



Matthew S. Washington
Chair

George Sarkissian
District Manager

COMMUNITY BOARD ELEVEN

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN
1664 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10035
TEL: (212) 831-8929/30
FAX: (212) 369-3571
www.cb11m.org

Housing Committee Special Meeting
Wednesday, December 14, 2011, 6:00 p.m.
Board Office
1664 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10035

Present: Brodie Enoch, JoAnn Lawson, Keith Massey, Peggy Morales, Yma Rodriguez, Adejose Rosario McKoy, Candy Vives-Vasquez, Tasha Williams, Jonathan Carillo, Lee Chong

Excused: Shawn Chin-Chance, Alvin Johnson, Antonio Rivera Theresa Richardson

Absent: Carmen Villegas,

Guests: Martin Garcia, Hispanic Community Organization for Life
Tom Ahn, Mt. Sinai
Brad Beckstrom, Mt. Sinai
Michael Carbone, Mt. Sinai
Henry Calderon, East Harlem Chamber of Commerce

Meeting called to order by Committee Chair Jo Ann Lawson at 6:10 p.m.

1. Presentations & Discussions

- a. Discussion of the marketing of affordable housing at Mt. Sinai development project.
- Representatives present from Mt. Sinai admitted there were several mistakes made during the process. The committee voiced many of the concerns from the regular housing meeting on Dec. 6th. (see minutes).
 - 116th Street Block Association (SBA) reported it had commenced distributing flyers in buildings throughout the district and had worked its way from 96th to 117th street at the time of the meeting.
 - As of December 12th, Mt. Sinai made applications available for pick-up at 116th SBA during the organizations posted hours. Committee members were concerned that only one Saturday was available as a pickup day between Dec. 12 and the deadline due to the holidays and this would unfairly restrict applicants who could not come during M-F hours due to work obligations.

COMMITTEE REQUEST #1: Given the admitted mistakes in the marketing process thus far, and the resulting constrained application period, we request that all efforts be exhausted to extend the application deadline beyond the current December 31, 2011 date. In

addition, we expect that confirmation be obtained from HFA allowing additional applications to be opened if community preference targets are not met after the initial application review.

MT. Sinai's Response: As previously indicated, we need to adhere to our December 31, 2011 postmark deadline for applications to participate in the lottery on January 10th, 2012. The building will be ready for occupancy beginning in April, 2012 and it is essential to maintaining commitments to financing obtained and the guidelines of the LIHTC program that affordable applicants are fully processed and ready to move in. The only way to meet the April 1 occupancy date for these initial units is to stick with the current schedule.

HFA's expectation and requirement is that the rent-up of the affordable units maintain an appropriate 4:1 pace with the market rate rentals, i.e. that for each 4 market units rented, there is one additional affordable lease. Preferences such as the 50% preference for CB11 residents require that processing of CB11 eligible applications occurs in advance of non-CB11 applications to the extent that 50% of the leases, 23 units, are signed by CB11 residents and/or CB11 applications are exhausted. The guidelines of the program do not allow the rent-up, in effect, to stop until the preference maximum is reached. However, Mount Sinai and Related remain committed to doing everything possible to assist CB11 residents to realize the 50% community preference. Based on current application volume we remain confident about the outcome and we hope that you will encourage CB11 residents to complete the applications and return them prior to December 31, 2011.

At the January lottery 5,000 applications will be opened and processing will commence. Soon after the lottery, unopened applications postmarked no later than December 31, 2011 in excess of 5,000 will be opened, and those belonging to CB11 residents will be logged and processed. Applications from residents outside of CB11 will be held for future use, if necessary. Secondly, applications received after the postmark deadline but by the lottery will then be opened, but only those from CB11 residents logged and processed. Finally, advertising targeted towards CB11 will resume (after the lottery) and continue with applications opened as received and those belonging to CB11 residents logged to the extent that the 50% preference requires it and within the overall pace of the rent-up. These measures provide added opportunity for CB11 residents to participate. Updates regarding progress will be shared with the community board

COMMITTEE REQUEST#2 : Although we applaud the outreach efforts of the 116th Block Association (SBA) in helping to distribute the applications, we maintain that the current application request process, via mail from Related, is an unnecessary constraint on the availability of applications. As such, we ask that applications be made available for download on the Related website now. To satisfy Related's ability to quickly sort incoming applications, we suggest that the downloadable applications display the word "GREEN" in large bold font at the top of the first page of the form. We feel these are easy steps to take that will help make the process that much easier for applicants.

Mt. Sinai's Response: HFA relies on Related's marketing practices in support of its signed management and marketing plans and tenant selection plans to meet fair housing guidelines and be applied appropriately and consistently. While some developers may make applications available via downloading, Related does not. Each application has a

written request attached to it, whether entered by webpage or mailed-in or by sign-out under control of the SBA. These controls are in place to discourage inappropriate distribution of applications. Additionally, a downloaded application would be indistinguishable from a Xeroxed application, and these are prohibited from entry.

In response to CB 11's concern that distribution solely from the SBA location on 115th Street is too limiting, SBA is supervising an additional distribution point from the Community Board 11 office during the next weeks.

We agree that the efforts of SBA have been most effective. A very large number of applications (3300 to date) have been distributed to residents of CB 11. In fact, the response has been more than double of other Related managed programs.

COMMITTEE REQUEST #3: We insist that local representation (SBA?) be involved in the application review process. This will help to ensure that proper consideration is given to applicants from our community.

Mt. Sinai's Response: HFA guidelines dictate the application/interview procedures and in fact the process is closely monitored by HFA. There is no precedent for an outside organization monitoring the interview process. This opens legal questions and jeopardizes the confidentiality of the applicant. If an individual feels they were unfairly treated, HFA requirements build in an appeal process which includes an appeal to the New York Division of Human Rights

Fair housing guidelines require that equal, fair, and consistent consideration is given to 100% of the applications. HFA expects the owners and Related to uphold these guidelines for all applicants, and Mount Sinai chose to engage Related due to its track record in this area. Applicant information is confidential and sensitive, and the interview process one between Related personnel and the applicant. Third-party oversight has no precedent, destroys the confidentiality of sensitive information, and makes it unclear who is responsible for the decision in relation to each and every application. All applicants are informed of determinations in writing that includes information regarding the appeal process with Related. Applicants who remain dissatisfied subsequent to the Related appeal process may bring their specific concern or complaint to HFA or to the New York State Division of Human Rights, who will then investigate appropriately.

2. Adjournment

- a. **Motion to adjourn by Brodie Enoch seconded by Keith Massey. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.**