

## **Testimony before the City Planning Commission regarding the Seward Park Mixed-Use Development project ULURP, July 11, 2012**

Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Linda Jones. I am Co-Chair of Community Board 3's Land Use, Zoning, Public and Private Housing Committee.

CB3, for the most part enthusiastically supports the Seward Park Mixed Use Development project that has resulted from our deliberations and from our collaboration with representatives of EDC and HPD. Based on our principles, we specified a few conditions and I'd like to discuss some of these.

The first was bottom line. **The affordable housing included in the project must be permanently affordable**

There are three other topics I'd like to discuss:

- Provision for former site tenants
- Fairness for the Essex Street market vendors
- Inclusion of a school

Qualified former or present residents displaced as a result of the 1967 urban renewal must be offered the opportunity to rent apartments in the new development.

The City, in partnership with CB3, must conduct extensive and credible outreach to identify, locate and notify all qualifying **former site tenants** about the proposed new housing development, their continued right to return to the site, and the application process for priority inclusion in the new housing that is built.

The plan to relocate the **Essex Street Market** assumes that a new market will be developed as part of Site 2, that the old market will remain open until the new facility is completed, and that current vendors will be given the opportunity to rent space in the new market. We approve this plan, provided that the following conditions are met:

- Vendors must be charged approximately the same rent they are paying at the time of moving for the same amount of space in the new facility.
- Vendors should not be responsible for paying their own moving costs. The City must provide financial assistance for the entire cost of moving those vendors who wish to move to the new market

Our principles and guidelines call for a **new school** to be constructed within the redevelopment area. Because of development that has already occurred within the CB 3 area and because more families are choosing to live and send their children to public school in CB3, the population of school-age children is already increasing faster than the Department of Education has forecast. The current enrollment growth shows no sign of abating.

With nearly 1000 new housing units, there will be a further increase in the population of school-age children.

We believe that the need for a dual District 1 and District 2 Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> grade school is critical.

Appendix B of the resolution passed by Community Board 3 includes statistics supporting our contention that a new school will be needed.

We should not lose the opportunity to create such a school exactly where it is needed – within the Seward Park Mixed-Use Development area. Provision of space where a school can be located should be a priority.

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