

Community Board 7 Statement regarding the JHL/PWV Land Swap Proposal September 17, 2009

Overview

CB7 heard from Jewish Home Lifecare (JHL) and the Chetrit Group about their proposed land swap at its most recent Steering Committee and Full Board meetings. A CB7 Task Force will work with a qualified and appropriate lawyer to review the JHL proposal. This Task Force will report its findings to the community as soon as is possible. Overall, the Community Board has two fundamental concerns: 1. That 106th Street be zoned appropriately, and 2. That open space and responsible development at Park West Village (PWV) be maintained. We believe that R8A and R8B zoning on 106th Street must be codified immediately.

Brief History

From 2005-2007, CB7 and Westsiders for Responsible Development succeeded in rezoning our district from 97th to 110th Streets, from Central Park West to Riverside Drive. The City Planning Commission unanimously voted for the rezoning changes advocated by the community. Just prior to the City Council final vote on the zoning revisions, the JHL asked to be “carved-out” of the rezoned area in order to have zoning flexibility to rebuild its nursing home. The City Council agreed to this “carve out.” JHL and CB7, along with neighborhood groups, immediately developed a Memorandum of Understanding ([MOU](#)) that was signed by all parties (including JHL), and subsequently modified ([MOU MOD](#)), to limit the height of the JHL buildings and of any new private development and any structure on this particular site. The MOU required that buildings on the JHL site on West 106th Street would closely follow the new zoning applicable to its neighbors, namely R8A and R8B. CB7 wants to ensure that the commitments to which the parties agreed are fully honored.

Current Status

On August 12, 2009 JHL presented a proposal to its Community Advisory Board regarding the sale of its property to a private developer, the Chetrit Group to build residential apartments. CB7 had been aware that JHL wanted to sell a portion of its land to a developer in order to finance the renovation and upgrade of their current nursing home. But until the current proposal, neither CB7 nor the community had received any notice of a plan under which the whole parcel would be sold or traded. JHL has written a letter to the community dated August 19, 2009 ([JHL Letter](#)) detailing the benefits to JHL. JHL has also entered into preliminary contract negotiations with the Chetrit Group, which is one of the PWV developers.

The concept presented is a land swap where the Chetrit Group would own the entire current JHL site on 106th Street and JHL would own property in Park West Village on 100th Street between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues. The proposed new JHL site is across the street from the FDNY and 24th Precinct houses, and adjacent to the NY Public Library and the NYC Department of Health buildings.

Community Concern About Zoning

CB7, as well as its community partners, the Duke Ellington Boulevard Neighborhood Association, Manhattan Valley Preservation Coalition and Westsiders for Responsible Development, Inc. negotiated in good faith with JHL to reluctantly accept the “carve out,” with the conditions described in the MOU. We fully expect and insist that all parties abide by those conditions, including the developer of the JHL site on 106th Street. We will work with the community, our local elected officials, our New York State Senators and Assembly Members, the Department of City Planning, JHL, and the Chetrit Group to ensure this outcome.

Community Concern About JHL On The PWV site

CB7 and many PWV residents have discussed over the past two years plans for the proposed JHL site as open space. The impact of the JHL proposal on the provision of open space as well as the impact on the community requires careful study. The Community Board looks to the PWV leadership to involve CB7 in the most useful way.