



ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER
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April 2, 2025

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

SUBJECT: 1 SYCAMORE LANE SITE PLAN APPLICATION FOR A BUDDHIST TEMPLE
DRO GAH SANG FOUNDATION CORP.
LEAD AGENCY DESIGNATION PURSUANT TO SEQRA

The application dated January 10, 2025, on behalf of Dro Gah Sang Foundation Corp., for site plan approval to construct a Buddhist Temple and related accessory Buildings on property at 1 Sycamore Lane (the "Proposed Action"), has been reviewed for compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) regulations.

The approximately four (4) acre project site is located at the northwest intersection of Sycamore Lane and Rosedale Avenue and designated on the City of White Plains Tax Map as S-138.07 B-12 Lot-11.

These premises are situated within an R1-30 (Residential One Family) Zoning District where churches and other places of worship are Permitted Principal Uses.

The Property has been developed with a two and a half story dwelling, a pool, one story pool house, tennis court and paddle tennis court.

The proposed development includes a change of use of the property from residential to a religious institution and includes renovation of an existing single family dwelling to become the living quarters for the Buddhist Master, construction of a two-story Temple (Church), a two-story accessory building, accessory structures, parking facilities, utility improvements and landscape elements.

The Applicant submitted an application dated August 1, 2024, to the White Plains Board of Appeals on behalf of Dro Gah Sang Foundation Corp., regarding variances necessary for the proposed development of the premises (the "Project Site").

The Applicant submitted an application dated January 10, 2025, for site plan approval to the Common Council in accordance with Sections 7.3 and 7.4 of the Zoning Ordinance.

At the February 3, 2025 meeting, the Common Council adopted a resolution declaring its intent to serve as Lead Agency for the environmental review of the Proposed Action and authorize the Environmental Officer to distribute the appropriate notice as required by SEQR. This notice

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was distributed on February 27, 2025. More than thirty days have elapsed since sending the notice and the City has not received any objection to the Common Council serving as Lead Agency

The Proposed Action represents Type I Action under the White Plains Zoning Ordinance and SEQR regulations. The 4-acre Property is considered "Environmentally Sensitive" as per Section 3-5-2 of the Municipal code due to onsite wetland area, stream channel and rock outcroppings. The stream is identified in the New York State Waters Index Number Long Island Sound tributary LIS 8-8; (18 NYCRR935.6).

The development of the site involves the following separate approval actions by the Common Council and the Board of Appeals:

A. Common Council for site plan approval pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 7.2.1.1, which states that the Common Council shall be the approving agency for site plans where the minimum parking requirement for proposed construction is 50 spaces or more; and pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 4.4.25 regarding a determination of wetland and watercourse buffer types on environmentally sensitive sites.

B. Board of Appeals regarding the following variances:

1. A variance regarding encroachment of structures within wetland buffer areas pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 4.4.25.5.2:

4.4.25.5.2 For a wetland or an aquifer recharge area which has been altered from its natural state to the maximum extent practicable, the following shall apply:

4.4.25.5.2.2 Where located in an RI-12.5, RI-20 or RI-30 Residential Zoning District on a site greater than 3 acres, the wetland or aquifer recharge area shall, at minimum, be maintained in its existing condition and either a 50 foot "protective buffer area" or a 50 foot "restrictive buffer area", shall be established and maintained surrounding the wetland or aquifer recharge area, as determined appropriate by the approving agency consistent with the objective of protecting the "environmentally sensitive site and features" to the maximum extent practicable, and a further 50 foot "protective buffer area" or "restrictive buffer area" shall be established and maintained around either the "protective buffer area" or "restrictive buffer area" established around the wetland or aquifer recharge area, as further determined appropriate by the approving agency consistent with the objective of protecting the "environmentally sensitive site and features" to the maximum extent practicable.

2. A variance regarding encroachment into water resource buffer areas pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 4.4.25.5.3:

4.4.25.5.3 For a water resource in its natural state, to the maximum extent practicable, the following shall apply:

4.4.25.5.3.2 Where located in an RI-12.5, RI-20 or RI-30 Residential Zoning District on a site greater than 3 acres, the preservation in its natural state of the water

resource, and the establishment and preservation in its natural state of a 50 foot "protective buffer area" on all sides of the water resource, and the further establishment and preservation of either an additional 50 foot "protective buffer area" or an additional 50 foot "restrictive buffer area," as determined appropriate by the approving agency consistent with the objective of Section 4.4.25 of this Ordinance to protect "environmentally sensitive sites and features" to the maximum extent practicable.

3. Variances for the location and yard setbacks for the off-street parking areas.

4. A variance for the number of parking spaces required.

Common Council Designation as Lead Agency.

Due to the environmentally sensitive features and regulated buffer areas located throughout the Project Site, the consideration of the requested variances together with the site plan approval as a coordinated review is warranted.

Pursuant to Section 617.6 (2)(1) of SEQR, for all Type I Actions involving more than one agency, a Lead Agency must be established prior to a determination of significance.

The Environmental Officer recommends that the Common Council designate itself as the Lead Agency for the environmental review of the Proposed Action and determined that the proposed action is a Type I action.

A resolution making the necessary findings and determinations is forwarded for the Common Council's consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Rod Johnson
Environmental Officer

**RESOLUTION OF THE WHITE PLAINS COMMON COUNCIL DESIGNATING ITSELF AS
LEAD AGENCY FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW THE PROPOSED
DEVELOPMENT OF A BUDDHIST TEMPLE AT ONE SYCAMORE LANE ON BEHALF
OF DRO GAH SANG FOUNDATION CORP.**

WHEREAS, an application, dated January 10, 2025, has been submitted on behalf of Dro Gah Sang Foundation Corp., for site plan approval to construct a Buddhist Temple and related accessory Buildings on property at 1 Sycamore Lane (the "Proposed Action") in accordance with Sections 7.3 and 7.4 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of White Plains (the "Zoning Ordinance"); and

WHEREAS, the approximately four (4) acre project site is located in the R1-30 Zoning District at the northwest intersection of Sycamore Lane and Rosedale Avenue and designated on the City of White Plains Tax Map as S-138.07 B-12 Lot-11 (the "Property"); and

WHEREAS, the Property has been developed with a two and a half story dwelling, a pool, one story pool house, tennis court and paddle tennis court; and

WHEREAS, the Proposed Action includes a change of use of the property from residential to a religious institution and includes renovation of an existing single-family dwelling to become the living quarters for the Buddhist Master, construction of a two-story Temple (Church), a two-story accessory building, accessory structures, parking facilities, utility improvements and landscape elements; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the application currently before the Common Council, Applicant submitted an application dated August 1, 2024, to the White Plains Board of Appeals on behalf of Dro Gah Sang Foundation Corp., regarding variances necessary for the proposed development of the premises (the "Project Site"); and

WHEREAS, though the Proposed Action would otherwise be an unlisted action pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act codified at New York Environmental Conservation Law § 8-0101 et seq. (the "SEQR Act") and its implementing regulations promulgated as Part 617 of Title 6 of the New York Codes Rules and Regulations (the "SEQR Regulations" and together with the SEQR Act, "SEQRA"), the Common Council preliminarily found that the Proposed Action represents a Type I Action under Section 4.4.25.4.1 the Zoning Ordinance for purposes of SEQRA. The 4-acre Property is considered "Environmentally Sensitive" as per Section 3-5-2 of the Municipal code due to onsite wetland area, a stream channel and rock outcroppings. The stream is identified in the New York State Waters Index Number Long Island Sound tributary LIS 8-8 (18 N.Y.C.R.R. §935.6); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 617.6 (2)(1) of SEQR, for all Type I Actions involving more than one agency, a Lead Agency must be established prior to a determination of significance; and

WHEREAS, due to the environmentally sensitive features and regulated buffer areas located throughout the Property, the environmental review of the Proposed Action as a coordinated review is warranted; and

WHEREAS, at its February 3, 2025 meeting, the Common Council adopted a resolution declaring its intent to serve as Lead Agency for the coordinated environmental review of the Proposed Action and authorized the Environmental Officer to distribute the appropriate notice as required by SEQR; and

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2025, in compliance with the SEQR Regulations, a Notice of Intent to Serve as Lead Agency (the "Notice") was sent to all involved and interested agencies; and

WHEREAS, more than thirty (30) days have elapsed since the distribution of the Notice and no objection to the Common Council serving as Lead Agency has been received; and

WHEREAS, the development of the site involves the following separate approval actions by the Common Council and the Board of Appeals:

- A. Common Council for site plan approval pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 7.2.1.1, which states that the Common Council shall be the approving agency for site plans where the minimum parking requirement for proposed construction is 50 spaces or more; and pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 4.4.25 regarding a determination of wetland and watercourse buffer types on environmentally sensitive sites.
- B. Board of Appeals regarding the following variances:
 1. A variance regarding encroachment of structures within wetland buffer areas pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 4.4.25.5.2:
 - 4.4.25.5.2 For a wetland or an aquifer recharge area which has been altered from its natural state, to the maximum extent practicable, the following shall apply:
 - 4.4.25.5.2.2 Where located in an R1-12.5, R1-20 or R1-30 Residential Zoning District on a site greater than 3 acres, the wetland or aquifer recharge area shall, at minimum, be maintained in its existing condition and either a 50 foot "protective buffer area" or a 50 foot "restrictive buffer area", shall be established and maintained surrounding the wetland or aquifer recharge area, as determined appropriate by the approving agency consistent with the objective of protecting the "environmentally sensitive site and features" to the maximum extent practicable, and a further 50 foot "protective buffer area" or "restrictive buffer area" shall be established and maintained around either the "protective buffer area" or "restrictive buffer area" established around the wetland or aquifer recharge area, as further determined appropriate by the approving agency consistent with the objective of protecting the "environmentally sensitive site and features" to the maximum extent practicable.
 2. A variance regarding encroachment into water resource buffer areas pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 4.4.25.5.3:
 - 4.4.25.5.3 For a water resource in its natural state, to the maximum extent practicable, the following shall apply:

4.4.25.5.3.2 Where located in an RI-12.5, RI-20 or RI-30 Residential Zoning District on a site greater than 3 acres, the preservation in its natural state of the water resource, and the establishment and preservation in its natural state of a 50 foot "protective buffer area" on all sides of the water resource, and the further establishment and preservation of either an additional 50 foot "protective buffer area" or an additional 50 foot "restrictive buffer area," as determined appropriate by the approving agency consistent with the objective of Section 4.4.25 of this Ordinance to protect "environmentally sensitive sites and features" to the maximum extent practicable.

3. Variances for the location and yard setbacks for the off-street parking areas.
4. A variance for the number of parking spaces required; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant has submitted the following documents (the "Application Materials") in support of the proposed Action:

1. Long Form Environmental Assessment Form, dated January 10, 2025.
2. Drawing and Plan Set, dated January 10, 2025, which includes:

- T-001 Cover Sheet

Civil Engineering drawings

- C-1: Existing Conditions
- C-2: Demolition Plan
- C-3: Sediment and Erosion Control Plan
- C-4: Site Layout/Grading Plan
- C-5: Stormwater Management Plan
- C-6: Utility Plan
- C-7: Utility Profiles (1 of 2)
- C-8: Utility Profiles (2 of 2)
- C-9: Infiltration System Sections
- C-10: Details
- C-11: Details
- C-12: Details
- C-13: Details
- C-14: Details
- C-15: Water Main Standard Construction Details

Landscape drawings

- L-100: Landscape Plan
- L-101: Wetland Mitigation Plan

Architectural drawings

- A-100: Architectural Site Plan and Zoning Analysis
 - A-101: Temple Building Plans & Elevations
 - A-102: Temple Building Rendering & Elevations
 - A-103: Artifacts Building & Pagoda Plans & Elevations
 - A-104: Parish Rectory (Existing Building) Plans (for information only)
3. Traffic Impact Study, prepared by DTS Provident Design Engineering, LLP, dated July 29, 2024 ("Traffic Study")
 4. Wetlands/Wetland Buffer Description & Functional Analysis of Wetlands of the proposed Buddhist Temple Site ("Wetland Report"), prepared by Paul J. Jaehnig, dated January 10, 2025.
 5. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan & Drainage Analysis, prepared by Hudson Engineering and Consulting, P.C., dated January 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Officer has recommended that the Common Council,

- (a) designate itself as the Lead Agency for the environmental review of the Proposed Action; and
- (b) determine that the Proposed Action is a Type I Action under the White Plains Zoning Ordinance and SEQR regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council has considered the Proposed Action, Application Materials and correspondence from the Environmental Officer, which constitutes the Environmental Review Record and serves as a basis for the SEQR determination; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Common Council hereby designate itself as Lead Agency for the environmental review of the Proposed Action; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Common Council hereby determines that the Proposed Action is a Type I Action under the White Plains Zoning Ordinance and SEQR regulations.