



Public Comment Analysis

Date: January 18, 2011

Topic: The Proposed Re-siting of P.S. 151 Yorkville Community School (02M151) in Building M066

Date of Panel Vote: January 19, 2011

Summary of Proposal

Yorkville Community School (02M151, or “P.S. 151”) is an existing District 2 zoned elementary school that was opened in 2009-2010 in leased space at 323 East 91st Street, New York, NY 10128, also known as “Our Lady of Good Counsel”, or building M816. It currently enrolls students in kindergarten and first grade and is expected to serve grades kindergarten through five when it reaches full scale. The DOE’s lease on Our Lady of Good Counsel is due to expire on August 31, 2012, and there is not enough space for P.S. 151 to grow to scale at that location.

On December 3, 2010, the Department of Education (“DOE”) published a proposal to implement a “Re-Siting,” which means that P.S. 151 will move to building M066, located at 421 East 88th Street, New York, NY 10128, for September 2011. Building M066 was originally built to serve elementary grades and is currently occupied by Richard R. Green High School for Teaching (02M580, or “RRG”). In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”), the DOE is proposing to relocate RRG to a new high school facility at 26 Broadway, New York, NY, 10004, where it would co-locate with Urban Assembly School of Business for Young Women (02M316, or “UASB”) and Lower Manhattan Community Middle School (02M896, “LMCMS”). The proposal to re-site P.S. 151 in Building M066 is dependent upon approval of the proposal to re-site RRG to 26 Broadway.

M066 has a target capacity of 625 students based on its current usage as a high school. Target capacity for the M066 building’s new usage as an elementary school would be adjusted based on the actual usage of rooms and target class size for elementary grades. The DOE estimates the target capacity of M066 for elementary school use as approximately 600 students. P.S. 151 currently enrolls 177 students in kindergarten and first grade, and is scheduled to add one grade each year until it reaches full scale to enroll students in kindergarten through fifth grades.

Based on the number of rooms in the proposed new location, the DOE anticipates that P.S. 151 would serve approximately 27 class sections at full scale. This would mean approximately five sections per grade in kindergarten through second grade, and four sections per grade in third

through fifth grades. This represents an increase in enrollment as compared to the current number of sections in kindergarten and first grade. The actual number of sections in total and per grade will be adjusted by the principal based on enrollment needs.

The DOE is also working with the Community Education Council (“CEC”) for District 2 to rezone of all the Upper East Side schools to address kindergarten waitlists. On December 22, 2010, the CEC 2 approved the proposal to expand the size of the P.S. 151 zone in order to utilize the capacity of the proposed relocation to M066.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at P.S. 151 on January 6, 2011. At the hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 70 members of the public attended the hearing, and 23 people spoke. Also present at the meeting were District 2 Superintendent Daria Rigney; Community Education Council 2 President T. Elzora Cleveland and members Shino Tanikawa, Michael D. Markowitz, and Cynthia Alvarez; Richard R. Green Principal David Raubvogel; P.S. 151 Principal Samantha Kaplan; P.S. 151 School Leadership Team representatives Rachel Joseph, Sue Fosmoen, Maria Mischel, Gwen Rawlings and Kimberly Ginner.

The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearing:

1. Community Education Council 2 President T. Elzora Cleveland noted that the CEC 2 has refrained from taking a formal position on the proposal in order to hear different concerns and comments about the proposal at the Joint Public Hearing.
2. CEC member Shino Tanikawa pointed out that according to the Educational Impact Statement, P.S. 151 is to start at over-capacity, at 113% utilization. Mr. Tanikawa also suggested that the Council come up with a proposal to create base level funding that is not tied to enrollment. Finally, Mr. Tanikawa showed his support for the proposal to provide both schools, Richard R. Green and P.S. 151, with permanent locations, but urged the DOE to consider compatibility of different schools and also to start engaging in long-term planning.
3. CEC member Michael Markowitz expressed his concern that the CEC does not have a formal role in the co-location proposal. He stated his support for the proposal to re-site P.S. 151, which he believes to be obvious, and wished to see it follow through. He also mentioned that M066 has been there all along and the DOE should have given it to P.S. 151 rather than starting it out in an interim location.
4. P.S. 151 Principal Samantha Kaplan expressed her support for the proposal, reasoning that P.S. 151 needs a permanent location and the only building in the zone that will suffice is M066. Furthermore, she dismissed Millennium High School’s opposition to the proposal.

5. SLT member Sue Fosmoen noted that the proposal is tied to the current rezoning proposal and that the P.S. 151's potential move affects every student on Upper East Side.
6. SLT member Maria Mischel stressed that the M066 location has a playground and other spaces that are appropriate for elementary school students and expressed her support for the move.
7. SLT member Gwen Rawlings reiterated the comment that P.S. 151 needs a permanent home, but raised concern that the school would be over-capacity at 113%.
8. SLT member Rachel Joseph expressed her support for the proposal and added that the P.S. 151's current location poses safety issues.
9. Dara Adams, from the Representative Carolyn Maloney's office, stated that the congresswoman supports the plan to move P.S. 151 to a permanent location since that was always the intention. Congresswoman Maloney, according to Ms. Adams, did not specify where she thought Richard R. Green should be located, but noted her belief that M066 makes sense for P.S. 151.
10. Several commenters supported the move, reasoning that students need stability and M066 represents an appropriate space, fit to house an elementary school.
11. Commenters praised the staff of P.S. 151 for providing a nurturing environment, particularly Principal Kaplan for doing a wonderful job with limited resources.
12. Commenters expressed their support for the proposal, but inquired what would happen if the proposal is not approved and what the other alternatives would be.
13. A commenter expressed their support for the proposal but expressed her dissatisfaction with the pace at which the proposal has proceeded and noted that P.S. 151 should be given the space and be allowed to move onto focus on improving the school, not wasting time worrying about permanent location.
14. Richard R. Green Principal Raubvogel expressed his support for the proposal and shared his excitement about P.S. 151 moving into the M066 building and RRG moving into the 26 Broadway Campus.

The DOE received a comment at the Joint Public Hearing which did not directly relate to the proposal.

1. Several commenters noted that Richard R. Green needs a permanent location as well and should be placed in a safe neighborhood.
2. A commenter noted that there is a documented need for seats for high school students who want to go to Millennium high school and that the DOE should allow Millennium high school to expand into 26 Broadway instead of Richard R. Green.

Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE

1. Council Member Jessica Lappin expressed her support for the proposal, reasoning that M066 building is the only viable option for the Yorkville Community School. She also mentioned that a permanent location for P.S. 151 is not a luxury but a necessity.
2. A petition with 364 signatures was submitted in favor of the proposal to re-site P.S. 151 to M066 and also to re-site Richard R. Green High School to 26 Broadway Campus.
3. Approximately 260 commenters expressed their support for the proposal. The reasons cited included:
 - a. The proposal would alleviate overcrowding in all eight Upper Eastside zoned schools, including P.S. 290.
 - b. P.S. 151 would be given a permanent location where the students can be in a safe and secure learning environment.
 - c. If the proposal is not approved, the rezoning plan, which was just approved to reduce overcrowding and waitlists in Upper Eastside schools, would render useless and adversely impact students.

Analysis of Issues Raised, Significant Alternatives Proposed and Changes Made to the Proposal

1. Comments 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14 express support for the proposal and do not require a response.
2. With regards to comment 2 and 7 regarding utilization, according to the projected enrollment, the estimated utilization at P.S. 151 for 2011-2012 school year is 51%. P.S. 151 would not reach the 113% utilization until 2014-2015 school year when the expansion is complete and the school serves K through fifth grades. According to the Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”), schools in the Upper Eastside typically have class size higher than the target and have building utilization rate above 100%. The DOE anticipates the class size at P.S. 151 at 113% utilization will still be comparable to those at the neighboring schools. The DOE hopes that with the expansion of P.S. 151, the utilization level for the other schools in Upper Eastside would be lowered (though likely still equal to or higher than the 113% projected for P.S. 151).
3. With regards to the portion of comment 2 related to funding, the funding for new school is subject to the DOE policy citywide. This proposal does not have an impact on the citywide policy.
4. With regards to comment 3, the CEC’s role in the EIS process is set forth in detail in Chancellor’s Regulation A-190.
5. With regards to comment 12, if the proposal is not approved, P.S. 151 will remain in its current location at Our Lady of Good Counsel/building M816 until August 31, 2012 when the lease expires. The DOE would look for a different space for P.S. 151 for the 2013 -2014 school year.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes in the proposal were made in response to public feedback.