

Land Use, Landmarks & Planning Committee

June 10, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

Held via video conference

***** MINUTES*****

Present: Denilyn Arciaga, Jessica Elliot, Elsie Encarnacion, Jessica Morris, Vincent Torres, Steven Villanueva (Chair)

Absent: Melanee Farrah, Joseph Goldbloom, Frances Mostrata, Candy Vives-Vasquez

Excused: none

Guests: Chris Cirillo, Ascendant Neighborhood Development; Veanda Simmons, NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development; Melissa Auton, James Hull & Arielle Goldberg, Department of Housing Preservation; and Jonathan Cruz, MDG Design + Construction; Warren James, Christina Johnson; Marina Ortiz; Jordan Barowitz, Durst; Wesley O'Brien, Fried Frank; George Janes; Milena Deleva; Natassia Rodriguez

1. Call to Order by S. Villanueva at 6:41 PM. Motion to adopt the agenda by D. Arciaga, Seconded by J. Elliot. Unanimously passed at 6:48 PM.

2. Presentations & Discussions

- a. **Informational Update: Las Raices** scattered site affordable housing development project presented by Chris Cirillo, Ascendant Neighborhood Development; Veanda Simmons, NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development; Melissa Auton, Department of Housing Preservation; and Jonathan Cruz, MDG Design + Construction.

Background: This project was initially presented to CB11's Executive Committee in October 2019 ([Las Raices Project Presentation](#)) and includes the development of four HPD-owned sites in East Harlem which will be developed for affordable housing as called for in an RFQ issued by HPD in 2014 ([HPD NIHOP/NCP RFQ \(12/2014\)](#)).

Current Update: Pre-ULURP Phase. Multi-site Residential development project located at 1761 Park Ave, 505 E 118th St, 338 E 117th, and 303 E 102nd St. Identified and addressed CB11's 2021 Statement of Community District Needs. The development team is attempting to maintain deep levels of affordable housing as well as targeting family units.

Each building will feature all of the following: Ground space to allow community facilities to be flexible to accommodate local preferences; laundry room; elevator(s); landscaped or green roofs; Ground floor artwork mural commissioned from local-based arts groups and artists. No buildings are seeking zoning/floor bonus.

- 303 E 102nd St (vacant lot): 6 units (4 studios and 2 two-bedrooms);
- 338th E 117th St (vacant lot): 7 units (1 studio, 4 one-bedrooms, 2 three-bedrooms);
- 505 E 118th St (makes up a portion of Pleasant Village garden but team is developing on HPDs lot): 18 units (6 studios, 6 one-bedrooms, 4 two-bedrooms, 3 three-bedrooms);
- 1761 Park Ave (two of three lots that make up Jackie Robinson Community Garden): 52 units/14 stories (11 studios, 25 one-bedrooms, 16 two-bedrooms).

****Future CB11 Action-Items****

- 1) Disposition of city-owned property subject through ULURP. At this time, we have not received a certified application.
- 2) Environmental Impact Statement.

CB11 Committee Concerns/Questions:

Pleasant Village Garden and preserving open spaces: losing the site and park space (request to have the development team produce a sun/shade study); Mural Painting: referenced the East Harlem Neighborhood Action Center for their participatory mural painting; Prevailing wage to construction workers; Timeline/process.

Response from C. Cirillo, V. Simmons, M. Auton, J. Cruz: The development team states that direct outreach has not happened with Pleasant Village garden or Jackie Robinson (initial concepts based on the landscape architects. It is the team's intent to coordinate with the existing stakeholders on both sites. G. Janes has stated that tools are not available (e.g. special garden zoning or variance); Certification process in early 2021 - rough estimate.

Public Concerns/Questions:

- Pleasant Village Representatives/Gardeners/Owners/Neighbors voiced concern about how the garden is a deeply entrenched vital community asset for 45 years. Pandemic has made a huge impact on affordable housing but there is an important realization that open space is equally important. The fact that the development team has not connected with the public site groups speaks volumes for how the team might operate in the future.
- For affordable housing to not pay prevailing/adequate wages is also troubling and a huge equity crisis.
- Building facades are underwhelming and mural programs are just a stamp for benign facades. (Development Team response is that the renderings are illustrations of the facades; however, maintain affordability through the brick material to maintain the existing street fabric and respect the context of the street.) Counter response: affordable housing should not necessitate poor design and that the proposal should be well constructed to not stigmatize affordable housing.

Arielle Goldberg from HPD states that these were provided as temporary sites. Back in 2015, the Deputy Mayor's Office met with these groups in order to notify that the sites would be moving forward.

- b. **Informational Update: Harlem-East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan** presented by James Hull, NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development.

Background: In December 2019, HPD notified our board that the [Harlem East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan](#) was set to expire in December 2020. HPD has now informed us that they intend to extend the term of the URP for an additional forty (40) years. This action will be subject to ULURP but at this time we have not received a certified application.

Current Update: Pre-ULURP process. No plan to acquire new sites. No project or new construction. Extension and administration access to extend the plan 40 years out. G. Janes asks the committee to consider the impact of expiration in December 2021: CB11 would lose the urban design controls of the sites.

*****Future CB11 Action-Item***:** Support to extend the Harlem East Harlem URP for 40 years.

CB11 Committee Concerns/Questions: when anticipating recertification?

- Points of Agreement: a future conversation amongst the committee to discuss the unrealized points of agreements that was instituted.
- Report/Data to inform extension?
- Expiration scenario: can HPD still amend it to make it active?
- Expedited process to support extension is disconcerting considering all that is going on with the neighborhood.
- Accountability: would URP keep their initial commitments?

Response from HPD: Typically, we don't have a report to extend the plan for the existing phases of the 125th st and nearby projects part of the URP.

- c. **Informational Update: Land Use Application N 200076 ZCM - 1800 Park Avenue Transit Easement; Block 1749, Lots 24 and 33)** by Wesley O'Brien, Fried Frank; Jordan Barowitz, the Durst Organization; and Carol Rosental, Fried Frank

Background: This application was initially referred to CB11 in [October 2019](#). Since then, the Durst Organization (property owner) and the MTA have reached an agreement with respect to the location of the transit easement for this site. Durst has filed a [revised application](#) for 1800 Park Avenue which DCP is in the process of referring to CB11. Durst has requested that we review now as we do not have any Land Use Committee meetings scheduled for this summer. The community board may provide comments in response to

this application but it is not required to do so.

Current Update: As of right, pursuant to the existing zoning with a two-step application/certification process. First, if the MTA wants a transit easement (May 2019). Yes, then file the second application to determine the location. (October 2019). The presenters are asking for support for the certification and the project which is part of the referral process from DCP to the CB11.

*****Request for Land Use Action-Items***: Resolution in favor of the application and support of the project.**

Asking for two Letter(s) of Support: 1) In reference to the location of the Easemen; Support for the project (premature at the time)

CB11 Committee Concerns/Questions:

- Monetary gain of the developers by the MTA?
- Could MTA ask for more space or is it legally binding?
- Programming of proposed building?

Response by Fried Frank and Durst Organization:

The transit easement is structured as a zoning requirement and additional costs are provided by the developers. Currently, the building is anticipated to be a mixed-used residential development; however, if it is not financed, the alternative may be commercial such as office/retail.

W. James: what are the community-based organizations/consultants/vendors part of the development team? (response: at this point, the project is in the infancy. is not further based plans for the community-based)

Public Concerns/Questions:

- What are the community-based organizations/consultants/vendors part of the development team? Response: at this point, the project is in the infancy and there has not been discussion for that particular issue at the time.

3. Old Business - None.

4. New Business - None.

5. Announcements

- a. **CB11's next Full Board meeting** will be held on **Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at 6:30 pm** via video conference.
- b. **NYCHA Connected Communities Guidebook**, joint collaboration between DCP + NYCHA (~120 pages) regarding the infill process/development. Announcement made by George Janes, CB11 Land Use Consultant.
- c. **Next Steps:** Reflection of meeting cycles for the last three months.

6. Adjournment by S. Villanueva at 9:11 PM.