



**STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW  
NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF  
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**DATE:** July 7, 2017  
**SEQR PROJECT NO.:** 17-024  
**LEAD AGENCY:** New York City School Construction Authority  
30-30 Thomson Avenue  
Long Island City, New York 11101-3045

Pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law) and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto (6 NYCRR Part 617), a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been prepared covering the action described below. It is available for public inspection at the office of the Lead Agency and applicant as set forth below. Pursuant to §1730.2 of the Public Authorities Law, the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) is SEQR Lead Agency. The FEIS is also available at the SCA's website ([www.nycsca.org](http://www.nycsca.org)).

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed project was issued on May 25, 2017. A public hearing on the DEIS was held on June 13, 2017, at Community Board 7 located at 4201 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, in order to accept comments from the public on the environmental issues considered therein. The public comment period remained open for fourteen (14) days following the hearing, and closed on June 27, 2017.

**NAME OF ACTION:** New Primary School Facility  
P.S. 557, Brooklyn  
Brooklyn, Kings County  
**LOCATION:** 4302 Fourth Avenue and 364 43<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Brooklyn, New York  
Tax Block 728, Tax Lots 34 & 36  
**SEQR STATUS:** Type 1

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

On behalf of the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) proposes the acquisition of two private lots located at 4302 Fourth Avenue and 364 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and which includes the



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former 68<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct Station House and Stable, to construct a new primary school facility accommodating approximately 332 students.

According to preliminary design plans, the proposed project will preserve and stabilize the main facades of the existing three-story station house building on both 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street while the balance of the existing station house building would be demolished. The majority of the new construction would be arranged in a five-story "L" shape behind the original footprint of the station house and would be set back from both 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street. The proposed new school facility would be a three- to five-story building, plus cellar, and would contain approximately 30,060 sf. The school's main entrance would be located on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The project would also provide an approximately 3,550 sf rooftop playground on the third floor above the gymnasium in the new school facility.

In accordance with the SCA's program of requirements, the proposed new school facility would contain general instructional classrooms for grade levels pre-kindergarten through five, special education (District 75) classrooms; reading and speech resource classrooms; project and music classrooms; gymnasium; library; student and staff support areas; storage spaces; administration; "cafetorium" with stage; kitchen and servery complex; lobby; and custodian's office, locker room, and workshop/storage space.

The proposed site is located within CSD No. 15. This new facility will address existing overcrowding and forecast changes in student enrollments, and will also support DOE's policies regarding class-size reduction, transition from the use of transportable classroom units (TCUs), and the expansion of pre-kindergarten classroom capacity in the City. Construction of the proposed project would be undertaken pursuant to the DOE's Five-Year Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-2019.

Student occupancy of the new facility is anticipated to occur in September 2022. For the purposes of the environmental impact analyses, 2022 has been selected as the Build Year.

## **POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS**

### SHADOWS

Based on the preliminary design currently under consideration, the proposed PS 557 building would include a three-story portion that would stand in the place of a portion of the existing station house, together with an attached "L"-shaped volume that would comprise the remainder of the project site on the southern and western sides. The L-shaped portion of the proposed PS 557 would stand five-



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stories with cellar and would have an estimated height of 75 feet. This represents a new building height with the potential to cast shadows that would not otherwise be present in the future without the proposed project (the shorter, three-story portion of the proposed PS 557 would be constructed behind the historic facades of the three-story station house, and therefore would not cause any substantial new shadow).

A detailed shadow screening analysis was undertaken to identify any potential sunlight sensitive resources that could be reached by the maximum shadow length of the proposed project. It considers shadows that would be cast on four days determined to be representative of the variability of shadows throughout the year: December 21 (winter solstice), either March 21 or September 21 (equinoxes), June 21 (summer solstice), and either May 6 or August 6 (midway between equinoxes and solstices).

Four potentially sunlight sensitive resources are located within 323 feet of the project site and potentially within reach of this maximum shadow. The analysis revealed:

- St. Michael's R.C. Church Complex & School Buildings, PS 516: The two school buildings are located south of the church building. They stand adjacent to one another and are located directly north of the project site. Based on the detailed shadow analysis, incremental shadows from the proposed PS 557 would extend to these school buildings on three of the analysis dates: March 21<sup>st</sup>, June 21<sup>st</sup>, and August 6<sup>th</sup>. Because sunlight is not necessary to maintain character-defining features of these buildings, as there is no stained glass or unique sculptural feature to the façade that may depend on sunlight for particular aesthetic effect, the incremental shadow attributable to the proposed PS 557 would not result in a significant adverse impact to these buildings. Based on the detailed shadow analysis, incremental shadows from the proposed PS 557 would extend onto the paved area immediately east of the church, but not onto the church building itself, on December 21<sup>st</sup>. As the incremental shadow would last for a short duration (approximately 11 minutes) and would not extend to any sunlight sensitive portion of the church building or sunlight sensitive landscaping, it would not result in a significant adverse impact to St. Michael's Church.
- St. Michael's R.C. Church Complex Open Space: The detailed shadow analysis determined that no incremental shadow attributable to the proposed PS 557 would reach this open space area on any analysis date. Therefore the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact to this open space area;



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- (Former) Sunset Park Court House: Based on the detailed shadow analysis, there would be incremental shadows from the proposed PS 557 on three of the analysis dates, March 21<sup>st</sup>, June 21<sup>st</sup>, and August 6<sup>th</sup>. Since sunlight is not necessary to maintain character-defining features of the (former) Sunset Park Court House, as there is no stained glass or unique sculptural feature to the façade depending on sunlight for particular aesthetic effect, the incremental shadow would not result in a significant adverse impact.
- Sunset Park Historic District. Based on the detailed shadow analysis, the proposed PS 557 would cast incremental shadows onto parts of the Sunset Park Historic District on two of the analysis dates, June 21<sup>st</sup> and August 6<sup>th</sup>. Because incremental shadows that reach the historic district on these dates would not be substantial or cast on sunlight-sensitive vegetation or character-defining architectural features of any buildings that may depend on sunlight for particular aesthetic effect, the proposed PS 557 would not result in a significant adverse impact to the Sunset Park Historic District.

#### HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The (former) 68<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct Station House and Stable, built in 1886, are a designated New York City Landmark and are listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The police precinct facility, designed by the architect George Ingram, is an important example of Romanesque Revival Style architecture. The facility includes a three-story (plus cellar) station house, two-story stable building, and one-story jail building. The structures are vacant and have experienced extensive deterioration. Although the project site is not located within a historic district; however, it is located directly west of the Sunset Park Historic District that is listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

The proposed project would require that a majority of the existing on-site structures be demolished to accommodate the DOE's Program of Requirements (POR) required for a new primary school facility. As required under Section 14.09, consultation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) was undertaken by the SCA.

In response to initial comments from OPRHP, the SCA submitted an extensive review of building conditions and alternatives. OPRHP commented in its letter of February 24, 2017, that the interior of the police precinct building is in terrible condition and is deteriorated beyond repair, but that the exterior walls do not demonstrate wholesale material deficiencies. OPRHP concurred that there are two viable options that meet the project goals: "Option RS2F" (the proposed



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project) and "Option RS3C" (Full Demolition Alternative) and that the SCA move forward with "Option RS2F," which includes the preservation of the station house main facades on both 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street.

OPRHP stated that considering that this building is an important architectural landmark in the neighborhood, retaining these two facades provides important continuity at this corner and preserves much of the architectural art of the façade. OPRHP further stated that the project would result in an Adverse Impact upon historic resources and suggested that the SCA develop a Letter of Resolution (LOR) to document the alternatives considered and to include the mitigation provided in the preferred redevelopment scenario, "Option RS2F."

The SCA has developed a draft LOR outlining the agreement between the SCA and OPRHP to which OPRHP has responded in a letter of April 21, 2017 with its recommendations. OPRHP stated that the proposed project may proceed subject to the following stipulations:

- The historic building shall be photographically documented in accordance with the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Level II Documentation Standards (HABS);
- The SCA shall continue to consult with OPRHP regarding the design of the new public primary school facility, in accordance with Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law; and
- Any party to the LOR may propose that the LOR be amended, whereupon the signatories shall consult with each other to consider such an amendment.

#### TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

With the proposed project, significant adverse traffic impacts would be expected at two intersections and a pedestrian impact would be expected at two corners and one crosswalk near the proposed school.

Improvement measures are recommended to mitigate the significant traffic impacts at the intersections of 43<sup>rd</sup> Street at 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> avenues. These improvement measures include signal timing adjustments and "daylighting" (i.e., temporary removal of parking adjacent to the curbs) to provide a peak period turn lane.

The pedestrian impacts to the south crosswalk at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street may be mitigated by signal timing adjustments. Six-foot curb extensions are recommended at the northwest and southwest corners of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 43<sup>rd</sup>



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Street, extending the corner quadrants into 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, subsequently shortening the crosswalk distances and increasing the available corner reservoir space for pedestrians waiting to cross the street.

No significant transit impacts would be expected. Less than 200 incremental peak hour transit trips would be generated by staff, students, and accompanying adults. Therefore, the proposed school is unlikely to create a significant transit impact.

No significant parking impacts would be expected. The proposed changes to the school would increase the parking demand by 14 vehicles, which would increase the shortfall in available on street parking from 42 to 43 percent on the most restrictive days; however, this shortfall may not be considered a significant impact for this project due to the availability and proximity of transit in the area.

#### NOISE

Based on noise monitoring measurements, the maximum L10 noise exposure level in the project area was found to be 72.5 dBA along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This noise level includes the effect of traffic noise from local streets. As a result, based on the CEQR noise exposure standards, the school's exterior noise exposure would be within the "Marginally Acceptable" category. To reduce the exterior noise exposure level to the required interior noise level of 45 dBA or below, attenuation measures (e.g., double-glazed windows), which are a standard feature of new facilities, would be incorporated into the school building's design and construction. Standard double-glazed windows are available which would result in the required attenuation value of 31 dBA. The walls and doors of the proposed school building would also have to attain a minimum attenuation value of 31 dBA. With these measures, the proposed school building would meet NYCDEP interior noise level requirements, and would not experience any noise exposure impacts.

#### SOIL AND GROUNDWATER CONDITIONS

Environmental due diligence investigations of this site were comprehensive and consisted of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and a Phase II Environmental Site Investigation (ESI) were completed in November 2016 and December 2016, respectively. These studies were performed to identify any potential sources of hazardous materials resulting from previous and existing uses on the site that could pose a hazard during and after construction of the proposed school facility.

The Phase I ESA identified on-site RECs associated with historic fill of unknown origin, a closed spill case, an active aboveground storage tank in an underground vault, a former sewage treatment building and oil-stained soil on the ground



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below the tank fill port. No off-site RECs were identified. Additionally, the evaluation revealed the presence of environmental concerns associated with the potential presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB)-containing material and methane generation from the filling of a nearby historical stream.

Observations recorded during the Phase II ESI indicated that soil consisting of red-brown fine to medium sand, clay, silt and some gravel was observed. Some fill material including trace brick fragments and bluestone was observed in some of the borings. Groundwater was encountered at depths ranging from approximately 10 to 22.5 feet below the ground surface elevation and is anticipated to flow in a northwesterly direction.

The geophysical survey identified several utilities, as well as the tank fill and supply/return lines, throughout the site.

The results of the Phase II ESI indicated tetrachloroethene at concentrations exceeding its New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Air Guideline Value (AGV) in one soil vapor sample. Petroleum and chlorinated solvent-related VOCs were detected in soil vapor at concentrations exceeding published background concentrations. Tetrachloroethene is likely attributable to off-site sources.

The analytical results of the soil samples detected four metals and one pesticide at concentrations exceeding soil cleanup criteria, which were attributed to the characteristics of the on-site fill material and on-site pesticide use.

Manganese was detected in all groundwater samples at concentrations exceeding its NYSDEC Class GA Groundwater Standards. The presence of manganese in the groundwater is likely attributable to natural conditions. PCBs were detected in two groundwater samples at concentrations in excess of its Class GA Groundwater Standards. These exceedances may be attributable to unidentified off site sources.

To ensure that none of the constituents of concern would pose a hazard to workers, future school occupants, and/or the environment during and after construction of the proposed project, the following remediation measures were identified and will be implemented as part of the proposed project.

- Construction of a sub-slab depressurization system (SSDS) and a soil vapor barrier would be integrated into the new school building design including integration with any proposed damp-proofing or waterproofing components of the new school building design.



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- Any suspect ACM, LBP and PCB-containing materials would be identified prior to construction and properly managed during construction activities.
- Any dewatering necessary during school building construction activities would be performed in accordance with applicable local, state and federal regulations, and would be minimized to avoid potential off site contaminated groundwater from migrating toward the Site.
- All soil excavated during building construction would be properly managed in accordance with all applicable local, State and Federal regulations. For areas of the Site where exposed soils may exist after the school building is constructed (e.g., landscaped areas), a twenty-four (24) inch thick layer of environmentally clean fill would be placed over the soils.

Other potential environmental impact assessment areas were fully examined, including land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic and demographic conditions; community facilities; open space and recreational resources; archeological resources; urban design and aesthetics; neighborhood character; infrastructure and energy; solid waste; air quality; natural resources; and construction impacts. No other significant adverse impacts were identified.

### **BENEFICIAL IMPACTS**

Development of the proposed project would provide approximately 332 additional permanent public school seats at the primary level to serve Community School District No. 15.





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July 7, 2017  
Date