



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

November 9, 2022 / Calendar No. 5

C 220468 PCM
CORRECTED

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the New York City Fire Department and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 601-613 West 29th Street (Block 675, p/o Lot 12) for use as an ambulance station, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 4.

This application for a site selection and site acquisition action was filed on June 23, 2022 by the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). The proposed action would facilitate the relocation of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Station 7 to a new facility located at 601-613 West 29th Street (Block 675, p/o Lot 12) in the West Chelsea/Hudson Yards neighborhoods of Manhattan, Community District 4.

BACKGROUND

The applicants seek site selection and acquisition of property of the development site, an approximately 12,500-square-foot, vacant, privately-owned lot for EMS Station 7 at 601-613 West 29th Street in Manhattan. The new, approximately 18,000-square-foot facility to be developed would accommodate ambulances, equipment, personnel, and other support space to help meet the FDNY's station requirements and maintain and enhance the unit's overall operational capabilities.

FDNY's existing EMS Station 7 is currently located at 512 West 23rd Street in a construction trailer situated at a temporary location under the High Line. Opened in 2011 upon the closure of St. Vincent's Hospital in the West Village, the 5,000-square-foot facility was meant to house a maximum of seven units (15 tours); however, it currently supports 10 units (24 tours). Given current and anticipated growth in the Clinton/Hell's Kitchen, West Chelsea, and Hudson Yards neighborhoods, as well as a continued growth in call volume, FDNY has identified the need for a new and expanded EMS Station 7.

Block 675 was considered as part of the 2005 Hudson Yards rezoning (C 040499(A) ZMM, *et al.*) as a shared Department of Sanitation (DSNY) garage and Police Department (NYPD) tow pound with a public park above. After the rezoning, public facility needs and plans shifted, and the city never acquired property on the block. In 2017, the Department of City Planning (DCP) developed a planning framework for Block 675 to guide the development of the block and anticipate the possible need for future zoning actions to accommodate public facility and infrastructure needs. In 2018, Douglaston Development, the owner of Lot 12, received approval for a special permit (C 180129(A) ZSM) and zoning text amendment (N 180128(A) ZRM) to allow for up to 18,500 square feet for an EMS facility to be exempted from FAR calculations and to increase the permitted number of accessory parking spaces for such facility from four to 18. These two actions, together with a related zoning map amendment (C 180127 ZMM) to change an M2-4 district to a C6-4X district and establish a Special Hudson River Park District, facilitated the development of 601 West 29th Street (aka 3ELEVEN) — a 740,615-square-foot (12.0 FAR), 60-story predominantly residential building. At the time, it was anticipated that the EMS facility would be the subject of a separate, future site acquisition and selection application by the city. The same year, the U.S. Department of Transportation released its preferred alternative alignment for the trans-Hudson Gateway Tunnel project, which identified the development site as a potential construction staging area.

As part of their recommendations on the 2018 applications, Manhattan Community Board 4 and the Manhattan Borough President encouraged the city and the applicant to work together to relocate the West 23rd Street EMS facility to enclosed space in the proposed 613 West 29th Street project. In its consideration on the applications, the City Planning Commission (CPC) found that the proposed special permit, which would allow the Commission to exempt floor space for an EMS station from the definition of floor area and increase the maximum number of accessory off-street parking spaces permitted for such station was appropriate. Furthermore, such proposal was necessary to accommodate an essential municipal facility that would provide critical emergency medical services to rapidly growing neighborhoods on the west side of Manhattan.

The surrounding area includes portions of the West Chelsea and Hudson Yards neighborhoods. Land uses in the vicinity are a mix of commercial, new mixed-use (residential with commercial below), transportation/utility, manufacturing, residential, and open space uses, as well as many major ongoing construction projects. The area generally transitions from transportation/utility and industrial/manufacturing uses along the waterfront toward a wider range of land uses in the Special West Chelsea District to the east and south of the development site.

The development site is located approximately three blocks south of the 7 train's 34th Street/Hudson Yards station and is adjacent to the M12 bus line. The High Line Park and Hudson River Park are a short walk from the site.

The development site, located on the northern side of West 29th Street, midway between Eleventh Avenue and the West Side Highway, on the westernmost portion of Lot 12. Lot 12 has a total area of 61,719 square feet and is occupied on its eastern side by the 60-story 3ELEVEN residential development. The development site has 125 feet of frontage along West 29th Street and is approximately 99 feet deep. At 60 feet wide, West 29th Street is a narrow street, and is a one-way, west-bound street with a dedicated bike lane.

The development site is located within a C6-4X zoning district within Area B2 of the Special Hudson River Park District (HRP); the development site is also located within a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area. C6 zoning districts allow for a wide range of high-density commercial uses requiring a central location. Most residential, community facility, and commercial uses are allowed as of right. The HRP modifies the bulk regulations of the underlying C6-4X district — the base FAR within an MIH Area is 10.0, which may be increased up to 12.0 through a transfer of floor area from the HRP pursuant to a CPC special permit.

The EMS facility is proposed to be a three-story, 43-foot-tall building with approximately 18,000 square feet of enclosed area for cleaning and restocking ambulances, offices, meeting rooms, employee lockers, bathrooms, kitchen and dining areas. The facility would operate 24/7 in three

tours/shifts and could accommodate approximately 148 total crew members. The proposed facility would have space for eight EMS vehicles and one supervisor SUV on the first floor; on the second floor, there would be space for 18 employee parking spaces to reduce the need for on-street parking. The proposed facility would also contain a two-bay apparatus floor accessed by a 44-foot-wide curb cut, while the employee parking area on the second story would be accessed by a 22-foot curb cut.

EMS stations operate differently from fire stations and use a strategy known as dynamic deployment. With dynamic deployment, the ambulance units leave the station — in almost all instances in a non-emergency capacity — and travel to pre-designated street corner locations known as atoms. From these locations ambulance units are then dispatched to specific medical emergencies in the surrounding area. In addition, most EMS incidents require patient transport to a hospital. When a unit arrives at a hospital (and after the patient has been transferred to hospital staff), the ambulance crew may return to their cross-street location, or they may need to return to the station. Some reasons for returning to the station during a tour include restocking of supplies, decontamination of the ambulance compartment or of the members themselves, or administrative issues. Each ambulance team reports to the facility at the beginning and end of their tours.

The proposed action would allow the city to enter into an agreement with Amtrak to use the site for temporary construction staging to facilitate the Gateway/Hudson Tunnel Project. It is anticipated that construction on the tunnel will last approximately 10 years; construction of the proposed EMS station is expected to begin after the agreement is extinguished and is projected to last approximately two years.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 220468 PCM) 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 22FDO002M. The lead agency is the FDNY.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed actions, a Negative Declaration was issued on April 21, 2021.

WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM CONSISTENCY REVIEW

This application (C 220468 PCM) was reviewed by the City Coastal Commission for consistency with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP), as amended, approved by the New York City Council on October 30, 2013 and by the New York State Department of State on February 3, 2016, pursuant to the New York State Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act of 1981, (New York State Executive Law, Section 910 *et seq.*). The designated WRP number is 20-160. This action was determined to be consistent with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 220468 PCM) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on June 27, 2022 and was duly referred to Manhattan Community Board 4 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

Manhattan Community Board 4 held a public hearing on this application (C 220468 PCM) on September 7, 2022. On that date, by a vote of 44 in favor, none opposed, and none abstaining, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application on the condition that an immediate solution to the current temporary outdoor station at West 23rd street be secured and that the mayor's office, FDNY, and DCAS work with the Gateway Development Commission Project to ensure an enclosed location for the EMS facility at no cost to the city.

Borough President Recommendation

The Manhattan Borough President waived his full review period. However, on September 29, 2022, he issued a supplemental letter recommending approval of the application with the condition that the applicants work with Gateway Project officials to find an alternative solution for the staging area of the Gateway Project or immediately identify an adequate, enclosed facility for EMS Station 7.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On October 11, 2022 (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled October 26, 2022 for a public hearing on this application (C 220468 PCM). The hearing was duly held on October 26, 2022 (Calendar No. 9). Three speakers testified in favor of the application and none in opposition.

The applicant team, including a representative from FDNY and a representative from DCAS, spoke in favor of the application, describing the design and programming of the new facility. They also discussed how population increases and growth in call volume in the catchment area since 2011 has created a pressing need to expand beyond the existing temporary trailer at 512 West 23rd Street, where options for accommodating additional vehicles and personnel are limited. In response to the Commission's questions regarding the delay in identifying a permanent EMS facility, the FDNY representative cited high land values in the area, which, alongside fiscal constraints, have made securing a site that meets the FDNY's demanding physical and operational needs exceedingly difficult. They also noted how the new EMS Station 7 on West 29th Street will expand the battalion's logistical capabilities, enhance the level of EMS service to Manhattan's West Side, and alleviate quality of life issues for neighborhood residents related to noise and air quality at the existing facility.

The applicant further explained how the capacity of the proposed facility — almost double that of the existing station — is designed to anticipate long-term growth beyond the anticipated 2034 delivery date. They also informed the Commission that, due to the site's location in the 1% annual floodplain, the station's critical infrastructure will be elevated above the 0.2% annual

floodplain and planners will consider incorporating dry floodproofing solutions that could be deployed in the event of inundation. Finally, the representative from DCAS explained that, during construction on the Gateway Tunnel, the city will continuously assess service demand relative to EMS capabilities to determine whether expanded or additional temporary facilities may be necessary during the period Amtrak has use of the site.

A representative of Manhattan Community Board 4 spoke in favor of the application. They reiterated the community board's conditional approval and expressed that, while they are supportive of the location and design of the project overall, a permanent facility should be secured immediately rather than wait for completion of the Gateway Tunnel.

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

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes the proposed site selection and acquisition of property is appropriate. This action will facilitate the construction of a new facility for EMS Station 7 on property located at 601-613 West 29th Street.

The Commission notes that the need for this facility was included in the Citywide Statement of Needs for Fiscal Years 2022-2023. The site selection will facilitate the construction of a much-needed modern EMS Station 7 facility serving the residents of Manhattan's West Side. The current facility located at 512 West 23rd Street is a substandard structure and does not meet the FDNY's long-term programmatic or operational requirements for EMS stations. The FDNY's plan to construct a new approximately 18,000-square-foot EMS Station 7 will create a modern facility that will allow the battalion to effectively and efficiently perform its critical duty to provide emergency services in the local area as well as the borough.

The Commission notes the need to reserve the site as a construction staging area for the Gateway Tunnel Project for approximately 10 years, during which time EMS Battalion 7 will continue to operate out of the temporary facility at 512 West 23rd Street until then. The Commission acknowledges that, while the future EMS Station 7 is not scheduled to be delivered for

approximately 12 years (including construction time for the station), the proposed action is necessary for the city to gain site control and allow Amtrak to use the site for temporary construction staging. While the Commission is confident in the FDNY's assurances that this will not lead to a diminution in services or negatively impact response times, the Commission nonetheless encourages FDNY to assess the battalion's operational capabilities on a continuous basis and allocate additional resources as necessary to ensure that the health, safety, and welfare of those who live, work, and visit the area are safeguarded.

The Commission recognizes the FDNY's commitment to incorporate sustainability and resiliency measures into the design of the station and strongly encourages the applicant to ensure that all critical systems, including electric charging infrastructure, be safeguarded against future flood risk. The Commission, in response to the community board's resolution, urges the FDNY to commit to producing and sharing an emissions plan and a Builder's Paving Plan that indicates the site's street tree locations and off-site street tree compliance.

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that having considered the Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) for which a Negative Declaration was issued on April 21, 2021 with respect to this application (CEQR No. 22FDO002M), that the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant impact on the environment; and be it further

RESOLVED, the City Coastal Commission finds that the action will not substantially hinder the achievement of any WRP policy and hereby determines that this action is consistent with WRP policies; and be it further

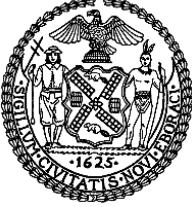
RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Sections 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and the consideration described in the report, the application submitted by the New York City Fire Department and the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the Zoning

Resolution of the City of New York, for site selection and acquisition¹ of property located at 601-613 West 29th Street (Block 675, p/o Lot 12), for use as an ambulance station, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 4, is approved.

The above resolution (C 220468 PCM), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on November 9, 2022 (Calendar No. 5), 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.

**DANIEL R. GARODNICK, Esq., Chair,
LEILA BOZORG, ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, JOSEPH DOUEK,
DAVID GOLD, Esq., LEAH GOODRIDGE, RASMIA KIRMANI-FRYE,
ORLANDO MARÍN, JUAN CAMILO OSORIO, RAJ RAMPERSHAD, Commissioners**

¹ The Resolution section of the report has been administratively corrected on January 18, 2023 to reflect the docket's description of the application.



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

September 26, 2022

Dan Garodnick
Chair & Director
City Planning Commission & Department of City Planning
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271

re: **ULURP #220468PCM**
603-613 West 29th Street
Site Acquisition & Selection
for West 23rd Street EMS #7 Relocation

Dear Chair Garodnick,

At the July 18, 2022 meeting of Manhattan Community Board 4 Chelsea Land Use Committee (CLU), New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) presented this land use application, seeking approval for site acquisition and selection of Block 675, Lot 12. At MCB4's regularly scheduled full Board meeting on September 7, 2022, voted 44 for, 0 against, 0 abstain, and 2 present not eligible to approve with conditions the above referenced ULURP for Site Acquisition & Selection for the construction of a permanent station for EMS#7 at 613 West 29th Street (between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues on the northside of the street) on the condition that an **immediate** solution to the current temporary outdoor station at West 23rd street be secured. The mayor's office, FDNY and DCAS must work with the Gateway Development Commission Project and ensure an enclosed location for this vital public safety facility at no cost to the city.

Background

Since temporary relocation more than ten years ago of the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) EMS Station #7, to 512 West 23rd Street, MCB4, following the closure of St.

Vincent's Hospital, MCB4 has been vocal that a suitable indoor permanent location be identified.¹

In 2016 and 2017 MCB4 worked with the Department of City Planning (DCP) to develop a rezoning framework for Block 675 (West 29th to West 30th, 11th to 12 Avenues) which included accommodating needed public facilities and infrastructure such as an EMS station. In 2018, as part of a rezoning and development of that block (180127 ZMM, N 180128 ZRM, 180129 ZSM), MCB4 and the City Council obtained a written commitment from Douglaston Development to provide the land for the #7 EMS Station as part of their mixed-use residential development at 601 West 29th Street.²

Concurrently, MCB4 was made aware that part of the proposed site was being discussed for construction staging for the Hudson River Tunnel Project, part of the larger Gateway Project. Therefore, at the same time as the rezoning, MCB4 collaborated with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), then the lead stakeholder in the Gateway Project, to secure yet another temporary EMS # 7 site to avoid conflict with EMS station development and Gateway construction staging. The PANYNJ proposed multiple garage buildings in the West 30s & West 40s. In 2018, MCB4 toured multiple locations with PANYNJ and recommended possible locations that would not conflict with other adjacent residential uses. The underlying concept was the Gateway Project would use the space for their own operations and temporarily house EMS Station #7 off site during the construction of the Hudson River Tunnel Project, thereby avoiding conflict with Gateway construction staging. Then the Governor of New Jersey pulled out of the Gateway project and all planning came to a halt.

Meanwhile, after a decade of advocating, planning, and negotiation, The New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) seek site acquisition and site selection approval for an approximately 12,500-square-foot, privately-owned property (the Development Site) located at 613 West 29th Street in Manhattan (Block 675, part of Lot 12). FDNY is proposing to relocate the existing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Station 7 facility from its current temporary location at 512 West 23rd Street in Manhattan to a new, approximately 18,068 square foot facility to be constructed at the proposed Development Site in the West Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan, Community District 4. The site will serve the EMS #7 district from West 12th to West 62nd Streets, 5th Avenue to the Hudson River.

¹ [MCB4's letters on this topic 2012-2022](#)

² <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/02/22-CLU-Letter-to-DCP-re-ULURP-Application-for-601-W.-29th-St.-180127-ZMM.pdf>

Location & Siting

The proposed 12,500 square foot development site is located at 613 West 29th Street between 11th Avenue and the West Side Highway in the West Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan. The proposed development site is located in a C6-4X underlying zoning district within Area B2 of the Special Hudson River Park District (HRP) as well as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Area. C6 zones are commercial zoning districts that allow for a wide range of high-density commercial uses requiring a central location. Most residential, community facility, and commercial uses in Use Groups 1 through 12 are allowed. The HRP modifies the bulk regulations of the underlying C6-4X district. The maximum base FAR within an MIH Area is 10.0, which may be increased up to 12.0 through a transfer of floor area from the Hudson River Park pursuant to a CPC special permit. DCAS and FDNY have looked for alternative space and not deemed any other location suitable for this use.

Proposed Project Design and Use

The proposed structure will be an approximately 18,068 square foot EMS Station 7 facility to be constructed on a 12,500 square foot, vacant portion of Block 675, Lot 12, adjacent to, and immediately west of, the mixed-use building currently under construction as part of the 601 W. 29th Street development. The parcel has 125 feet of frontage along West 29th Street and is approximately 98.75 feet in depth. According to the current concept, the 3-story building will have a height of approximately 43 feet. There will be 80 FDNY staff assigned to the proposed EMS Station 7 facility. This proposed 3-story facility will have space for 8 EMS vehicles and 1 supervisor SUV on the first floor. On the second floor, there will be space for 18 parking spaces for employee parking. The proposed facility will contain a two-bay apparatus floor. The apparatus bay will be accessed by a 44-foot-wide curb cut, while the employee parking area will be accessed by a 22-foot curb cut. FDNY confirms that this structure is commensurate with other new locations they have established and will be suitable for accommodating the growing population of MCB4 and the overall territory expected to be served by this EMS station.

We are encouraged by FDNY's commitment to clean air and look forward to seeing a thorough emissions plan as the building design is finalized. Additionally, MCB4 requests that electric charging stations for both ambulances and staff vehicles be included in the building's design and requests that trees be planted in accordance with NYC Zoning Resolution Section 26-41, and that FDNY produce a Builder's Paving Plan to indicate on site street trees and given the required curb cuts, how many street trees will be planted off site in compliance with zoning.

Unacceptable Delay and Proposed Mitigation

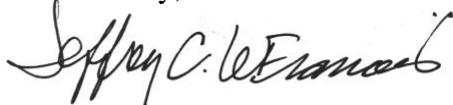
According to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for its Hudson Tunnel Project, Amtrak holds a construction easement on the undeveloped portion of Lot 12 until 2032. As proposed, construction of the proposed EMS station is expected to begin after the easement is extinguished and is anticipated to be completed in 2034. This timeline for

relocation of the current “temporary” and unsuitable EMS station is absolutely unacceptable. MCB4 remains firm: an indoor site that can support the emergency medical needs of the Westside of Manhattan must be secured immediately and is a condition of our approval of the ULURP under review.

Conclusion

Approval of this ULURP, on the condition of an immediate resolution to the outdoor site at West 23rd, will facilitate the relocation and construction of a new facility for EMS Station 7 on Block 675, Lot 12 (part), in the West Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan. MCB4 has argued for this move over the last decade and is ready to partner with you to make it a reality.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey LeFrancois
Chair
Manhattan
Community Board 4



Jessica Chait
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use
Committee



Kerry Keenan
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use
Committee

cc: Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council
Gateway Development Commission



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Mark D. Levine, Borough President

September 29, 2022

**Recommendation on Block 675 – EMS Station 7 - ULURP Application No. C220468PCM
By FDNY and NYCDCAS**

PROPOSED ACTIONS

The New York City Fire Department (“FDNY”) and the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (“DCAS”), collectively the “Applicants,” are proposing several actions to relocate the existing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Station 7 from its current temporary location at 512 West 23rd Street (Block 694, Lot 40) to 613 West 29th Street in Manhattan (Block 675, part of Lot 12; the “Development Site”). Both sites are in Community District 4 in Manhattan.

The Applicants are requesting approval for the acquisition and selection of the Development Site.

BACKGROUND

Area Context

The Development Site is located within Manhattan Community District 4 in the West Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan. The site is on West 29th Street, between 12th and 11th Avenues, and extends 331 feet east of 12th Avenue. The Special Hudson Yards District is located north of the Development Site.

The Hudson River is approximately 400 feet west of the Development Site, and along its coast is Hudson River Park, the longest waterfront park in the United States. The Development Site is within walking distance of multiple open spaces, including the Hudson River Park and Greenway, Bella Abzug Park, Chelsea Park, Chelsea Waterside Park, and the High Line. The Development Site is also within walking distance to numerous transit options, including the 7 Train located at the Hudson Yards Station, approximately 900 feet north of the site, while nearby bus routes include the M11 and M12, which run north and south along 11th Avenue, and the M23 and M34-SBS buses, which run crosstown and along 23rd and 34th Streets respectively.

Special West Chelsea District

In 2005, the Special West Chelsea District was created as a direct response to the redevelopment of the High Line, an elevated rail line running north-south through the length of the district that was repurposed as a large public urban park. To facilitate the public use of the High Line, the special district was established to permit a floor area transfer mechanism to preserve light, air, views, and floor area bonuses related to access and open space development. The special district

also fostered the development of a dynamic mixed commercial and residential district centered around the High Line which contributed to the commercial characteristics of the area.

Special Hudson Yards District

In January 2005, the New York City Council approved a comprehensive rezoning of the Hudson Yards area that would transform the western edge of Manhattan into a high-density extension of the Midtown business district and include residential, cultural, and retail uses, as well as open space. The rezoning has permitted 24 million square feet of new space, including 13,500 new residential units, one million square feet of new retail, two million square feet of new hotels, and more.

Temporary Relocation of EMS Station 7 and Block 675 Development

Upon the closure of St. Vincent's Hospital in 2010, EMS Station 7 moved from that location to a temporary, unenclosed space under the High Line at 512 West 23rd Street.

In 2017, Douglaston Development proposed to redevelop Block 675. The proposal required discretionary actions, including a rezoning, which underwent the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). Douglaston's project, which was approved, will include a 740,615 square foot mixed-use building at 601 West 29th Street. As part of its discussions with the community during the ULURP process, Douglaston committed to dedicating a portion of Lot 12 for the permanent relocation of EMS Station 7.

Amtrak holds a construction easement on the undeveloped proportion of Lot 12 until 2032. That easement is intended to facilitate the construction of the Gateway project, a \$16 billion infrastructure project that will provide greater, more reliable service on the North East Corridor rail line, which serves Amtrak and NJ Transit commuters. In September 2022, officials announced an updated timeline for the project, which moved the date of completion from 2035 to 2038.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Proposed Development is a three-story building with a height of approximately 43 feet. The 18,068 square foot EMS Station 7 facility would be built on a 12,500 square foot portion of Block 675, Lot 12, which is immediately west of the 601 West 29th Street development that is currently under construction. The proposed EMS station will serve approximately 80 FDNY staff, and would provide the staff with 18 parking spaces, support for ambulances – including equipment for refueling, restocking, and cleaning – office space, and locker space for EMS personnel.

Given the timeline of the Gateway Project, the Applicants propose to commence construction of the new EMS facility upon the termination of the easement in 2032. Completion of the new EMS facility would be expected by 2034.

Site Description

The Development Site is in the West Chelsea neighborhood in Manhattan Community District 4. It is located on Block 675, Lot 12 and extends east from West 29th Street to 11th Avenue. The privately owned lot includes 525 feet of frontage along West 29th Street and 197 feet of frontage along 11th Avenue.

Land uses in the surrounding area include a mix of industrial, commercial, residential, and open spaces. The neighborhood around the site includes M2-4 and M1-5 zones to the south, with building heights of less than 300 feet. Notable sites south of the proposed development include the Terminal Warehouse and the Starrett Lehigh Building. Immediately south and west of the site are parking lots, one of which is owned and operated by Consolidated Edison. To the east of the site are C6-4 and C6-3 districts. Commercial corridors are farther east from the site at 10th Avenue, between West 18th and West 25th Streets and between West 35th and West 39th Streets. In contrast, higher and denser buildings are scattered throughout the eastern part of the neighborhood and are mostly located northeast of West 30th Street and 11th Avenue, within Hudson Yards. Directly north of the Development Site is the Western Rail Yard, which will soon be redeveloped.

COMMUNITY BOARD RESOLUTION

Manhattan Community Board 4 (“CB4”) held a public hearing regarding the application on July 18, 2022. During this hearing and in subsequent Board meetings, members and the public were concerned that the timeline for the Gateway Project would further delay securing an adequate facility for EMS Station 7, that the proposed facility included too many parking spots, and about quality-of-life issues.

On September 7, 2022, CB4 voted to recommend approval of the application with the condition that the Mayor’s Office and the Applicants work with Gateway Project officials to find “an immediate resolution to the outdoor site at West 23rd” that “will facilitate the relocation and construction of a new facility for EMS Station 7 on Block 675.”

BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS

As the city grows, it’s crucial that our infrastructure adapt to serve the expanding need for municipal services. FDNY EMS Station 7 has outgrown its current facility. As EMS call volumes increase and more residents move to the Clinton, West Chelsea, and Hudson Yards neighborhoods, the need for a new, right-sized facility becomes more urgent.

The existing EMS station supports five ambulances in addition to other administrative and equipment needs for EMS staff. However, it currently runs eight ambulances and is operating at capacity. In contrast, the proposed 18,068 square foot EMS Station 7 facility would be able house eight EMS vehicles and one supervisor SUV, much better suited to meet the rising demand in the area.

Finding a proper site for this station is a matter of public health and safety. For over 10 years, the west side of Manhattan has relied on emergency services that are housed in a temporary, partially unenclosed facility. I agree with CB4 that the community deserves an EMS station that meets not only the current needs, but also the projected needs as new buildings in the area come online. The unenclosed, temporary facility cannot continue to be the status quo while the Gateway Project is under development. Residents, workers, and EMS staff must have a reasonable, adequate, and safe EMS station as soon as possible.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, the Manhattan Borough President **recommends approval** of ULURP Application No. C220468PCM **with the condition** that the Applicants work with Gateway Project officials to either find an alternative solution for the staging area of the Gateway Project or immediately identify an adequate, enclosed facility for EMS Station 7.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Levine".

Mark Levine
Manhattan Borough President