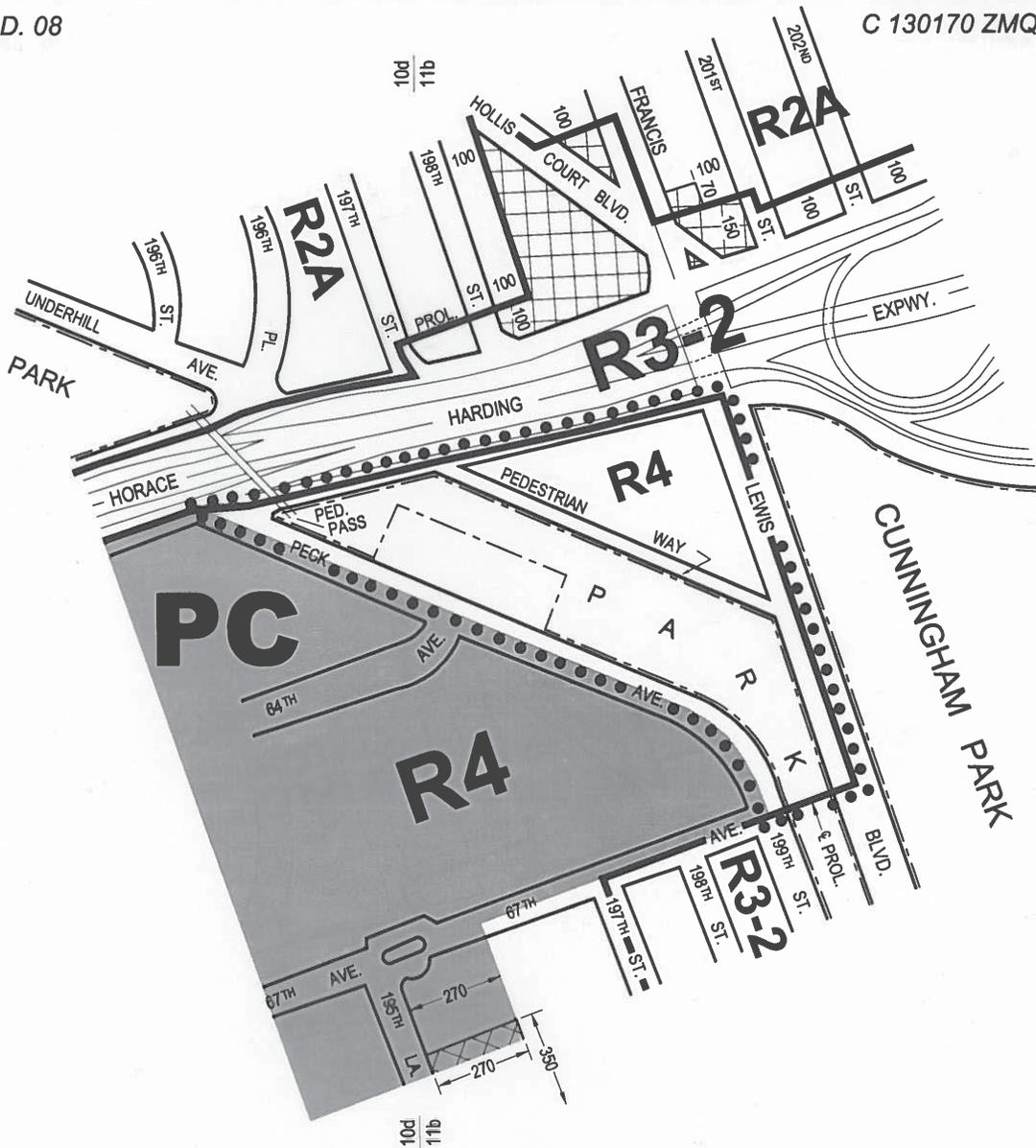
- The applicant is proposing to rezone an area generally bounded by the Horace Harding Expressway to the north, Francis Lewis Boulevard to the east, 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the south and Peck Avenue to the west from R3-2 to R4. The proposed rezoning would facilitate expansion of an existing school.;
- The proposed rezoning would increase the allowable Community Facility FAR to 2.00 and facilitate a 42,271 sf addition to the existing 214,614 sf one-three story high school building. Portions of the existing South Wing and an addition would be demolished. The building extension would replace the demolished portions of the South Wing and connect to the North Wing of the existing building. The two-story addition and cellar would be used for modern lab space, classrooms and art & music performance studios. Fifteen additional parking spaces would also be made possible through reorganization of parking spaces. These improvements are proposed to enhance the school's programs for their students.;
- The proposed rezoning area is triangularly shaped and split by a mapped pedestrian way. More than half of the area that would be rezoned is mapped parkland. Aside from the applicant's property the other parcel not mapped parkland is developed with another school. The Horace Harding and Long Island Expressways to the north of the site separate it from low density housing. Cunningham Park is located directly east across Francis Lewis Boulevard. The areas to the south and west are mapped with R3-2 and R4 districts and are developed with low rise multiple dwellings and single family homes. There is also a mapped Special Planned Community Preservation District to the west.;
- The existing building was built in 1963. The St. Francis Preparatory School has operated on the site since 1974.;
- Community Board 8 (CB8) unanimously approved this application by a vote of thirty-six (36) in favor with none (0) against or abstaining at a public hearing held on May 8, 2013.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above consideration, I hereby recommend approval of the application.

  
PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

  
DATE



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
 CITY OF NEW YORK  
 DIAGRAM SHOWING PROPOSED  
**ZONING CHANGE**  
 ON SECTIONAL MAP  
**10d & 11b**  
 BOROUGH OF  
**QUEENS**

New York, Certification Date  
 MARCH 18, 2013

*J. Miraglia*  
 J. Miraglia, Director  
 Technical Review Division



- NOTE:**
- Indicates Zoning District Boundary.
  - The area enclosed by the dotted line is proposed to be rezoned by changing an R3-2 District to an R4 District.
  - Indicates a C1-2 District.
  - Indicates a Special Planned Community Preservation District.

THIS DIAGRAM IS FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY.