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## **Manhattan Community Board 7 Issues Major Report on Extell's Proposed *Riverside Center*, Upper West Side Mega-Project**

After more than two years of careful analysis, and scores of community meetings, Manhattan Community Board 7 voted on July 22, 2010 to disapprove Extell Development Company's proposal for *Riverside Center*, unless certain improvements were made to the project. While MCB7 welcomes development of the site and appreciates a number of proposed features, including its innovative architecture, residential uses, and some provisions for a public school, affordable housing, and public open space, the proposed project falls short in key ways.

Extell requires a number of zoning approvals in order to build *Riverside Center*, which proposes 5 high-rise towers (totaling more than 3 million square feet), 2,500 mostly market-rate apartments, a hotel, retail complexes, an auto showroom and auto repair center, and a massive 1,800 space garage. The project is planned for 8 acres of land now occupied by a parking lot, between West 59<sup>th</sup> and West 61<sup>st</sup> Streets, West End Avenue and the extended Riverside Boulevard, at the Hudson River. MCB7 is the first city body to review the Extell application during the public land-use review process ("ULURP"). The project will next be reviewed by the Manhattan Borough President, the City Planning Commission, and the New York City Council

Community Board Chair Mel Wymore, said: "The Community Board and the entire neighborhood found consensus on how to modify this project in a way that really balances the interests of the Developer, the Upper West Side community, and the city as a whole."

Ethel Sheffer, Chairperson of MCB7's Riverside Center Working Group, said: "We have worked diligently to provide a clear road map for the Developer and for city officials. We envision *Riverside Center* as an integrated asset of the Upper West Side, not one that appears to be a private enclave."

MCB7's Report and Resolution is available online at [www.nyc.gov/mcb7](http://www.nyc.gov/mcb7). Key recommendations include:

- Build a public school large enough to serve over-crowded School District #3
- Include 30% permanently affordable mixed-income housing
- Reduce density and increase public open space by removing one of the five buildings
- Make public areas level with sidewalks to improve visibility and access to the site
- Add streets, broad pathways, and wide sidewalks to draw visitors and improve circulation
- Develop West 59<sup>th</sup> Street as a corridor for pedestrians and cyclists to Riverside Park South, and establish an attractive context for the historic powerhouse designed by McKim Mead & White
- Replace the auto showroom and repair center with vibrant, community-friendly retail
- Limit the garage to 1,000 parking spaces and provide for car-sharing and rentals
- Ensure that design and construction meet the highest environmental standards
- Invest in local economy and infrastructure, including Riverside Park South

Community Board 7 looks forward to working with all parties to make this development the dynamic and welcoming destination it has the potential to be.