

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION  
ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 180242 PPX  
EDENWALD YMCA**

**DOCKET DESCRIPTION**

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the disposition of one city-owned property (Block 4905, Lot 2002), pursuant to zoning.

**BACKGROUND**

Approving this application will facilitate the disposition of property (the development site) located at 1250 East 229<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 4905, Lot 2002 in addition to property located in the bed of Needham Avenue (Block 4905, Lot 30). Consolidating these lots yields 127,651 square feet of property on which will be constructed the Edenwald YMCA. A previously approved ULURP, (C 860257 MMX), resulted in the demapping of Needham Avenue between East 224<sup>th</sup> and East 229<sup>th</sup> Streets. This site is vacant, composed largely of wooded areas and is located in Bronx Community District #12. It will remain zoned R5.

The site is located at 1250 East 229<sup>th</sup> Street. It is bounded by Schieffelin Place to the north, the bed of Needham Avenue to the south. The western boundary of this site is property on which the Christopher School is situated, (Block 4905, Lot 2). This facility, situated on 7.5 acres of property includes a three-story main building which is one of six buildings on the site. A guardhouse marks the entry to the Christopher School campus. It is operated by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and caters to students with special needs.

Development of this property for the purpose of providing the Edenwald community with a recreational center has its genesis in 2015. At that time the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) solicited a request for proposals (RFP) to construct such a facility. The YMCA of Greater New York was selected.

As proposed by the YMCA of Greater New York (the developer), this new facility will include a full range of athletic facilities, including a gymnasium, a full-service fitness center, an aquatic center with two swimming pools, locker rooms, a teach-in kitchen and outdoor amenities. Off-street parking will offer 150 spaces. Vehicular access to this parking facility will be via 24 foot wide curb-cut situated on East 229<sup>th</sup> Street. Hours of operation will be 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. Site security will be in place 24/7. It will employ approximately 100 people based on the seasons. Of this total, approximately 20 will be full time employees. The anticipated investment needed to bring this project to fruition will approximate \$60 million. Membership fees are to be based on the household income profile of the host community. Such fees have not yet been determined.

The full buildout of the Edenwald YMCA campus includes three programming buildings plus one locker room facility. The complex will be composed of 52,569 square feet of floor area.

Highlights of this facility include :

- Main Pavilion (three stories)

First Floor:

- Lobby: 1,665 square feet
- Community Room: 1,204 square feet
- Multi Purpose Room: 624 square feet
- Child-watch Room: 621 square feet
- Youth/family Suite: 364 square feet

Second Floor:

- Group Studio A: 2,061 square feet
- Group Studio for Cycling: 822 square feet
- Flexible Studio Space: 499 square feet

Third Floor

- Wellness Center (fitness): 5,800 square feet
- Quiet Studio: 1,000 square feet

Additional programming rooms include a teaching-kitchen, administrative offices and numerous restroom facilities. An indoor circulation corridor is specifically designed to allow for ample natural light and the viewing of programs taking place within various locations.

Pending the availability of additional financial support or a lower than anticipated cost to construct this complex, a full green roof and access to it will be constructed. This amenity, costing an additional \$1 million, would include:

- Roof Terrace: 970 square feet
- Planted Area: 512 square feet

- Gymnasium/Locker Rooms Pavilion (one story)

- Basketball Court/Gym: 7,191 square feet
- Men's Locker Room: 1,077 square feet
- Women's Locker Room: 1,296 square feet
- Universal Locker Room: 1,354 square feet

Locker room facilities are accessible from the gymnasium and aquatic center via a “dry corridor” and/or “wet corridor.”

- Aquatic Center (one-story)
  - The full aquatic center: 5,019 square feet
    - Lap Pool: depth 4 feet---to---6 feet
    - Family Pool: depth 4 feet---to---6 feet
    - Pool Viewing Lounge: 1,052 square feet
    - Sauna and steam rooms will be available

This complex will be situated on a multi-acre wooded site that currently includes approximately 250 trees some of which are mature, and shrubs. To accommodate the new complex, a significant number of trees will be removed. Where possible however, the oldest growth trees will be incorporated into the landscaping plan for this complex. This plan includes a 4,000 square foot planted green area adjacent to the entry plaza. A woodland courtyard consisting of 14,845 square feet will be situated on East 229<sup>th</sup> Street, between the main building and aquatic center building. Two additional woodland areas will be situated on Schieffelin Place, the total combined space of which will approximate 7,229 square feet.

Pedestrian access to the YMCA facility will be via East 229<sup>th</sup> Street. Visitors will follow an ADA compliant walkway 106 feet in length to the main building’s entrance/exit. Situated opposite this entrance will be a second entrance-exit which will lead onto an outdoor entry plaza composed of 5,776 square feet.

The site also includes facilities now belonging to the Christopher School. These include a guardhouse and driveway, both of which will be relocated by the YMCA. The YMCA will construct a 24 foot wide curb-cut and new guardhouse on Schieffelin Place, offering access to the Christopher School. The YMCA will also rebuild two of the three basketball courts currently used by the Christopher School.

The exterior of the three buildings envisioned for this project will include the use of glass windows specifically designed to allow natural light to enter the buildings as well as provide ambient lighting to the surrounding area after dusk. The architectural design will be contemporary in profile, featuring a metal façade with a subdued color scheme specifically to complement the natural area that defines this site. A façade composed of a translucent material will be installed on the upper portion of the three buildings. This will facilitate natural lighting inside. It is anticipated that this feature in addition to the many other energy saving installations being made, will comply with a LEED Silver rating.

Development of the surrounding community includes a residential complex belonging to the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). This complex, known as the Baychester Houses, is situated on the northeast corner of Schieffelin Place at East 229<sup>th</sup> Street. The remaining residential built-profile of this area is typified by low-rise one and two family homes and mid-rise multiple family buildings. Additional development includes Cardinal Spellman High School, which is located the north side of East 229<sup>th</sup> Street, opposite the location for the proposed YMCA. Subway service is provided via the #5 train’s Baychester Avenue station

approximately 0.37 miles from the proposed YMCA. Bus transportation operates on East 229<sup>th</sup> Street. Retail activity is found on the Boston Post Road, approximately four blocks east of the site.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION**

This application has been reviewed pursuant to CEQR and SEQR and received a Negative Declaration. The City Planning Commission certified this application as complete on February 12, 2018.

## **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING**

A public hearing was held by Bronx Community District #12 to consider this application on February 23, 2018. A unanimous vote recommending approval of this application was, 29 in favor, zero opposed and zero abstaining.

## **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING**

A public hearing was convened by the Bronx Borough President on March 8, 2018. Representatives of the applicant were present and spoke in favor of this application. All testimony given by the public recommended approval of this application. Having heard all those who sought to provide comment, the hearing was closed.

## **BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

Since being elected borough president in 2009 I have been given an opportunity to comment on matters pursuant to ULURP. Of the projects presented most warrant my support. The proposed construction of the Edenwald YMCA approving this ULURP will facilitate is one that will long be remembered for the benefits it will yield for future generations living in the Edenwald community.

This proposal represents years of determined work on the part of Edenwald residents. Realizing how vital a comprehensive recreational center is for good health, community members came together to advance a plan they were never certain could become real. Yet, because of their tenacity and unyielding conviction, today these folks can claim success. So too, working with all those who represent this community, I am especially pleased to point out that I have committed a total of \$3 million for this project and of the anticipated \$60 million dollar cost this project will require, and that a total of \$36 million has been committed by all those elected to represent Edenwald. I am also grateful to the New York City's Economic Development Corporation for its ongoing endeavor to bring the YMCA to Edenwald.

As one who takes physical fitness very seriously and as one who has been advocating for ways we in The Bronx can dramatically improve our health through our #Not62 campaign, I believe the programming and recreational opportunities this YMCA will offer cannot be surpassed. Year-round swimming activities made possible by two indoor pools, a full array of weight lifting equipment, cardio machines, a gymnasium, and even a kitchen specifically set up to offer

healthy eating courses--this is how The Bronx gets healthier. For those adults who may want to work out, but whose toddler must be watched, this YMCA will provide a safe care option for that child. Rooms for meetings, places for relaxing, a bright and naturally lit daytime environment also means this facility will be energy efficient and provide a cheerful place to meet up with friends for a good, satisfying workout.

I appreciate the "good neighbor" policy the YMCA is adopting as it pertains to the Christopher School which occupies the adjacent lot. Noting that it will be necessary to relocate a guard's station and the school's entrance/exit way, I am pleased that the "Y" will reconstruct both the station and the entrance/exit venue.

It is with gratitude to the Edenwald community that has seen this vision to fruition, that I support the unanimous decision of Bronx Community Board #12 and recommend approval of this application.