

**Riverside South Working Group**  
**Organizing Meeting**  
**Helen Rosenthal and Ethel Sheffer, Co-Chairpersons**  
**February 7, 2008**

Ethel Sheffer reviewed the history and zoning of the L, M, and N parcels of Riverside South. (See attached outline.)

Brian Cook explained that the expected ULURP application would change the large-scale development and then cascade down to underlying zoning.

Ms. Sheffer reviewed project progress (see B on attached handout). Affordable housing and park are constructed in phased conjunction with overall building construction (market units, retail space).

Ms. Sheffer cited an advertisement in the February 3, 2008 *New York Times* Real Estate Section touting Riverside South's "suburban" qualities as emblematic of MCB7's concerns about future of Riverside South.

Micah Lasher discussed the possible relocation of the highway underground. Project construction is occurring with room left for a "box" to contain three lanes of highway in each direction. The developer would be responsible constructing the northbound box and its three lanes and the public responsible for the southbound box and its three lanes. The existing highway's useful life ends in 2017.

Ms. Sheffer reported that the developer is no longer funding the Riverside South Planning Corporation (RSPC). Paul Elston has replaced Michael Bradley at RSPC, which charges that the developer is not adhering fully either to design guidelines or to sustainability and environmental requirements. There is much legal back and forth. Elston is also pushing for environmental reuse of the 59<sup>th</sup> Street Con Ed building, relocating the steam plant (underground?).

Andrew Albert identified transportation issues to pursue:

- Riverside Boulevard build-out
- new bus routes
- bus layovers
- MetroNorth station
- ferry at 69<sup>th</sup> Street.

Discussion of future of "affordable" housing on L, M, and N.

Discussion of "big box" retail. The MCB7 group assembled was opposed to any such auto-intensive use.

Klari Neuwelt raised the issue of the design guidelines. MCB7 should take this opportunity to adjust the guidelines.

Ms. Sheffer and Sheldon Fine urged that MCB7 state our priorities to the developer and City Planning as pre-certification input to influence shape of the ULURP. Helen Rosenthal recommended that participants report back to their respective committees and bring back input from those discussions.

Ms. Rosenthal suggested that Parks, Green, and Transportation committees need to identify priorities (and perform the research necessary to do so) in February. (On the other hand, a school and affordable

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housing are clear MCB7 priorities that do not require further research.) Ms. Sheffer wants to assemble the full priorities and concerns by the end of February. Mr. Fine suggested a public information meeting and letter (identifying issues and concerns) to City Planning in March.

Goals: Next meeting of working group, early March

Draft letter to City Planning, March 15

PRESENT (CB7): Helen Rosenthal, Ethel Sheffer, Andrew Albert, Hope Cohen, Sheldon Fine, Phyllis Gunther, Klari Neuwelt, Luis Reyes, Elizabeth Starkey; Penny Ryan

PRESENT (electeds): Brian Cook, Sari Bernstein (MBPO); Gale Brewer (City Council); Linda Rosenthal, David Weinberg (NYS Assembly); (Duane, NYS Senate); Micah Lasher (Nadler, U.S. House of Representatives)

Attachment.

2/7/08

## Selected Background Information on Riverside South Development

### A. Restrictive Declaration, 1993

#### 1. Floor Area Limitations

Sec. 2.02: Not more than 7,899,951 sf, consisting of

- a maximum of 6,099,951 sf of residential
- 336,400sf of community facility
- 163,400sf of Use Group 6b (local retail and service)
- 137,800sf of local retail Use Group 8A theatres and Use Group 9A studios
- Not more than 5,700 dwelling units
- A maximum of 1,800,000 sf composed of Use Group A Studio use and Use Group 10C large retail use on Parcels L/M/N (61<sup>st</sup>-59<sup>th</sup> Streets)
- L/M/N breakdown of 1,690,000 sf of studio, 33,300sf of retail use, 19,400sf of professional office space, 54,700 sf of community facility space, 572,172sf of residential use, 743 below grade parking spaces for an approximate total available floor area on these three parcels of 2.4 million sf

#### 2. Parking Garages

Sec. 2.05 Maximum of 3.500 parking spaces in development, to be used primarily by owners and residents, (except for parking on L/M/N) and if such parking not needed by occupants, they may be rented out.

#### 3. Underlying Zoning for the Development

- In general, the zoning for the entire development is C4-7 or R-10 equivalent (have to check if it is 10A equivalent)
- The underlying zoning for the L/M/N parcels is C2-5

- The underlying zoning permits a total of 8.3 million sf for the entire Riverside South development, with the ability to shift and distribute FAR throughout the development

#### 4. Park and Open Space Phasing

- (to be discussed and summarized)

#### 5. Affordable Housing Obligations

Sec. 7.01, minimum of 12% of total residential units or 684 units, and up to at least 20% which may be lower, moderate or middle Income

### **B. Current Project Overview (see current Extell chart and summary)**

- Completed or in construction-approximately 5million sf FAR or approximately 6 million sf gross building area
- 3,578 market units
- 395 affordable units
- 75,268 sf retail area
- 2,076 parking spaces

### **C. Proposed Extell Development for Parcels L/M/N (ULURP)**

- 2.75-3.3 million sf
- Residential, hotel, commercial, retail uses
- Approximately 2,100-2,500 residential uses
- Below grade big box store (not counted in FAR) of approximately 300,000sf
- Five towers ranging from 623 feet high to a low of 400+ feet, do not adhere to Design Guidelines
- Possible school of approximately 97,000sf
- 750 as-of-right parking spaces and will request approximately 1,500 spaces
- Open space, plaza, approximately 28% of site, “Privately Owned Public Space”
- Affordable Housing , to be determined

### **D. Highway Planning and Construction of “Box”**

- Fill and “Box” northbound land is developer’s responsibility and is being built (64<sup>th</sup>-65<sup>th</sup> Streets and north)
- Southbound lane is public responsibility
- Current issues regarding the building of northbound lanes, part of the southbound lanes and relation of construction of the box” and obligatory completion of park phases

### E. Community Board Seven Resolution 1992

- Density should not exceed 6.9 million sf with 5.5 million sf residential
- Disapproved superblock and studio use
- 20% affordable housing
- Need for active and passive uses in 21.5 acre park (would like to see more green and open space)
- Assurances of accessible and usable park even with elevated highway
- Variety of requests on community facilities, some of which have been implemented and others not

### Current Community Concerns and Priorities

- Density, Total FAR , Mix of Uses as asserted in 1992
- Extell uses, increase in density, FAR for southern parcels
- Riverside South development in context of increased development in the last 15 years; CB7 revised criteria? Community needs? , Request for increased FAR that would be more than that provide even by Underlying zoning
- Proposed L/M/N development provides for higher buildings than in built Riverside South, and increased and different distribution of density, etc. , CB7 priorities and concerns
- Big Box Use
- Priorities for open space for southern parcels and linkage to waterfront park to the north
- Transportation and traffic priorities and concerns
- Building of “Box” and phasing of obligated park and long term plans and funding for removal of elevated highway
- Mix of housing to provide affordable. middle income housing
- Sustainability, environmental concerns and priorities
- Review and assessment of built Riverside South buildings and facilities—retail, design guidelines and built character, neighborhood character, accessibility, integration into built fabric and West Side?
- Extell’s goals for southern parcels as “midtown-like” destination, regional shopping?
- Need for community facilities, school, other?
- Pre-Certification CB7 positions