Land Use, Landmarks & Planning Committee
Wednesday, February 5, 2020 6:30 p.m.
Bonifacio Senior Center
7 E 116th St

***MINUTES***

Present: Denilyn Arciaga, Jessica Elliot, Melanee Farrah, Frances Mastrota, Jessica Morris, Robert Perkins, Steven Villanueva (Chair), Candy Vives-Vasquez

Absent: La Shawn Henry, Vincent Torres
Excused: Joseph Goldbloom
Guests: Marina Ortiz, East Harlem Preservation; Nilsa Orama, CB11; Derek Gaskill, Ascendant; Micheal Sandler, HPD; Eddy Almonte, HPD; Krystal Peartree, L&M; Ivy Humme; Renee Keith, Chenchita's Garden

1. Call to Order– Adoption of the Agenda

   The meeting was called to order by Villanueva at 6:43 PM. The motion to adopt the meeting agenda was made by Mastrota and seconded by Arciaga. Passed at 7:56 PM.

2. Presentations & Discussions

   (See Old Business)

3. Old Business

   a. “Where We Live NYC” Draft
      i. Michael Sandler and Eddy Almonte from HPD provided a 30-minute presentation and overview of the draft intention, process, and strategy developments
      ii. The Committee provided individual feedback as follows:
          1. Villanueva: Concern about ‘Accelerating the Land Use Process’ proposed in Goal 2; Question about FAR Caps
          2. Perkins: Passed on providing comment.
          3. Mastrota: Concern about the unfairness in racially determining school children; To define by ethnic values.
4. Arciaga: The achievements to date outlined in Chapter 3 is misleading and when compared to our own community district, not reflective; The spatial data and mapping in Chapter 5 should include local business-sense of belonging means that affordable housing = affordable economies; Strategies outlined in Chapter 6 still do not address practical solutions to the historically repetitive failures of why affordable housing is never strengthened -> discriminatory bad actors.

5. Elliot: Discriminatory bad actors such as landlords have a higher rate of return/profit for pursuing non equitable practices- solution should be to have a greater punishment for breaking the law; landlords also create warehouses of empty residential units - solution should be to tax on vacant apartments.

6. Farrah: Concern regarding schools and education; Letter Grades of Schools influence how DOE looks at neighborhood schools; Diverse and Integrated Schools

7. Morris: Appreciates the interagency conducted throughout the Draft plan; Feeling welcome in a neighborhood is a key attribute for affordable housing

8. Vives-Vasquez: Our community has a lot of residents who fall in the lowest income bands (less than $9000) - solution to have rent be determined by Net Income and a calculated formula for affordable housing that is truly equitable

iii. The discussion opened to the public:

1. Marina Ortiz (East Harlem Preservation): Repetitive Plan - we already know all the issues and have heard of these solutions before; Concern about the financial budget to produce the “Where We Live” Draft; Skeptical about the ‘Outreaching’ process.

2. Marie Winfield (Public Member of Land Use Committee): Zero Construction Building; Guideline recommendations for new construction; Existing landlords who violate the law has been an intention.

3. Renee : NYC AMI should be without Westchester; RAD Conversion - Infill concern; Difficulty with lotteries/vouchers; Open Space and Affordable Housing by 2030 is not going to happen; Rezoning = Redlining

b. Lexington Gardens II update

i. Spencer Orkus and team from L&M Development provided an update for Lexington Gardens II, now referred to as “La Carolina”, update on subcontractors and suppliers as well as local hiring

ii. The Committee had the following concerns/questions;

1. Elliot: property management practices of C&C and L&M due to on-going issues and lack of communication regarding day-to-day life. whereas L&M told them to hold them accountable during a past resident meeting, the question is now determining what metrics residents could use to hold such management accountable

2. Vives-Vasquez: Q- where in the lottery process was L&M for the project? A- January 27 closed; Morris request for L&M to come back and inform after the lottery
3. Mescain (DM): Q: Occupants of the Commercial Facility? A: Three community facilities a) north side for a new school b) Union Settlement c) Unoccupied at 5400 SF but is set aside for community programming; Arciaga: Q: Length of lease for community facilities? A: Typically 30-40 years for the school facility and 10 years for Union Settlement

   iii. The discussion opened to the public:
      1. Ortiz: Income thresholds; difficulty on Housing Connect; Less than 30-40% AMI; Community preference should be considered (e.g. 30% at 50; 10% at 60)

   c. Sendero Verde update
      i. Jessica Yoon and team from L&M Development provided an update since the last progress report was during the June 2019 committee meeting; Information about building up the MWBE program and providing 361 affordable units
      ii. The update was met with committee and public concerns due to the accessibility of the shared outdoor space and specific focus on L&M’s ambiguity for the location/accessibility of bathrooms solely for gardeners that are part of the Green Thumb program. The committee was distraught due to L&M not seeming to hold their end of their responsibility since the committee voted and approved for certain expectations to be met (i.e. bathroom facility)

4. Announcements

   a. Villanueva: Next Steps for Committee to be a) ‘Where We Live’ draft by the 13th to be voted during Executive; Public Hearing on Thursday, February 06 at 5:30 p.m. with Arciaga to attend and report back; b) Budget Responses submitted by Wednesday, February 13th for the District Needs & Budget committee meeting Wednesday, February 13th; c) Citywide Statement Needs to be reviewed d) Reach out to George Janes about developing a map along 125th St regarding development
   b. Vives-Vasquez: African Burial Ground Memorial; Ferry proposal for East Harlem
   c. Morris: 2030 Waterfront Vision Plan on March 19, to confirm; Decade of Fire film screening on March 06

5. Adjournment

   The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.