CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

December 16, 2024 / Calendar No. 18 C 240369 ZMM

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the New York City Economic Development Corporation pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section Nos. 8d and 12c, changing from an R8 District to a C6-4 District property bounded by First Avenue, a line 255 feet northerly of East 25th Street, Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, and East 25th Street, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated June 24, 2024, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-1006.

This application for a zoning map amendment was filed by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) on May 28, 2024. This application, in conjunction with related applications, would facilitate the development of a new life sciences and education campus at 425 East 25th Street in the Kips Bay neighborhood of Manhattan Community District 6.

RELATED ACTIONS

In addition to the zoning map amendment (C 240369 ZMM) that is the subject of this report, the proposed development also requires action by the City Planning Commission (CPC) on the following applications, which are being considered concurrently with this application:

N 240371 ZRM	Zoning text amendment to map a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area.
C 240370 ZSM	Zoning special permit pursuant to Section 74-171 of the Zoning Resolution to permit a laboratory listed under Use Group VII, not otherwise allowed by the underlying use regulations.

C 240390 ZSM	Zoning **s**pecial permit pursuant to Section 74-901 of the Zoning Resolution to modify the height and setback requirements of Section 33-442 (Alternate Front Setbacks In Other Commercial Districts).
C 240372 PPM	Disposition of City-owned property.
C 240391 PQM	Acquisition of real property by the City.
C 240373 PCM	Site selection and acquisition for use as a forensic pathology center and medical examiner facility.
C 240309 MMM	City Map change for the elimination of a pedestrian overpass and the adjustments of grades, block dimensions, and angles necessitated thereby.

BACKGROUND

NYCEDC, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) are seeking a number of land use actions, including a zoning text amendment, two zoning special permits, a disposition of City-owned property, an acquisition and site selection of real property by the City, an acquisition of real property by the City, and a City Map change to facilitate the development of a full-block, three-building life sciences campus, including commercial life sciences space, a NYC Health and Hospitals ambulatory care and training center, an OCME forensic pathology center, City University of New York (CUNY) space, and a public high school, at 425 East 25th Street (Block 962, part of Lot 100) in the Kips Bay neighborhood of Manhattan Community District 6.

After this application was certified, the City Council adopted the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity zoning text amendment, which went into effect on December 5, 2024.

The development site (Block 962, part of Lot 100) is a full block bounded by Franklin D.

Roosevelt (FDR) Drive to the east, East 25th Street to the south, First Avenue to the west, and includes former East 26th Street to the north.

The area surrounding the development site is characterized primarily by institutional uses, with some commercial, residential, and park uses. Directly north of the development site is Bellevue Hospital and the Hirsch Center for Forensic Sciences. West and southwest of the development site is the New York University (NYU) College of Nursing, Dentistry, and Engineering. Directly south of the site is the Margaret Cochran Corban VA Hospital Campus. Northwest of the site is the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Public Health Laboratory, which is slated to be relocated and replaced by a new commercial life sciences development known as Innovation East. East of the development site is the Waterside Plaza commercial and residential complex and the United Nations International School.

Most of the surrounding area, including the development site, is zoned R8. R8 zoning districts are residential districts that allow for a maximum community facility floor area ratio (FAR) of 6.5, and a maximum residential FAR of 7.20 or 8.64 for a Universal Affordability Preference (UAP) development. The area along the waterfront, east of FDR Drive, and north of East 25th Street, is zoned C2-7. C2-7 districts allow for 2.0 FAR for commercial uses, 7.52 FAR for residential uses, 9.02 FAR for residential uses with UAP, and 10.0 FAR for community facility uses. Further south along the waterfront is an M1-1 zoning district. M1-1 zoning districts are light manufacturing districts that allow light industrial uses and most commercial uses but do not allow residential uses. They allow for 1.0 FAR for manufacturing uses and 2.4 FAR for community facility uses. A small area in the southwest corner of the surrounding area is zoned C1-9A. C1-9A zoning districts allow 2.0 FAR for commercial uses, 10.0 FAR for community facility uses, 10.0 FAR for residential uses, and 12.0 FAR for residential uses with UAP.

Open spaces in the surrounding area include the Asser Levy Playground south of the development site across East 25th Street and Bellevue South Park one block northeast of the site. The public baths at Asser Levy Recreation Center located within the Asser Levy Playground are a landmark designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The 28th Street station of the 6 subway line is located four blocks west and two blocks north of the development site and provides access to Lower and Upper Manhattan, as well as the Bronx. The M15 and M15 SBS buses run northbound along First Avenue and southbound along Second Avenue. The M9 bus runs northbound along First Avenue, west along East 29th Street, and then south along Second Avenue. The M34A SBS bus runs south along Second Avenue, east along East 23rd Street, and north along Waterside Plaza.

The full block development site consists of approximately 207,000 square feet of lot area, is zoned R8, lies within the Coastal Zone, and is currently occupied by the CUNY Hunter College Brookdale Campus. The development site is composed of three interconnected main buildings which rise to 14 stories, surround a courtyard currently used for parking, and contain a total of approximately 629,505 square feet of gross floor area. There is a pedestrian bridge over the FDR Drive from the north sidewalk of East 25th Street whose westernmost pier is located on the southeast corner of the development site and whose easternmost pier is located on the southwest corner of the Waterside Plaza complex (Block 991, Lot 60). The bridge is not ADA compliant and the width of its pedestrian path ranges from six to eight feet. The underside vertical clearance of the bridge is approximately thirteen to sixteen feet in height, and a portion of the bridge does not comply with City and State Department of Transportation standards for underside bridge clearance heights.

Proposed Project

The applicants seek to replace the existing Brookdale Campus with Science Park and Research Center (SPARC) Kips Bay, a new approximately 1,691,000 zoning square foot life sciences and education campus. The proposed development would contain three buildings: building A, building B1, and building B2. It would also include a 0.6-acre public open space with a retail kiosk, a through-block driveway, and a new ADA-accessible pedestrian bridge over FDR Drive.

Building A would be located on the easternmost portion of the block facing FDR Drive and contain an educational campus. It would include space for Hunter College School of Nursing and

departments of Physical Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology, and Medical Laboratory Sciences; Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) Health Sciences, Health Studies, and Nursing programs; the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy; and a New York City public high school focused on health care and sciences education. Building A would be comprised of approximately 559,000 square feet of floor area, including 557,035 square feet of community facility floor area and 2,300 square feet of commercial floor area for retail use. The proposed zoning envelope for building A would have a maximum height of 370 feet.

Building B1 would be located on the westernmost portion of the block along First Avenue and include space for commercial life sciences laboratory and a new NYC Health and Hospitals (H+H) outpatient care and training center. This H+H facility would allow for primary care, wellness programs, ambulatory care, and simulation training facilities. The building would contain approximately 668,000 square feet, including 174,550 square feet of community facility floor area for H+H and 493,120 square feet of commercial floor area for office, laboratory and retail use. The proposed zoning envelope for building B1 would have a base height of 100 feet with a 6.4-foot setback on First Avenue before rising to a maximum height of 500 feet.

Building B2 would be located on the northern side of the midblock between buildings B2 and A. It would include space for commercial life sciences laboratories and space for OCME's Forensic Pathology Center. This new OCME facility would replace the existing Forensic Pathology Center located several blocks north at 520 First Avenue, which contains outdated HVAC, electrical, and fire suppression systems. The OCME facility would be connected to the existing OCME Hirsh building by a sky bridge over former East 26th Street. The upper floors of building B2 would also be connected to the upper floors of building B1 via two sky bridges located within the development site. Building B2 would contain approximately 463,000 square feet, including 112,020 square feet of community facility floor area for the OCME facility, 351,440 square feet of commercial floor area for office, laboratory, and retail use. The proposed zoning envelope for building B2 would have a maximum height of 420 feet.

The applicants are proposing an approximately 0.6-acre, 24/7, year-round, publicly accessible open space on the midblock facing East 25th Street with the three buildings wrapping around it. Within the open space, the applicants have proposed a 1,000-square-foot retail kiosk. The open space would also connect to the proposed ADA-accessible pedestrian bridge over FDR Drive. The design of the open space is yet to be finalized; however, the Department of City Planning has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NYCEDC codifying a separate design review process that includes consultation with department staff and final sign-off by the Chairperson of the CPC

The applicants are proposing a number of pedestrian and vehicular circulation improvements, including a new access drive between buildings B1 and B2 to connect East 25th Street and former East 26th Street, widening sidewalks around the development site, introducing bi-directional traffic on East 26th Street within the development site, and improvements to the crosswalk between the site and Asser Levy Playground across East 25th Street. The new through-block access drive would be bidirectional and accommodate drop-offs for ambulatory and passenger vehicles for the H+H and OCME facilities. Below-grade parking garages for OCME and CUNY vehicles would be provided at the basement level, accessible via ramps along former East 26th Street. Together, both garages would include a combined 225 parking spaces; however, the exact size and number of spaces per garage is not yet defined. Loading berths for commercial life sciences, H+H, OCME, CUNY, and NYCPS use would be located off-street within the buildings at the basement level with access to the ground floor via either ramps or truck elevators. The applicant has proposed three loading areas: one shared loading area for commercial life sciences, H+H and OCME, one loading area for CUNY, and one for NYCPS. The applicants are also proposing replacing the existing pedestrian bridge over FDR Drive with a new ADA-accessible bridge that would meet City and State standards for under bridge clearance heights.

To improve flood resiliency, the proposed project would include the construction of flood protection along East 25th Street, tying into the East Midtown Coastal Resiliency flood protection project.

Proposed Actions

To facilitate the proposed project, the applicants request the following actions:

Zoning Map Amendment (C 240369 ZMM)

NYCEDC seeks to rezone the area bounded by First Avenue to the west, a line 255 feet northerly of East 25th Street along former East 26th Street to the north, FDR Drive to the east, and East 25th Street to the south, from an existing R8 zoning district to a C6-4 zoning district. C6-4 districts are commercial zoning districts that allow for a maximum of 10.0 FAR for commercial uses, community facility uses, and residential uses and 12.0 FAR for residential uses with UAP.

Zoning Text Amendment (N 240371 ZRM)

NYCEDC seeks a modification to Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution to establish a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area conterminous with the rezoning area. The area would be mapped with MIH Options 1 and 2. Pursuant to MIH Option 1, any future development is required to provide 25 percent of the residential floor area as permanently income-restricted housing at 60 percent AMI or lower. Pursuant to MIH Option 2, any future development is required to provide 30 percent of the residential floor area as permanently income-restricted housing at 80 percent AMI or lower.

Special Permit Pursuant to ZR Section 74-171 (C 240370 ZSM)

NYCEDC seeks a special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-171 to allow for Use Group VII Laboratory Use not otherwise allowed by the underlying regulations. The underlying use regulations for C6-4 districts allow Use Group VII Laboratory Use only in compliance with Section 427 of the New York City Building Code, which provides detailed standards for operating a laboratory as a community facility or commercial use. The special permit is sought to allow maximum flexibility for a variety of life science lab providers including production-related lab uses.

Special Permit Pursuant to ZR Section 74-901 (C 240390 ZSM)

NYCEDC seeks a special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-901 to modify ZR Section 33-442,

which specifies alternate required front setback regulations that apply to C6-4 districts. In C6-4 districts, ZR Section 33-442 requires an optional front open area of fifteen feet on narrow streets and ten feet on wide streets. It also requires an alternate sky-exposure plane of 3.7 on narrow streets or 7.6 on wide streets beginning at 85 feet above the street line.

The applicant seeks bulk waivers for building B1 along First Avenue and East 25th Street to increase the tower area beyond the initial setback distance and the sky exposure plane. Building B1 would provide a 3.4-foot optional front open area along First Avenue where ten feet is required and a three-foot optional front open area along East 25th Street where fifteen feet is required. Building B1 would encroach on the sky exposure plane by up to 44.6 feet along its First Avenue frontage and by up to 109.2 feet along its East 25th Street frontage. The applicant seeks these waivers to facilitate large floor plates suitable for modern, efficient laboratory use.

Disposition of Non-Residential City-Owned Property (C 240372 PPM)

NYCEDC and DCAS jointly seek disposition approval of real property owned by the City. The western portion of the development site, which include buildings B1 and B2, as well as the new access drive, are proposed to be disposed to a private developer, or developers, to be selected through a public Request for Proposal (RFP) for development and operation. Through this disposition action, the open space may be disposed to the selected developer for maintenance or otherwise for access while remaining under DCAS jurisdiction. The portion of building A dedicated to CUNY operations is proposed to be disposed to CUNY.

Site Selection and Acquisition of Real Property Interest (C 240373 PCM)

NYCEDC, DCAS, and OCME jointly seek site selection and acquisition of space to facilitate a new Forensic Pathology Center for OCME within building B2. After the construction of the building by the selected developer, the portion of the building containing the OCME Forensic Pathology Center would be reacquired by the City for OCME operations.

Acquisition of Real Property Interest (C 240391 PQM)

NYCEDC and DCAS jointly seek an acquisition action to facilitate a new outpatient care and

training center for H+H in building B1. After the construction of building B1 by the selected developer, the portion of the building containing the H+H facility may be reacquired by the City and transferred to H+H pursuant to Section 7387 of the Unconsolidated Laws of the State of New York for H+H operations.

City Map Change (C 240309 MMM)

NYCEDC seeks an amendment to the City Map involving the elimination of the pedestrian bridge over FDR Drive at East 25th Street. This action would demap the existing elevations and street lines of the pedestrian bridge and map street lines along the sidewalks. The proposed City Map change would allow for the construction of a new ADA-accessible bridge with higher under bridge clearance.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 240369 ZMM), in conjunction with related applications for a zoning text amendment (N 240371 ZRM), two zoning special permits (C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM), a disposition of City-owned property (C 240372 PPM), a combination acquisition and site selection by the City (C 240373 PCM), an acquisition of property by the City (C 240391 PQM), and a City Map change (C 240309 MMM) 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 23DME013M, and the lead is the New York City Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination (MOEC).

It was determined that this application, in conjunction with the applications for the related actions, may have a significant effect on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be required. A Positive Declaration was issued on January 30, 2024, and distributed, published, and filed. Together with the Positive Declaration, a Draft Scope of Work for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was issued on January 30, 2024. A revised Draft Scope of Work was issued on February 13, 2024. A public scoping meeting was held on

March 18, 2024, and the Final Scope of Work was issued on June 21, 2024.

A DEIS was prepared and a Notice of Completion for the DEIS was issued on June 21, 2024. Pursuant to the SEQRA regulations and the CEQR procedures, a joint public hearing was held on the DEIS on November 6, 2024, in conjunction with the public hearing on the ULURP items (C 240369 ZMM, C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM, C 240372 PPM, C 240373 PCM, C 240391 PQM).

A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) reflecting the comments made during the public review process was completed, and a Notice of Completion of the FEIS was issued on December 5, 2024. The proposed project as analyzed in the FEIS identified significant adverse impacts with respect to historic and cultural resources, transportation, and construction (traffic, pedestrians). Potential significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials and noise would be avoided through the placement of (E) designation (E-776) as described in the FEIS. The proposed mitigation measures are summarized in the FEIS.

WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

This application (C 240369 ZMM), in conjunction with related applications for a zoning text amendment (N 240371 ZRM), two zoning special permits (C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM), a disposition of City-owned property (C 240372 PPM), a combination acquisition and site selection by the City (C 240373 PCM), an acquisition of property by the City (C 240391 PQM), and a City Map change (C 240309 MMM), 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 23-178.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 240369 ZMM), in conjunction with related applications for two zoning

special permits (C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM), a disposition of City-owned property (C 240372 PPM), a combination acquisition and site selection by the City (C 240373 PCM), an acquisition of property by the City (C 240391 PQM), and a City Map change (C 240309 MMM), was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on June 24, 2024, and duly referred to Manhattan Community Board 6 and the Manhattan Borough President in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b), along with the related text amendment (N 240371 ZRM), which was referred in accordance with the procedures for non-ULURP matters.

Community Board Public Hearing

Manhattan Community Board 6 held a public hearing on this application (C 240369 ZMM), in conjunction with related applications for a zoning text amendment (N 240371 ZRM), two zoning special permits (C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM), a disposition of City-owned property (C 240372 PPM), a combination acquisition and site selection by the City (C 240373 PCM), an acquisition of property by the City (C 240391 PQM), and a City Map change (C 240309 MMM), on September 11, 2024, and on that date, by a vote of 41 in favor, one opposed, and zero abstaining, the community board adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application with the following conditions.

"1. NYCEDC commits to coordinating planning efforts to identify sites and opportunities to increase the stock of affordable housing in CB6 in a clear and publicly available timeline;
2. NYCEDC commits to protecting the viability of the Bellevue Sobriety Garden and will not build anything that puts parks flora at risk by diminishing exposure to sunlight;
3. Securing commitments from the MTA to increase 1st and 2nd Avenue bus service along with 23rd and 34th Street crosstown bus service, in addition to creating a new bus line dedicated to connecting the adjacent Innovation East and Science Park and Research Center (SPARC) with the 4/5/6 subway stops and future 2nd Avenue Subway stops;
4. Maximizing ground floor active retail with extended hours of operations, with at least one bar, cafe, or restaurant tenant that will be open throughout the evening;
5. Providing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to accommodate community board meetings and other public uses within the CUNY lecture spaces or classrooms of the

building;

6. NYCEDC commits to a design that reflects the uniqueness and character of the neighborhood, with human-scale facade design that accounts for sun-reflection and heat impacts on adjacent streets and the park, to ensure comfortable and inviting surroundings;
7. Committing to a design and operations approach that meets and exceeds the highest energy-efficiency and environmental resilience standards."

Borough President Recommendation

On October 30, 2024, the Manhattan Borough President issued a recommendation to approve this application (C 240369 ZMM), in conjunction with related applications for a zoning text amendment (N 240371 ZRM), two zoning special permits (C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM), a disposition of City-owned property (C 240372 PPM), a combination acquisition and site selection by the City (C 240373 PCM), an acquisition of property by the City (C 240391 PQM), and a City Map change (C 240309 MMM), with the following conditions:

"1. EDC and city agency partners commit to prioritizing housing for the future of other city-owned or controlled sites or exploring opportunities to preserve existing affordable housing in Manhattan Community Board 6.
2. Provide only as many parking spaces as needed for OCME and CUNY, fewer than the 225 initially contemplated.
3. Continue to work with partners to maximize the success of the life sciences portion of the campus, including considering a broader range of uses to maximize the leasing potential of the space.
4. Ensure that workforce development opportunities evolve throughout the lifespan of the campus, as tenancies, programming, and technology change over time, with an emphasis on creating programs and partnerships between agencies that lead to long-term career pathways.
5. Explore including an early education facility on site, provided that it can coexist with other uses.
6. EDC work with H+H to consider options for opening Bellevue Gardens to the public to fit into the area's network of green spaces, subject to the discretion of the hospital

regarding times that do not interfere with hospital operations."

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On October 16, 2024 (Calendar No. 11), the City Planning Commission scheduled November 6, 2024, for a public hearing on this application (C 240369 ZMM), in conjunction with related applications for a zoning text amendment (N 240371 ZRM), two zoning special permits (C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM), a disposition of City-owned property (C 240372 PPM), a combination acquisition and site selection by the City (C 240373 PCM), an acquisition of property by the City (C 240391 PQM), and a City Map change (C 240309 MMM). The hearing was duly held on November 6, 2024 (Calendar No. 18). Twelve speakers testified in favor of the application and one in opposition.

The applicant team, consisting of four applicant representatives, testified in favor of the application, providing an overview of the proposed project. The team emphasized that the proposed project would be an education, workforce, and industry hub creating connections between education and jobs. They also noted that the proposed project would greatly improve the public realm to serve the surrounding community better. They explained that the proposed development was developed in coordination with community engagement, including a community task force.

Eight additional speakers spoke in favor of the project. These included non-profit members of the community task force, a medical researcher who is an alum of EDC's LifeSci NYC program, and representatives from the project's City agency stakeholders, including OCME, CUNY, New York City Public School (NYCPS), and H+H Bellevue. They emphasized the importance of public realm improvements, community involvement, education and workforce opportunities, and new space for critical facilities such as the OCME Forensic Pathology Center, H+H ambulatory care, and educational spaces.

A representative from a life sciences developer spoke against the project, expressing concern about the ZR 74-171 special permit. They questioned the need for this special permit which

would allow a wide range of laboratory uses, including manufacturing laboratories. They expressed that the leasing market for laboratories would not have enough demand for the amount of laboratory space proposed in the project and the special permit would prevent some of that space from being used for housing.

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

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that this application (C 240369 ZMM), in conjunction with related applications for a zoning text amendment (N 240371 ZRM), two zoning special permits (C 240370 ZSM, C 240390 ZSM), a disposition of City-owned property (C 240372 PPM), a combination acquisition and site selection by the City (C 240373 PCM), an acquisition of property by the City (C 240391 PQM), and a City Map change (C 240309 MMM) is appropriate.

SPARC Kips Bay will replace the aging Hunter College Brookdale Campus with approximately 1,691,000 square feet of state-of-the-art facilities for commercial life science tenants, H+H, OCME, CUNY, and NYCPS. The proposed development will contain three buildings: a commercial life sciences tower with space for H+H's outpatient care and training center rising to a maximum height of 500 feet, another commercial life sciences tower containing the OCME's Forensic Pathology center rising to a maximum height of 420 feet, and an educational building housing CUNY and a public high school rising to a maximum height of 370 feet. The campus will also include a 0.6-acre public open space with a retail kiosk, a through-block driveway, and a new ADA-accessible pedestrian bridge over FDR Drive. In addition, SPARC Kips Bay will provide much-needed public realm improvements, including widened sidewalks, improved vehicular circulation, and flood resiliency infrastructure.

SPARC Kips Bay is appropriate for the surrounding context in Kips Bay. The concentration of life sciences, healthcare, and academic uses makes this section of First Avenue and its surrounding area a notable life sciences corridor for the City. The proposed mixture of uses will provide opportunities for learning and collaboration amongst life science researchers, health

practitioners, and students, bolstering the existing life science ecosystem in the area, creating an education and jobs pipeline, and helping realize the City's goal of expanding the life sciences industry. The proposed height and bulk distribution are appropriate for the location fronting on two wide streets in proximity to a number of transit options. In addition, the sheer rising towers are necessary to provide the large, even floorplates needed by laboratory tenants and to allow for the provision of public open space. This open space will be open to the public 24/7, allow for additional light and air for the campus and the surrounding area, and provide additional green space in an area with limited access to parks and open space. The open space will serve to activate the campus, creating a gathering space for the campus's users and the general public. In addition, the proposed open space, along with the proposed public realm improvements, will connect a larger pedestrian circulation and open space network including the Asser Levy Playground to the south, the Bellevue Sobriety Garden to the north, and the redesigned pedestrian bridge over the FDR. The design of the open space is yet to be finalized; however, the Department of City Planning has entered into an MOU with NYCEDC codifying a separate design review process that includes consultation with department staff and final sign-off by the Chairperson of the CPC.

Zoning Map Amendment (C 240369 ZMM)

The Commission believes the proposed zoning map amendment is appropriate. The proposed action will rezone the block from an R8 zoning district to a C6-4 zoning district.

The proposed C6-4 district, in conjunction with the special permits, will permit the mixture of uses and the distribution of bulk of the proposed development. Under the existing R8 zoning, only residential and community facility uses are allowed. The proposed C6-4 zoning district will allow for commercial uses, including laboratories and retail, which complement existing uses in the surrounding area. The proposed C6-4 district is appropriate to facilitate the continued growth of the life sciences sector in this area, allowing laboratories, offices, and retail along with additional density. The density and bulk of the C6-4 district is appropriate for this site given its frontages on two wide streets, First Avenue and FDR Drive, and its proximity to several public transit options and similar R10 equivalent zoning districts in the vicinity.

Zoning Text Amendment (N 240371 ZRM)

The Commission believes that the proposed zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution to establish an MIH area is appropriate. While the proposed development will not include residential use, it is the City's policy to map MIH areas in conjunction with any zoning text amendment that creates a substantial increase in the permitted residential floor area on a site otherwise appropriate for housing.

Special Permit Pursuant to ZR Section 74-171 (C 240370 ZSM)

The Commission believes that the proposed zoning special permit pursuant to Zoning Resolution Section 74-171 to allow for Use Group VII laboratories that do not comply with the underlying use regulations is appropriate. Life sciences is a rapidly evolving field, and this special permit will enable SPARC to respond as the science does, facilitating research and development into future vaccines, medical devices, and therapeutics without concern that zoning may become an arbitrary barrier to future innovations. The proposed project meets the conditions of the special permit which specify that the facility will conform to the standard applicable to M1 districts and occupy a zoning lot containing no residential use.

The special permit is sought in an appropriate location within the growing life science cluster in Kips Bay, which includes a myriad of existing life sciences, healthcare, and academic uses. The proposed project will contain a harmonious collection of life sciences, healthcare, and academic uses that complement one another and support the existing character and future development of the area. The proposed project will limit impacts on vehicular traffic by including a through-block drive for ambulatory vehicles and passenger drop-offs and pick-ups, including the provision of dignified arrival for H+H patients and those visiting the OCME facility. Additionally, all loading activities will be located within the development site off-street. Vehicular circulation would be improved by introducing bi-directional traffic on former East 26th Street. The 225 below-grade parking spaces will not be open to the public and will limited to OCME and CUNY vehicles. The garage entrance and exit will be located on former East 26th Street. The drawings for this application note that laboratory tenants will utilize fully enclosed

storage space for all raw materials, finished products, by-products, and waste materials. Thus, the proposed project meets the findings of the special permit which relate to avoiding adverse impacts on the essential character and future use and development of the surrounding area, minimizing vehicular traffic, and providing fully enclosed storage space for laboratory materials, products, and waste. The findings related to signage are not applicable because no signage modifications are requested.

Special Permit Pursuant to ZR Section 74-901 (C 240390 ZSM)

The Commission believes that the proposed zoning special permit pursuant to Zoning Resolution Section 74-901 to allow for bulk modifications to the sky exposure plane and optional front area in conjunction with a Use Group VII laboratory is appropriate. The proposed waivers are limited to the First Avenue and East 25th Street frontages of building B1. This building will encroach on the sky exposure plane by up to 44.6 feet along its First Avenue frontage and by up to 109.2 feet along its East 25th Street frontage. It will provide a 3.4-foot optional front open area along First Avenue where ten feet is required and a three-foot optional front open area along East 25th Street where fifteen feet is required. These waivers are necessary to create the large, even floor plates required by life science buildings to meet the functional requirements of modern laboratory work and provide the flexibility to hold a variety of different life science tenants.

The proposed project will push the highest density within the campus to the avenue where it is more appropriate, dropping in scale from west to east towards the river. In addition to optimizing laboratory floorplates, the proposed bulk waivers allow for higher density in building B1 while keeping the building height appropriate for the surrounding area. A building with the same floor area as B1 that complied with the required sky exposure plane instead of rising sheer would be much taller, with significantly less efficient floorplates that would not adequately accommodate life science uses. The concentration of bulk along First Avenue will allow for a publicly accessible open space along the East 25th Street midblock and appropriate spacing between the three towers. This will increase access to light and air in SPARC's classrooms, offices, and other spaces, while also providing light and air to the surrounding blocks. Thus, the proposed project meets the findings of the special permit which relate to avoiding adverse impacts on the essential

character and future use and development of the surrounding area and avoiding the obstruction of access to light and air to adjoining properties and streets.

Disposition of City-Owned Property (C 240372 PPM)

The Commission believes that this application for the disposition of city-owned property is appropriate. Disposition approval for the western portion of the block will allow the City to identify a private developer to redevelop that portion into two commercial life sciences towers with space allocated to H+H and OCME facilities. Disposition of a portion of the eastern portion of the block to CUNY will provide space for Hunter College School of Nursing and departments of Physical Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology, and Medical Laboratory Sciences; Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) Health Sciences, Health Studies, and Nursing programs; and the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy. While the open space will remain under DCAS jurisdiction, disposition approval of the open space will facilitate proper maintenance of the public space by the private developer of the western portion and allow for any access easements as needed.

Site Selection and Acquisition of Real Property Interest (C 240373 PCM)

The Commission believes the proposed site selection and acquisition of property is appropriate. This action will facilitate the location of a new Forensic Pathology Center for OCME within building B2. The existing Forensic Pathology Center at 520 First Avenue is an outdated facility that is not able to meet OCME's needs. Many of the systems within the existing building are beyond their useful life, including HVAC, electrical, and fire suppression systems. Relocation is essential for the functionality and safety of this facility. The development site is an appropriate location for the new Forensic Pathology Center due to its proximity to existing OCME facilities in the Hirsh Building. Building B2's location immediately across former East 26th Street from the Hirsh Building allows for a sky bridge to connect the two buildings and seamlessly integrate OCME's operations.

Acquisition of Real Property Interest (C 240391 PQM)

The Commission believes the proposed acquisition of property is appropriate. This action will

facilitate the operation of a new H+H outpatient care and training center in building B1. The Commission believes that the site is appropriate for the proposed use which is compatible with the abundance of healthcare uses in the surrounding area.

City Map Change (C 240309 MMM)

The Commission believes that the proposed amendment to the City Map is appropriate. This action will facilitate the deconstruction and replacement of the existing pedestrian bridge over FDR Drive at East 25th Street. The existing bridge does not meet City and State standards for under-bridge clearance and is not ADA-accessible. This bridge is essential for pedestrian connectivity and ADA-accessibility here should be prioritized. However, the Commission also notes that because this thoroughfare is essential to the residents of Waterside Plaza and other users, interruption to bridge access during deconstruction and reconstruction should be minimized to the greatest extent possible. The Commission notes that technological improvements to bridge construction have rendered it possible to erect bridges extremely quickly, minimizing interruptions to access.

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that having considered the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), for which Notice of Completion was issued on December 5, 2024, with respect to this application (CEQR No. 23DME013M) the City Planning Commission finds that the requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and Regulations have been met and that:

1. The environmental impacts disclosed in the FEIS were evaluated in relation to the social, economic, and other considerations associated with the actions that are set forth in this report; and
2. Consistent with social, economic, and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is one which avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable; and
3. The adverse environmental impacts disclosed in the FEIS will be minimized or avoided to the greatest extent practicable.

The report of the City Planning Commission, together with the FEIS, issued December 5, 2024, constitutes the written statement of findings that form the basis of the decision pursuant to Section 617.11(d) of the SEQRA regulations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission, in its capacity as the City Coastal Commission, has reviewed the waterfront aspects of this application and finds that the proposed action is consistent with WRP policies; and be it further

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Sections 197-c and 200 of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and consideration described in this report, the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York, effective as of December 15, 1961, and as subsequently amended, is further amended by changing the Zoning Map, Section Nos. 8d and 12c, changing from an R8 District to a C6-4 District property bounded by First Avenue, a line 255 feet northerly of East 25th Street, Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, and East 25th Street, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 6, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated June 24, 2024, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-1006.

The above resolution (C 240369 ZMM), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on December 16, 2024 (Calendar No. 18), 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*
KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., *Vice Chairman*
GAIL BENJAMIN, ALFRED C. CERULLO III, Esq.,
ANTHONY W. CROWELL, Esq., DAVID GOLD, Esq., LEAH GOODRIDGE, Esq.,
RASMIA KIRMANI-FRYE, ORLANDO MARÍN, JUAN CAMILO OSORIO,
RAJ RAMPERSHAD, *Commissioners*

COMMUNITY/BOROUGH BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Project Name: SPARC Kips Bay			
Applicant:	EDC - Economic Development Corporation for NYC	**Applicant's Primary Contact**:	Amy Jin
Application #	240371ZRM	**Borough**:	Manhattan
CEQR Number:	23DME013M	**Validated Community Districts**:	M06

Docket Description:

Please use the above application number on all correspondence concerning this application

RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Favorable			
# In Favor: 41	**# Against:** 1	**# Abstaining:** 0	**Total members appointed to the board:** 42
Date of Vote: 9/12/2024 12:00 AM		**Vote Location**: 25 Waterside Plaza	

Please attach any further explanation of the recommendation on additional sheets as necessary

Date of Public Hearing: 8/26/2024 6:30 PM	
Was a quorum present? Yes	*A public hearing requires a quorum of 20% of the appointed members of the board but in no event fewer than seven such members*
Public Hearing Location:	Lewis Davis Pavilion at 25 Waterside Plaza

CONSIDERATION: Manhattan Community Board Six conditionally supports the proposed actions with the following conditions/modifications:

• NYCEDC commits to coordinating planning efforts to identify sites and opportunities to increase the stock of affordable housing in CB6 in a clear and publicly available timeline;

• NYCEDC commits to protecting the viability of the Bellevue Sobriety Garden and will not build anything that puts parks flora at risk by diminishing exposure to sunlight;

• Securing commitments from the MTA to increase 1st and 2nd Avenue bus service along with 23rd and 34th Street crosstown bus service, in addition to creating a new bus line dedicated to connecting the adjacent Innovation East and Science Park and Research Center (SPARC) with the 4/5/6 subway stops and future 2nd Avenue Subway stops;

• Maximizing ground floor active retail with extended hours of operations, with at least one bar, cafe, or restaurant tenant that will be open throughout the evening;

• Providing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to accommodate community board meetings and other public uses within the CUNY lecture spaces or classrooms of the building;

• NYCEDC commits to a design that reflects the uniqueness and character of the neighborhood, with human-scale facade design that accounts for sun-reflection and heat impacts on adjacent streets and the park, to ensure comfortable and inviting surroundings;

• Committing to a design and operations approach that meets and exceeds the highest energy-efficiency and environmental resilience standards.

Recommendation submitted by	MN CB6	Date: 10/1/2024 2:15 PM

SANDY MCKEE
CHAIR

JOHN KELLER, FIRST VICE CHAIR
MARK THOMPSON, SECOND VICE CHAIR

JESÚS PÉREZ
DISTRICT MANAGER

GABRIEL TURZO, TREASURER
BEATRICE DISMAN, ASST. TREASURER
LIVIA SHREDNICK, SECRETARY
RUPAL KAKKAD, ASST. SECRETARY

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
211 EAST 43RD STREET, SUITE 1404
NEW YORK, NY 10017

VIA E-MAIL

September 12, 2024

Dan Garodnick
Director
Department of City Planning
120 Broadway, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10271

Andrew Kimball
President & CEO
New York City Economic Development Corporation
One Liberty Plaza
New York NY, 10006

Resolution to Approve with Modifications/Conditions the proposed zoning actions for the Science Park and Research Campus (SPARC) Kips Bay

At the September 11, 2024 Full Board meeting of Manhattan Community Board Six, the Board adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), and the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), in affiliation with the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (H+H), New York City Public Schools (NYCPS), the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), and the City University of New York (CUNY), are seeking several Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) and discretionary actions to redevelop a 4.75-acre area to be known as the SPARC Kips Bay campus;

WHEREAS, the application is being made to facilitate the construction of approximately 2.19 million gross square feet of academic, health care, life science, and retail space and is seeking the following zoning actions:

- Rezoning the site from an R8 district to a C6-4 district to allow laboratory uses (C240369ZMM);
- Revising the zoning text to map MIH on the site (N240371ZRM);

And requesting three special permits:

- Disposing and site selection of City property (C240372PPM, C240391PQM, and C240373PCM);
- City map change related to the East 25th Street pedestrian bridge (C240309MMM);
- Modifying the height and setback regulations for additional height and bulk resulting in a building that would be 500 feet tall (140 feet taller than the maximum allowed under zoning) and 2.19 million sf (1.6 million sf larger than the maximum allowed under zoning) (C240370ZSM and C240390ZSM);

WHEREAS, this project is expected to create approximately 15,000 jobs and more than $42 billion in economic activity;

WHEREAS, these new jobs will add demand for housing to a market that is already facing a supply shortage and will add congestion to an overburdened transportation network;

WHEREAS, increased foot traffic in this area will increase the use of nearby public parks, particularly Bellevue South Park, and increase the resources necessary to maintain them;

WHEREAS, the pedestrian areas in the vicinity of 25th Street and 1st Avenue are not currently equipped to service a large influx of foot traffic, nor are they typically activated beyond the close of business;

WHEREAS, the Land Use & Waterfront Committee has received materials related to this project, and has shared direct feedback with NYCEDC about our needs and aspirations for this project concerning public space usage, community amenities, housing, and other community priorities;

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board Six is currently looking for permanent meeting space in the district that can accommodate various board needs;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board Six conditionally supports the proposed actions with the following conditions/modifications:

- NYCEDC commits to coordinating planning efforts to identify sites and opportunities to increase the stock of affordable housing in CB6 in a clear and publicly available timeline;
- NYCEDC commits to protecting the viability of the Bellevue Sobriety Garden and will not build anything that puts parks flora at risk by diminishing exposure to sunlight;
- Securing commitments from the MTA to increase 1st and 2nd Avenue bus service along with 23rd and 34th Street crosstown bus service, in addition to creating a new bus line dedicated to connecting the adjacent Innovation East and Science Park and Research Center (SPARC) with the 4/5/6 subway stops and future 2nd Avenue Subway stops;

- Maximizing ground floor active retail with extended hours of operations, with at least one bar, cafe, or restaurant tenant that will be open throughout the evening;
- Providing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to accommodate community board meetings and other public uses within the CUNY lecture spaces or classrooms of the building;
- NYCEDC commits to a design that reflects the uniqueness and character of the neighborhood, with human-scale facade design that accounts for sun-reflection and heat impacts on adjacent streets and the park, to ensure comfortable and inviting surroundings;
- Committing to a design and operations approach that meets and exceeds the highest energy-efficiency and environmental resilience standards.

VOTE: 41 In Favor 1 Opposed 0 Abstention 0 Not Entitled

Best regards,



Jesús Pérez
District Manager

Cc: Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Keith Powers, Council Member
Majed Abdulsamad, Chair, CB6 Land Use & Waterfront Committee

BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION

Project Name: SPARC Kips Bay	
Applicant: EDC - Economic Development Corporation for NYC	**Applicant's Administrator**: Amy Jin
Application # 240371ZRM	**Borough**: Manhattan
CEQR Number: 23DME013M	**Validated Community Districts**: M06

Docket Description:

Please use the above application number on all correspondence concerning this application

RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Favorable

Please attach any further explanation of the recommendation on additional sheets as necessary

CONSIDERATION:

Recommendation submitted by	MN BP	Date: 10/30/2024 2:56 PM

OFFICE OF THE
MANHATTAN
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

1 Centre Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007
(212) 669-8300 p (212) 669-4306 f
431 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027
(212)531-1609 p (212) 531-4615 f
www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov
Mark Levine, Borough President

October 30, 2024

Recommendation on ULURP Application Nos. C240391PQM, N240371ZRM, C240372PPM, C240369ZMM, C240370ZSM, C240390ZSM, C240390ZSM, and C240309MMM – SPARC Kips Bay and SPARC Pedestrian Bridge City Map Change By Economic Development Corporation for New York City (EDC)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

The Economic Development Corporation for New York City (EDC) (the "Applicant") is proposing multiple land use actions to facilitate the development of the Science Park and Research Campus ("SPARC") located at 425 East 25th Street (Block 962, Lot 100), in Manhattan Community District 6 (the "Site").

The Applicant proposes the following actions:

1. A zoning map amendment to rezone the Site to the street centerlines of East 25th Street to the south, First Avenue to the west, the FDR Drive to the east, and to 255 feet north of East 25th Street from an R8 district to a C6-4 district;
2. A zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the New York City Zoning Resolution (ZR) to establish a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area at the Site;
3. A special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-171 for laboratories to allow for Use Group (UG) VII that does not comply with Section 427 of the New York City Building Code;
4. A special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-901 for bulk modifications for laboratories to modify certain bulk regulations in a commercial district;
5. Disposition of City-owed property for the western parcel, disposition for the open space, and disposition of a portion of the eastern parcel to the City University of New York (CUNY);
6. Site selection and acquisition of real property interest for the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) facility;
7. Acquisition of real property interest for the NYC Health and Hospitals (H+H) facility; and
8. A demapping action to remove the existing East 25th Street pedestrian bridge from the City Map to facilitate the eventual replacement of the East 25th Street pedestrian bridge.

These actions would facilitate the development of the SPARC project, which will include facilities for OCME, H+H, CUNY, New York City Public Schools (NYCPS), and commercial life sciences, on a campus of life sciences, healthcare, and academic uses.

BACKGROUND

The Brookdale Campus was constructed in 1954, and its 538,654 gross square foot (GSF) facility has been a nursing school and dormitories for Hunter College since 1967. The current campus is

in disrepair from years of aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance, with inadequate spaces for modern educational practices, lack of ADA compliance, and flooding concerns. The campus currently contains 648 student dormitory beds at 86% occupancy as of spring 2024, priced at $816 per month.

In October 2022, EDC announced plans for the Brookdale Campus to become the SPARC project. The project furthers the objectives of EDC's LifeSci NYC initiative to create a pipeline for workforce development, invest in new research, and construct new life sciences spaces. LifeSci NYC began in 2016 as a $1 billion commitment to advance the life sciences industry in New York City, with the goal of creating 40,000 new jobs. According to EDC, there has been a 59% increase in life sciences jobs since 2013 in NYC. Additionally, the life sciences industry creates jobs that are available to a broad range of skill levels – for every person employed in a technical life sciences role there are three workers employed in non-technical/supporting roles.

Proposed Development

The Site would consist of approximately 1.8 million zoning square feet (ZSF) of community facility, office and laboratory, and retail use. The Applicant has divided the Site into two sections, the eastern and western parcels.

The Applicant proposes to develop the eastern parcel during phase 1 of SPARC beginning in 2025 and projected to be completed in 2030. This parcel includes Building A, which would be programmed as follows:

Building A – 730,590 total square feet

	SF	Program
CUNY	552,490 GSF[1]	• Hunter College School of Nursing • Hunter College School of Health Professions – Physical Therapy and Speech Language Pathology • Hunter College School of Arts & Sciences • BMCC Allied Health, Health Education, and Nursing Programs • CUNY School of Public Health • CUNY Research Labs
NYCPS	175,800 GSF	• Public health and health professions-focused high school • Potential STEAM center
Retail	2,300 ZSF	• Tenant to be determined

Phase 1 would also include 0.6 acres of publicly accessible open space, to be known as SPARC Square. SPARC Square would be accessible from all buildings, open to 25th Street, and include a 1,000-square-foot retail pavilion. The community task force that met prior to certification focused on establishing design parameters for the open space. The developer of the western parcel would have a long-term lease to operate and maintain the open space.

[1] GSF estimates are from the January 2024 DEIS, ZSF estimates are from the June 2024 Land Use Application

Additionally, phase 1 would include the replacement of the East 25th Street pedestrian bridge. The current bridge is not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and its infrastructure is aging. The future replacement would be facilitated by the proposed demapping of the existing street lines and elevations of the existing pedestrian bridge. There may be a potential future mapping action once the replacement bridge design is finalized.

During phase 1 the Applicant would also incorporate the Site into the NYC Department of Design and Construction's (DDC) Kips Bay Coastal Resiliency (KBCR) plan by constructing flood protection along East 25th Street and including a flood wall as part of the public realm.

The Applicant would develop the western parcel as phase 2 of SPARC, which would be completed in 2031. This parcel includes Building B1 and Building B2, which would be connected by two 60-foot-long, 50-foot-wide, and 40-foot-tall skybridges. EDC would issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select the developer of the western parcel in 2025. Buildings B1 and B2 would be programmed as follows:

Building B1 – 667,670 total zoning square feet

	ZSF	Program
H+H	174,550	• Outpatient Care and Training – Simulation and Nursing Advanced Practice Center • Ambulatory surgery • Adult primary care • Wellness programs • Wound care
Commercial Life Sciences Labs	488,060	• Developer-led, technology forward life sciences laboratories[2] • Wet labs • Dry labs
Retail	5,060	• Tenant to be determined

Building B2 - 551,780 total zoning square feet

	ZSF	Program
OCME[3]	200,340	• Medical facilities • Autopsy suite • Toxicology and pathology lab • Forensic anthropology lab
Commercial Life Sciences Labs	488,060	• Developer-led, technology forward life sciences laboratories • Wet labs • Dry labs
Retail	2,760	• Tenant to be determined

[2] On March 4, 2024, EDC released a Request For Expressions of Interest (RFEI) for an anchor tenant for the commercial life sciences laboratory space.

[3] This space would replace the current OCME facility located at 516 First Avenue that is not suitable for current forensic pathology needs, including outdated HVAC systems, elevators, and an overall aging facility.

The proposed zoning action is facilitated in part by changes to the zoning text from City of Yes for Economic Opportunity, which was approved by the New York City Council on June 6, 2024. That action updated ZR Section 74-171 to allow laboratories under Use Group 7 in commercial districts or residential districts by special permit. Conditions for the special permit in commercial districts include compliance with performance standards already required in M1 Districts, and that the facility be on a zoning lot that does not include residential use.

In order for the City Planning Commission to grant the special permit, it must find that that the laboratory use does not affect the character of or impair the future use of the area, that the proposed facility minimizes traffic on local streets, fully encloses products such as raw materials and waste, and incorporates the appropriate sign modifications. Additional requirements for this project include that the floor area be considered commercial floor area and follow commercial bulk regulations. The Applicant is also seeking a special permit for modifications to bulk regulations, including height and setback regulations, per ZR Section 74-901, provided that the modifications will not affect the character of or impair future use of the area and will not unduly obstruct light and air. Modifying these bulk regulations would help accommodate the larger floorplates required for laboratories.

The Applicant also proposes multiple improvements to streets, sidewalks, and vehicular circulation around the campus. The Applicant would widen the formerly de-mapped East 26th Street by eight feet and convert it into a two-way drive with a turnaround area for drop-off, unloading, and easier access from Fist Avenue. The Applicant would also create an in-block access drive for drop-offs to the H+H and OCME facilities. The drive would have crosswalks and sidewalks to facilitate pedestrian circulation. While no parking is required by zoning, the Applicant proposes up to 225 below-grade parking spaces for OCME and CUNY vehicles. This would cure the existing condition of OCME vehicles parked on the 26th Street sidewalk.

The Applicant would also widen East 25th Street to 15 feet to provide improved pedestrian conditions, set back the building on First Avenue to widen the sidewalk to 23 feet, and widen the 26th Street sidewalk to 16 feet in addition to the street widening by partially extending onto the Site. The Applicant is also exploring options for improving the safety of the pedestrian crossing of East 25th Street at the FDR exit, where cars often quickly turn onto the street, through a potential bump out or raised crosswalk.

CUNY has acquired replacement dormitory space at 569 Lexington Avenue, which is an existing building that leases dorms to students. Students who lived at the Brookdale Campus as of the fall 2022 semester will have locked in rates of $816 for the replacement dorms. Otherwise, the pricing will be $969 for quads, $1,097 for triples, and $1,273 for doubles for all other students. CUNY has also leased space on Madison Avenue between 27th and 28th Streets to host Hunter classes currently located at the Brookdale Campus during construction.

Area Context

The Site is located in Manhattan Community District 6 in the Kips Bay neighborhood. The surrounding area is zoned R8 with C2-5 overlays on the west side of First Avenue, C6-2, and C2-7 along the waterfront.

The Site is served by transit by the M15, M15-SBS, M23-SBS, M34A-SBS, and M9 buses, and the 6 Subway line at East 23rd or 28th Streets and Park Avenue. There is a Citi Bike Station on the corner of East 25th Street and First Avenue.

The surrounding area includes multiple medical and institutional uses including Bellevue Hospital, the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the New York University College of Dentistry, the Alexandria Center for Life Science, the planned Innovation East building; open spaces and recreational uses including Asser Levy Park and Recreation Center and the Bellevue Sobriety Garden; and residential campuses including Waterside Plaza, Nathan Straus Houses, East Midtown Plaza, Peter Cooper Village, and Stuyvesant Town.

COMMUNITY BOARD RESOLUTION

The SPARC community task force, co-chaired by Council Member Keith Powers and Manhattan Community Board 6 Chair Sandra McKee, met six times from January to June 2024. Members of the task force included local elected officials, area residents, agency partners, and other stakeholders. The task force culminated in a set of Design Principles to help guide the design of the campus, particularly the open space.[4]

On September 11, 2024, Manhattan Community Board 6 (CB 6) voted to recommend approval with the condition that EDC:

1. Identify sites and opportunities for affordable housing in CB 6;
2. Protect the viability of Bellevue Sobriety Gardens by maximizing its exposure to sunlight;
3. Work with the MTA to increase bus service along First Avenue, Second Avenue, 23rd Street, and 34th Street, and to create a new bus line to connect SPARC and Innovation East to the 4/5/6 subway stops and future 2nd Avenue Subway stops;
4. Maximize ground-floor active retail with at least one bar, cafe, or restaurant that will be open throughout the evening;
5. Sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that allows community board meetings and other public uses to take place on CUNY's proposed space;
6. Commit to a design that reflects neighborhood character and facade design that accounts for sun reflection and heat impacts on adjacent streets and parks; and
7. Commit to a design and operations plan that exceeds the highest energy-efficiency and environmental resiliency standards.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

SPARC Kips Bay promises to be a cornerstone of the life sciences industry in our city and a mainstay for our public institutions. Our public schools and public health facilities deserve the highest quality spaces, and this campus will provide just that. By bringing together academic, healthcare, and life sciences uses on one campus, this project will create opportunities for synergy between the various campus tenants and create pathways to workforce training and career opportunities.

[4] NYCEDC-SPARC-Community-Design-Principles-06-24-2024.pdf

A project of this magnitude should also bring significant benefits to the community, and I commend EDC for continuing to listen to feedback and emphasizing public realm improvements in the proposal. This project addresses infrastructure concerns such as the state of disrepair of the 25th Street pedestrian bridge, the need to protect the area from flooding, narrow sidewalks and uninviting streetscapes, and public facilities aging into disrepair including the OCME building and Hunter's facilities on the Brookdale campus itself.

A key role of SPARC will be to provide space for essential NYC public health and medical institutions. The outpatient space and cutting-edge training facilities for Bellevue will help the hospital advance the care they are able to provide for New Yorkers for generations to come. I am excited that OCME will be able to move into a building that is fully equipped for their important work, including their efforts at the forefront of the opioid crisis and training future medical examiners. These dedicated spaces also provide the opportunity for campus tenants to create partnerships for workforce development programs. EDC established the Kips Bay Workforce Development Task Force in order to foster connections across industries and agencies at SPARC, including apprenticeships or learning opportunities for the students at CUNY or NYCPS.[5] I hope these programs can adapt as new career pathways emerge and industries evolve over time.

Another important public benefit will be the 25th Street pedestrian bridge replacement. The current structure, which provides access to the waterfront, is not accessible and in desperate need of an upgrade. I look forward to seeing more of EDC's plan for providing interim access to the waterfront during construction, particularly for Waterside Plaza tenants and United Nations International School students, as well as the design of the new bridge as those plans develop. Resiliency is key to the long-term success of this project and the whole neighborhood corridor, and I urge EDC to make sure the proposed resiliency efforts will account for the 100-year floodplain and work with the appropriate agencies to make sure the campus and surrounding community will be adequately protected.

With a $1.6 million investment from the City and State, in addition to leveraging $2 billion in private funding, EDC has come up with a plan that will create jobs, train the future employees of the life sciences fields, and have a positive impact on New York City's economy in the decades to come. SPARC will bring great benefits to the 4,500 CUNY students who will be educated at the campus, and is anticipated to create 12,000 union construction jobs, 3,100 permanent jobs, and have a $42 billion economic impact to the city over the next 30 years.

The City and EDC have made commendable progress to ensure that New York has a competitive life sciences industry. EDC has already begun the process of identifying an anchor life sciences tenant for 100,000 to 150,000 of the one million square feet of life sciences space. Next year, EDC will release an RFP for the developer of this portion of the campus. The proposed zoning actions aim to accommodate a variety of life sciences and laboratory uses, and I believe these actions should be approved for the purpose of leaving as many possible options on the table as the RFEI and RFP processes continue. However, other projects in Manhattan have had trouble leasing life sciences space. In the spirit of ensuring the success of this campus, I ask EDC to

[5] Mayor Adams, Governor Hochul Release Details for First-of-its-Kind Job and Education Hub for Growing Health Sector | NYCEDC

exercise flexibility in its approach and attract a wide range of companies and uses to ensure the ultimate success of this project.

The current Brookdale campus is closed off, surrounded by narrow sidewalks, and does not create an inviting experience for students or pedestrians in the area. The proposed design of SPARC aims to cure many of these issues. I appreciate that SPARC Square will be open to 25th Street and that there will be widened and improved sidewalk conditions around the campus. Having retail that fronts First Avenue will also help enliven the streetscape, and I ask that EDC consider tenants that will be open in the evenings so that residents can benefit from the activated frontage.

I look forward to seeing more concrete plans for improving the pedestrian safety of the 25th Street crossing alongside the FDR, particularly for the students who will occupy the eastern portion of the campus. And while I am glad that cars will be moved off of 26th Street and instead be parked underneath the SPARC campus, I ask that EDC only build as many parking spaces as truly necessary for OCME and CUNY, fewer than the 225 initially proposed. Doing so would help alleviate vehicle congestion in the area while also potentially driving down construction costs.

The widened sidewalks and even the site plan of the SPARC campus itself will help absorb the impacts from the new workers, students, and visitors to the area. While the subway is just over half a mile away, buses provide direct access to the SPARC site, with the ridership on all nearby lines below pre-pandemic levels.[6] Additionally, transit projects such as the redesign of Second Avenue have the potential to improve bus speeds and bike infrastructure by the time SPARC is operational.[7] As the project approaches completion, I encourage EDC to monitor the number of potential visitors to the campus, as well as bus ridership in the area, in case any transit mitigations need to be put in place to alleviate congestion.

As a member of the SPARC Community Task Force, I was happy to recommend guidelines for the open space in SPARC Square to be a place that is inviting to a variety of users. The potential to create a corridor of green space from Aser Levy Park, through SPARC Square, to Bellevue Gardens and Bellevue Sobriety Gardens, would bring great benefit to the community. I ask H+H to work with EDC to open Bellevue Garden to the public to help this corridor be as accessible as possible. I also call for programming in SPARC Square and from campus tenants whenever possible that is accessible to the surrounding community and residents, particularly related to public health and workforce development.

I echo the community's call for housing in the area to help address our housing crisis. First, I commend CUNY for acquiring replacement dormitory space for students and maintaining the rents for existing students. I also recognize that housing is currently not a compatible use with the proposed programming on the SPARC site. However, I do urge EDC and other city agencies to prioritize housing as the potential future use of other city-owned or controlled sites, particularly in Community District 6. I also encourage EDC to work with city and state agencies

[6] According to the most recently available data (https://new2.mta.info/agency/new-york-city-transit/subway-bus-ridership-2023)
[7] NYC DOT Begins Redesign of Manhattan's Second Avenue With Wider Bike Lane and Upgraded Bus Lane

to determine if there are opportunities to fund the preservation of existing affordable housing in the area.

Throughout this process, EDC and the agency partners have been communicative and inclusive of stakeholders, including hosting an open house and the community task force. I hope this collaboration continues as the project progresses, particularly in relation to public realm improvements and EDC's work to identify potential affordable housing opportunities in the area. I commend EDC for the work they have done thus far and I look forward to seeing this project come to fruition.

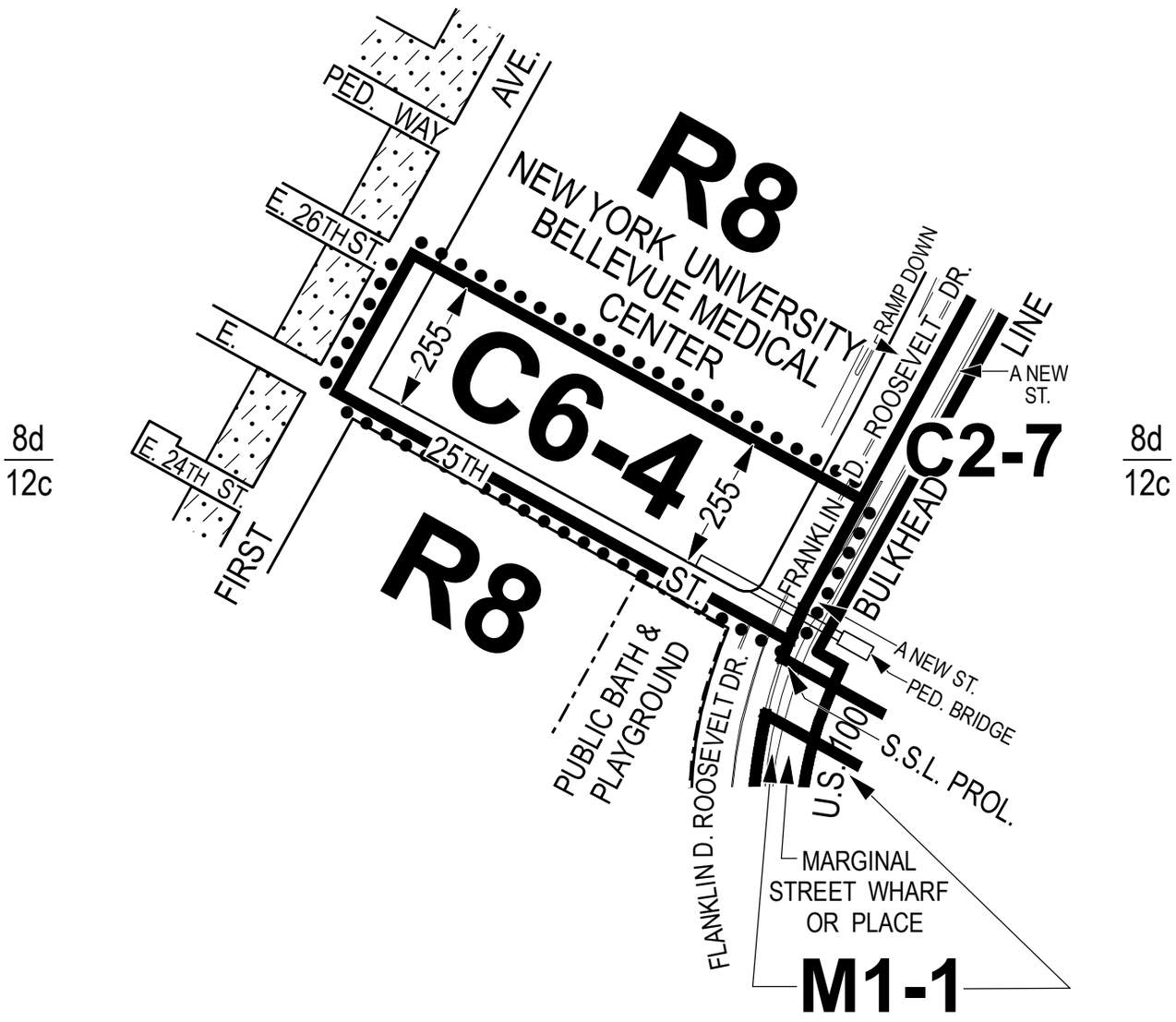
BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, I recommend **approval** of ULURP Application Nos. C240391PQM, N240371ZRM, C240372PPM, C240369ZMM, C240370ZSM, C240390ZSM, C240390ZSM, and C240309MMM **with the following conditions**:

1. EDC and city agency partners commit to prioritizing housing for the future of other city-owned or controlled sites or exploring opportunities to preserve existing affordable housing in Manhattan Community Board 6.
2. Provide only as many parking spaces as needed for OCME and CUNY, fewer than the 225 initially contemplated.
3. Continue to work with partners to maximize the success of the life sciences portion of the campus, including considering a broader range of uses to maximize the leasing potential of the space.
4. Ensure that workforce development opportunities evolve throughout the lifespan of the campus, as tenancies, programming, and technology change over time, with an emphasis on creating programs and partnerships between agencies that lead to long-term career pathways.
5. Explore including an early education facility on site, provided that it can coexist with other uses.
6. EDC work with H+H to consider options for opening Bellevue Gardens to the public to fit into the area's network of green spaces, subject to the discretion of the hospital regarding times that do not interfere with hospital operations.



Mark Levine
Manhattan Borough President



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF NEW YORK

DIAGRAM SHOWING PROPOSED

ZONING CHANGE

ON SECTIONAL MAP

8d & 12c

BOROUGH OF

MANHATTAN

New York, Certification Date:
June 24, 2024

S. Lenard, Director
Technical Review Division

SCALE IN FEET

0 150 300 450 600

NOTE:

Indicates Zoning District Boundary

● ● ● ● ● The area enclosed by the dotted line is proposed to be rezoned by changing an R8 District to a C6-4 District.

Indicates a C2-5 District

THIS DIAGRAM REFLECTS PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE CITY MAP
PURSUANT TO RELATED MAPPING APPLICATION C 240309 MMM