DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW DIVISION

Amanda M. Burden, FAICP, *Director*
Department of City Planning

October 17, 2013

Robert Kulikowski
Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
100 Gold Street 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10038

NOTICE OF LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION AND REVIEW

Re: **Braddock-Hillside Rezoning**
CEQR No. 14DCP005Q
ULURP No. 140037ZMQ
Queens, Community District 13
SEQR Classification: Unlisted

The above-referenced application involves a discretionary action subject to City Planning Commission approval. This action is subject to review under the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR), Executive Order No. 91, and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), 6 NYCRR 617.

Pursuant to Sections 5.03 and 5.05 of the Rules of Procedure for City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) as adopted June 26, 1991, the Department of City Planning, acting on behalf of the City Planning Commission, is assuming lead agency status for this application and is initiating the CEQR review.

The applicant, DERP Associates, is seeking a zoning map amendment from R3-2 and R3-2/C2-2 zoning districts to C4-1 district for an existing shopping plaza (portion of Block 7914 (p/o Lots 55 and 2). The proposed action would facilitate a proposal by the applicant to allow for a 25,000 sf conversion of a hardware store to a department or specialty store, not currently allowed under C2-2 zoning. The area to be re-zoned, approximately 97,535 square feet (2.24 acres) is currently occupied by a flag-shaped one-story commercial building and an accessory parking lot for 121 vehicles. The project site is located at 220-05 Hillside Avenue, on the northeast corner of Hillside Avenue and Braddock Avenue, in the Queens Village neighborhood of Queens, Community District 13.

The project site is located in R3-2 and R3-2/C2-2 zoning districts, with a commercial FAR of 1.0. The proposed C4-1 district has the same maximum commercial FAR as that of the existing C2-2 district. The existing shopping center was constructed in 1997, pursuant to a 1991 Zoning

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Resolution § 73-52 special permit from the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) allowing the building to extend 25 feet west into the R3-2 zoning district. The rezoning would remove the nonconforming condition currently allowed by the BSA special permit by establishing the western district boundary of the proposed C4-1 district further to the west than the current C2-2 district boundary.

The shopping plaza contains a 25,755 square foot retail space, currently occupied by a Use Group 6 hardware store, with an additional two smaller stores, a bank and an auto parts store having approximately 6,522 square feet and 3,868 square feet respectively. The proposed actions would allow for occupancy of the shopping center's main space by a range of Use Group 10 retail uses, as well as the Use Group 6, 8, and 9 uses that are currently permitted. Use Group 7 uses, which are permitted within the existing C2-2 district, would not be permitted in the proposed C4-1 district. Use Group 10 consists primarily of large retail uses such as clothing stores, department stores, and furniture stores, with no limitation in size. These uses are permitted in C2 districts as Use Group 6, but are limited in size to 10,000 square feet, and therefore could not occupy the main retail space of the affected shopping center. The applicant intends to continue utilizing the existing building for commercial uses with the large hardware store space being leased to a Use Group 10 tenant. Due to the high parking requirement for commercial uses within the proposed C4-1 district, any enlargement of the building, or its replacement with a new commercial building, would trigger a parking demand that would make such enlargement or redevelopment impractical. The proposed zoning map amendment would allow for a wider range of retail use, but would not result in any new building development.

Absent the proposed action, the project site would continue utilizing the existing building for retail uses as permitted by the site's C2-2 zoning. The project assumes a build year of 2014.

An Environmental Assessment Statement is attached. Please contact Ingrid Young of the Department of City Planning at (212) 720-3425 if you have any questions regarding the application.

Sincerely,

Celeste Evans

Celeste Evans, AICP, Deputy Director
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New York City Department of City Planning

cc:

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