

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION
ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 150058 PQX
EAST BRONX DAYCARE CENTER
November 10, 2015

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF AN application submitted by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the acquisition of property located at 1113 Colgate Avenue (Block 3736, Lot 1) for continued use as a day care center.

BACKGROUND

Approving this application will facilitate the continued use of a daycare facility for children located at 1113 Colgate Avenue, (Block 3736, Lot 1). Known as the East Bronx Day Center, (the daycare center) the site being considered by this application has been used by this daycare provider since the 1970's. The daycare center is located in Bronx Community District #9, and the building in which this center is located is zoned R6. Approval for the use of this facility was initially reviewed and approved for a period of 20 years in 1994, ULURP Application Number C 910446 PQX. At this time the lease agreement being considered by this application is valid for five years.

The East Bronx Daycare Center provides educational and recreational activities for approximately 70 pre-school age children and 36 children of school age. This facility operates Monday through Friday, commencing at 8:00 a.m. and concluding at 6:00 p.m. Children are taken to the center in the morning by their parents or guardians and are picked up in the same manner at the end of the day. As such, this facility offers the families it serves an essential service, allowing those who work ample scheduling-flexibility.

Daily activities include providing youngster with a full and balanced breakfast, lunch and snack. Supervised playtime which affords the children ample exercise is offered both indoors and out. Educational programming pursuant to the Head Start program is also provided.

The East Bronx Daycare Center is located in a two-story building, the total square footage of which is 27,770. This sum includes 20,270 square feet of interior space and a roof area used for outdoor recreational functions consisting of 7,500 square feet. A free-standing, open-air shelter also occupies a portion of the roof facilitating space that is sheltered from direct sunshine. The entire roof area is also fenced with chain-link to assure safety. The interior activity rooms are well lit and appropriately maintained. A staff of sixteen people oversee the full operation of this daycare facility. Among others, this staff consists of four teachers, four assistant teachers and a family advocate. As the teaching staff leads the day's activities, it is the family advocate that reaches out to the family if a youngster is absent from the center or requires any kind of special assistance. This facility is NOT handicapped accessible.

Development of the surrounding community is typified by one and two-family homes and low-rise multi-family buildings. Commercial activity and access to bus transportation are available on Bruckner Boulevard, approximately two blocks from the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

This application has been reviewed pursuant to SEQR and CEQR and received a Type II Designation. The City Planning Commission certified this application as complete on September 8, 2015.

COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was called by Bronx Community Board #9 on October 25, 2015. A unanimous vote recommending approval of this application was 25 in favor, zero opposed and zero abstaining.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

The Bronx Borough President convened a public hearing on November 10, 2015. Representative of the applicant were present and spoke in favor of this application. No other members of the public were in attendance and the hearing was closed.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

It is now an accepted fact that pre-school age children benefit significantly as a consequence of their participation in activities provided by daycare facilities such as those offered at the East Bronx Daycare Center. We know that the interaction between youngsters and exposing them to organized playtime and educational activities stimulates young minds and prepares them for entry into elementary school. I am especially pleased that the programming offered at this location satisfy Head Start requirements.

It is very apparent that the building in which the East Bronx Daycare Center operates is well maintained and offers youngsters a comprehensive array of indoor and outdoor programming venues. It is unfortunate however that the exterior of this facility fails to offer an inviting site for those who live in the surrounding neighborhood, work at the daycare center, or participate in the activities that take place here. The building lacks any esthetic character as it offers nothing but a dark-brick façade, interrupted by small windows, while the parapet wall is defined by a black chain link fence topped off with what appears to be wire. I do urge the property owner and tenant to consider ways by which this building can be a visual asset to the neighborhood as well as a vital destination for those young people attending the daycare programming that is so well provided.

I recommend approval of this application.