
IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Human Resources Administration (HRA) pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the selection of three buildings (Building Nos. 4, 5, 6) of the former Greenpoint Hospital campus located at 300 Skillman Avenue (Block 2885, Lot 1), Community District 1, Borough of Brooklyn, for use as a homeless shelter for men.

This application (C 890619 PSK) was filed on February 24, 1989 by the Human Resources Administration for the selection of property in the former Greenpoint Hospital complex (Buildings 4, 5, 6), for permanent use of 289 beds as part of the Greenpoint Men's Shelter.

BACKGROUND

The Human Resources Administration (HRA) proposes to select and utilize three buildings (Buildings #4, 5, 6) at the site of the former Greenpoint Hospital complex to expand the existing Greenpoint Men's Shelter by 289 beds. HRA has utilized these buildings temporarily since June of 1987 under an emergency declaration pursuant to Section 6 NYCRR 617.2 (q) (4) and Section 4 (h) of Executive Order 91, 1977 (City Environmental Quality Review Act). The proposed site selection action seeks to make permanent use of these 289 beds in compliance with a court order dated February 24, 1987 (Greenpoint Renaissance Enterprise Corporation vs HRA, DCP, DEP, DRP, et al.) requiring that a land use and environmental review be conducted for the 289 beds in

use and environmental review be conducted for the 289 beds in Buildings 4, 5 and 6.

The former Greenpoint Hospital complex is located at 300 Skillman Avenue in the Greenpoint/Williamsburg area of Brooklyn. It is bounded on the north by Jackson Street, on the south by Maspeth Avenue, on the east by Debevoise Avenue and on the west by Kingsland Avenue. Primary access onto the complex grounds is from an entrance located on Kingland Avenue.

The proposal to house 289 additional men on a permanent basis in Buildings 4, 5, and 6 would bring the total capacity of the Greenpoint Mens Shelter to 951 occupants. HRA also currently utilizes Buildings 1, 2 and 3 to house 662 residents. The proposed increase includes 88 beds in Building 4, 100 beds in Building 5, and 101 beds in Building 6.

The entire complex is 199,600 square feet in area and is zoned R6. The surrounding area contains a mix of light manufacturing, automotive related and residential uses. The Cooper Park Houses and Cooper Park are the largest land uses in the surrounding area.

The Greenpoint Complex contains an aggregate total of 220,000 square feet of floor area. This floor area is spread throughout the six primary buildings, a lab/morgue facility and a

maintenance/storage facility. The buildings which are the subject of this site selection application, Buildings 4, 5, and 6 contain 13,500 square feet, 15,450 square feet and 15,400 square feet of floor area, respectively, for a total of 44,000 square feet. Each building has a basement and is four stories high.

There will be 77 parking spaces provided on site for staff and visitor parking.

Part of the site previously used for parking purposes has been converted for use as a passive recreation area (16,151 square feet). HRA proposes to convert additional parking space for use as basketball and handball courts to provide active warm weather outdoor recreation facilities for complex residents.

In addition to the outdoor recreation area, HRA currently uses 11,946 square feet of space for indoor recreation activity, including aerobics, weightlifting classes and table games. The basement of Building 2 serves as the primary indoor recreation area. Each of the other occupied buildings, except Building 1, has smaller recreation areas containing television rooms and game rooms.

HRA will be providing a number of support services on site, including social, medical, food, laundry and community outreach

services, work programs and recreational programming.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 890619 PSK) 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) procedures set forth in Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 87-321K.

It was determined that the proposed action may have a significant effect on the environment, and that an environmental impact statement would be required. A positive declaration was issued on September 15, 1987. The declaration stated the following reason for the determination:

1. The project, as proposed, may significantly impair the existing community and neighborhood character.

Therefore, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of City Planning asked the applicant to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in accordance with Section 6 NYCRR 617.00. (c).

The applicant prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of City Planning submitted to the Commission for its consideration the results of their study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action. A Notice of Completion was issued on June 14, 1989. Pursuant to the SEQRA regulations and the CEQR procedures, a joint public hearing was held on the DEIS on September 6, 1989. This joint public hearing was held in conjunction with the public hearing on the related Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) item(C 890619 PSK).

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was completed, and a Notice of Completion of the FEIS was issued on September 22, 1989. The Notice of Completion for the FEIS identified the following potential significant impacts and proposed mitigation measures:

"Neighborhood Character

Community Facilities

The potential exists for the proposed action (289 permanent beds) to create a significant impact by placing an additional demand on existing community facilities such as hospitals and social services. Potential impacts may arise from the possible past abuse of alcohol and drugs by shelter residents, thereby having the potential to

divert medical resources of area hospitals from their current use.

On-site medical and social services programs would be expanded on a permanent basis at the shelter to mitigate adverse impacts arising from the potential demand on off-site health resources in the study area. These programs are currently provided on an emergency basis to the residents of Buildings #4, #5 and #6.

Security

The potential exists for the proposed action to increase security problems in the surrounding community and at the shelter; therefore, creating a potentially significant impact. These security problems may range from increased loitering to an increase in crime.

Mitigation measures to reduce security problems include the 94th Precinct designating a patrol car to specifically respond to calls during the 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight period related to the shelter, and security staff patrolling the area surrounding the shelter from 8:00 a.m. to midnight. A shelter curfew of 10:00 p.m. presently exists for non-employee clients, reducing evening pedestrian traffic. Security staff

would be provided on a permanent basis with the implementation of the proposed project.

Demographics and Socioeconomic Impacts

The proposed project would result in a permanent increase in total population within Census Tract 465 by 289 residents, with demographic characteristics of this population varying from those of the existing community.

The study area's demographic characteristics would be affected in terms of the population's sex and age composition. Under the proposed action, the age cohort groups expected to be adversely affected include the 25 to 34 year cohort and the 35 to 44 year cohort.

Socioeconomic conditions in the study area would experience certain effects including a potential increase in the number of residents on public assistance and unemployment. However, the resident population inhabiting Buildings #4, #5 and #6 are typically employed prior to entering the shelter or must obtain work on or off-site through one of the available work programs. Residents entering the State's Job Corps Program (a program implemented by HRA involving educational and job training for shelter residents) are housed in Building

#4 prior to entering the program located in Glenmont, New York.

Several mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the aforementioned impacts have been implemented on an emergency basis and would be provided permanently if the program is adopted. These measures include the implementation of the Shelter Employment and Housing Program (SEHP) and Work Experience Program (WEP).

Open Space

The permanent expansion of the Greenpoint Men's Shelter by an additional 289 male residents would exacerbate present deficiencies in public open/recreational space, creating a potentially significant impact.

A portion of the parking lot on-site has been converted to a passive open space area to provide additional recreational space. This open space area would partially mitigate the impacts to existing recreational resources. Plans to expand outdoor recreation space on a permanent basis also includes basketball and volleyball courts for active recreation. Recreation space has been expanded in Building #2 to accommodate residents of Buildings #4, #5 and #6. This recreational space contains tables,

chairs, televisions and weight room facilities in the basement. Indoor recreational activities would be provided on a permanent basis with the implementation of the proposed project."

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 890619 PSK) was certified as complete by the City Planning Commission on June 19, 1989, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules and was referred to Community Board 1.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 1 held a public hearing on this application on August 8, 1989 and adopted a resolution on that date recommending disapproval by a vote of 32 in favor and 0 in opposition with 2 abstentions.

In voting to disapprove the application, Community Board 1 cited the inadequacy of the environmental impact statement, the negative adverse effects that the facility would have on the surrounding community, the size of the shelter, and the announcement by the Mayor that the Greenpoint Men's Shelter would be phased out over a five-year period beginning in May, 1990.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On August 21, 1989 (Calendar No. 13), the Commission scheduled September 6, 1989 for a public hearing. The hearing was duly held on September 6, 1989 (Calendar No. 39). There were four speakers in opposition to the proposal.

The Councilmember from the 29th District urged the Human Resources Administration to withdraw its current application in light of the Mayor's recent announcement that the Greenpoint Men's shelter would be phased out. A representative of Community Board 1 reiterated the Board's recommendation. A representative of the Greenpoint Renaissance Enterprise Corporation and that group's attorney also requested that the application be withdrawn.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

This application was filed by HRA pursuant to a court order dated February 24, 1987. The application seeks to make permanent the use of Buildings 4, 5, and 6 in the former Greenpoint Hospital complex as a shelter for homeless men.

In addition to the current temporary use of Buildings 4, 5, and 6, the complex also accomodates 662 men in Buildings 1, 2 and 3. The site is zoned R6 which permits its use as a shelter. No

displacement of existing uses would be required.

The site is secured with a perimeter fence and has security guards around the clock. Access is limited to the entrance at Kingsland Avenue.

The facility has 11,946 square feet of indoor recreation space. HRA has converted a former parking area (16,151 square feet) to passive recreation use. HRA indicated in its application its intention to add active outdoor recreation space and to provide laundry facilities, medical services, employment, work and outreach programs, and on site social workers and services.

On August 16, 1989, subsequent to the Commission's certification of this application, the Mayor announced plans to gradually phase-out the current facility beginning in May of 1990. The current 951 bed facility would be replaced with a smaller 250 bed shelter and approximately 83 units of permanent housing for low-income and homeless families.

The Commission notes, however, that the City of New York is under court order to pursue this application and that it must continue its review of this application in accordance with the court order. At this time the specific aspects of the phase-out plan are not known while the need to house the homeless men who

utilize Buildings 4, 5 and 6 remains. Consequently, the Commission believes the application is appropriate and recommends its approval to the Board of Estimate.

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that having considered the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), for which a Notice of Completion was issued by the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of City Planning on September 22, 1989, with respect to this application (CEQR No. 87-321K), the City Planning Commission finds that, consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations:

- 1) From among the reasonable alternatives thereto, the actions to be approved are ones which minimize or avoid adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable; and
- 2) The adverse environmental impacts revealed in the environmental impacts statement will be minimized or avoided to the maximum extent by incorporating as conditions to the decision those mitigative measures that were identified as practicable.

The report of the City Planning Commission, together with the FEIS, constitutes the written statement of facts and the social, economic and other factors and standards that form the basis of the SEQRA regulations; and be further

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter that, based on the environmental determination, and the considerations described in this report, the application of the Human Resources Administration (HRA) for the selection of three buildings (Building Numbers 4, 5 and 6) of the former Greenpoint Hospital Campus located at 300 Skillman Avenue, (Block 2885, Lot 1), Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 1, for use as a homeless shelter for men, is approved.

The resolution (C 890619 PSK), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on October 4, 1989 (Calendar No.31), is filed with the Secretary of the Board of Estimate, in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-c of the New York City Charter.

SYLVIA DEUTSCH, Chairperson
DENISE M. SCHEINBERG, Vice Chairperson
SALVATORE C. GAGLIARDO, MARILYN MAMMANO, Wm. GARRISON McNEIL,
Commissioners