



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE CHAIR

REVISED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Project Identification

CEQR No. 13DCP053M
ULURP Nos. 130139ZSM; 130140ZSM;
N 130138ZCM; N 130137ZRM
SEQRA Classification: Type 1

Lead Agency

City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007
Contact: Robert Dobruskin
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Name, Description and Location of Proposal:

Madison Square Garden

The Negative Declaration originally issued on December 17, 2012, has been revised in order to take into account modifications to the proposed action being considered by the City Planning Commission.

The applicant, MSG Holdings, L.P., is seeking a number of discretionary actions, which include a special permit pursuant to Section 74-41, as amended, to allow an arena in excess of 2,500 seats, a special permit, as amended by a proposed text amendment to modify Section 93-17 (Modifications of Sign Regulations), to modify sign regulations within the Pennsylvania Station Subarea B4 of the Special Hudson Yards District, a text amendment to Sections 37-625 and 74-41 to allow the City Planning Commission (CPC) to approve, in connection with an arena special permit without certification by the Chairperson of the CPC, design changes to existing plazas within Subarea B4 of the Special Hudson Yards District. The proposed action would facilitate the continued use and operation of the Madison Square Garden arena, a proposal by the applicant to install signage that is larger and higher than signage permitted under current zoning and includes third-party advertising and sponsor messaging and certain open space area improvements. The project site encompasses Subarea B4 of the Special Hudson Yards District, which is located on the western portion of the

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block bounded by West 31st Street, West 33rd Street, Seventh and Eighth Avenues, in the Midtown South neighborhood of Manhattan, Community District 5. The Project Site is currently developed with Madison Square Garden and Pennsylvania Station.

Additionally, the applicant is seeking a certification by the Chairperson of the CPC pursuant to Section 37-621 for the elimination of non-bonused plaza area, which is a ministerial action and is not subject to environmental review. The special permit pursuant to Section 74-41 is also not subject to environmental review pursuant to CEQR's grandfathering provisions.

Madison Square Garden is currently undergoing a major, three-year rehabilitation known as the Transformation, consisting of substantial as-of-right interior renovations to upgrade many components of the Arena's interior.

The text amendment to modify Section 93-17 (Modification of Sign Regulations) of the Zoning Resolution would create a special permit by which sign regulations applicable within Subarea B4 of the Special Hudson Yards District may be modified. Subsequently, the applicant seeks the grant of a special permit to Section 93-17, as amended, to modify the sign regulations applicable to the Project Site. The proposed text amendment to Section 93-17 of the Zoning Resolution would create a special permit by which Sections 32-63 (Permitted Advertising Signs), 32-64 (Surface Area and Illumination Provisions), and 32-65 (Permitted Projection or Height of Signs) could be modified within Subarea B4 for a use permitted by a CPC special permit pursuant to Section 74-41 of the Zoning Resolution. The proposed text amendment to Section 93-17 would maintain the basic zoning controls contained in the existing Subarea B4 of the Special Hudson Yards District, but would amend the zoning text to create a special permit that would allow greater signage flexibility in terms of size and content.

The Project Site would be the only site that would be affected by the text amendments. The proposed sign regulations would not have any implications for any part of the Special Hudson Yards District except Subarea B4. The proposed signs for the Arena exceed the maximum surface area and height limitations applicable within Subarea B4 of the Special Hudson Yards District and would contain third-party advertising and sponsorship messages, as well as content associated with the Garden. Therefore, a special permit pursuant to Section 93-17, as amended, is needed to modify the application of such sections to allow the proposed signs.

The proposed text amendment and associated special permit to Section 93-17 would facilitate a signage program with the following components:

1. Proposed Tower Signage ("Tower Media")—20 mm LED display panels with a square footage of up to 3,000 square feet would be installed on each of the escalator Towers A, B, C and D. The panels would have a maximum height of 77'-6" above curb level. The digital displays would include content permitted under current zoning as well as advertising signs.
2. Proposed Eighth Avenue Signage ("Eighth Avenue Media Wall")—The existing marquee-like sign on Eighth Avenue would be removed and replaced by a 20 mm LED media wall on the Eighth Avenue façade. The media wall have a height of 18'-8" and a width of 230'-0", and wrapping around the façade's northern and southern ends, with end panels of 18'-8" by 26'-6". The maximum height of all proposed media wall signage would be 50 feet above curb level.
3. Proposed Vitrines—Pedestrian-level vitrines would be incorporated into the lower façades along West 31st Street and portions of West 33rd Street on areas that are currently blank

walls or doors. Vitrine signage would not be digital. Signage in the proposed vitrines would help to enliven the pedestrian-level facades with images of defining moments in MSG's history and would promote upcoming events.

The text amendment to modify Sections 37-625 and 74-41 would allow the CPC to regulate the design of pedestrian-accessible open areas in connection with the grant of a CPC special permit pursuant to Section 74-41. Currently, under the existing Section 37-625, design changes to existing plazas require a certification by the Chairperson of CPC that such changes bring the plazas into greater accordance with the current standards for public plazas. The proposed text amendment would allow CPC to approve design changes to existing plazas without a certification by the Chairperson of CPC. The text amendment would facilitate the open space area modifications described below.

The open area improvements would consist of a number of modifications including proposed wayfinding signage, cladding an existing vent structure with bench seating, providing improved lighting and additional benches and cluster seating with LED underlighting. The two wayfinding signs would be located near the Penn Station entrances on Eighth Avenue. The signs would be free-standing pylons, approximately 8 feet tall by 2 feet wide, with identification for the Garden, and would contain text at eye level to direct the reader to the Arena's main entrance on Seventh Avenue. The building's exterior façade recesses and the compression ring at the top of the building would be illuminated. Decorative pavings, plaza identification plaques and other wayfinding signage would be placed by the Penn Station entrance areas at 31st and 33rd Streets.

Absent the proposed action, there would be signage that is compliant with the current zoning regulations. Additionally, absent the proposed action, the open space areas would be improved with new lighting, paving, seating, area wayfinding signage, and non-graphic screening at the loading area in accordance with the current Certification pursuant to Section 37-625. The build year is 2014.

The modifications to the text amendment to Section 93-17 (Modifications of Sign Regulations) and to the special permit under the new Section 93-17, as modified, would not allow advertising, or sponsor messages, would modify the surface area, height, and projection of the proposed signs, and would not allow signs with moving (video) images. The modification to the open area improvements include the elimination of proposed etched Madison Square Garden and team logos at the Eighth Avenue plazas; shifts in location and reduction in height of portions of the proposed loading screen at the midblock of West 33rd Street to increase the visibility of the adjacent existing ADA elevator to Penn Station; minor refinements to the design of proposed pedestrian wayfinding signage to improve identification of Penn Station; and the addition of new pedestrian wayfinding signage in the private driveway.

Statement of No Significant Effect:

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 (EAS), dated December 12, 2012, prepared in connection with the ULURP Application (No. 130139ZSM; 130140ZSM; N130138ZCM; N130137ZRM). The City Planning Commission has determined that the proposed action will have no significant effect on the quality of the environment.

Supporting Statement:

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

1. A Technical Memorandum as appended in a Revised EAS, dated May 20, 2013, analyzed the modifications currently being considered by the City Planning Commission. As detailed more fully in the Technical Memorandum, it was determined that the proposed modifications would not have the potential for significant adverse impacts on the environment.
1. No significant effects on the environment that 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.

Should you have any questions pertaining to this Negative Declaration, you may contact Jonathan Keller at (212) 720-3419.



Robert Dobruskin, Director, AICP
Environmental Assessment & Review Division
Department of City Planning

Date: 5/21/2013

Amanda M. Burden, FAICP, Chair
City Planning Commission

Date: 5/22/2013