

COMMUNITY BOARD 7

COMMITTEE REPORT

Joint Committee Meeting with Transportation and Land Use/Landmarks Committees

2025-05-14 6:30pm

1.) Names of the committee members present:

Transportation: John DeLooper, Gabino Morales, Fay Walker

Land Use: Diana Gonzalez, Erin Keith, Nick Jackson, Jeremy Kaplan, Gabino Morales, John Santore, Karen Rolnick

Quorum not achieved

2.) Agenda

Last Mile Facility Text Amendment presentation by the Department of City Planning

- Maria Free, Doug Rose, and Emily Bachman from the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) presented about the proposed Last-Mile Facility Text Amendment, which is a proposed zoning change that would establish a City Planning Commission (CPC) Special Permit for new last-mile facilities.
- DCP is currently engaging in a part of the environmental review, and as part of this, recently held an Info Session on April 24, and an Environmental Scoping Meeting on May 6.

- Feedback about the Environmental Scoping can be sent to 25dcp067y_dl@planning.nyc.gov by May 16, 2025. Questions and other feedback can be sent to LastMile@planning.nyc.gov.
- After Environmental Review, the amendment will enter Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) and stakeholders like Community Boards, Borough Presidents, the City Planning Commission, the City Council and Mayor will have an additional opportunity to weigh in about the proposed change.
- Amendment follows growth in last mile facilities since 2017, and which have brought new challenges like high vehicle and good throughput, 24/7 operations, usage of more vehicles than standard warehouses, and increased trip generation.
- This amendment will introduce a public review process for last mile facilities, and aims to shift development of them further from where people live, and to encourage use of sustainable delivery modes.
- Amendment will define what a last mile facility is - calling it a “parcel delivery facility.” DCP is defining this in the zoning code, as a type of Group 9 General Storage Warehouse, with a distinct use category and which is served by vehicles of weight classes 1-5. It is proposing that new last mile facilities require a special permit, which would subject new facilities to review by Community Boards, Borough Presidents, and City Council Members. DCP has also designed the proposed amendment to include incentives to encourage use of sustainable methods such as vehicle electrification and blue freight (shipping goods via NYC waterways).
- Facilities under 50,000 square feet would not be subject to the special permit, nor would water-dependent facilities, and exceptions would also be provided for new facilities with

certain electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and that are more than 500 feet away from residential zones.

- DCP is also studying issues like the market for last-mile goods and how changes to regulation impact this, impacts on transportation, impacts on pollution and greenhouse gases, and whether the effects of the facilities or this rule would be disproportionate on disadvantaged communities.
- Committee members discussed DCP's presentation. Several members noted concerns that the current proposal does not require that facilities be sited away from schools. Several members also noted concerns that 50,000 square feet was too large for as-of-right facilities, and might encourage last-mile businesses to purchase multiple smaller facilities, rather than one larger facility.
- Members also expressed concerns about whether these facilities might cause increases of in-ground gas or diesel tanks, which causes future brownfield sites when a facility closes, and encouraged DCP to include this in their environmental review.
- Members also asked questions including about how DCP would analyze the impact of boat vs. truck pollution if blue highway facilities increase under this change, whether facilities could be incentivized to create pedestrian infrastructure like sidewalks or bike lanes to facilitate multiple delivery methods. Questions were also asked about whether new parcel delivery facilities could be incentivized to park vehicles on-site instead of on streets and sidewalks near their facilities.
- Several members noted concerns about the concentration/clustering of last-mile facilities. This includes multiple facilities by the same owner in the same place, or large sites like Sunset Industrial Park, where one large facility is subdivided into multiple

facilities for different last-mile providers. Several members noted concerns that the less than 50,000 square feet exemptions could create “loopholes” where businesses subdivide spaces for multiple last mile tenants, or create multiple LLCs for the same business to fall under the facility size, and encouraged DCP to include robust study and discussion of enforcement to prevent and address these types of situations.

- Other suggestions included that DCP should consider distance restrictions for other facilities like senior centers, food banks, and houses of worship. DCP stated that this could be best accomplished if the special permit passes, as the community can create stipulations under ULURP surrounding deliveries at concentrated times like school pickup and drop-offs, church services, grocery store runs for foodbanks, etc.
- Members also asked about stormwater remediation, and encouraged DCP to consider the merit of incentives for buildings that plant trees and/or go beyond current regulations to remediate stormwater or other pollution.
- Members also expressed concerns that this proposed rule does nothing to remediate the harms of existing last-mile facilities.
- Other suggestions included a proposal that DCP should study crossing guards near these facilities.
 - DCP noted that they currently study Junction Analysis and Level of Service under the special permit process and stated that they would need to seek clarification about whether this is included under CEQR or other environmental study regulations.

- Other concerns included that there is no consideration of food delivery such as AmazonFresh or FreshDirect, which also generate high volumes of trips, nor discussion of “dark storefronts” used as distribution hubs by companies like Gorillas or Getir.
- Related to concerns about inequitable distribution of these facilities, members also sought clarification about how clustering factors into decision-making processes. DCP believes that this can best be addressed under the ULURP process, which allows for better conversations on a local level about what facilities are available.
- Members also suggested that the EV incentives should take into account environmental issues like peaker plants, and that the study of last-mile facilities should also include consideration of evolving delivery methods like drone delivery.
- Diana Gonzalez noted that since no quorum was achieved, neither committee could take official action. However, Board and community members can independently send feedback to DCP about the proposal.

3.) Next meeting:

- Transportation Committee Meeting June 10, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

4.) Corrections and amendments to previous meeting minutes (if any)

- None

5.) Additions to the current agenda

- None

6.) Motions taken or rejected (if any)

- None

7.) Actions taken or agreed to be taken

- None

8) Next steps

- Board and community members can send feedback for DCP Scoping by May 16 to 25dcp067y_dl@planning.nyc.gov .
- Other questions and other feedback can be sent to LastMile@planning.nyc.gov.

9.) Old Business

- None

10.) New business items

- None

11) Time of adjournment

- 8:30 p.m.

Appendix A: Resources related to Meeting

- YouTube recording of Committee Meeting:
https://www.youtube.com/live/TITEohb_cM0
- Recording of April 24 Info Session:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6StORjXjzIM>
- Recording of EARD Scoping Meeting: Last Mile Parcel Delivery Facility:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0Zk0QyKS7U>
- Last-Mile Facility Text Amendment Documents/Information on NYC Zoning Application Portal (ZAP):
- Project Homepage:
<https://www.nyc.gov/content/planning/pages/our-work/plans/citywide/last-mile-facility-text-amendment>

- Zoning Application Portal Documents:

<https://zap.planning.nyc.gov/projects/2025Y0279>

- [Draft Scope of Work \(DSOW\)](#)
- [Environmental Assessment Statement \(EAS\)](#)
- [Positive Declaration](#)
- [Scoping Notice](#)
- [Market Assessment](#)

Appendix B: UPROSE Testimony



May 13th, 2025

Nebraska Hernandez

nebraska@uprose.org

Climate Justice Hub Advocate

Submitted on behalf of UPROSE

Subject: *Written Comments on the Department of City Planning's Last-Mile Zoning Text Amendment's Draft Scope of Work for the Environmental Review*

Overview:

UPROSE is a women of color-led community-based organization founded in 1966 working at the intersection of racial justice and climate change in Sunset Park. UPROSE is a founding member of the Last-Mile Coalition, launched in December 2021, a citywide coalition of environmental justice and public health advocates fighting to regulate last-mile trucking facilities in New York City.

The coalition has submitted a Zoning Resolution Text Amendment (ZTA) application to mitigate the explosive growth of last-mile trucking facilities – warehouses where packages are sorted and sent out for distribution. As part of the Last-Mile Coalition, UPROSE has been educating Sunset Park residents on the dangers associated with truck and warehouse pollution. For example, we had a last-mile informational session at our office in February where we trained residents on submitting public testimony to the city council and informed them of upcoming dates on last-mile-related legislation, including this comment period deadline.

We remind DCP and others here today that air pollution and truck traffic are deadly.

1. In the New York City metropolitan area, 21,000 new childhood asthma cases are diagnosed each year due to nitrous dioxide pollution.¹
2. In New York City proper, 2,000 premature deaths can be attributed to PM2.5 pollution every year.²
3. According to the DOT, in Sunset Park, 634 people have been injured along 3rd Avenue between 2018-2022. Since 2016, there have been 14 fatalities along this corridor.³
4. According to the Last-Mile Coalition's Reasonable Worst Case Development Scenario, 19 soft sites in Sunset Park could be developed into last-mile warehouses. This would counter ongoing efforts to encourage industrial retention in the city, as stated in the ongoing work with the NYC Industrial Plan and with UPROSE's [Green Resilient Industrial District \(GRID\) 2.0](#).⁴

1. <https://globalcleanair.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/95/files/EDF-NY-Warehouse-Boom-Report-1-18-23.pdf>

2. https://nyc-eja.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/NYC_CHAMPEJ_Report.pdf

3. <https://www.nyc.gov/content/visionzero/pages/>

4. Last Mile Coalition RWCDs



We are pleased that the city is moving forward with its zoning text amendment and thank the Department of City Planning (DCP) for beginning this process. Unfortunately, the City’s proposed ZTA differs from the Last-Mile Coalition’s proposed ZTA and fails to adequately address the disproportionate environmental burdens placed on disadvantaged communities (DACs) in the City.

Specific Recommendations:

First, Sunset Park, along with other waterfront neighborhoods like Red Hook, Maspeth, and Hunts Point, is already overburdened by last-mile facilities and their associated truck traffic and air pollution. UPROSE, as well as the Last-Mile Coalition, is deeply concerned that the proposed ZTA does not do enough to prevent clustering of the facilities in DACs. Our proposal recommends a distance of 1,000 feet between new facilities and sensitive receptors, such as schools, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) properties, parks, and nursing facilities, as well as other last-mile facilities. The City’s proposed zoning text amendment only explicit buffer is 500 feet from residential zones that meet certain electric vehicle charging infrastructure standards. We are concerned this will not do enough to prevent clustering and may not be a suitable buffer for residential zones next to manufacturing zones, especially those from 4th Avenue to the waterfront in Sunset Park. Thus, UPROSE recommends that the DCP:

- 1. Incorporate 1,000-foot buffers around sensitive receptors, including schools, parks, nursing facilities, and NYCHA properties.*

Second, the City’s proposed zoning text amendment also provides an exemption from review for “water-dependent facilities.” According to page 15 of the Last Mile Parcel Delivery Facilities (PDFs) Market Assessment, “some PDFs are located on the waterfront, but they are not currently using the water to move goods since the network for maritime shipping of parcels is still being developed.”⁵ While DCP is using the definition of water-dependent facilities already in the zoning resolution, they also carve out an ambiguous exception of this definition on page 3 of the Public Notice of a Scoping Meeting Draft Environmental Impact Statement with “or by similar standards to be specified by DCP.”⁶ This is similar to their electric vehicle charging infrastructure standards. This ambiguity can mean anything and should be defined in consultation with local community groups. Thus, UPROSE recommends that the DCP:

- 2. Explicitly define ambiguous exceptions in consultation with community groups;*
- 3. Work with other government agencies, including EDC, to implement Blue Highways Initiatives to ensure water-dependent facilities are actually utilized to remove truck traffic from NYC streets;*
- 4. Work with other government agencies, including NYSERDA, to install electric vehicle charging infrastructure where necessary to ensure that EV-based exceptions are honored.*

5. <https://zap.planning.nyc.gov/projects/2025Y0279>

6. <https://zap.planning.nyc.gov/projects/2025Y0279>

7. <https://ir.aboutamazon.com/news-release/news-release-details/2025/Amazon-com-Announces-Fourth-Quarter-Results/>

UPROSE

Lastly, we ask that DCP remember that the vast majority of these last-mile facilities are owned by large, multinational corporations that can afford a special permitting process. According to DCP's own Market Assessment Report, in NYC, FedEx operates 38% of PDFs over 50,000 SF, Amazon operates 28%, and UPS operates 24%. The other category represents only 10% of PDFs over 50,000 SF in NYC (p. 47). Recent news articles espouse a fear that the ZTA will drive business out of NYC. However, we know that the 3 largest actors in last-mile deliveries are more than capable of affording and following a special permitting process for new facilities. Amazon alone generated \$59.2 billion in 2024.⁷ It is imperative that DCP does not cater to the interests of a few businesses instead of what community members and community environmental justice organizations have been advocating for for years. Far too often, DCP leverages planning in a way that reinforces historical injustice. Today, we ask that DCP leverage planning in a way that ensures a just environment for all. Thus, UPROSE recommends that DCP:

- 5. Not be dissuaded by industry stakeholders who continue to derail environmental justice efforts coming from community-based organizations under the guise of “economic concerns.”*

Conclusion:

The combination of deadly air pollution and traffic violence subjects disadvantaged communities, like Sunset Park, to early death and respiratory ailments that cascade across generations. The Department of City Planning must do everything in its power to create a stringent special permitting process to prevent additional clustering of last-mile warehouses and their associated pollutants in disadvantaged communities. Once again, we thank the Department of City Planning for beginning this long overdue effort to protect residents of New York City from environmental harm.

5. <https://zap.planning.nyc.gov/projects/2025Y0279>

6. <https://zap.planning.nyc.gov/projects/2025Y0279>

7. <https://ir.aboutamazon.com/news-release/news-release-details/2025/Amazon-com-Announces-Fourth-Quarter-Results/>