Statement of Findings
Special Permit Pursuant to ZR Section 74-533

74-533
Reduction of parking spaces to facilitate affordable housing

In all districts in the #Transit Zone#, the City Planning Commission may permit a waiver of, or a reduction in, the number of required #accessory# off-street parking spaces for #dwelling units# in a #development# or #enlargement# that includes at least 20 percent of all #dwelling units# as #income-restricted housing units# as defined in Section 12-10 (DEFINITIONS), provided that the Commission finds that such waiver or reduction:

(a) ***will facilitate such #development# or #enlargement#. Such finding shall be made upon consultation with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development;***

The Proposed Development is located in the Transit Zone and at least 20% of dwelling units will be income-restricted housing units. Under the anticipated development scheme, the parking regulations applicable in the R8A/C2-4 zoning district would require approximately 83 parking spaces for exclusive use by the residential units (208 market rate units x 40% = 83 spaces).

The waiver will facilitate the development because it will allow the parking available in the cellar of the Proposed Development to replace the existing church parking and offer the flexibility to make spaces available to other users in the area as needed. It is anticipated that the cellar level of the Proposed Development will be used for parking with approximately 80 spaces, with the exact number to be determined by the capacity of the excavated cellar taking into account coordination of building systems and vehicular circulation needs. The new spaces would replace the 36 accessory church spaces currently in an open parking lot with spaces on the cellar level to be available for congregants, particularly on Sunday mornings. When not in use for church purposes, the spaces would be available to residents and potential users of the retail space in the Proposed Development.

The cellar area does not have enough space to provide a dedicated 83 spaces for residential units *in addition* to 36 parking spaces accessory to the church. To accommodate this many spaces would require excavating and constructing an additional below-grade level, which is cost-prohibitive and not feasible for this project after taking into account the cost of providing the required affordable housing units under Mandatory Inclusionary Housing. The proposed MIH project would not occur if excavation of two cellar levels were needed to meet the parking requirement, therefore the proposed waiver facilitates the proposed MIH development.

The Applicant requests a waiver of the required parking and not a partial reduction to ensure that the spaces can be used flexibly to accommodate demand from the church together with demand from building residents, residents in the surrounding area, and retail users. These needs may be met in part by hosting a car sharing service. If residential accessory parking requirements were reduced rather than waived, there would be constraints on layout, operation and use by non-residents that would prevent the owner from making operational changes over time to increase efficiency and to adapt to future changes in personal vehicle parking demand and practices. Such changes may result from advances in transportation technology and in connection with policies enacted by the City to reach its goal to reduce personal vehicle travel by 40 percent by 2050 (as set forth in the City's 80 x 50 report). The waiver of required accessory residential parking would offer the flexibility to make parking spaces available to all potential users and result in more efficient parking operations.

The Applicant consulted with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development regarding this application.

(b) ***will not cause traffic congestion; and***

The Project Area is in proximity to mass transit options, which reduces the demand for private car ownership and accessory parking. The Fort Hamilton Parkway Station with access to the F and G subway lines is located across Ocean Parkway, two blocks from the Project Area. The B68 bus stops at Coney Island Avenue and Caton Place. Taxis and ride-sharing services like Uber offer additional options that are easily accessible at all times of day to occupants and users of the Proposed Development.

Additionally, the traffic analysis set forth in the EAS found that the amount of traffic generated by the project would be so low (i.e., less than 45 vehicle trips during the highest traffic generating peak hour) that no potentially significant adverse traffic impacts would result from the Proposed Development. Given the limited volume of traffic that would be generated by the Proposed Development and the proximity to mass transit, a reduction in parking supply is appropriate and would not cause traffic congestion.

(c) ***will not have undue adverse effects on residents, businesses or #community facilities# in the surrounding area, as applicable, including the availability of parking spaces for such #uses#.***

The waiver of required accessory off-street parking spaces will not have adverse effects on the surrounding area because the parking demand projected to arise the Proposed Development would be adequately accommodated by parking resources within reasonably close proximity of the Project Area. As presented in the EAS, two off-street public parking facilities with a total of 138 parking spaces were identified within a ¼-mile of the Project Area. The facilities have capacity; overall occupancy rates range from 40% to 70% during peak hours. As a result, the waiver of required spaces will not have undue adverse effects on the residents, businesses, or community facilities in the surrounding area, including availability of parking spaces for such uses.

The Commission may prescribe additional conditions and safeguards to minimize adverse effects on the surrounding area.