

Station Plaza

Restore NY Grant Application

December 2017



NYCEDC

Restore NY Communities Initiative: Background

Seeking Council approval to submit a grant application for \$5M to fund demolition and reconstruction as part of the Station Plaza Project in Jamaica, Queens

- New York State municipal grant program to revitalize communities and stabilize neighborhoods across New York
- Provides financial assistance for revitalization of urban centers through elimination and redevelopment of blighted structures
- Round 5 launched in September 2017
- Program Goals include
 - Revitalize urban centers
 - Induce commercial investment
- Each municipality may apply for up to \$5 million but may only submit one project for consideration; **Station Plaza in Jamaica was selected for the 2017 submittal**
- Priority given to:
 - Projects in Empire Zones and Brownfield Opportunity Areas
 - Projects that leverage other state or federal redevelopment, remediation, or planning programs
 - Projects in economically distressed communities

Restore NY Communities Initiative: Eligibility

Round 5 of Restore NY grant program launched in September 2017 by Empire State Development

- Eligible projects include:

Buildings that are:

- Vacant
- Abandoned
- Condemned
- Surplus

Can be:

- Demolished
- Deconstructed
- Rehabilitated
- Reconstructed

- Applications must include a public hearing and municipal resolution in support of the project

Station Plaza – Opportunity for Downtown Jamaica

Station Plaza will improve pedestrian safety and alleviate traffic congestion

Jamaica 2007 Rezoning Plan

- Plan envisioned a vibrant new gateway to Jamaica's commercial corridor
- In partnership with Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, Station Plaza identified as one of 3 major infrastructure improvements in Jamaica
 - Sutphin Underpass, completed in 2013
 - Atlantic Ave. Extension, construction Q1 2018

Jamaica Now Action Plan

- Plan was released in April 2015 and includes 26 'Action' items as identified by community members, stakeholders, and partners
- Station Plaza identified as a community priority to improve livability in Jamaica

Station Plaza – Project Overview

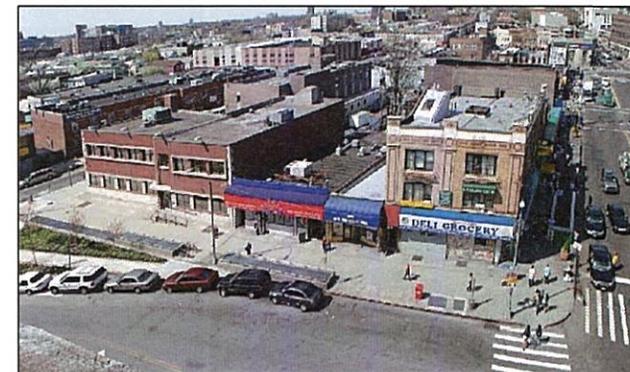
Located at the intersection of Archer Avenue and Sutphin Boulevard, Station Plaza will result in critical safety enhancements and new public plazas

- Project scope:
 - Acquisition (City controls 3 sites; negotiating for the 4th)
 - Two new plazas
 - Widened sidewalks
 - New medians
 - New subway entrances
 - Circulation improvements

- Restore NY funds needed for:
 - Demolition of four existing buildings
 - Advance the site development work as part of this major infrastructure project



Existing Conditions: Northeast Corner



Existing Conditions: Northwest Corner

Restore NY Next Steps

- **Public Hearing:** City Council Land Use Committee Meeting – Thursday, December 7th
- **Municipal Resolution:** City Council Stated Meeting- Monday, December 11th
- **Application Due:** Friday, December 15th
- **Award Notification:** Spring 2018

Dear Speaker Mark-Viverito:

I wanted to explain why I believe that Int. No. 1661-A, passed by the Land Use committee today and scheduled for a Council vote on Monday, will be a step backwards for urban agriculture in New York City:

- (1) The bill does essentially nothing except compile existing information on a single website:
 - a. The zoning code is already very clear about urban agriculture. DCP testified to this and I wrote about it in Five Borough Farms.
 - b. The DCP website explains the services available from DCP for any person who has a question about land use.
 - c. The link to ZoLa can be found by searching on Google.
 - d. Other business resources are available on the SBS website.
 - e. DPR already publishes a list of urban agriculture spaces, as does the Office of Food Policy in its Food Metrics Report.
 - f. DCAS already discloses (pursuant to local law enacted by the Council over the administration's objections) vacant spaces that might be suitable for urban agriculture.
 - g. DPR's GreenThumb site already discusses city resources available for community gardens.
 - h. Information on how produce can be distributed is available to gardeners through various sites, including GrowNYC, Harvest Home, etc.
- (2) Because the bill adds no value to farmers and gardeners (and prospective urban agriculture entrepreneurs) it will be viewed as something merely meant to appear to advance urban agriculture, when in fact it does not.
- (3) Passing it on Monday will be a step backwards, not the first step towards a full plan, because the bill will make it more difficult to regain political traction. The administration will be able to argue that the Council's vote indicates that the website itself is adequate, and that it should be given the opportunity to launch the website, then to evaluate it, before taking any additional steps. This will likely delay any movement towards an urban agriculture plan by a year or more.
- (4) There are no goals stated in the legislation (e.g., "that it is the goal of the city to increase the scale of urban agriculture in NYC and to facilitate agricultural businesses") or any other language that advocates and

entrepreneurs can point to as leverage to obtain support to grow their enterprises or to advance an urban agriculture plan.

(5) From a procedural perspective, the bill is so dramatically different than Int. No. 1661 (in fact, it bears no resemblance to 1661 in goals or requirements) that it should have been introduced as new legislation, not an amended version, and should have received two committee hearings before being voted on.

I urge the Council to consider withdrawing the bill from consideration on Monday or voting it down, in favor of resuming negotiations for an urban agriculture plan in the next Council session. I welcome the opportunity to work with you and your staff, and the urban agriculture community, to move a meaningful bill forward in the coming year.

Respectfully,

Nevin Cohen

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Liza Kent NYCED

Address: 110 William

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Cali Williams

Address: 110 William NYCED

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Eleni Boucinaris

Address: 112 William NYCED

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms