

November 6, 2003

Commissioner Jerilyn Perine
Department of Housing Preservation & Development
100 Gold Street
New York, NY 10038

Re: Support for Clinton Housing Association proposal for 538-546 West 53rd Street (part of Clinton Urban Renewal Area Site 7A)

Dear Commissioner Perine:

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 is pleased to provide its preliminary support for the proposal by Clinton Housing Association (CHA) to develop up to 62 units of affordable housing at 538-546 West 53rd Street.

This site, which is part of Clinton Urban Renewal Area (CURA) Site 7A, now consists of three low-rise buildings and a vacant lot. We understand that there are three commercial tenants in occupancy, all on month-to-month leases, and all sub lessees of non-vested prime tenants.

CHA's proposal contemplates a change of zoning to permit residential use, and construction of a new 8 story building, with 62 residential units. Rents are intended to be affordable to working individuals and families who are ineligible for low-income housing programs but who cannot afford market rents, especially in this area of a rapidly rising rental market. While we have not considered CHA's proposal in depth, residential use is consistent with adjacent uses and the community's goals for the area, as well as the requirements of the Third Amended Urban Renewal Plan for the CURA. We are especially pleased that the proposal targets the needs of moderate-and middle-income residents, who are currently underserved in Community District 4.

The Clinton Housing Association (CHA) was formed soon after the designation of the Clinton Urban Renewal Area (the CURA) in 1969 and has served as the community-based sponsor of some of the larger residential developments in the CURA, including Hudsonview Terrace, Clinton Manor and Clinton Tower Harborview. At this preliminary stage we have not yet considered whether CHA's proposal satisfies all of the Board's criteria for development proposals in the CURA. However, CHA certainly possesses the required previous development experience.

We therefore encourage HPD to begin discussions with CHA about this project, and to authorize CHA to apply to the Housing Development Corporation and other funding sources for the financing necessary to make this project a reality.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Simone Sindin
Co-Chair
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee



Anna Hayes Levin
Co-Chair
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee

This letter was approved at Manhattan Community Board No. 4's November 5, 2003 full board meeting.

cc: Local elected officials
Mary D'Elia, CHA