

10.0 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

This chapter includes responses to all substantive comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Metropolitan Avenue School Campus that was published on May 17, 2005. Several of the comments concerned aspects of the project that have been modified since publication of the DEIS and are therefore addressed comprehensively in the other sections of this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that review the environmental assessment areas. Where appropriate, references to the FEIS sections have also been noted in the responses to the comments received on the DEIS.

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The following are responses to written comments submitted by Mr. Tinnirello on May 26, 2005.

Section 1.1 Project Description

Comment: This report was prepared and developed prior to acceptance of a final design by the SCA. Three possible design schemes for the development of the Metropolitan Ave. Campus Schools were still under review and consideration. Except that it will consist of several 5 story buildings on an 8 acre site, will seat 2,238 students, that there will be a ball field (seating capacity unknown), adolescent play areas and 746 seat auditorium; no other site development or building design information is offered.

Response: As explained in the Foreword to the FEIS, the FEIS analyzes a development plan that has been modified from the concepts discussed in the DEIS. A copy of the current site layout has been provided in the FEIS (see P. 14).

Comment: The report indicates that the (entire) southern portion of the site is bordered by the active LIRR Babylon line (passenger and freight operations) yet does not address its impact on the school campus and student population or does it offer mitigation measures.

Response: Noise monitoring was conducted at two areas near the site, but did not record any rail passbys. The school campus's design will provide appropriate window-wall attenuation to address existing noise sources.

Comment: As a result of public hearings SCA and their design team agreed that Sybilla Street vehicular access points to the site would be eliminated; yet the report identifies Sybilla Street as a direct access to the site using 70th Road and 69th Ave. as entry points.

Response: The FEIS analyses reflect the change in vehicular access points.

Section 1.2 Probable Impacts of Proposed Project

Comment: This section indicates that the site is designated M1-1 manufacturing zoning, as such, a zoning waiver is required from the BSA. More in keeping with the present environment rather than a site for a 2,238 seat school, an evaluation should be made to rezone the site as R2 (residential). An agency akin to the Forest Hills Development Corporation (FHD) can develop the site as residential which truly will "...support and compliment the residential

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communities that adjoin the site east and north.” Additionally, it will serve as an additional tax base for the City. An argument may be given that it is bounded by incompatible DOT/DEP operations.

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: FHD is currently constructing 22-2 family homes in this area. These homes are located at 70th Road/Sybillia Street directly across the street from the Lynne and Dixie Doo Stables and DOT/DEP operations. It appears that horse stable and DOT/DEP activities impact residential development in this area.

Response: At the time the DEIS was published, the Forest Hills Swim Club still existed on the property that has since been redeveloped with these residences. The residences have been added to neighborhood descriptions in the FEIS.

Comment: This section indicates that “The project would slightly increase the demand for police and fire services.” and Section 3 (3.2.3.1 – page 24) indicates “...Police Department would not be able to assess potential impacts of the proposed development or commit resources...” At a minimum, a review of police demands at schools similar in scope and population could establish a reasonable projection of what additional manpower may be needed.

Response: By letter dated May 11, 2007, the NYPD confirmed that it continuously adjusts staffing and deployment of personnel based on a variety of factors. The NYPD’s School Safety Division would deploy personnel to area schools according to the School Safety Agent Allocation Model. According to the letter, the construction of the proposed school would likely necessitate the funding and hiring of additional school safety agents, the exact number to be determined by the Allocation Model.

Comment: “The scale of the proposed school buildings may be slightly greater than that of residential uses typical of Forest Hills Gardens,....” The proposed 5 story buildings are totally out of scale and character of the residential structures which make up Forest Hills Gardens. The aesthetics and materials of building elevations as presented at public hearings in comparison with Forest Hills Gardens architecture are uncomplimentary, incompatible and “...architecturally unremarkable”.

Response: “Slightly” has been removed from the text. Although the scale of the proposed school building is greater than surrounding, predominantly

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residential uses, it is generally acceptable for schools to be larger than their surroundings. In addition, the difference in height will be mitigated by the fact that the project site does not directly abut any of the residential homes, as it is separated by Sybilla Street.

Comment: Due to years of nonuse, this area (the school site and abandoned LIRR Rockaway Branch) has become, and is recorded as, an indigenous and migratory bird sanctuary.

Response: The school site is not listed among New York State Bird Conservation Areas by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The proposed project does not include any modifications to the former Rockaway Beach LIRR right-of-way.

Comment: "...schools would be built to a slightly larger scale than the existing residences typical of Forest Hills Gardens..." This is the second time that the disproportion of scale and aesthetics of the school project is noted in this "Executive Summary". Attempts to reconcile these extreme discrepancies are feeble, unconvincing and most of all misleading.

Response: See response above.

Comment: "The project is currently an unused, open lot that does not provide any visual amenities to the neighborhood." The installation of several 5 buildings which are out of character with their environs will not be a visual improvement and furthermore will interrupt the penetration of light and air into the community.

Response: The schools' design would consider the following factors: that the architectural treatment and details be designed at a scale that relates to the residential area instead of creating a monumental statement, and that the main entry point of the complex becomes an attractive anchor welcoming and enhancing the community. Furthermore, the school building would not result in significant shadows on surrounding areas. The open space /recreational areas planned for the site's perimeter would allow sunlight on most outdoor activities. Shadows may fall on entrances facing north as well as some parking and service areas; the architecture would respond to the orientation.

Comment: "...the proposed development would increase the impermeable surface area....and could adversely impact the rate of storm water runoff." Like the

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detailed impact studies in the EIS for increased traffic, transportation and pedestrian impacts, why wasn't there an evaluation of the amount of runoff for at least a 50 year storm conducted? Eight acres can generate a lot of runoff. Mitigation of runoff is shrugged off to the NYC DEP without giving any measure of potential water runoff flows and capacities.

Response: The storm water runoff system for the school complex will be subject to approval by NYCDEP. Runoff will be required to be controlled so that it will not result in any adverse impacts on storm water flow rates.

Comment: Although titled "Infrastructure and Energy" this section does not address design, construction and implementation issues associated with all infrastructure required including sanitary waste systems and utilities (public and private).

Response: As shown in **Figure 10**, combined sewer service (sanitary and stormwater) is already adjacent to the site as a 15-inch line (with an 8-inch stub serving the project site) is located under 69th Avenue/Sybilla Street. Furthermore, according to CEQR, "Because of the size of the City's water supply system and because the City is committed to maintaining adequate water supply and pressure for all users, few actions (those using more than 1 million gallons per day) would have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts on that system." Private utility suppliers are required to service the proposed school, but as the surrounding area is developed, no impacts are expected.

Comment: "...project generated traffic...will result in traffic impacts at six intersections in the AM peak and six intersections in the PM peak,..." Mitigation measures recommended are limited to changing traffic light phases by seconds and provided dedicated turn lanes onto/off Metropolitan Ave. Currently, AM/PM peak traffic is heavy on Metropolitan Ave.; why not initiate these mitigation measures now to observe their impact on current conditions?

Response: The New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) requires that roadway improvements, and other transportation-related mitigation measures that are specified as conditions of approval for a particular development project, be in-place just prior to opening and occupancy of the development. As such, they are tailored to accommodate future build traffic conditions (including traffic from the development) which may vary considerably from existing traffic conditions. Consequently, implementing mitigation measures intended for future conditions *under existing conditions* likely would result in

inefficient traffic operations for motorists currently traveling on the roadway system.

Comment: "...project would introduce a demand for 129 additional parking spaces" for school staff. No estimate is given to the demand for additional parking from H.S. seniors who will drive to school, demands generated by the 746 seat auditorium or the additional traffic demands (vehicular/pedestrian) generated by the ball fields (home/visiting teams, onlookers, etc.). No mention is made to seating capacity of ball fields. If football is offered, the ball fields can be in use near 12 months out of the year. The study proposes that overflow parking can spill out to the residential community streets. This is an unacceptable solution to this issue. There is no indication of the number of on site parking spaces provided and projected number of cars that would seek parking in the residential community.

Response: Approximately 157 on-site parking spaces are proposed to be available for faculty and staff along the roadways planned to abut the schools complex. High school students were assumed to use public transit (20-45%), be dropped-off by another party (10-15%), use special education vans (up to 25%), or walk (10 - 65%). No high school students were assumed to drive and park. Although it is conceivable that some high school seniors could drive and park on streets in the surrounding neighborhoods, this number would be negligible considering the fraction of seniors who would be qualified for a driver's license (the minimum driving age in the five-borough metropolitan area is 18), the lack of designated student parking spaces on-site, and the low likelihood that seniors at the school living throughout the five-borough area would both have access to a private auto and perceive driving as a efficient mode of transport to and from this particular site from a travel time perspective.

Special events (*i.e.*, those held in the auditorium and on the athletic fields) occur infrequently, and the analysis of traffic conditions under these conditions is beyond the scope of this study. The magnitude of particular special events cannot be quantified at this time because specific programming is not available. Although the parking analysis does not address special events, the demand associated them may need to be absorbed along local streets in the surrounding neighborhoods, should the number of on-site accessory spaces be insufficient.

Comment: Build aspects of the school program projects an increase in vehicular traffic compared with existing levels. The study, focused at the intersection of

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Woodhaven/Metropolitan Ave. indicates that there will be no difference in carbon monoxide (CO) levels in 2008 with build or no build alternatives. This is questionable; however, additional testing, at a minimum, should be done at the Selfridge Street/Metropolitan Ave. entrance to the site during the full a.m. and p.m. peak periods.

Response: The selection of the intersection to model and the modeling procedures were conducted according to guidance provided in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. To assess carbon monoxide due to vehicular traffic, a preliminary evaluation of intersections was conducted to identify those with the potential to violate the NAAQS or the *CEQR Technical Manual* thresholds for CO. Based on the *CEQR Technical Manual* and subsequent revisions to its procedures, actions resulting in 100 or more auto trips through an intersection may warrant further analysis for CO.

The traffic periods evaluated for impacts include the weekday AM (7:15-8:15 am) and PM (3:00 – 4:00 pm) peak hours. Among the signalized intersections with 100 or more project-generated vehicles, one consistently shows high intersection volumes coupled with a low LOS and a relatively high project-generated volume: Woodhaven/Metropolitan Avenue. This intersection is therefore considered the worst-case intersection, and it was modeled with MOBILE6.2 and CAL3QHC. The peak AM period has the highest volumes and is selected as the worst case for modeling. The FEIS also includes CO modeling for the intersection of Metropolitan Avenue and Selfridge Street based on the most recent traffic projections because it showed the highest project-generated volumes.

The modeled results showed compliance with both the NAAQS and the New York City de minimis standards. If the results for the modeled worst-case intersection show compliance with the NAAQS and the New York City de minimis standards under Build Conditions, then the remaining intersections are also presumed to be in compliance.

Comment: This section indicates that there will be no noise impacts at 70th Road/Sybilla Street even though this is the proposed secondary access/egress to the school site in this study. This proposed secondary access/egress is right in the middle of this residential area of Forest Hills Gardens south.

Response: 70th Road/Sybilla Street is no longer a proposed secondary access/egress to the school site. As discussed in the FEIS, vehicular access from 70th Road/Sybilla Street to the site will be limited to emergency access.

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Comment: The worst case scenario for this (70th Road) “driveway” is that drivers looking to avoid delays and backup of vehicles coming from or going onto Metropolitan Ave. will divert to 70th Road/Sybilla Street thereby increase traffic, noise and CO levels at this intersection. Study should include probable impacts of this worst case scenario if 70th Road/Sybilla Street remain as a secondary access/egress.

Response: See response above.

Comment: Noise from the ball fields at 69th Ave/Sybilla Street and events hosted by the 746 seat auditorium generally will be after normal school hours and will generate after school pedestrian/vehicular traffic to dusk and into evening hours. Impacts of these activities should be evaluated and included in this study.

Response: The traffic and noise impact studies, based on guidance from the CEQR Technical Manual, estimate typical, daily, worst-case conditions, not necessarily special events. Events and games are not included in the study, as they are atypical situations.

Comment: “These VOCs were determined to originate from off site groundwater contamination plumes... being investigated and remediated...” “Plumes” indicates wide, uncontrollable and extensive areas. Will remediation efforts eliminate contamination completely? Will off site contamination plumes continue to migrate and contaminate the site? If so, what impact will it have on the continued use of the school campus in that remediation measures are required now prior to school construction?

Response: The groundwater analytical data clearly demonstrate that from a Site-wide perspective, concentrations of TCA and PCE within the on-site monitoring wells and downgradient have been non-detect or at concentrations below the groundwater quality standards. Low levels of PCE, and to a lesser extent TCA, have been documented in background wells (*i.e.*, up gradient sentinel wells), and in the few occasions where groundwater quality standards have been exceeded, the detected concentrations have been below or comparable to background concentrations.

Groundwater is not used for consumption at the site, so therefore the only potential exposure pathway for very low level VOCs in groundwater would be via soil gas migrating into indoor air. To protect against this unlikely scenario, a vapor barrier and active sub-slab depressurization system have

been designed for the school and will be installed. The potential for residual vapors impacting indoor air quality at the school can be easily mitigated by the incorporation of a vapor barrier and actively operated sub-slab depressurization system. A vapor barrier and active sub-slab depressurization system are recognized by the NYSDEC and by the NYSDOH Final Guidance Document (October, 2006) as effective measures to address potential exposure pathways from subsurface vapors. The incorporation of these engineering controls into the construction of the school will assure that residual on-site contaminant levels do not pose an unacceptable risk to school occupants.

Comment: Presentations at public hearings stated that remediation efforts will continue through 2005 and into 2006. The study indicates that construction on the project will begin in the Summer of 2005. What stage of completion will the remediation efforts be and what impact will construction activities, in somewhat contaminated soil, have on the local residential environment?

Response: Based on the NYSDEC's evaluation of the site remediation, the remedial system was shut down in March, 2007, on an interim basis and post-remediation groundwater monitoring commenced in April, 2007, to verify continued attainment of the remedial action objectives. The post-remediation monitoring will be performed on a monthly basis from April, 2007, through July, 2007, when construction of the new school is scheduled to begin. At that time, a petition for the permanent removal of the AS/SVE system will be submitted to NYSDEC.

The remediation system operated at this site to address contaminated groundwater found more than 60 feet below the surface. Soils above the watertable at the site are not considered to be contaminated based on previous investigations, and therefore, do not pose a risk to surrounding properties. However, as an added safeguard, a community air monitoring plan will be implemented during construction to assure that earth moving activities do not negatively affect the properties downwind of the construction site.

Comment: This section is extremely limited in its scope and evaluation of construction impacts. It limits itself to issues of traffic and dust. "Local noise and traffic impacts...would occur primarily as a result of truck traffic...these impacts are not expected to be significant." On an eight hour work day the study projects eight trucks per hour (each truck creating noise equivalent to that of 47 cars). It does not include concurrent noises created on site by workers, heavy equipment activity, pile driving, generators, etc.

Response: Temporary construction noise impacts would occur during the 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. period on weekdays. Construction noise is regulated by the New York City Noise Code and by the U.S. Environmental Protection Administration noise emission standards for construction equipment. Locating noisy equipment away from site boundaries would help reduce these temporary noise impacts.

Comment: The impact (noise and quality of life) of off site construction activities, connections to public and private utility lines, is not addressed. Off site construction activity impacts on local residents and retailers with respect to accessibility, internal movement (pedestrian/vehicular) and required diverted traffic patterns resulting from installing infrastructure are not addressed.

Response: As stated above, construction of the proposed development would result in short-term impacts on adjacent properties. However, it is expected that the majority of construction-related vehicular trips would be coming from Metropolitan Avenue, and not the local street network, so as to minimize impacts on local residents.

Section 1.3 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Comment: Alternative site analysis is limited to only a shopping plaza and does not indicate type and extent of shopping plaza evaluated. Other alternatives should be evaluated; i.e. residential development (more in keeping with the Forest Hills Gardens community as well as a new tax resource for the City) or extension of Forest Park (would serve as a community amenity and indigenous and migratory bird sanctuary).

Response: The Shopping Plaza Alternative was developed and included in the DEIS and FEIS because it represents uses that are allowed as-of-right under the applicable zoning and had been advanced by the site's prior owner.

Comment: Note to SCA: When evaluating potential sites for development of a new schools consideration should be given to sites in District 5 where there is 33+% more "Vacant Space/Recreation" than in District 6. (Table 10, page 15 of the EIS) Sites more suitable for this type of development may be located in District 5.

Response: Possible sites for the school were reviewed by the New York City Department of Education, and this site received final site selection approval in 1999. The purpose of this Environmental Impact Statement is not to discuss site

selection, but to analyze potential impacts of the modified project proposed for this site.

Comment: "...the proposed...schools could have significant adverse impacts on traffic and noise." The operative word here is "significant".

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: As iterated in 1.2.7 (paragraph 1) why not initiate these suggested traffic mitigation measures now to observe their effect on current and future traffic conditions?

Response: See response above regarding standard NYCDOT policy for implementing mitigation measures.

Comment: "...analysis...determined that noise from both site generated traffic and the school's playgrounds could have significant (underline significant) impacts on homes in the immediate area. These impacts would not be mitigated." No mitigation recommendations? This is UNACCEPTABLE and is noncompliant with BSA requirements to override existing zoning. (as M1-1 schools are not permitted as-of right). The site must be rezoned via approval of the BSA special permit for a school to be constructed in M1-1 – Zoning Resolution, Section 73-19. The project meets neither the noise criterion nor several other requirements for BSA approval.

Response: The SCA would seek a zoning override from the New York City Deputy Mayor's Office to permit the proposed school complex. This mayoral override eliminates the need for BSA special permit. Any reference to a BSA permit has been removed, as it was included in error.

Section 2.0 Project Description

Comment: Indicates the southern perimeter of the site is Union Turnpike which in fact it is an active passenger and freight branch of the LIRR Babylon line.

Infers that Ursula Place is an active through street (Sybilla St./70th Ave. to 70th Road) which in fact is closed and occupied by the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Baseball fields and Super Stop and Shop (SS&S) referred to here are segregated from the school site by the active LIRR Babylon line.

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Infers that Woodhaven Blvd. is the primary access and egress to Home Depot and the Sports Authority when in fact the primary access and egress to these sites is Trotting Course Lane south off Metropolitan Ave. Additionally, a car wash (Cars-a-Poppin) is being replaced by a bigger and better car wash.

Response: Comments noted. Necessary revisions have been made in the text of the FEIS. Ursula Place is a mapped street; however, it has not been built and is not open to the public.

Section 2.2 Project Site

Comment: Project Site Location (map) –Shows Ursula Place as an active extension of 70th Ave. doglegging east to 70th Road. Not so, it's occupied by DOT.

Response: As stated above, Ursula Place appears on the official City Map, although it is not in public use. The map included within the FEIS has been revised accordingly.

Comment: Sanborn Map does not identify the Metropolitan Avenue School Campus site.

Response: The site has been identified on the Sanborn map.

Comment: Same comment for the tax lot map as that for Figure 1 above.

Response: The site has been identified on the tax lot map.

Section 2.3 Proposed Project

Comment: Indicates a total staff and student population of 2416±. Mentions need for change of rezoning from M1-1 and cites "Zoning Resolution" (Section 73-19) as vehicle for effecting change.

Response: Comments noted. The DEIS discussed the need for zoning overrides, not a "change of rezoning."

Section 2.4 Project Status

Comment: As a result of the Public Hearings mentioned herein certain design concessions were made to community leaders and their constituents by the SCA and their design consultants. These include:

- 1. Eliminating 70th Road/Sybilla Street as a secondary access/egress artery.*

2. *Eliminate the 2 building concept for the school building.*

Response: The pedestrian entrance on Sybilla Street has been removed from the FEIS. The DEIS described a one-building concept that would accommodate four school organizations; the project has since been modified so one building would accommodate two organizations.

Section 3.1 Land Use and Zoning

Comment: Table 1 indicates that Community Board #6 (CB6), district of the school site, consists of 34+% more residential use than Community Board #5 (CB5), 3.7% more schools than CB6 and that CB6 has .5% less parking facilities than CB5. Additionally, it indicates that there is 33+% more open space in CB5. Efforts should be made to seek a more suitable site for a school in CB5.

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: Mention is made of the SS&S "...under construction...". At the time of the completion and distribution of this draft report SS&S had been operating at full capacity for approximately 10 months. It appears the study did not include actual traffic impacts on generated by the SS&S and doesn't address the auto parts distribution outlet east of SS&S on Union Turnpike.

Response: As explained in the Foreword to the FEIS, the FEIS analyses include additional data that was compiled since publication of the DEIS. New traffic counts were taken in January, 2007, which includes trips to and from the SS&S.

Comment: The study does not mention the 22-2 family housing development under construction on 70th Road east of the DOT. Was this considered in the study, specifically infrastructure, traffic and parking???

Response: The housing development has been added to the study and included in the traffic and parking analyses in the FEIS.

Comment: Study indicates "...a few automobile related and other commercial and retail activities are located along Metropolitan Ave..." The fact of the matter is that Metropolitan Ave., within the 7 blocks of the study area, contains over 60 (combined) active commercial, retail, and professional, institutional auto related establishments.

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Response: The wording of this sentence has been changed to reflect more accurately the neighborhood's land use.

Comment: Figure 5 – Existing Land Use:

- a. Does not reflect true picture of commercial, retail, professional and institutional establishments on Metropolitan Ave.*
- b. Identifies the new 22-2 family house development site (east side of 70th Road) as recreational.*
- c. Does not identify the SS&S or auto parts distribution center locations.*
- d. Does not identify vacant buildings (potential for future development).*
- e. Identifies Forest Park on south side of Union Turnpike as commercial.*

Response: The land use survey included in the DEIS was conducted in August, 2004, and reflects land use at that time. However, the SS&S and residential development have been added to the land use figure in the FEIS. Forest Park is correctly identified as public open space on the map.

Comment: Indicates that schools are permitted in M1-1 districts only by special permit of the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA). Has this project been reviewed and approved by the BSA? If so on what design and grounds?

Response: The SCA would seek a zoning override from the New York City Deputy Mayor's Office to permit the proposed school campus. This mayoral override eliminates the need for BSA special permit. Reference to the BSA was an error that has been corrected.

Comment: Indicates that former occupants of the site were single story buildings with large footprints with accessory parking. This project report recommends the majority of accessory parking for the school be the local residential streets. What on site parking is provided?

Response: Approximately 157 parking spaces will be provided on-site for faculty and staff.

Comment: Indicates that Urbahn (authors of the report) discussed what other development projects planned for this area through 2008 with Queens Department of City Planning and CB6; yet it does not mention the 22-2 family housing development on 70th Road. It does mention the SS&S and its opening date of late 2004. This infers that by the distribution date of this draft report the data used as the basis for this study is at least one year old.

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Response: Comment noted.

Comment: Section indicates that the school will be a 5 story structure and then goes on to say "...buildings...". Will there be more than one 5 story building?

Response: There will be one five-story school structure on the project site.

Comment: Section indicates "...remainder of the site to be used for outdoor recreation, parking and circulation. How many parking spaces will be provided on site?"

Response: Approximately 157 on-site parking spaces are proposed to be available for faculty and staff along the roadways proposed to abut the schools complex.

Comment: Mentions the LIRR Babylon line but not that it is active.

Response: The text in the FEIS indicates that the line is active.

Comment: Indicates that BSA special permit approval occurs only after certain criterion are met. These criterion are:

- (a) There is no practical possibility of obtaining a school site of adequate size in a district where it is permitted as-of-right. Did BSA/a consultant investigate this possibility in CB5?*
- (b) That a school is located no more than 400 feet from boundary of district which permits as-of right. Have sites in CB District 5 been evaluated?*
- (c) Adequate separation from noise, traffic and other adverse effects. Study indicates that there will be significant adverse noise impacts, however no mitigation measures are recommended.*
- (d) The movement of traffic through streets on which the school is located can be controlled as to protect children. Currently traffic on Metropolitan Ave. is extremely heavy during school peak periods mentioned herein and will be exacerbated with the installation of the new school.*

Response: The SCA would seek a zoning override from the NYC Deputy Mayor's Office to permit the proposed school campus. This override would apply only to the project site and would have no impact on other properties.

Comment: Indicates that the schools can contain a total of 814,000 sq. ft. floor area and then goes on to say that 4 buildings will contain 303,600 sq. ft. zoning floor area. Numbers don't seem to work out.

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Response: Since the project site contains approximately 339,000 sq. ft. of lot area, a school on the site could contain a total of up to 814,000 sq. ft. in floor area (2.4 FAR). Since the proposed school design only contains 298,678 sq. ft. of zoning floor area, this is well below the maximum bulk permitted by the zoning district.

Comment: Not all Present to 2008 developments were identified; i.e. 22-2 family housing development on 70th Road. There are several large vacant properties on Metropolitan Ave. in the study area which were not addressed as having potential for future development and what impact development might have on a “build” scenario.

Response: The FEIS analyses include the residential development on 70th Road which replaced the Forest Hills Swim Club and development of the retail/grocery project on the west side of the Rockaway Beach LIRR right-of-way.

Section 3.2.4 Probable Impacts of the Proposed Project

Comment: Indicates that police would not be able to assess potential impacts of the new school. A base line can be established by reviewing police resources required at existing schools similar in type and population.

Response: As stated in the response to an earlier comment, the NYPD has confirmed that it continuously adjusts staffing and deployment of personnel based on a variety of factors and would do so in the case of this project.

Comment: Indicates “Almost all the students....already live in the surrounding neighborhoods and make use of these (health care) services.” What % of the students do not live in the immediate surrounding area and what provisions should be made for immediate/emergency pediatric and adolescent care? The 2 districts (CB5 & 6) which will make up the majority of the student population are quite extensive, as detailed on page 15 – 3.1.1, and many students will be remote from their neighborhood health care services.

Response: Students are already serviced by health care in their home neighborhood. The proposed facility will have health care professionals on site to address any medical needs during school hours.

Comment: What impact would the school recreation facilities have on existing public/private recreational facilities?

Response: The project would not have any adverse impacts upon public/private recreation areas since the schools would collectively be located on a campus - like site, and the campus includes its own playground/recreation areas.

Comment: The study indicates an additional 3.5 tons of solid waste (trash) be generated by this project, that is just for the projected 2,416 daily staff/student population. It does not address waste generated by school support services, by after school activities generated by ball fields and auditorium as well as the new 22-2 family residential development. The study has yet to address increased sanitary waste solids impacts.

Response: Even with additional waste generated by after school activities, the total amount of solid waste generated by the project is insignificant relative to the 5,100 tons of trash collected every day in Queens. In addition, the residential development is not expected to cause significant adverse impacts to solid waste collection.

Section 3.3 Neighborhood Character

Comment: Combined student population (4 schools 2,238 students) to combined staff/teacher (teacher population unknown) population (177) equates to 18 students per staff/teacher. When the numbers of "staff" is deleted from the equation the student per teacher count rises.

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: Mention is made to "... custodial facilities, a centralized kitchen, a dining area, and 746-seat auditorium." Are these considered in the solid waste section (3.2.3.6 above)?

Response: According to CEQR, solid waste generation estimates are based on the number of school seats and encompasses all waste generated by school operations.

Comment: Mentions increased traffic resulting from the SS&S. As indicated above, the SS&S has in fact increased traffic on Metro. Ave., Woodhaven Blvd. and Union Turnpike. Are actual counts part of the traffic study equation?

Response: The FEIS traffic analyses incorporate traffic data collected in January, 2007, which include traffic resulting from the SS&S.

Section 3.4 Historic and Archeological Resources

Comment: Block 3886, Lots 800 to 830; how many 50ft. x 100ft. lots (typical size of existing residential lots) are there in Block 3886, Lots 800 to 830?

Response: The text reads Block 3886, Lots 800 & 830.

Section 3.5 Urban Design and Aesthetics

Comment: Indicates that DOT & DEP operate garage and asphalt facilities. Were there soil core samples taken in these areas; is there potential for toxics migrating via ground water back onto the site? Is this the source of the “off site groundwater contamination plumes” cited in the “Executive Summary”?

Response: The DOT facility is located down gradient or cross gradient relative to the subject site, and therefore, there is not a potential for contaminants to migrate onto the site from the DOT property.

Comment: Indicates that the store fronts on Metropolitan Ave. make up commercial and retail establishments but makes no mention of the residential units above these store fronts with entries on Metropolitan Ave.

Response: Land use discussion has been modified to incorporate these residential units.

Comment: Refers to a nonexistent fire house on Metropolitan Ave. and does not mention the Forest Hills ambulance headquarters across from the main entrance to the school.

Response: The fire house has been eliminated from the discussion and reference to the ambulance headquarters has been added.

Comment: The main access/egress to a busy car wash, Sports Authority and Home Depot is from Metropolitan Ave. onto Trotting Course Lane. This intersection is approximately 200 feet from the main entrance to the site.

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: Indicates that DOT/DEP, horse stables and the closed Swim Club site on 70th Road do not relate to the school site. The secondary access/egress to the school site, as referred to in this EIS, runs along the north perimeter of the

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DOT/DEP site and dumps right into the Swim Club site and horse stables on 70th Road.

Response: The purpose of this statement is to indicate that although these activities are adjacent to the site, they do not currently utilize the site.

Comment: "Without the proposed schools, the site would likely remain vacant." There have been proposals from Forest City Ratner to develop the site. As being done with the Swim Club site the site could be handled by an outfit like Forest Hills Development Corporation as residential or be developed as an extension to Forest Hills Park with pedestrian bridges over the LIRR to SS&S.

Response: See response to comments in Section 1.3.

Comment: The urban design issues relative to a 5 story, 4 building school identified herein are not at all compatible with or complementary to the residential environs of Forest Hills Gardens.

-The 5 story school elevations lies in the southern exposure of the community and will block light and air onto homes on the north side of the school site.

-The building is totally out of scale with the 2 story frame homes in the immediate area.

-Pedestrian and service access (via the proposed 70th Road access) will traverse right through the middle of the residential community.

-Architectural materials as presented at public hearings are not compatible or complementary to its residential environment or existing schools in the area.

Response: The schools' design would consider the following factors: (1) that the architectural treatment and details be designed at a scale that relates to the residential area instead of creating a monumental statement; and (2) that the main entry point of the complex becomes an attractive anchor, welcoming and enhancing the community. The difference in height will be mitigated by the fact that the project site will not directly abut any of the residential homes, as it is separated by Sybilla Street. Furthermore, the school building will not result in significant shadows on surrounding areas. The open space /recreational areas planned for the site's perimeter would allow sunlight on most outdoor activities. Shadows may fall on entrances facing north as well as some parking and service areas.

Section 3.6 Infrastructure and Energy

Comment: Addresses the adequacy of water supply, storm sewer (no mention of sanitary sewers) and natural gas (no mention of electric and telephone) but does not indicate how access to these utilities should be handled in order to minimize disruption to local stores, emergency services and residences.

Response: The EIS refers to combined sewers which carry both stormwater and wastewater in the same mains. According to the CEQR Technical Manual, “All new structures requiring heating and cooling are subject to the New York State Energy Conservation Code, which reflect state and City energy policy. Therefore, those actions that would result in new construction . . . would not create adverse energy impacts and would not require a detailed energy assessment.” Detailed analysis is only required for actions which could significantly affect the transmission or generation of energy.

Comment: “It is expected by the City that the implementation of water conservation... measures will result in a decline in the Bowery Bay Plants flow.” And if conservation measures are not effective, what then? Will existing facilities be adequate?

Response: According to the CEQR Technical Manual, “Because of the size of the City’s water supply system and because the City is committed to maintaining adequate water supply and pressure for all users, few actions (those using more than 1 million gallons per day) would have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts on that system.” Also, a connection would be subject to review by DEP, which may require design measures necessary to maintain local water pressure.

Comment: Addresses student population water usage but not staff/teachers, visitors and additional personage generated by athletic fields and auditorium.

Response: According to the CEQR Technical Manual, water usage rates for schools are determined by the number of seats and the square footage.

Comment: Indicates 97,500 gpd additional water required and that it is negligible given the City’s daily demands. What’s the impact on the immediate area’s demands and infrastructure.

Response: See above response regarding the City’s water supply system.

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Comment: Indicates that sanitary sewer water flows to Bowery Bay would be comparable to the additional water demands. What about sanitary solids, are they included? What has to happen to connect to existing infrastructure?

Response: See previous responses above and in Section 1.2 related to sewer service.

Section 3.7 Traffic and Transportation

Comment: Data on Metropolitan Ave. parking regulations is erroneous. Parking regulations are:

North side - No parking 7:00 - 9:00am; 2 hour meter parking until 7:00pm.

South side - No parking 7:30 - 8:00am; 2 hour meter parking until 7:00pm.

Response: Parking regulations have been corrected.

Comment: Union Turnpike section indicates it as access to Grand Central Parkway and the Van Wyck Expressway. It also provides access to the Jackie Robinson Parkway as well as SS&S, auto parts distribution center and the 21 story Crescents Apartment building, all of which are within the school study area.

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: Sybilla Street/69th Ave. section infers that 69th Ave is a two-way street, it's one way north bound only. Sybilla Street has parking on both sides. Indicates that Sybilla Street is proposed to provide direct access to the site. Not in any of the proposals presented at public hearings.

Response: The pedestrian entrance on Sybilla Street is no longer part of the project design and has been removed from the FEIS.

Comment: Although Sybilla/70th Road Street is addressed as secondary access to the school site, in this report no traffic data was gathered for evaluation at this intersection. Why?

Response: The proposed school access driveway located south of 70th Road/Sybilla Street will be used for emergencies only. As such, detailed analysis of the 70th Road/Sybilla Street intersection was not conducted.

Comment: Trotting Course Lane/ Metropolitan Ave. Re-allocate 2 seconds of green time from north/south phase to east/west phase. What impact will this have on east/west traffic at Woodhaven Blvd. and Selfridge Street lighted intersections

and other intersections further east and west on Metropolitan Ave.? What impact will it have on north, south, east and west traffic entering and leaving from Home Depot, Sports Authority and the car wash?

Response: The mitigation measures recommended for the signalized Trotting Course Lane/Metropolitan Avenue intersection have been updated in the most recent (2007) version of the traffic study included in the FEIS. The recommended mitigation now calls for restricting parking along both sides of Metropolitan Avenue, west of Trotting Course Lane, during the weekday PM peak period, and modifying the traffic signal phasing at the intersection to accommodate a leading westbound phase, followed by a concurrent east-west phase, and a northbound phase. These improvements will reduce vehicular delays for westbound through traffic along Metropolitan Avenue at this intersection by approximately 16 seconds during the critical weekday PM peak hour (under Mitigated Build conditions, relative to Existing conditions), and reduce vehicular delays for eastbound through traffic by approximately six seconds during the critical weekday PM peak hour. No change in the delay to traffic on the northbound approach to this intersection is projected during the weekday AM peak hour (under Mitigated Build conditions, relative to No-Build conditions). During the weekday PM peak hour, delays on the northbound approach are projected to decrease by approximately 3 seconds.

Comment: Selfridge Street/Metropolitan Ave. Proposes to mitigate traffic backups by modifying existing traffic signal to include a left turn arrow and street paving to create a left turn only lane and a shared left/right turn lane. To do this on this narrow two way street a minimum of 4 parking spaces on both sides of the street must be eliminated (total 8 parking spaces eliminated).

Response: The recommended mitigation measures for the signalized Selfridge Street/Metropolitan Avenue intersection involves elimination of on-street parking spaces on both sides of Metropolitan Avenue east and west of Selfridge Street during the weekday PM peak period. No separate protected left-turn arrow phase, or additional paving or widening, is recommended on Metropolitan Avenue. The signalized Selfridge Street/Metropolitan Avenue intersection is the only proposed access point for the schools campus, and as such, must accommodate a concentration of new site-generated vehicle trips, as well as new pedestrian crossing movements by students, faculty and staff. The parking restriction is needed to maintain the east-west capacity (*i.e.*, two travel lanes in each direction) along Metropolitan Avenue in the vicinity of this intersection, and provides additional space for queued eastbound right-turning and westbound left-turning vehicles waiting to enter the schools

complex from Metropolitan Avenue. This capacity will compensate for the overall loss of intersection capacity associated with introducing an additional signal phase to serve vehicular traffic exiting the proposed school driveway. Introducing the additional signal phase with no restriction of on-street parking will reduce the green time currently allocated to motorists traveling on Metropolitan Avenue and on Selfridge Street, resulting in significantly increased delays for motorists on these roadways.

Comment: Another mitigation measure proposed is to eliminate pm parking (north and south sides of Metropolitan Ave.) 100 feet on both sides of the intersection during pm peak (why not am peak too?). 100 feet parking ban as proposed translates to the temporary elimination of 20 parking spaces (20 feet per car). Was the elimination of these 28 parking spaces included when the study came up with 603 off site parking spaces? Elimination of these parking spaces will have a significant adverse impact on the retailers 1 1/2 blocks on both sides of the intersection (many people shop on there way home from work).

Response: The parking restriction along Metropolitan Avenue described above is already in place during the weekday AM peak period. The additional restriction during the weekday PM peak period is required to mitigate the traffic-related impacts of the proposed schools complex. The SCA acknowledges the local community's concerns regarding the implementation of additional parking restrictions in the area, particularly along Metropolitan Avenue, and as such, has identified an alternative Build scenario whereby the existing parking regulations for all on-street parking spaces are maintained.

Comment: 69th Ave./Metropolitan Ave. Re-allocate 2 seconds green time from north/south phase to east/west phase (Metropolitan Ave.). Currently traffic backs up on 69th Ave. from Selfridge. When light is green from 69th Ave. onto Metropolitan Ave. it's red at Selfridge Street (a distance of approximately 80 feet).

Response: The passenger drop-off area on 69th Avenue that was previously shown on the site plan has been removed from proposal. Because no additional site-generated traffic volumes are projected on the northbound approach of 69th Avenue at its intersection with Metropolitan Avenue, and there is no significant impact on the southbound approach, no change to the existing signal timing parameters are recommended at this intersection. The coordination of traffic signals and mitigation of existing issues related to the progression of traffic along arterial roadways (such as Metropolitan Avenue)

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in New York City are engineering functions under the jurisdiction of the New York City Department of Transportation.

Comment: 70th Road/Sybilla Street. Cited as the proposed secondary access/egress to the school site as well as Sybilla Street cited as direct access to the school site (page 51,3.7.1.1), why wasn't this intersection monitored?

Response: The access driveway on the south side of Metropolitan Avenue, opposite Selfridge Street, will serve as the primary vehicular access point to and from the site.

Comment: The parking survey extends west across Woodhaven Blvd. (a busy roadway akin to Queens Blvd. in size and traffic) to 88th Street, south/east 7 blocks along Metropolitan Ave. and 1 block south and 6 blocks and north/east 6 blocks east and 4 blocks north towards Forest Hills Gardens proper. The survey indicates its findings as 603 spaces available throughout residential neighborhoods. The study suggests for parking will spill over into the residential neighborhood. It does not note that the majority of the spaces in the immediate vicinity of the school (and throughout most of the area) are much smaller than average (13 feet between driveways) City parking space. Note - The average midsize automobile is 15ft. x 6in.; average economy car is 14ft. x 6in.). Also, does not identify the distribution and location of the 603 available residential spaces. How many are ¼ mile away?

Response: The details of the parking survey are summarized in the Technical Appendix accompanying the study. All of the parking spaces identified in the study are located within ¼-mile of the proposed site, and can be reached via an approximate 10-minute walk from the proposed school site.

Comment: The study does not indicate the number of on site parking spaces.

Response: See previous response.

Comment: The study does not count the 22-2 family home street parking demands.

Response: The revised parking survey includes demand from the residential development.

Comment: The study indicates the majority of the parking demand will be accommodated off site as far as ¼ mile from the site. No on site parking is discussed under a build scenario. Study indications are that a few students

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(seniors) will drive to school but doesn't apply a number of students. It does not address after school traffic generated by the ball fields (no number of stadium seats are given) or the 746 seat auditorium. Commentary Note: Parking on streets in the area is a problem now for residents because of the less than average size curb side parking spaces.

Response: See previous responses regarding number of on-site parking spaces and special events.

Comment: The study indicates that 75%+ of pedestrian traffic will be the students arriving and leaving by public transportation. Based on the numbers presented this translates to 1679+ pedestrians (838+ per hour). Sidewalks in the residential neighborhood are 4 feet wide and at present people walk in the roadway more then on the side walks.

Response: As shown in the revised traffic study, forty-four percent (44%) of the students traveling to and from the proposed intermediate school/high school, and twenty-one percent (21%) of the students traveling to and from the proposed high school are projected to use public transit (bus or subway) and walk from the nearest stop or station to the school. This computes to 552 total public transit trips (360 trips for the intermediate school/high school and 192 trips for the high school). Ten percent (10%) of the intermediate school/high school students are projected to walk to school (*i.e.*, 81 walking trips), and sixty-five percent (65%) of the high school students are projected to walk to school (*i.e.*, 585 walking trips). These pedestrians are projected to travel to the school from neighborhoods north, south, east and west of the project site. A detailed analysis of sidewalk capacity was not conducted as part of this study, or deemed warranted by the New York City Department of Transportation based on existing conditions.

Comment: Indicates that students originating from the north side of Metropolitan Ave., coming from subway at Queens Blvd., will cross at Selfridge Street and Metro. Most people traveling from the subway to Metro. go straight down 71st Ave. It's more realistic to say that subway students will cross at 71st Ave. and Metro., not Selfridge. Diverting pedestrians from 71st Ave. will bring the pedestrian traffic through the middle of Forest Hills Gardens proper.

Response: Students, faculty, and staff that choose to use the 71st Avenue subway station on Queens Boulevard to travel to and from the site have the option of crossing Metropolitan Avenue at 71st Avenue (and may be likely to do so). However, the pedestrian traffic crossing Metropolitan Avenue via the crosswalks at

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Selfridge Street is projected to consist predominately of students walking to/from school from the surrounding neighborhoods and those using public buses routed along Metropolitan Avenue.

Comment: "...70% of all student trips are project to be made via walking." 3.7.23 indicates that 75%+ are public transportation and ultimately pedestrians. Which is it? "...70% of all student trips are project to be made via walking. This computes to approximately 397 pedestrian trips..." 70% of 2238 total student population is 1,567 not 397.

Response: The differences indicated were a result of the various student populations that will occupy the campus. Originally, seventy percent (70%) of PS/IS 167 students were expected to walk and seventy-five percent (75%) of high school students were expected to use public transit. The updated estimates for public transit and pedestrian trips associated with the two schools under the current proposal are outlined above.

Comment: Table 10 shows a total of 191 accidents at today's traffic levels with the majority at the 69th Ave./Metropolitan Ave. (19), Trotting Course Lane/Metropolitan Ave. (19) and 71st Ave./Metropolitan Ave. (22) intersections. These intersections are of major concern for additional pedestrian (school related) and vehicular traffic. Students traveling on buses north/south on Woodhaven Blvd. will walk to the school campus from that intersection. The opportunity for increased accident rates at this and the other intersections is extremely high.

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: Students walking from the subway to the school campus will be walking through Forest Hills Gardens proper if diverted from 71st Ave.

Response: Comment noted.

Section 3.8 Air Quality

Comment: Table 14 shows negligible differences in build/no-build air quality created by vehicular traffic, yet the study shows increased vehicular traffic under the build scenario and makes recommendations to mitigate congestion. With additional traffic how could there be only minimal differences in air quality?

Response: Because the project-generated vehicles are dropping off or picking up students, all are assumed to be operating with engines in hot stabilized mode.

Based on the most recent traffic projections, the total CO concentrations of 3.5 ppm at Metropolitan/Selfridge and 4.5 ppm at Metropolitan/Woodhaven are within the NAAQS. No exceedances of the New York City de minimis values would occur.

Section 3.9 Noise

Comment: Evaluates potential noise level impact in build year 2008. It doesn't indicate what the projected school population is expected to be at time. Does it assume capacity or something less?

Response: Capacity is assumed.

Comment: Does not give equivalent sound pressure levels for school buses, trash truck compacting, backup beeping, Late evening trash pickups, etc.

Response: Sound pressure levels for school buses are included in the TNM noise model, and the calculated PCEs also account for noise levels from buses according to guidelines in the NYC *CEQR Technical Manual*. Schedules for municipal sanitation trucks would be similar to those for existing residential uses and are not expected to cause significant impacts to the L10 or Leq noise levels.

Comment: Noise level monitoring was done only at the pm peak and was done for 20 minutes at each of the 2 monitoring locations. Why was there no monitoring during the am peak and not for the full peak time (3 – 4pm) at both locations? DOT/DEP operations are before, during and after school am/pm peaks.

Response: Noise monitoring was carried out according to the NYC *CEQR Technical Manual*. The manual states that, where traffic is the dominant source of noise, "...it is generally not necessary to conduct noise measurements for more than a 20-minute period during any hour at any given location, provided that a traffic count and vehicle classification is conducted simultaneously at the measurement site..." Noise monitoring included traffic counts and vehicular classifications. It was carried out to establish existing noise levels in the vicinity of the project site, to determine the local vehicular mix, and to provide data for calibrating the FHWA's Traffic Noise Model (TNM). Once the model has been calibrated by using field counts to obtain noise levels that are similar to modeled values, it can be used to model noise levels with traffic volumes for other time periods or future years. Therefore, no additional noise monitoring was necessary.

Comment: Table 19 shows “no build” noise increases without PCE conversion while Table 21 shows “build” noise level increases with PCE conversion, the reader is asked to compare apples to oranges. Both show for am and pm peak periods. Where did the base line data for am peak come from?

Response: Relative changes in noise level can be calculated from the relative changes in traffic volume. While the proportions of automobiles and trucks remain the same, the calculations can be based on the total volumes. No changes in vehicular mix are expected for the increase in traffic from Existing to future No Build Conditions. Thus, Table 19 used total volumes to project the noise level increases. If PCEs had been used, the results would have been the same. The traffic volumes for Existing Conditions for 2004 were obtained from the traffic study, as were the No Build volumes. The vehicular mix for project-generated traffic would be different from the mix for No Build Conditions. It would include buses and automobiles, but not trucks, and the proportions of these vehicles would vary from No Build Conditions. Therefore, to calculate potential noise level increases from the project, the traffic for No Build and Build Conditions was converted to PCEs as shown in Table 21.

Section 3.11 Construction Impacts

Comment: Indicates a 3 year construction effort with up to 115 workers on the site, 75% driving (86 cars) and projects 35 trucks would travel to and from the site per day (this averages at 4 trucks/hour in an 8 hour shift (page 119 indicates City regulations allow weekday construction 7:00am – 6:00pm) and does not account for queue and dwell time. The noise level of 1 truck is equivalent to that of 47 cars (page 104). This appears to be an excessive amount of noise for a residential community (potentially 11 hours daily) Are local roads suited to handle constant heavy truck traffic without experiencing damage to pavement and underground utilities?

Response: The truck traffic will be temporary and most construction vehicles will access the site via Metropolitan Avenue, where the noise margin will be negligible. Furthermore, DOT trucks currently utilize these local roads to access their facility.

Comment: If required, what effects will pile driving have on noise level studies, infrastructure, wood frame homes and quality of life? The suggestion of installing temporary wood walls as noise barriers is preposterous.

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Response: Construction of the proposed development would result in short-term impacts on adjacent properties. However, construction noise would be regulated by the New York City Noise Code and by the U.S. Environmental Protection Administration noise emission standards for construction equipment.

Comment: Study indicates construction will begin while soil remediation is on going. What are the chances of dust from toxic soil becoming airborne and migrating into residential area? Same holds for saturating site to prevent dust, trucks will track mud through the community.

Response: Dust control measures, such as watering of affected areas and the use of dust covers on trucks, will be used to limit the possibility of soil becoming airborne. In addition, all necessary measures would be implemented to insure compliance with the New York City Air Pollution Control Code regulating construction-related dust emissions. If these measures are implemented and sufficiently enforced by contractors, no significant air quality impacts due to fugitive dust emissions would be anticipated.

Comment: Indicates CO emissions from driving workers and on site construction equipment would not substantially change air quality. Does not consider the daily emissions of the 8 trucks per hour going back and forth to the site and idling in question.

Response: The level of CO emissions is substantially below screening levels.

Comment: All construction activities are to be coordinated by the Mayor's Transportation and Construction Coordination Council. "This issue is particularly important given the surrounding communities residential character and associated safety issues that require careful and constant attention." quotes the study team; but who'll check the checkers???

Response: Comment noted.

Section 4: Alternatives Analysis

Comment: The only alternative considered was a shopping plaza. No consideration was given housing development which would better suited to the residential environment of Forest Hills Gardens or possibly an extension of Forest Park (equally better suited), as a residential quiet area and continued migratory bird sanctuary.

Response: See above response.

Section 5: Traffic Mitigation Measures

Comment: Indicates that mitigation measures are required at all Metropolitan Ave. intersections. Does not discuss mitigation at 70th Road/Sybilla Street, proposed secondary access/egress point, or 69th Ave./Sybilla Street, direct access to the site.

Response: Since the 69th Avenue/Sybilla Street pedestrian access point has been eliminated, and the 70th Road/Sybilla Street entrance would be restricted to emergency access, they do not warrant detailed traffic analysis or mitigation.

Comment: All recommended mitigation measures are limited to modifications to traffic light timing phases except at Selfridge Street where left turn arrow and dedicated lane installation is recommended. And if not!!! Let's implement these recommendations now to determine what impact it will have on current traffic congestion.

Response: The SCA has already consulted with DOT and will continue to work closely with the agency. Once the school is in operation, DOT will monitor the traffic conditions in the study area and determine if those predicted in the FEIS are occurring. If the conditions are similar to those described in the FEIS, DOT can implement the traffic mitigations.

Section 6.0 Unavoidable Adverse Impacts of the Proposed Project

Comment: No noise mitigation measures are recommended and it is projected that in the future there will be adverse impacts due to increased noise levels. This is unacceptable and does not comply with BSA requirements for rezoning.

Response: As explained in the FEIS, noticeable increases in noise, principally attributable to the requirement that all traffic entering and exiting the campus use Metropolitan Avenue, would occur at the backyards of two residences located on 69th Avenue. The school facility would be built with appropriate levels of window-wall attenuation so classroom environments would not experience unacceptable noise levels. No rezoning is proposed. The SCA will seek a zoning override from the New York City Deputy Mayor's Office to permit the proposed school campus.

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The following are responses to written comments submitted by Steven Goldberg, Second Vice Chair, Queens Community Board #6, on June 15, 2005.

Comment 1: The DEIS states that the SCA will not be seeking a special permit from the BSA but will seek a project design-off from a Deputy Mayor. This cannot be allowed to happen to the public review process. There needs to be a continuation of the review process and this must be transparent.

Response: The SCA will seek a zoning override from the NYC Deputy Mayor's Office to permit the proposed schools, as the City of New York can elect not to apply the *Zoning Resolution* to a public agency when performing a governmental function.

Comment 2: The 70th Road/Sybilla Street entrance/exit be only for emergencies, and no other purpose.

Response: Under the modified project analyzed in the FEIS, the traffic study has been revised to eliminate vehicular access via 70th Road/Sybilla Street. The 70th Road/Sybilla Street access will be opened and operated for emergencies only. The Selfridge Street/Metropolitan Avenue access will serve as the primary vehicular access to the school site.

Comment 3: A comprehensive traffic study is needed. Too many of the traffic mitigation measures are the addition of 2-3 seconds of green time. We had similar mitigation proposals from Vornado in the Mall Expansion. A full scale traffic analysis has now been required for the Vornado project.

Response: With the exception of the Woodhaven/Union Turnpike intersection, the improvements identified in the traffic section of the FEIS are sufficient to mitigate the projected operational impacts resulting from additional school-generated traffic, according to the CEQR criteria. The SCA has consulted and shall continue to consult with the NYCDOT regarding the implementation of all appropriate measures to mitigate the traffic impacts due to the school campus.

Comment 4: Attendance in the schools should be for students from local school districts. The DEIS has the high schools as borough wide.

Response: The 700-seat combined intermediate and high school would serve students Citywide and the 1,000-seat high school would be locally zoned. Although

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the IS/HS will serve students Citywide, it is expected that most students attending the school would live in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Comment 5: Parking for the teachers, administrators, and staff needs to be on-site. The DEIS has no on-site parking, and refers to sufficient spaces on neighborhood streets.

Response: Approximately 157 on-site parking spaces will be available for faculty and staff along the roadways proposed to abut the schools campus.

Comment 6: The entrance on Metropolitan Avenue has a guard's gate. This needs to be sufficiently recessed in from Metropolitan Avenue to prevent spillover back on Metropolitan Avenue as the guards verify entrants.

Response: Comment noted. A copy of the site plan has been included in the FEIS that indicates the location of the security booth.

Comment 7: One of the schools will be a District 75 school. This needs to be explained, as the neighborhood will be impacted if this includes students with disciplinary problems.

Response: Approximately 200 seats of capacity for District 75 students shall be provided on the campus. District 75 serves students with special needs and not necessarily those with disciplinary problems.

Comment 8: The DEIS notes that the neighborhood will be impacted by noise from traffic and from the school, but proposed no mitigation measures. This should be addressed.

Response: As discussed in the Response to Comment 3 above, the FEIS identifies mitigation measures for the project's traffic impacts. A noise analysis of the proposed schools campus determined that noise from site-generated traffic could have a significant impact on the backyards of two residences on 69th Avenue. This impact would not be mitigated.

Comment 9: The original proposal was for separate facilities. The proposal has four schools in one large building. Why has this changed? Has a similar structure been built in other neighborhoods? If so, what has been the result?

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Response: The current design plan is for the two school organizations to occupy one large building. This would allow for the greatest amount of outdoor recreation space. In addition, the schools will share custodial facilities, a library, a gymnasium, a centralized kitchen and cafeteria, and a 754-seat auditorium.

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The following are responses to written comments submitted by Naim Rasheed, Director, New York City Department of Transportation, on June 16, 2005.

Comment 1: Please have the consultant provide background material (ATR's, turning movement and pedestrian counts, physical inventories, official signal timing), detailed HCS summary sheets (including hard copies and on diskette), and No-Build soft site trip assignment maps/ patterns and travel demand assumptions.

Response: Background material, detailed HCS summary sheets, and No-Build trip assignment maps/patterns and travel demand assumptions for the DEIS were submitted to DOT in 2005. The updated backup materials reflecting the analyses in the FEIS will be sent to DOT.

Comment 2: Under CEQR, the maximum credit allowed for linked trips is 25% without justification. In estimating the trips generated by the No-Build soft sites the consultant used a 36% credit for linked trips. Please have the consultant revise the No-Build network to account for 25% linked trips, or justify the higher use of linked credit via survey or other acceptable and approved sources for New York City.

Response: The soft sites analyzed as part of the 2005 traffic study included in the DEIS have all been constructed and are currently operating. Therefore, because the traffic volumes associated with these soft sites are reflected in the updated traffic counts conducted in January, 2007, the traffic study in the FEIS no longer includes projections for trips generated by these sites. The traffic analyses in the FEIS include a new soft site (a grocery store and retail space, located on the southwest quadrant of the Trotting Course Lane-Alderton Street-Metropolitan Avenue intersection) that is planned to be operating by 2010. A twenty-five percent (25%) pass-by trip credit has been applied to this particular soft site in the traffic analysis.

Comment 3: Please have the consultant provide more details related to the Shopping Plaza Alternative mentioned on page 5.

Response: The Shopping Plaza Alternative is a scenario that could be developed as-of-right under the applicable zoning and was a concept that had been advanced by the site's previous owner. It is assumed to generate more trips than the proposed school, and would also generate traffic outside of typical school hours (e.g., weekends).

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Comment 4: Please have the consultant justify the exclusion of the 71st Avenue and Sybilla Street intersection from the analyses.

Response: The intersection of 71st Avenue and Sybilla Street has been included in the updated traffic analyses in the FEIS.

Comment 5: Please have the consultant provide a preliminary site plan indicating signage, markings and geometric alignment, and all other relevant information related to site access.

Response: A preliminary site plan has been shared with DOT.

Comment 6: The intersection of Selfridge Street and Metropolitan Avenue is identified as an impacted location in the “Summary of Significant Traffic Impacts” (Table 7) during the AM peak hour, however the delays provided in the “Summary of Traffic Operations at Study Intersections Year 2008 Build Conditions” (Table 6) do not show any impacts. Please have the consultant clarify this discrepancy.

Response: The transportation improvements recommended for the signalized Selfridge Street/Metropolitan Avenue intersection (where the school access driveway would be located) are being proposed as part of the school development project, rather than being identified as a mitigation measure per se. Therefore, the current traffic study does not identify this particular intersection as an impacted location, because the proposed improvements at that location would ensure that no significant impact would occur at that intersection

Comment 7: Please have the consultant explain the methodology in developing the trip generation maps (Figures 13.1 and 13.2). Figure 13.1 shows 280 vehicles assigned into the project site driveways, however the “Trip Generation Estimate” (Table 5) indicates 105 vehicles are assigned into the campus and 367 vehicles are assigned into all locations. Figure 13.1 shows 141 vehicles assigned out of the project site driveways, however Table 5 indicates that 228 vehicles are assigned out of the campus and all locations. Similarly, the PM peak hour has the same problem. Please note the number of assigned trips differs for Figure 13.2 as well.

Response: The site-generated traffic volume maps developed and included in the DEIS previously assumed that some drop-off trips would occur along 69th Avenue-Sybilla Street (i.e., they would not technically enter the site via the

site-access driveways). Because pedestrian access has been eliminated from Sybilla Street, this drop-off area on 69th Avenue-Sybilla Street has also been eliminated. The revised site-generated traffic volume maps indicate that all site-generated trips during the weekday AM and PM peak hours enter and leave the site via the proposed site-access driveway on the south side of the Selfridge Street/Metropolitan Avenue intersection.

Comment 8: For the proposed mitigation involving modifications to signal timing, please have the consultant provide the exact green time in seconds to be shifted, not approximate. Please note that as part of mitigation the shift in signal timing should not be provided in fractions of seconds.

Response: The recommended changes have been addressed in the updated traffic study.

Comment 9: At the location of 69th Avenue and Metropolitan Avenue, the proposed mitigation measures do not fully mitigate the impact during the weekday PM peak hour. Please have the consultant provide mitigation to fully mitigate the impact or, otherwise disclose this location as unmitigatable.

Response: All identified traffic impacts have been mitigated as part of the revised traffic study, with the exception of the Woodhaven Boulevard/Union Turnpike intersection (which is identified as an unmitigatable impact).

Comment 10: Please have the consultant provide detailed level-of-service tables for the pedestrian analyses including corner analyses.

Response: Urbitran sent a memo to DOT on December 6, 2006 to confirm the scope for revising the traffic analysis. The scope included a crosswalk analysis, but not a corner analysis. DOT approved the scope on January 4, 2007.

Comment 11: Please have the consultant explain how the parking utilization rate of 58% parking spaces occupied is constant whether alternate side of the street regulations are in effect or not. The parking utilization rate should be greater when the alternate side of the street regulations are in effect. Additionally, the number of on-street parking spaces available during the street cleaning regulations should be used in determining whether the proposed project will result in any parking impacts.

Response: Based on the count data, there are approximately 2,882 legal on-street parking spaces that were fifty-six percent (56%) utilized (1,616 parked

vehicles) during the weekday morning hours and fifty-one percent (51%) utilized (1,482 parked vehicles) during weekday afternoon hours. Taking into account alternate side of the street parking restrictions, on a typical Monday morning there would be 2,331 legal parking spaces (551 fewer) within the study area. Of these remaining spaces, fifty-eight percent (58%) are occupied during weekday morning hours, leaving 972 spaces available. It should also be noted that the project has been modified since publication of the DEIS to include approximately 157 accessory on-site parking spaces.

Comment 12: As part of the safety assessment for the intersection of Woodhaven Boulevard and Metropolitan Avenue, the EIS recommends (page 84) to shift three seconds of green time to the eastbound/westbound phase. Please have the consultant forward a LOS analysis for this intersection to show that the change in signal timing would not cause any significant impacts on other approaches.

Response: Level-of-service (LOS) calculations for all of the study intersections have been revised as part of the updated traffic study, and shall be forwarded to DOT.

Comment 13: Please have the consultant provide a detailed schematic drawing of the recommended parking modification proposed at the intersection of Selfridge Street and Metropolitan Avenue.

Response: A conceptual design plan showing the improvements at the Selfridge/Metropolitan signal was prepared by another consultant. This will be provided to DOT.

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The following are responses to written comments submitted by Barbara Stuchinski, President of the Forest Hills Community & Civic Association, on July 11, 2005.

Page 1 – 1.1: The area is not situated in the privately owned Forest Hills Gardens section.

Response: All references to Forest Hills Gardens have been replaced with Forest Hills.

Page 2 – 1.2.2: The high schools are to be locally zoned and, therefore, would not alleviate overcrowding “throughout Queens.”

Response: The high school is to be locally zoned, but the IS/HS will be open to all students in the five-borough metropolitan area.

Page 2 -1.2.5: The development as presented would affect the surrounding area adversely because of the 5 story height and incompatible architecture.

Response: Although the scale of the proposed school building is larger than surrounding uses, it is generally acceptable for schools to be larger than their surroundings. In addition, the difference in height will be mitigated by the fact that the project site does not directly abut any of the residential homes, as it is separated by Sybilla Street.

Page 3 – 1.2.: Rather than “could adversely impact the rate of storm water runoff” the development definitely would adversely impact runoff. The site is “uphill” from Selfridge Street and whenever there is heavy rainfall, basement flooding occurs because of sewer backup in homes along Selfridge Street. Additionally, 26 two-family homes are being built on Sybilla Street between 70th Road and 70th Drive lack storm catch basins.

Response: The proposed development shall incorporate measures required by New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the combined sewer system (e.g., retention tanks to slow the rate of storm water flow). Since these measures are required by law, the project would not have any adverse impacts upon the combined sewer system.

Page 3- 1.2.7: On-street parking is extremely limited because of the surrounding residential neighborhood. The community has experienced many problems and complaints because of adequate parking that is compounded by Monday and Wednesday alternate side parking. There absolutely will no be

space for 129 additional vehicles, especially when the new housing is complete.

Response: Comment noted. Approximately 157 parking spaces will be provided on-site for faculty and staff as part of the project modifications since publication of the DEIS.

Page 12 – 2.3: “As there are adequate parking capabilities in the surrounding area, a faculty lot will not be provided”. This is an erroneous assumption based on an inaccurate assessment of available parking. Further in the EIS, on page 78, “parking” is mentioned on the opposite side of Woodhaven Blvd. and this is totally unrealistic both in terms of availability and the concept that staff would walk that great a distance.

Response: See response to previous comment.

Page 14-2.4: Refers to approval given by the Community School Districts and Community Board in 1999. Since that initial presentation, all plans have been drastically altered, the physical plant has been radically designed and the new plan has NOT met with community approval, acceptance is no longer valid.

Response: Comment noted.

Page 16: The Super Stop & Shop Complex which included 3 additional retail stores has opened on Union Turnpike. On the corner of Metropolitan Avenue & Trotting Course Lane, next to the proposed school site, a Super Car Wash/Auto Lube building is under construction which will result in a heavy flow of traffic across the pedestrian walkway on Metropolitan and will adversely impact school children. Opposite this, at 90-30 Metropolitan, an office/retail complex is planned and environmental problems are being addressed. Adjacent to the site is a busy HIP/LI Medical complex with an active car service on the corner. Opposite the site on the corner of Selfridge Street & Metropolitan Avenue is an MRI facility which serves many Senior residences, nursing homes etc. Adjacent to that is the Forest Hills Volunteer Ambulance building with a very active response unit.

Response: Comment noted. As stated in the Foreword to the FEIS, the analyses for the environmental assessment areas have been updated to reflect changes to background conditions since publication of the DEIS.

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Page 20-3.1.3: In addition to the Super Stop & Shop complex, the aforementioned car wash/lube, the retail office structure at 90-30, the Atlas Park section of the Atlas Mall has opened on Cooper Avenue. The retail/cinema portion at Atlas is under development.

Response: See response to previous comment. The analyses in the FEIS now include the development of the Shops at Atlas Park.

Page 28-3.3.3: Refers to “three design possibilities” and “campus” final design would consider the site’s relationship to local residences . . .” Also that “landscaping or other buffers could be used to screen the campus . . .” The community was not shown there designs – only one that is not harmonious and not well planned in regard to outdoor use for school children. Rather than landscaping “could” it should read will be used.”

Response: The text has been changed.

Page 33 – Figure 8 – Photo 1: Not NYC DOT property – this is a private heavy construction business. Photo 4 – same incorrect reference to DOT/DEP.

Response: The photo captions have been revised.

Page 44: Remove reference to Sybilla Street entrance.

Response: All references have been removed.

Page 45 – Open Space – The PS/IS recreation area is situated directly adjacent to the DOT depot. Not only is asphalt kept at high temperatures, ready for use, but diesel trucks are kept running continuously in cold weather. Both of these could pose serious health hazards for young children exposed to CO fumes and other noxious air fumes.

In regard to architectural details, it does not appear that “the school’s design would consider” either the scale, the emergency entrance, the relationship to the residential neighborhood or the possibility of becoming a welcoming or enhancing addition to the area.

Response: The modified project no longer includes primary school grade levels in the campus. The recreation area will not be located adjacent to the DOT facility. See response above.

Page 46-3.6.1.2: Again we stress the present, continuing problem of sewer backup into homes on Selfridge Street during heavy rainfall and the lack of storm catch basins along 70th Road in the area of the stables of new development. Mention here is made of water supply, sewers, and gas, but not electric. Over the past few years, 69th Avenue from Sybilla Street to Metropolitan Avenue and Metropolitan Avenue from 69th Avenue to 71st Avenue have experienced severe electrical shortages and power outages. On 69th Avenue, the old main street feeders burned and CO escaped into a number of homes. The same situation occurred on Metropolitan Avenue. It is essential, therefore, to have a proper study made in consultation with Con Edison to determine the reliability of electric service to that entire area. This is particularly important because of the medical center and MRI facility.

Response: See response above regarding storm water. A discussion of electricity has been added.

Page 50 -3.6.3.2: Refer to previous mention of sewer problems along Selfridge Street.

Response: See response above.

Pages 51 & 52 3.7: Present peak conditions on Metropolitan Avenue result in frequent delays. At least once a week, often more, an accident will stop the flow of traffic on the Jackie Robinson Parkway and traffic then transits along Union Turnpike and Metropolitan Avenue creating even more delays. School traffic will further impact peak A.M. problems.

Response: Operational and safety analyses of the Jackie Robinson Parkway were beyond the scope of the traffic study. The scope of the traffic impact analyses provided in the FEIS was developed with input from the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT).

Page 65: Added traffic generated by staff, delivery trucks, Sanitation trucks etc. will have a negative effect on the present Metropolitan Avenue problems.

Response: With the exception of the Woodhaven/Union Turnpike intersection, mitigation measures have been identified in the traffic section of the FEIS that are projected to mitigate the operational impacts of the additional school-generated traffic volumes.

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Page 73: Parking along Metropolitan Avenue near the HIP/Medical Center or MRI facility CANNOT be eliminated. These are essential medical facility and it is not acceptable to deny access to patients.

Response: The SCA acknowledges the local community's concerns regarding the implementation of additional parking restrictions in the area, particularly along Metropolitan Avenue, and as such, has identified an alternative Build scenario whereby the existing parking regulations for all on-street parking spaces are maintained.

Page 78-3.7.2.1: No parking for street cleaning on alternate side of the street is for Monday and Wednesday. Additionally, many homes have more than one vehicle and we do not believe that the numbers shown are accurate. Moreover, by staff utilizing these parking spots, residents are denied parking for the library, post office, and other Metropolitan Avenue businesses.

Response: As previously discussed, on-site accessory parking for teachers and staff shall be provided on the campus.

Page 80-3.7.2.3: The 129 parking spaces cannot be accommodated within a walking range of the proposed site. To anticipate staff parking on the far side of Woodhaven Blvd is unrealistic.

Response: See response above.

Page 83-3.7.4.3: Delete reference to students traveling from anywhere within the five boroughs. School will be locally zoned.

Response: The high school is to be locally zoned, but the IS/HS will be open to all students in the five-borough metropolitan area.

Pages 90-93: Air quality must be monitored at site because of proximity to DOT asphalt plant. Readings from Queens College and other remote areas are totally irrelevant.

Response: The asphalt plant is not operating at the DOT site at this time, and was not operating during field work. In addition, existing residential blocks are currently adjacent to the DOT site.

Pages 94-100: The study is inadequate as it fails to specifically monitor the site and surrounding area. Once gain, we stress that the playground location is unacceptable.

Response: The air quality modeling is based on worst-case meteorological conditions, which, by definition, occur very infrequently. As a result, the projected CO concentrations under Build Conditions are conservatively high. The background CO concentrations were provided by NYCDEP for Queens and are the recommended ones to use for future conditions. Monitoring of existing air quality would not provide an estimate of future air quality. Adding the conservative modeled worst-case CO values to the approved future background concentrations provides a worst-case analysis for the project.

Page 107: Noise generated by the DOT trucks, equipment, and physical plans compounded by the LIRR active Babylon line with Diesel trains. Therefore, attention must be given to establishing a buffer zone between these areas and the school site. Landscaping or high walls may be necessary.

The LIRR is an active, daytime, and nighttime commuter and freight operation and there must be a high wall along the track in order to keep any track access unavailable. Children must be protected in the safest manner possible.

Response: Comment noted. The campus driveway will circle and will separate the school building and play areas from both the DOT property and the LIRR line. Security fencing will also be installed along the perimeter of the campus property to prohibit access to and from adjoining properties.