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**KATE D. LEVIN**  
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release # 38-07

Monday, November 5, 2007

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## **CITY ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF DEVELOPER FOR INNOVATIVE MIXED-USE COMPLEX IN BAM CULTURAL DISTRICT**

*Project Will Feature Sustainable Design and Create Nearly 100 Affordable Housing Units, 40,000 Square Feet of Cultural Facilities and 4,000 Square Feet of Ground Floor Retail*

New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Shaun Donovan and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin announced the selection last week of the team chosen to design and construct a mixed-use development consisting of cultural, commercial, and residential spaces located in the cultural district around the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM). The architectural and development team is a consortium comprised of locally based and minority owned Full Spectrum of NY and studioMDA with Behnisch Architects.

Marked by numerous inventive design elements and resulting in 187 total housing units, over half of which will be affordable to low-, moderate- and middle-income families, the development will feature 40,000 square feet of cultural space in addition to 4,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space. The cultural center and residential development—both of which will boast state-of-the-art green design—are the latest components of the BAM Cultural District, a visionary plan developed by the City with the support of local elected officials and the surrounding community.

“The redevelopment of the BAM Cultural District is a direct result of interagency and public-nonprofit collaborations fostered through the Mayor’s historic ten-year New Housing Marketplace Plan—the nation’s largest affordable housing plan, which aims to create affordable housing for 500,000 New Yorkers and enhance diverse, vibrant communities,” said City Housing Commissioner Shaun Donovan. “Not only will this development provide a new dynamic cultural resource and necessary affordable housing, it will set a precedent for future developments by integrating sustainable design features with affordability.”

Uniquely designed to maximize the use of natural light, the 40,000 square foot cultural space represents the first City-led development of a new choreographic center, providing critically-needed affordable rehearsal and performance space for dancers and other performing artists. The Downtown Brooklyn

Partnership is leading project development, with advisory support from Danspace Project as an anchor occupant. One of New York's premier contemporary dance presenters, Danspace Project boasts a 35-year history of support for emerging choreographers, incubating and sustaining the development of a broad and distinguished range of artistic work.

"This project represents an important milestone in the City's commitment to nurture cultural endeavor by creating affordable artist work space," said DCLA Commissioner Kate D. Levin. "The City's collaboration with the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership will enhance Downtown Brooklyn's thriving cultural community by extending the infrastructure of support for artists in New York City."

Located at the corner of Fulton Street and Ashland Place, the development site is within the boundaries of the BAM Cultural District and is within walking distance of Brooklyn's Borough Hall and the foot of the Brooklyn Bridge.

The BAM Cultural District is an arts and economic development initiative that is converting vacant and underutilized city-owned properties into a mix of affordable space for visual, performing and media arts organizations, along with arts-related educational programs, a variety of housing, public open space and amenities such as restaurants, cafés, retail and parking. This development represents the first mixed-use development in the BAM Cultural District to move forward under the leadership of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership. By providing area residents with an affordable place to live, a center for active participation in the arts and additional access to quality commercial offerings, this project will help make Downtown Brooklyn a true 24-hour mixed-use community.

Totalling approximately 181,000 square feet, the residential component of the development will consist of an assortment of studios, one-, two- and three-bedroom units, 96 of which will be affordable to families making between 40% and 130% of Area Median Income (AMI)—between \$28,360 and \$92,170 for a family of four and between \$19,840 and \$64,480 for a single person. 157 of the units will be rental, while the remaining 30 will be homeownership.

The project is expected to be financed in part through The New York City Housing Development Corporation's Mixed Income Program in addition to subsidies from the New York City Housing Trust Fund, part of the Mayor's 165,000 unit New Housing Marketplace Plan. Construction on the project is anticipated to begin in spring 2009 and be completed in winter 2010.

"EDC is pleased to be a part of the continuing development of the BAM Cultural District which has a major role in the revitalization of Downtown Brooklyn," said New York City Economic Development Corporation President Robert C. Lieber. "To be truly successful, economic development must contain diverse components such as cultural and community amenities, as well as commercial and retail components. It must also include housing for the diversity of residents in the area and those who will be attracted to the area in the future. EDC looks forward to our continued support and participation in the many creative projects in the pipeline for the Cultural District and Downtown Brooklyn."

The Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, in cooperation with EDC and DCLA, has also issued an Open Call to cultural organizations, inviting them to submit ideas or proposals for other projects in the Cultural District. Responses are due by December 14th and more information is available at [www.dbpartnership.org/opencall](http://www.dbpartnership.org/opencall).

“The BAM Cultural District is a vital component in the ongoing revitalization of Downtown Brooklyn,” said Joe Chan, president of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership. “The designation of local developers underscores just how important the area’s resurgence is for stakeholders, and this Open Call is the next step in advancing the Cultural District.”

“As we know, these days Brooklyn is the creative capital of America, and the vibrancy of the BAM Cultural District—as a place where artists and those who thrive on cultural activity can both work and live affordably—is the key to Downtown Brooklyn’s future as a 24/7, live-work center of urban life for this growing borough of 2.5 million,” said Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz.

"I am truly excited about having a local, prominent person of color be named as developer for the north site of the BAM Cultural District," said Council Member Letitia James. “The major priority for our community leadership has been to ensure that affordable housing and diverse voices and are key to this project, and I applaud the strength and diversity of this development team.”

The development team was selected as a result of a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the City in February 2007. Of the proposals submitted, this team’s proposal provided the greatest range of affordability, helping to ensure a vibrant, economically diverse community. In addition, studioMDA’s focus on the maximization of natural sunlight and cross ventilation, its conception of the project as five “mid-rise” communities and its overall use of high quality, innovative design helped it to stand out from the competition.

Markus Dochantschi and David Salazar of studioMDA said, "We are enthusiastic to have been designated as the team to design a signature vision for affordable housing, and to contribute to the expansion of the cultural amenities at BAM."

Carlton Brown from Full Spectrum said, "To pioneer the legacy our city must offer for tomorrow, we are deeply committed to collaborating with the Forte Green community, the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership and the City of New York. Our entire team celebrates these possibilities and looks to set a new benchmark for green mixed income and mixed use housing for the BAM Cultural Arts District and for the next generation."

In keeping with PlaNYC—the Mayor’s plan to create housing for one million additional New Yorkers while simultaneously improving the urban environment and cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 30%—the development is one of the first to adopt the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development’s New Construction Sustainability Guidelines, which include design practices and materials that ensure healthy indoor air quality, energy efficiency, water conservation and the use of environmentally preferable products. The development features extensive use of natural light and lighting control, the situation of all residential units so as to maximize cross ventilation and over 10,000 square feet of “green” roofs and open space, which will serve to reduce heating and cooling costs and capture water for reuse.

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