CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

May 6, 2015/ Calendar No. 6 C 140363 PQM

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Administration for Children's Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the acquisition of property located at 218 West 147th Street (Block 2032, Lot 17), for continued use as a child care center, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 10.

This application (C 140363 PQM) for acquisition of property was filed on April 28, 2014 by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) to facilitate the continued operation of a child care center, known as the Early Life Center 13 at 218 West 147th Street, Manhattan, Community District 10.

BACKGROUND

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) seek the acquisition of approximately 28,878 square feet of privately-owned property at 218 West 147th Street (Block 2032, Lot 17) for continued use as a child care center.

The center has been operating at this location since the early 1970s. On February 3, 1993 (Calendar No. 25), the City Planning Commission approved an application (C 920148 PQM) to acquire the property for a period up to 20 years. The lease on the property expired on October 24, 2014.

The subject site is improved with a three-story building located on a through lot bounded by West 146th Street, West 147th Street Adam Clayton Powell, Jr and Frederick Douglass boulevards. The property is located within a R7-2 zoning district and has approximately 18,878 square feet of interior space, and approximately 10,000 square feet of rooftop play area.

The Early Life 13 Center currently serves approximately 135 children. There are 80 children, ages 3-5, enrolled in the ACS's Early Learn program and 54 four year olds who are enrolled in the Department of Education's Pre-K for All program. All of the children attend the program fulltime, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The daycare center provides a variety of activities and programs based on the child's age, developmental stage and the number of hours spent in the center. ACS provides children with a nutritionally balanced breakfast, lunch and snack daily. The center is licensed and subject to the established standards of ACS as well as federal, state and city regulations. The program is staffed with approximately 15 professional, paraprofessional and support staff.

During a site visit by staff from DCP, DCAS and ACS, it was noted that the building's conditions were fair; however, there were some noticeable maintenance and repair issues. However, the conditions of the building were documented by ACS and DCAS, as part of the lease renewal process, so that a Scope of Work could be prepared and shared with the landlord to ensure continued and routine maintenance of the building.

The surrounding area is characterized by a mix of residential, commercial and community facility uses. The subject site located two blocks north of 145th Street, which is the nearest commercial corridor and is characterized predominantly with mixed-use buildings containing ground floor retail and residential uses. The site is accessible by public transportation with the number 3 train at West 148th Street and the M7, M2, M102 and M10 buses that traverse Adam Clayton Powell Jr, Boulevard and Lenox Avenue. The Jackie Robinson Park and Recreation

Center is located east of the subject site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 140363 PQM) 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 lead agency is the Administration for Children's Services (ACS). This application was determined to be a Type II action which requires no further environmental review.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 140363 PQM) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on December 15, 2015, and was duly referred to Community Board 10 and the Manhattan 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 10 chose not to hold a public hearing on this application (C 140363 PQM) or submit a recommendation.

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 140363 PQM) was considered by the Manhattan Borough President who

issued a recommendation approving the application on March 24, 2015.

City Planning Commission Hearing

On March 18, 2015 (Calendar No. 4), the Commission scheduled April 1, 2015 for a public hearing on this application (C 140363 PQM). The hearing was continued and duly held on April 22, 2015 (Calendar No.14). There were four speakers in favor and none in opposition.

A DCAS representative spoke about the terms of the lease and the scope of work. She informed the Commission that this property would be under a short term lease that would expire in December 2018. Further, the scope of work outlines the City's and the landlord's maintenance obligation for the duration of the lease. The DCAS representative also stated DCAS and ACS are working in concert to examine ACS's future programmatic needs for this community and citywide. Two representatives from ACS also spoke about the analysis being done to examine the future needs of the agency and how it will affect the site selection of new daycare facilities. A representative from the Borough President's office iterated the Borough President's favorable recommendation.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the acquisition of property located at 218 West 147th Street (Block 2032, Lot 17) by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) is appropriate.

A daycare center has operated from this site since the early 1970s, providing much needed services in the Central Harlem neighborhood of Manhattan Community District 10. The facility is well served by public transportation and is located to serve the current residential community of Central Harlem.

The Commission is aware that a number of daycare centers went through the lease renewal process 20 years ago, and that many of those facilities had issues regarding the building's physical condition and on-going maintenance. As many of these facilities are now returning through the public review process for lease renewal, the Commission continues to be concerned about this issue. The Commission is aware that the Early Life 13 Center was visited by staff from DCP, DCAS and ACS who confirmed that there were some visible maintenance and repairs issues. The Commission encourages the involved agencies to develop an oversight plan to ensure routine maintenance and repairs to the building are provided.

The Commission recognizes that DCAS and ACS are seeking a short term lease for this property, and while a short term lease may be appropriate at this time, it is important that planning begin now for continued provision of needed daycare in the long term, in space that is optimally designed and built out for modern programmatic needs. The Commission was pleased to learn that ACS is currently assessing its needs and properties across the city to better plan for the future. The Commission strongly encourages ACS to lead a robust inter-agency effort with other city agencies, including the Department of City Planning and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, to identify future development opportunities and other planning resources that can support the provision of subsidized childcare.

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-c of New York City Charter, that acquisition of property located at 218 West 147th Street (Block 2032, Lot 17), for continued use as a childcare center, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 10, in an application submitted by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the Department of Administrative Services (DCAS), dated April 28, 2014, is approved.

The above resolution (C 140363 PQM), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on May 6, 2014 (Calendar No. 6), is filed with the office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President of Manhattan in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

CARL WEISBROD, Chairman

RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,
ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, MICHELLE R. DE LA UZ, JOSEPH DOUEK,
RICHARD W.EADDY, CHERYL COHEN EFFRON, BOMEE JUNG,
ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN, LARISA ORTIZ, Commissioners

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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

March 24, 2015

Recommendation on ULURP Application No. 140363 PQM - Early Life Center 13
by Administration for Children's Services and
the Department of Citywide Administrative Services

PROPOSED ACTION

The Administration for Children's Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services ("the applicants") seek the acquisition of property located at 218 West 147th Street in order to secure privately owned space for an operating day care center currently located within an existing building. The programs are currently housed on three floors within a privately-owned commercial building on Block 2032, Lot 17, in an R7-2 zoning district in Community District 10, Manhattan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) and the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) are proposing to continue to occupy 28,878 square feet of space in a privately owned building located at 218 West 147th Street for the use of a child care center. The facility is the sole tenant of the building and the space calculation combines interior facility space with multiple rooftop play areas.

The building is privately owned, and was built in the early 1970's. It was occupied in 1972 by the NYC Human Resource Administration (HRA) and used in the provision of child care services. The lease start date coincides with, at the time, a sudden citywide demand for space that would accommodate many new Head Start facilities in response to newly available federal funding. In 1992, after the first two decades in operation, the city sought to renew the day care and senior center lease for another 20 year term to continue the existing services. Ruth Messinger, the Manhattan Borough President at the time advised that the lease be limited to 10 years. Community Board 10 voted unanimously to recommend approval of the application to extend the lease on the condition that the term be limited to 10 years. The current proposal would allow the City of New York to enter into a new legal agreement with the land owner to allow a facility to occupy the space for another three years.

Area Context

The area is dominated by multi-family residential buildings and major transportation infrastructure. The surrounding blocks to the north and south are R7-2 with a C1-4 commercial overlay on the avenues. Generally, the narrow streets are lined by multifamily buildings that are five and six stories in height. The Avenues are denser in comparison with nearby buildings reaching 14 stories. The 218 West 147th Street

facility is less than two blocks away from the Harlem Rail Yard, which is also the terminal station for the number 3 subway line. The facility's close proximity to the bus depot and major avenues provides excellent connections to the east and west sides of Manhattan via the M1, M2, M7, M10 and M102 buses. In addition, the Bx19 runs along West 145th Street to the Botanical Garden in the Bronx via West 145th Street and Southern Boulevard. The newly renovated Robert L. Clinkscales Playground and Community Garden can be access by exiting the facility on the south side and crossing West 146th Street.

Proposed Site and Project

The Early Life Center 13 program that operates out of 218 West 147th Street serves a well-defined need in the Harlem Community. The onsite play areas located on the terraces and roof provide the children open space in addition what can be found in neighborhood parks. The previous 20 year lease agreement is no longer in effect and the facility operates on a month-to-month basis. The new license agreement is for five years, and retroactively covers the past two years, where the facility operated on a month-to-month basis. Approval of this ULURP application would allow the City of New York to execute a lease that would terminate on December 12, 2018.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

DCAS is currently negotiating a significant number of renewals because the wave of senior citizen and child care center leases negotiated in the mid-1990s are up for renewal again. Their efforts along with those of ACS and the Department for the Aging (DFTA) should be applauded as these facilities are crucially important to our communities. The end-users of these efforts are the seniors and children. It is our responsibility to ensure, when reviewing these applications, because these centers are so critical for the communities they serve, that the facilities are in the best of conditions and are maintained that way throughout the lease cycle.

Like a similar facility on 110 West 146th Street, the City must confront the specter of future development replacing aging, purpose-built structures from the 1970's. At the City Planning Commission (CPC) Public Hearing on March 18th, 2015 in Spector Hall, Chair Weisbrod signaled that the Department of City Planning (DCP) would take into account the need to provide new community facility space for displaced programs. Such considerations are especially important for communities such as the one in Central Harlem that depend on the resources provided. Any public facility that is currently housed in non-city owned space or a space that constrains its ability to provide the amount of service that the neighborhood requires needs to be re-examined. Such is the case with the Macomb's Bridge Library, which is housed in a one-bedroom apartment unit in the Harlem River Houses less than five blocks away and could benefit from co-location with either a daycare or senior center.

We must work together to establish a community development framework to plan for needed community facilities. These must include any other facilities that are similarly threatened or constrained. Our office looks forward to working with the community stakeholders and city agencies so that community resources might benefit as a result of the same development pressure that puts the longevity of their current leases into question.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, the Manhattan Borough President recommends <u>approval</u> of ULURP Application No. 140363 PQM.

Gale A. Brewer
Manhattan Borough President