Kingsland Commons
(aka Cooper Park Commons)
June 20, 2024

1. Introduction

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development ("HPD") and Maspeth Manager, LLC (the "Applicant") seeks a certification from the Chairperson of the City Planning Commission ("CPC") to grant a minor modification to a Restrictive Declaration (the "Proposed Action") associated with a Large-Scale General Development ("LSGD") (N 210481 ZSK) affecting Block 2885, Lot 1 ("Development Site") in the East Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn Community District 1. The LSGD requires that the form of Restrictive Declaration approved by CPC, which controls the development potential, the phasing of the development and the publicly accessible area ("Publicly Accessible Area" or "PAA") on the Project Area, be recorded against the Development Site prior to any development.

The Proposed Action would modify the requirements for phasing of the PAA and the Phase 2 Development. The Restrictive Declaration currently provides that the Phase 2 Development cannot receive a temporary certificate of occupancy until the Phase 1 PAA is substantially completed. The modifications to the Restrictive Declaration would allow the Phase 2 Development to be completed and receive a temporary certificate of occupancy independently of the Phase 1 Development and associated PAA. The Development Site is part of a larger multiphase project involving the redevelopment of the former Greenpoint Hospital which includes the development of two new construction buildings and the rehabilitation of two existing buildings to provide approximately 553 affordable units, plus three units for superintendents, a new 200-bed shelter facility to replace an existing one on the site, community facility and light retail uses, and a landscaped open space plan that will reintegrate the former hospital campus with the surrounding neighborhood.

No other modifications to the terms for the completion of the PAA are proposed.

2. Background

Construction of the Project Area (approximately 4.5 acres)—the full Greenpoint Hospital campus on the lot bounded by Maspeth Avenue, Debevoise Avenue, Jackson Street, and Kingsland Avenue—began in 1913. By 1915, the six original buildings that comprised the campus were complete: the Main Hospital Building and five smaller support buildings that front Jackson, Debevoise, and Kingsland. The southern portion of the site was used for parking and receiving. In 1932, the Nurses' Residence was subsequently constructed on the southeast corner of the site and the Outpatient Clinic and Dispensary building was later added on the southwest corner of the site in 1938. Greenpoint Hospital was closed in 1982 due to overcrowding, poor conditions, and financial issues. The Main Hospital Building was repurposed as a homeless shelter in 1984, which remains in use today.

Skillman Avenue, which continues as a mapped street to the west of the Project Area, was demapped and discontinued between Kingsland and Debevoise Avenues on November 25, 1953 (CP-9768, Map no. 2868). The demapped roadbed now runs east-west through the Project Area, creating a larger than typical block. In conjunction with the demapping action, the pre-1953 Blocks 2885 and 2894 were combined into a single larger Block 2885, including the area of the

former Skillman Avenue. Map no. 2868 from 1953 also shows a permanent sewer easement, 30 feet wide, running down the centerline of the formerly mapped Skillman Avenue.

On August 31, 2017, HPD issued a Request for Expressions of Interest ("RFEI") for the redevelopment of the Disposition Area. The RFEI invited applicants to submit proposals for the design and construction of a high-quality, sustainable, mixed-use, and mixed-income affordable housing development. The issuance of the RFEI sought to further the vision and goals laid out in the Housing New York Plan (updated in November 2017 as Housing New York 2.0) that includes the preservation and new construction of 300,000 affordable units by 2026.

On November 23, 2021, the City Council (Resolution 1831) (approved by the CPC on October 6, 2021) approved a series of land use actions (C 210480 ZMK, C 210481 ZSK, N 210482 ZRK, C 210483 HAK, and C 210484 PPK) to redevelop and repurpose the former Greenpoint Hospital campus, also known as Cooper Park Commons, located on Block 2885, Lots 1, 25, 35, 10, 20, 23, 28, and 32. The actions to facilitate the development of Cooper Park Commons included the following: zoning map amendment changing the Project Area from an R6 district to an R7-2 district and an R7-2 /C2-4 district; zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution ("ZR") to establish the Project Area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing ("MIH") Area; special permit to establish an LSGD pursuant to ZR Sections 74-74 and 74-743(a)(2) to modify height and setback regulations and distance between buildings regulations within the LSGD; and Urban Development Action Area ("UDAA") designation, Urban Development Action Area Project ("UDAAP") approval, and disposition of former Lot 1 (currently Lots 1, 25, and 35); and disposition of Block 2885, Lot 10 to modify allowable uses described in a prior disposition action (C 990220 HAK) to broaden the allowable use on Lot 10 from a specific healthcare facility tentatively known as the Greenpoint Renaissance Family Health Center to general community facility use. These land use actions will facilitate the development of two new buildings and the rehabilitation of two existing buildings to provide approximately 553 affordable units that include permanently affordable units that will meet the housing needs of seniors, low-income families and individuals and the formerly homeless in search of permanent housing. These land use actions will also facilitate a new and more appropriately designed 200-bed shelter facility to replace an existing one on the site. Lastly, the actions will facilitate the implementation of a landscaped open space plan that will reintegrate the former hospital campus with the surrounding neighborhood.

The development of Cooper Park Commons pursuant to the LSGD (N 210481 ZSK) is proposed to be constructed in four phases, with each phase developing its associated portion of the PAA plan:

1. Phase 1 Development: The conversion and enlargement of Building 1 from the vacant former Nurses' Residence to a homeless shelter with approximately 200 beds;
2. Phase 2 Development: The new construction of a new 12- to 18-story mixed-use affordable housing building with approximately 310 affordable units, plus a superintendent's unit (Building 2) on currently vacant land fronting on Maspeth Avenue;
3. Phase 3 Development: The conversion of the existing 5- and 6-story Barbara Kleiman homeless shelter to an affordable housing building with approximately 109 affordable senior units (Building 3) utilizing Affordable Independent Residence for Seniors ("AIRS") and the enlargement of that building with two five-story extensions on the north side of the east and west wings of the main building; and
4. Phase 4 Development: The new construction of a 14-story mixed-use affordable housing building with approximately 109 affordable units, plus a superintendent's unit (Building 4) fronting Jackson Street.

The development of the PAA plan would be tied to each phase of the development. PAA developed in Phase 1 would include the area surrounding Building 1 and a small portion of the

former Skillman Avenue abutting Building 1 at Debevoise Avenue. The PAA developed in Phase 2 would include the area surrounding Building 2 and most of the area that is the former Skillman Avenue west to Kingsland Avenue. The PAA developed in Phase 3 would include the area surrounding Building 3, and the PAA developed in Phase 4 would include the area surrounding Building 4. The portion of the Project Area proposed to be landscaped comprises approximately 90,950 square feet, which is approximately half of its lot area and will include approximately 70,650 square feet of Publicly Accessible Area. Of the approximate 70,650 square feet of Publicly Accessible Area, approximately 10,860 square feet would be developed in Phase 1, approximately 24,879 square feet would be developed in Phase 2, approximately 29,908 square feet would be developed in Phase 3, and approximately 5,003 square feet would be developed in Phase 4.

Cooper Park Commons would also include approximately 20,300 square feet of private open area accessible to the residents. Approximately 4,114 square feet would be developed in Phase 2, approximately 6,440 square feet would be developed in Phase 3, and approximately 3,465 square feet would be developed in Phase 4. The total 20,300 square feet of resident designated open area also includes approximately 6,281 square feet of open area on Lots 28 and 32.

In addition, there are 21 existing street trees in the Project Area that will remain—four trees along Kingsland Avenue, eight trees along Debevoise Avenue, and nine trees along Jackson Street. Two additional street trees are proposed along the Jackson Street frontage and 25 additional street trees are proposed along Maspeth Avenue, which would have a wide sidewalk area that can accommodate two rows of street tree plantings. Within the Project Area, 74 new major trees and 17 new minor trees are proposed. The project will comply with ZR § 26-41 by utilizing existing trees, providing additional trees, including off-site trees, as necessary, and possibly, to the extent necessary, by making a contribution to the NYC Parks "Tree Fund."

The Publicly Accessible Area would be primarily comprised of the plaza that was the former Skillman Avenue (approximately 28,910 square feet of public driveway/open area) and the open area between Buildings 1 and 2. The plaza will be shared by pedestrians and authorized vehicles and the design will include shared pavement, seating, plantings, and permeable pavement. The open area between Buildings 1 and 2 would provide pedestrian access from Maspeth Avenue to the Skillman Avenue plaza. That public open area is an approximately 7,445 square foot space with seating and plantings. The Skillman Avenue plaza area and the open area between Buildings 1 and 2 will have approximately 186 linear feet of benches.

The private open space on the campus includes two areas: the rear courtyard of Building 2 and the northeast corner of the campus. Both private open areas are bounded by building walls and separated from the Publicly Accessible Areas by an approximately six-foot tall black aluminum slat fence having approximately two inches between slats and at least 3'-6" between supporting posts. The courtyard of Building 2 contains approximately 4,114 square feet and will be exclusively for the use of Building 2 tenants and their guests. Located in the open area to the north of Building 3 and to the east of Building 4 will be a private open area containing approximately 16,186 square feet of landscaped space, including pavers, benches, plantings, and a lawn. This space will be used by the tenants of Building 3 and Building 4 as well as the tenants of the two Neighborhood Women's Houses buildings located in the corner of the Cooper Park Commons campus (Buildings 7 and 8). Within the northeast corner open area will be a lawn space with benches that would be approximately 5,350 square feet.

3. Description of the Surrounding Area

The land within a 600-foot radius of the Project Area (the "Surrounding Area") includes a wide range of land uses such as one- and two-family residences, elevator apartment buildings, local

retail and manufacturing uses. Current zoning districts in the Surrounding Area include R6, R6A, R6B/C2-4, R6B, R7, R7-2/C2-4 and M1-1.

Block 2885, Lot 10 is primarily a corner lot situated immediately southwest of the Project Area. Lot 10 is part of the former Greenpoint Hospital campus and contains a three-story, approximately 25,620 square foot community facility building within an R7-2/C2-4, but it is excluded from the Development Site subject to this application and the previously approved LSGD area. St. Nicks Alliance, operating through the Greenpoint Renaissance Center on Lot 10, provides and administers local community service programs, including assistance in accessing affordable and supportive housing, elder care, workforce training (including classes, training, and internships), and youth, teen and young adult education programs. The Greenpoint Renaissance Center on Lot 10 contains service and administrative space as well as space for training, education, afterschool, and arts related programs.

Directly to the east and north of the Project Area is a superblock, Block 2867, containing the 700-unit NYCHA Cooper Park Houses. This NYCHA development contains 11 eight-story buildings and is reflective of the existing R6 district that typically produces three- to 12-story buildings. These NYCHA apartment houses are surrounded by lawns, parking lots, and the 0.74 acre Frost Playground (fronting Frost Street) operated by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation ("NYC Parks") on an approximately 12-acre campus. The remainder of this superblock contains two-story one- and two-family homes along Maspeth Avenue that adjoins the southeast corner of the Project Area. The blocks to the south and west of the Project Area are generally characterized by one- and two-family homes ranging from one to three stories. These blocks are primarily located within R6A and R6B zoning districts, two contextual residential districts that permit up to 3.0 Floor Area Ratio ("FAR") and seven stories, and up to 2.0 FAR and five stories, respectively.

Commercial uses are generally limited to ground-floor retail use within several mixed buildings that front Kingsland Avenue to the northwest of the Project Area zoned R6B/C2-4. Such existing commercial spaces include food stores, coffee shops, medical offices, a laundromat and a gas station. Additional commercial uses are located south of the Project Area along Metropolitan Avenue, and include bars, restaurants, coffee shops, and delis, a laundromat, and ground-floor office spaces. The blocks to the east of Cooper Park Houses contain a concentration of industrial and manufacturing uses. These blocks, located on the east side of Morgan Avenue, are zoned M1-1 and are part of the larger North Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone ("IBZ"). As of 2016, this IBZ contained 19,500 jobs and is the third largest IBZ by employment in the city. More than three-quarters of these jobs are industrial in nature, and include manufacturing wholesale, transportation, construction, waste management, and motion picture recording.

Other than the 200-bed Barbara Kleiman Residence on Block 2885, Lot 25, there are no other public facilities and institutions within the Surrounding Area. However, several houses of worship are located just beyond the 600-foot radius from the Project Area including the St. Francis of Paola Church and Divine Mercy Parish to the west and the St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church and Elementary School to the south.

The largest open space resource in the Surrounding Area is Cooper Park, a 6.4-acre mapped park immediately south of the Project Area, which contains a variety of sports courts, playgrounds and a dog run. Red Shed Garden, a 0.11-acre NYC Parks GreenThumb garden, is located at 266 Skillman Avenue immediately west of the Project Area, and the 0.15-acre Orient Grove garden is located at the intersection of Orient and Metropolitan Avenues to the south of the Project Area. Additionally, it should be noted that Frost Playground, which is part of the NYCHA Cooper Park Houses complex, is also a significant open space resource in the Surrounding Area.

The Surrounding Area is well served by mass transit as the Graham Avenue subway station on the L line is approximately 0.4 miles away from the Project Area. The B24 bus line runs north and south along Kingsland Avenue with two stops proximate to the Project Area near the intersection of Kingsland and Skillman Avenues. The B24 bus connects this area to the JMZ line (Marcy Avenue station) near the Williamsburg Bridge and the 7 line (46th Street station) in Woodside, Queens.

4. Description of the Proposed Project Area

The Project Area contains the area subject to the previously approved LSGD (N 210481 ZSK) and the associated Restrictive Declaration, which includes Block 2885, Lots 1, 20, 23, 25, 28, 32, and 35.

The Project Area is bounded by three wide streets ((i) Jackson Street (80' wide, 473' of street frontage) to the north, (ii) Maspeth Avenue to the south (90' wide, 418.41' of street frontage), (iii) Debevoise Avenue (79.33' wide, 403.79' of street frontage) to the east), and one narrow street (Kingsland Avenue (70' wide, 253.68' of frontage)) to the west. All four streets accommodate two-way traffic. The Project Area is larger than a typical city block due to the de-mapping and discontinuance of Skillman Avenue that runs east-west. The Project Area contains approximately 182,487 square feet of lot area. The Project Area is currently mapped with an R7-2 and R7-2/C2-4 district.

The Project Area contains seven existing buildings, including the former Nurses' Residence, to be renovated to become Building 1 or the Phase 1 Development. Building 1 is a U-shaped building situated at the southeast corner of the Project Area at the intersection of Maspeth and Debevoise Avenues (Lot 35). This four-story plus basement community facility building was constructed in 1932 and contains approximately 43,653 square feet of floor area. Historically used as a nurses' residence, it was used as a homeless shelter until 1990 and has remained vacant since.

The former Main Hospital was completed in 1915 and is situated in the approximate center of the Project Area and on Lot 25. It is a five- and six-story building containing approximately 63,206 square feet of floor area. This will be renovated to become Building 3, and currently comprises a six-story, 108.92' high central portion flanked by two five-story, 87' high wings to the east and west. Subsequent to the closure of Greenpoint Hospital in 1982, this structure has been used as and continues to serve as a 200-bed homeless shelter called the Barbara Kleiman Residence. The Hospital's former power plant and current Department of Homeless Services laundry facility, proposed for demolition, is currently located on the south side of Jackson Street midway between Kingsland and Debevoise Avenues. Demolition of the former power plant and relocation of the laundry facility operations will allow for a new residential building, Building 4, to be developed in its place.

There are also four privately owned standalone three-story residential buildings (Buildings 5-8). These buildings are located along the Jackson Street frontage and are currently occupied with affordable housing that were constructed in the early 1950s for accessory hospital uses with a combined 34,330 square feet of floor area. Buildings 5 (Lot 20) and 6 (Lot 23) are located at the northwest corner of the Project Area near the intersection of Kingsland Avenue and Jackson Street. Buildings 7 (Lot 28) and 8 (Lot 32) are located at the northeast corner of the Project Area near the intersection of Jackson Street and Debevoise Avenue. Subsequent to the closure of the hospital in 1982, these buildings and the parcels which they occupy were subdivided from Tax Lot 1 and were conveyed to an affordable housing developer and converted to affordable housing. Those properties, Lots 20, 23, 28, and 32, were subsequently conveyed to the Neighborhood Women HDFC in 2011 and remain affordable housing.

5. Description of the Proposed Development Site

The Development Site consists of one irregularly shaped vacant City-owned lot located at 125 Maspeth Avenue (Block 2885, Lot 1). Portions of the Development Site includes the formerly mapped street Skillman Avenue that runs east-west along the northern portion of the Development Site. The Development Site has approximately 290 feet of street frontage along Maspeth Avenue and approximately 46 feet of street frontage along Kingsland Avenue, and has approximately 51,874 square feet of total lot area. Lot 1 is located within an R7-2 district and an R7-2/C2-4 district.

6. Description of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Action would facilitate Phase 2 of the Cooper Park Commons development at Block 2885, Lot 1.

Proposed Building 2 will be located south of Skillman between Kingsland and Debevoise Avenues, and would contain a total of approximately 354,023 square feet of floor area of which approximately 343,125 square feet would be residential floor area. The remaining 10,898 square feet would contain approximately 2,064 square feet in commercial use and 8,834 square feet in community facility use. Building 2 would front on Maspeth Avenue with a street wall width of approximately 230 feet. Approximately 72 feet of this street wall's width would be located on or near the street line and would rise to 18 stories and approximately 194.17 feet high without setback. The remainder of the street wall (approximately 163'-9" in length) would rise to 12 stories and a maximum height of up to approximately 134.5 feet. Notwithstanding the maximum building height for (i) the 18-story portion of Building 2, a volume up to 207.17 feet will accommodate the height of a solar energy system and bulkhead that will exceed the permitted obstruction threshold, and (ii) the 12-story portion of Building 2, a volume up to 147.50 feet will accommodate the height of a solar energy system that will exceed the permitted obstruction threshold.

Building 2 is proposed to contain approximately 310 affordable housing units, plus one unit for a superintendent, in a mix of studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom units. Residential entrances are planned along Maspeth Avenue. While primarily a residential building, the approximately 10,898 square feet of ground floor community facility and commercial use is proposed for uses such as a health clinic, job/workforce career center, and café. It is noted that while this building would rise on or near the street line, it would be set back approximately 38'-2" from the roadbed of Maspeth Avenue due to an unusually wide sidewalk that is proposed to be planted with two rows of street trees. Under the LSGD, Proposed Building 2 would receive waivers for Height and Setback and Minimum Distance Between Buildings. Height and Setback waivers requested for Building 2 include exceeding the maximum base height of 75 feet and maximum building height of 135 feet without the required 10-foot setback from Maspeth Avenue on the 12-story portion of the building, and exceeding the maximum base height of 75 feet and a maximum building height of 135 feet and 13 stories on the 18-story portion of the building. The Minimum Distance Between Buildings waiver for Building 2 is requested for two instances along the eastern façade distance to Building 1, where a 50-foot separation is required and 43'-9" is provided, and where a 60-foot separation is required and 55'-10" is provided.

Commercial and community facility entrances are planned along Maspeth Avenue and on the eastern side of Building 2 along the pedestrian walkway between Buildings 1 and 2. The design for proposed Building 2 provides two communal recreation areas for its residents: (i) a communal upper-level terrace for general social uses; and (ii) an approximately 4,114 square foot ground-level courtyard for passive recreation. On the Maspeth Avenue frontage, an approximately 12,850 square foot widened sidewalk plaza will include plantings and seating. Additional planned amenities in Building 2 include a laundry room, fitness room, children's

playroom, landscaped courtyard, playground, tenants' lounge and meeting space, rooftop terrace, and enclosed bicycle parking spaces for approximately 156 bicycles.

7. Actions Necessary to Facilitate the Project

The Development Site was the subject of a Restrictive Declaration relating to the previous approvals for the LSGD and related actions to facilitate the development of Cooper Park Commons. The Restrictive Declaration controls the development potential, the phasing of the development and the Publicly Accessible Area on the Site.

The Applicant seeks a certification from the Chairperson of the City Planning Commission to grant a minor modification to the Restrictive Declaration. The Proposed Action would modify the requirements for phasing of the PAA and the Phase 2 Development. The Restrictive Declaration currently provides that the Phase 2 Development cannot receive a temporary certificate of occupancy until the Phase 1 PAA is substantially completed. The modifications to the Restrictive Declaration would allow the Phase 2 Development to be completed and receive a temporary certificate of occupancy independently of the Phase 1 Development and associated PAA.

No other modifications to the terms for the completion of the PAA are necessary.

8. Conclusion

The Proposed Action would modify the Restrictive Declaration related to a previous LSGD approval associated to the Project Area by changing the mechanism for which development of the Phase 1 Publicly Accessible Open Space would be required. The Proposed Action would facilitate Phase 2 of the Cooper Park Commons development on the Development Site, which includes 310 affordable housing units, plus one unit for a superintendent, 10,898 square feet of ground floor community facility and commercial use, and two communal recreation areas for the building's residents.

The Development Site is part of a larger multiphase project involving the redevelopment of the former Greenpoint Hospital involving the development of two new construction buildings and the rehabilitation of two existing buildings to provide approximately 553 affordable units that include permanently affordable units that will meet the housing needs of seniors, low-income families and individuals and the formerly homeless in search of permanent housing. The project also entails the development of a new 200-bed shelter facility to replace an existing one on the site and the implementation of a landscaped open space plan that will reintegrate the former hospital campus with the surrounding neighborhood.