Project Description (LR Item 3)
Project ID No.: 2021Q0365

Whitestone Lanes

30-05 Farrington Street

June 2023

1. Introduction

This is an application for a zoning map and zoning text amendment (the "Proposed Actions") by Mar Mar Realty, LLC, the owner of the development site (the "Applicant"). The proposed zoning map amendment seeks to rezone three (3) properties identified on the City's tax maps as Block 4370, Lots 1, 15 and 48 (the "Project Area") which is generally bound by Whitestone Expressway, Linden Place, 31st Road, and Farrington Street within Queen Community District #7. The proposed zoning map amendment would rezone the Project Area from an M1-1 district to R7A. The proposed zoning text amendment seeks to amend Appendix F (Inclusionary Housing Designated Areas) of the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York ("ZR") to establish the Project Area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing ("MIH") area.

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of a 377,870 (4.6 FAR), nine-story and cellar residential building (the "Proposed Development") on Block 4370, Lots 1, 15 and 48 (the "Development Site"). The Proposed Development would contain 468,681 gross square feet ("gsf") of floor area with 415 dwelling units and 200 parking spaces. The Proposed Development would include a Publicly Accessible Area (PAA) in in the rear of the development along Farrington Street, which would be recorded against the property through a project component related to the environment ("PCRE") associated with the Proposed Action's CEQR review.

In connection with the proposed zoning map amendment, the zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution will make the entire Project Area applicable as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Area and would be mapped as Options 1 or 2, pursuant to ZR 23-154. The Applicant intends to comply with MIH through Option 1, so that 25% of residential floor area (comprised of approximately 113 dwelling units) will be set aside as affordable housing for residents with total incomes averaging 60% Area Median Income (AMI).

2. Background

The Project Area was mapped as M1-1 at the inception of the 1961 Zoning Resolution. It has remained as M1-1 since that time. The area immediately to the north of the Whitestone expressway was rezoned in 2009 as part of a zoning map amendment (090319 ZMQ) that rezoned a 94-block area from M3-1 and M1-1 to M1-1 and M2-1, respectively, and created a new special district (Special College Point District). The rezoning sought to provide additional bulk and signage regulations to promote a business 'campus-like' environment in the area. Additionally, several blocks that were originally zoned for industrial uses that contained residential uses were amended to reflect a more residential character. Lastly, mixed-use arterials such as College Point Boulevard were rezoned to reflect and reinforce their roles as 'main streets'.

The area to the east (across Union Street) was also rezoned in 2009 as part of the North Flushing Rezoning (090281 ZMQ), which rezoned a 257-block area from R1-2, R2, R3-2, R4, R4-1, R5, R6 districts, along with C1-2 and C1-3 commercial overlays to lower density and contextual districts, such as R1-2A, R2A, R2, R3X, R3-1, R3-2, R4, R4A, R4-1, R4B, R5B and R5D districts with a C1-3 commercial overlay.

To the south of the Project Area, closer to Downtown Flushing, two private rezoning applications were approved in 2010 and 2017. The first, the 35th Avenue Rezoning (030223 ZMQ), was adopted in July of 2010. This rezoning amended an area from M1-1 to R6/C2-2 for an area to the north side of 35th Avenue between Prince and Farrington Streets. The proposed rezoning was intended to facilitate an 11-story mixed-use building to contain residential units, community facility uses retail. The parcel was subsequently developed with a 16-story mixed use building in 2020.

The second, 135-01 35th Avenue Rezoning (C 170180A ZMQ**)**, was adopted in October of 2017. This rezoning is immediately to the east of the 35th Avenue Rezoning at the northeast corner of 35th Avenue and Farrington Place and amended an M1-1 district to R7A/C2-3 under MIH. The rezoning was sought to facilitate a 9-story residential development with 93 dwelling units, 27 of which would be affordable under MIH. This building has not been constructed as of the time of this application.

There were no other approved land use actions in the last ten years within 600-feet of the proposed Project Area.

3. Description of the Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is predominantly mixed in use and sits at the intersection of the College Point, Flushing, and Whitestone neighborhoods, which are separated by the Whitestone Expressway. The Project Area is located immediately south of the Whitestone Expressway, with the College Point neighborhood located immediately to the north of that expressway and the commercial core of Flushing is located approximately a half-mile to the south at Northern Boulevard. The Whitestone neighborhood is located north and east, which is predominantly residential. As such, the immediate area surrounding the Project Area is composed of a varied mixture of land uses, including residential, commercial, and light manufacturing, reflecting the intersection of these three diverse areas.

The area to the north (and across the Whitestone Expressway) consists of the Special College Point District, which is predominantly commercial/manufacturing in nature as it is zoned M1-1 and M2-1 and in a special district that encourages campus-like businesses. The area is developed as a commercial business park and contains a number of large one and two-story commercial complexes, such as the College Point Multiplex Cinemas, a Home Depot and a large printing press and distribution facility for the New York Times, among other news outlets.

The area to the west and south is predominantly developed with commercial and light industrial/manufacturing uses. The block to the west of the Project Area is developed with a commercial shopping complex (The Whitestone Expressway Plaza) which comprises an open parking area and a ‘strip mall’ style retail complex with a series of eating and drinking establishments, banks, a pharmacy, and food store (Stop & Shop).

Immediately to the south of the Project Area is a six-story commercial office building owned and operated by the City of New York (DCAS/Department of Education) on Lot 50. To the south of this area around 32nd Avenue (Blocks 4409 and 4952) are blocks predominantly developed with smaller residential and mixed-use (residential-commercial) properties ranging in height between two and four-stories. Linden Place is to the east of this area and is a mixed-use arterial thoroughfare with residential and commercial uses. This area contains R5, R5D, R6 and R5/C1-2 districts. As noted above, the area around 35th Avenue and Farrington Street is developed with mid-rise mixed-use developments, with 134-03 35th Avenue rising to 16-stories and 135-01 35th Avenue under development with a 9-story residential building.

Downtown Flushing is approximately a half-mile south of the Project Area. It contains a vibrant high-density mixed-use area that is well served by numerous transit options located between Roosevelt Avenue, Main Street, College Point Boulevard and Northern Boulevard. The commercial core of Flushing is generally zoned C4-3 and permits a range of uses associated with central business districts and has no maximum height limit.

The area immediately to the east and north (to the south of the Whitestone Expressway) is developed with more mid-rise residential uses. To the east of the proposed project on Linden Place is the Linden Towers Co-Op Park, which contains tower-in-the-park style housing rising to six-stories. P.S. 242 Leonard P Stavisky Early Childhood School shares that block and is located on the corner of 31st Road and 137th Street at 29-66 137th Street.

A single park, Cadwallader Colden Playground (1.47 acres) is located approximately 3 blocks east of the Project Area at 31st Road and Union Street. In addition, a small area (0.32 acres) of public open space surrounds the Lewis H Latimer House two blocks to the south of the playground. Surrounding this DPR-managed facility, is a large open space associated with Flushing High School. However, this facility is primarily reserved for students of the school. As such, the surrounding area does not provide substantial public open spaces.

As noted above, the surrounding area contains M1-1, M2-1, R5, R6 and R5/C1-2 districts, as well as the Special College Point District. The following discussion will provide the permissible bulk and use attributes of these zoning districts.

The M1-1 zoning district allows a maximum FAR of 1.0 for light manufacturing, commercial and industrial uses (Use Groups 4-14, 16-17) and allows an FAR of 2.4 for limited community facility uses (Use Group 4). The maximum building height is based on the sky-exposure plane, which begins 30 feet above the street line.

The M1-1 area to the north of the expressway in the Special College Point District. The Special College Point District (CP) was created in 2009 with three goals: (a) to encourage and retain high performance manufacturing establishments in New York City; (b) to maintain the high-quality business campus environment with landscaped yards within the area known as the College Point Corporate Park; and (c) to promote the most desirable use of land and thus conserve and enhance the value of land and buildings, and thereby protect the City's tax revenues. The corporate park environment was to be sustained by requiring front and side yards, restricting signage, and loading locations, and setting higher parking requirements for certain commercial uses. Street tree planting and landscaping for front yards and parking lots are required for Use Group 17 and 18 uses. All uses in the Special District must still adhere to M1 performance standards and provide enclosure or screening to minimize impacts upon neighboring uses. Unlike most manufacturing districts, parks and other recreational uses are allowed as-of-right to support the goals outlined above.

The M2-1 zoning district is designated for medium manufacturing uses and is similar to M1-1 districts but does not permit community facility uses (Use Group 4). M2-1 districts permit a maximum FAR of 2.0 or light manufacturing, commercial and industrial uses (Use Groups 6-14, 16-17) with a maximum 60-foot street wall height and overall maximum height governed by the sky exposure plane.

The R5 district is a low-density general residence district that permits residential buildings up to 1.25 FAR and community facility buildings up to 2.0 FAR. The maximum height of buildings within R5 districts is 40 feet, with a maximum street wall height of 30 feet, as well as a 15-foot setback above the street wall. R5 districts require side yards of at least 8 feet and a 10-foot front yard. Parking is required for 85% of dwelling units. The R5/C1-2 district permits residential

buildings under R5 regulations and commercial uses (Use Groups 5-6) at a maximum FAR of 1.0 on the first floor of the building or with standalone commercial use.

The R6 district permits medium and higher-density residential uses under Height Factor and Quality Housing regulations. For Height Factor buildings, open space is required with a ratio range of 27.5 to 37.4 with a corresponding maximum FAR range from 0.78 to 2.43. The height factor regulations for R6 districts encourage small apartment buildings on small zoning lots, and tall, narrow buildings that are set back from the street on larger lots with the maximum height governed by the sky exposure plane. Under Quality Housing regulations outside the Manhattan Core, a maximum height of 70 feet is permitted with a maximum street wall height of 65 feet and a maximum FAR of 3.0. For Height Factor buildings, 70% of dwelling units require parking, while for Quality Housing buildings, 50% of dwelling units require parking.

The Project Area is located approximately one mile north of the nearest NYCT subway station at Flushing-Main Street, where the 7 Train provides service through Queens to Midtown Manhattan. The MTA's Long Island Railroad also makes stops in Downtown Flushing. Additionally, MTA express buses are within close vicinity. The QM2, QM20 and QM32 all make stops at Linden Place and the Whitestone Expressway Service Road and provide express service to points in Manhattan. The Q25 and Q50 buses stop along Linden Place and along the adjacent Whitestone Expressway service roads, connecting the affected area with rail transit. The Q25 provides service between College Point and Downtown Jamaica. The Q50 provides limited-direct service to Downtown Flushing. Despite this access to transit, the Project Area is located outside the Transit Zone, which extends from Downtown Flushing to 35th Avenue, a few blocks south of the Project Area.

4. Description of the Proposed Project Area

The Project Area and Development Site are the same and are discussed in greater detail below.

5. Description of Proposed Development Site

The Proposed Development Site (the "Development Site") consists of three properties on a single block (Block 4370, Lots 1, 15 & 58) in the College Point/Whitestone area of Queens Community District #7. The Development Site combined resembles and L-shape and contains frontage along four streets: approximately 266 feet along the Whitestone Expressway Service Road; approximately 283 feet along Linden Place; approximately 460 feet along Farrington Street; and approximately 60 feet along 31st Road.

Linden Place and 31st Road are classified as narrow streets with a 60 in mapped width, while the Whitestone Expressway Service Road is classified as a wide street, with at least 250 feet in width. Farrington Street is also classified as a narrow street with 70 feet in width. As noted above, the entire Development Site is within an M1-1 zoning district. In total, the Development Site contains approximately 82,172 square feet of lot area.

Block 4370, Lot 1 (no mapped address) is a narrow corner lot with a depth of 60 feet and a length of approximately 275 feet for a lot area of approximately 16,500 square feet. The lot is currently utilized as an accessory parking area for Lot 15. This parcel contains one curb cut along Farrington Street and one along 31st Road.

Block 4370, Lot 15 (30-05 Farrington Street) is an irregular-shaped corner lot with approximately 58,000 square feet of lot area and frontage along three streets: Farrington Street, Linden Place, and the Whitestone Expressway Service Road. The parcel is developed with a 37,520 square foot commercial building that rises to a single story (0.65 FAR). The building currently contains

Whitestone Lanes, a bowling alley. The parcel contains two curb cuts, one along the Whitestone Expressway Service Road and one along Linden Place

Block 4370, Lot 48 (no mapped address) is a narrow interior lot with 35 feet of frontage along Linden Place and a length of approximately 190 feet for a lot area of approximately 6,650 square feet. The lot is currently utilized as an accessory parking area for Lot 15. This parcel contains one curb cut along Linden Place.

The Proposed Development Site is wholly located within the NYC Coastal Zone Boundary and is located in an AE area (1% annual flood hazard) and 0.2 Percent Annual Flood Hazard by FEMA's Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (PFIRM). This zone requires in this particular area that habitable spaces be located above 13' in elevation.

6. Description of Proposed Development

The Proposed Development would consist of a residential development that would rise to 9-stories and contain 377,870 square feet (4.6 FAR). This would include 415 dwelling units, 113 of which would be affordable pursuant to MIH (25% - Option 1). The building would rise to a maximum height of 95 feet and set back at the 7th floor, following varied setbacks along Linden Place, the Whitestone Expressway and Farrington Street frontages. Since Linden Place is a narrow street (60 feet) a minimum setback of 15 feet is provided, while minimum setbacks of 10 feet and greater are provided along the Whitestone Expressway and Farrington Street frontages (wide streets). Due to the irregular shape of the lot, setbacks as large as 26 feet are provided along the Whitestone Expressway. The interior court of the building would feature private open space with a garden area including seating and plantings, in approximately 11,470 square feet of space. The 9th floor would also contain a mezzanine area with 10,348 square feet of zoning floor area. Each facade with street frontage would provide three dormers measuring between 21 and 26 feet in width.

The Proposed Development's parking would be provided at the cellar level via two relocated 22' curb cuts, one along Linden Place and the other along Farrington Street. The remaining existing curb cuts present on the Development Site would be removed. Approximately 200 parking spaces would be provided to satisfy a requirement of the 152 spaces and 20 reservoir spaces would be provided to satisfy a requirement of 10%. Cars would be able to enter both entrances but would be required to exit from Farrington Street, drawing traffic away from Linden Place. In terms of pedestrian access, the Proposed Development's main entrance area would be located along Farrington Street, approximately 43 feet away from the intersection of the Whitestone Expressway to move pedestrian traffic away from the service road. The curb cut areas would be treated with concrete hatching and speed bumps, to reduce pedestrian conflicts with automobiles.

As the Development Site is in Flood Zone AE (13 feet), Appendix G of the NYC Building Code applies. However, the first habitable floor in the Proposed Development, the first floor, is located above 16 feet in elevation, which is above the 13-foot requirement. As such, only the cellar level would need flood proofing and that area would be wet floodproofed per Appendix G.

The frontage of the Development Site would include 27 new street trees and a new Publicly Accessible Area (PAA) would be provided on the tail end of the property, roughly aligning with the dimensions of Lot 1. This PAA area would encompass approximately 14,400 square feet with approximately 240 feet along Farrington Street and approximately 59 feet along 31st Place. The PAA would contain active and passive open areas, include a range of tree plantings and seating. Passive areas would consist of seating and a community garden, while active areas would include fitness equipment and ping pong tables. In total, 119 linear feet of seating would be provided with 48 movable chairs and 16 movable tables. The PAA would also include signage indicating open hours, lighting, and trash receptables. As the adjacent DOE facility rests at a higher elevation than

the PAA space, screening will be employed along the shared lot line between Lots 1 and 50. The PAA would be publicly accessible from Farrington Street and 31st Street. The PAA will be memorialized in a Restrictive Declaration as a project component related to the environment ("PCRE").

7. Actions Necessary to Facilitate the Project

The Proposed Actions consist of a zoning map amendment and zoning text amendment that are primarily intended to facilitate the Proposed Development. The proposed zoning map amendment would include the entire subject block (Block 4370) with the exception of Lot 50, that is a city-owned parcel with a commercial office facility for the Department of Education that. As such, this parcel was not included in the Project Area and is proposed to remain zoned M1-1.

The zoning map amendment would create a new R7A district mapped between the Whitestone Expressway Service Road, Farrington Street, and 31st Road, except for an area measuring 240 feet along Linden Place and 190 feet along 31st Road. This area new R7A district would encompass Block 4370, Lots 1, 15 and 48 (the Project Area).

The proposed zoning text amendment pursuant to Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution would make the Project Area applicable as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area and would be mapped as Options 1 or 2, pursuant to §123-154(d). All residential developments, enlargements, and conversions within this MIH area that meet the criteria set forth in the MIH program must comply with the requirements of one of the options described below:

- Option 1: 25% of residential floor area must be for affordable housing units for residents with incomes averaging 60% AMI, with a minimum of 10% of housing to be affordable at 40% AMI.
- Option 2: 30% of residential floor area must be for affordable housing units for residents with incomes averaging 80% AMI.

At this time, the Applicant would comply with MIH through Option 1 and would require 113 affordable housing units or approximately 25% of the proposed residential floor area permanently affordable to incomes averaging 60% AMI.

The proposed zoning map amendment would rezone the majority of the subject block from M1-1 to R7A. The proposed new R7A district would facilitate a higher but appropriate density and permit residential use in a predominantly mixed-use area. The proposed zoning map amendment is necessary because the Project Area is currently developed with an underutilized commercial building, with surface parking, that needs substantial upgrades and no longer reflects the highest and best use for this location. Moreover, the underlying M1-1 district no longer permits a more viable use for this location, which is located at the intersection of three neighborhoods, adjacent increasing mixed-use and residential developments, near Downtown Flushing and mass transit.

The proposed R7A district would facilitate much needed dwelling units, a portion of which would be affordable, a recognized local and citywide need. In addition to the above, the Proposed Development would provide new public open space in the form of a 14,400 square-foot Publicly Accessible Area (PAA), in an area with a demonstrated lack of open space as noted above, there are only two small public open spaces in the surrounding area, and the Proposed Actions would facilitate a new 14,400 square-foot PAA (0.33 acres) with a passive and active areas for residents of the surrounding area. In addition, the Proposed Development would provide a private open space for new residents in the form of a garden area, containing planting and seating area in approximately 11,470 square feet. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would facilitate new public and private open spaces, a demonstrated need in this area.

The change from M1-1 to R7A will serve to increase the permitted bulk in that area from 1.0 to 4.0 FAR (before an FAR bonus for MIH up to 4.6 FAR, as set forth below), and will change the set of permitted uses. The proposed zoning map amendment would not allow the establishment of uses in Use Groups 6-14, 16 &17 (office, retail, service/repair, custom manufacturing, open uses, boating-related uses, semi-industrial and industrial uses), which are currently permitted in the M1-1 district; and allow for Use Groups 1–4 (residential and community facility uses). The increase in permitted bulk is appropriate given mid-rise residential developments in close proximity to the east and south of the Project Area. Moreover, the Project Area is located a half-mile to the north of Downtown Flushing and access to mass transit and other services.

The R7A residential district allow for buildings up to 4.0 FAR (4.6 FAR with MIH) and generally yields 7- to 9-story buildings. Maximum lot coverage is 65% for interior and through lots and 100% on corner lots. Above a base height of 40 to 75 feet, the building must set back to a depth of 10 feet on a wide street and 15 feet on a narrow street, before rising to a maximum of 95 feet or 9-stories (with MIH). Parking is required for 50% of all dwelling units and affordable units are reduced outside the transit zone.

8. Conclusion

The Proposed Actions would create a new R7A district and Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area that would facilitate the highest and best use of the Project Area with a new residential building, with required affordable units, and Publicly Accessible Area (PAA) for surrounding residents. The Proposed Actions would newly permit residential use in an appropriate location, adjacent existing and new mid-rise residential and mixed-use developments, in close proximity to Downtown Flushing and mass transit. In addition to facilitating the productive use of the Project Area with a new mid-rise residential building, new public and private open spaces would be provided, a demonstrated need for the immediate area, and would overall improve the pedestrian condition of the subject block with reduced curb cuts, new pedestrian walkways and required street trees. Last, the Proposed Development would be designed to respond to traffic conditions resulting from proximity to the Whitestone Expressway entrance and promote pedestrian and automotive traffic along Farrington Street. Therefore, the Proposed Actions and resulting development would be appropriate for this area and result in new residential capacity for a range of incomes, new public open space, and an improved pedestrian environment for a growing community adjacent Downtown Flushing.