

FULL BOARD
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 1
December 16, 2021
MINUTES

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson said that I am the Chair of Community Board 1 and we have now officially started tonight's meeting.

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson requested for the roll to be called.
The roll was called and there were 23 members present constituting a quorum.

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson called for a motion on the Agenda.
Motion made to approve the Agenda as presented. **Motion** duly seconded. **Motion** called and passed.

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson called for a motion on the October and November Full Board meeting Minutes.
Motion made to approve the October and November Full Board meeting Minutes as presented.
Motion duly seconded. **Motion** called and passed.

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson said that if you have any questions related to the Public Hearing project, please put your questions in the Chat and you will be called upon in the order that you appear in the Chat. That being, said we're now moving on to the Public Hearing

PUBLIC HEARING

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson said that the Public Hearing is regarding a rezoning of the former Our Lady of Pity site, located at 272 East 151st Street. Rezoning Application 210321 ZMX, N 210322 ZRX. What is being considered tonight is a zoning map amendment from R6 to R7A and a zoning text

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amendment to create an MIH area to facilitate 2 new 9-story buildings with 205 affordable units.

Ms. Susan Albrecht, Catholic Homes New York said that I have a couple of people with me here tonight but before we begin, we did ask to see if Fr McGillicuddy of Immaculate Conception would join us, but I don't see him on here. As you know Our Lady of Pity closed many years ago and Immaculate Conception is the local parish.

This is an opportunity for us to reuse this site for good. So, while we're still working on the design considerations our objective tonight is to ask for your support for this project which will provide the highest quality affordable housing and to provide green space, recreational space for our tenants as well as to create a project that fosters a sense of community. So, again this is our presentation and again, we're asking for your support. Catholic Homes New York is the housing office, owner, Morris 151st Street HDFC, Architects SGVA (WEB), Land Use Attorney, Goldman Harris, Financial Consultant, Forsyth Street Advisors, General Contractor, Monadnock Construction and the Management Company to be determined and will be a Request for Proposals. So, just in terms of who we are our mission driven and again our mission is to develop safe affordable housing for families, seniors and people with special needs based on our belief that having a home is a sacred human right. We currently have 14 projects that provide over 29 hundred units of affordable housing for families and seniors. These are 3 recent projects the one on the left is located right next to West Farms 319 units of affordable housing, the one in the middle is St. Augustas which is located on the site of the former St. Augustas church and the one on the right is St. DePaul Senior Housing that opened this year providing 89 units of housing for low-income seniors.

Ms. Nicole Vlado, Architect SVGA said that we are a woman owned Architectural Firm in Brooklyn. It is a mission of our firm to bring and preserve affordable housing throughout the 5 boroughs and this here shows some images of our recent work in the Bronx, images on the left are of Borinquen Court, in the middle is Tres Puentes which we have presented to this Board in the past and just up the road from the project we're talking about so it's very dear to us and on the right is a rendering for a new project in Highbridge which will be under construction next year. We thank you for your time this evening and look forward to sharing the details Our Lady of Pity apartments project with you.

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Ms. Susan Albrecht, Catholic Homes New York said thank you Nicole. So, I just want to review the objectives with you again. The idea is to reuse this vacant site for good and provide much needed affordable housing as we discussed the rezoning is from an R6 to an R7A to help

facilitate the development of an efficient project. We're looking at 2-buildings that will be separated by a large courtyard, the building on 150th Street will be 112 units, the one on 151st will be 90 units both building will be 9-stories with 202 units of affordable housing, our mission is to provide the highest quality housing. These are some interior photos of the type of housing we've developed in the past, the two photos on the left are from St. Augustas Terrace, the one on the right is the recently completed Seconds Farms. Our mission is to provide units for families with ample space, state-of-the-art security, ample storage and closets, build apartments and create a welcoming environment that include services that will connect them to the community again, this is based on our mission as an affordable housing provider.

Mr. Drew Kirizides, Catholic Homes New York said good evening everyone and thank you for the opportunity to present to you. We're looking at one of the 9-story buildings on 150th Street and you see on the right what we mean by affordable housing is low and moderate income 30 to 70 percent AMI. As you know the City's requirements for formerly homeless families will be part of this project. We are seeking funding, which is typical for affordable housing that would be, tax exempt bonds and it comes with another subsidy It will either be from New York City's HPD agency or New York State HCR/FHA. The construction cost not the total development cost the hard cost approximately 70 million for both projects for both buildings combined.

Ms. Susan Albrecht, Catholic Homes New York said that again our mission is to create housing that supports families and gives them a sense of security. In terms of amenity there is the lobby, laundry room, package room, tenant meeting room that can be used for community meetings, a large courtyard that will connect the 2-buildings and security there will be a Security Guard Station with at least 8-hours in a day and we will be working on that with our budget and usually in the evening hours.

Mr. Greg Bousa from Monadnock said that the most important thing we do it's not optional we require all Sub-Contractors on our projects to make 1 out of every 10 positions on their crew available to local residents that's a contract requirement. We then do comprehensive outreach as we've done in the past in Board 1 to all the constituents and try to match up these positions with people that can take advantage of them with job preparation, we will also fund OSHA Training for people that don't have it according to Law 96 which is a requirement of projects and we will even try to coordinate some specialized skills trades for them too. Again, in the

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past some of the groups we've worked with Sustainable South Bronx, Workforce 1, Hire NYC, United Hispanic Desperado's, of course Community Board 1 and Elected Officials in terms of finding and identifying candidates for these positions.

Ms. Nicole Vlado, Architect SVGA said that so the zone that's outlined in red is actually the development site describing the location where the two buildings will be. Again, just to the east of Morris Avenue on East 150th and East 151st Streets. We'd like to go to the next slide which just describes in a little more detail the buildings, these two 9-story buildings with a shared yard between the two, I think that's one of special amenities of this project which will include a series of spaces for both small and large groups of all ages. This shared yard will provide not only a beautiful view from within the buildings but will also serve as a communal for the tenants, it will help promote the health of the tenants and the surrounding neighborhood by encouraging the activity and now the two buildings themselves have this shared view of the yard. The north building on the left on East 151st Street has light colored brick in the front and a darker brick in the setback and rear whereas the south building has the darker brick in the front of the façade and lighter brick in the setback and we intentionally used these contrasting brick colors to minimize the appearance of the bulk of these buildings and we also do this by integrating some vertical bricks at the front to really make the buildings read smaller than they are and in addition we intentionally stepped the buildings to become smaller. In our effort to design buildings with for health and wellbeing both the buildings are strong candidates for rooftop solar and the client has expressed a strong interest in an all-electric approach to the buildings heating and cooling systems. The area is known for having a very eclectic mix of building types and heights and we find that our buildings of 9-stories are related to many of the buildings in the adjacent areas.

Mr. Eric Vath, Goldman Harris said that I'm joined by the Managing Partner of Goldman Harris and we just going to say a quick word about the proposed actions. Chair Parks mentioned this is a ULURP and before you tonight you're considering a map change R6 to an R7A and if you look at the Zoning Map on the left you have the existing zoning, you'll note that the existing R6 is shown in an orangey red color and on the right is the proposed R7A zoning district which includes the development site and some lots along Morris Avenue. I'll note that the commercial overlays the C1-4 is within 100 ft. of Morris Avenue and that stays the same and the R7A puts us in line with the surrounding district, there's an R7-1 to the north, an R7-2 to the west and a C4-4 which is an R7-2 equivalent. The second action before you tonight, is a Text Amendment for Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Area. So, thank you for your consideration.

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Ms. Susan Albrecht, Catholic Homes New York said that so, just a little bit more on about Catholic Homes what makes us different from other developers and providers is that we are uniquely linked to Catholic Charities Community Service and we have recently expanded the programming we're beginning to introduce on-site Social Services in all our housing for all of our tenants and this is something that we're funding that we really believe is critical for helping our tenants to be successful to avoid eviction, connect residents with educational job opportunities. We do food distribution events at different sites and we did recently a vaccine clinic in the community room at one of our sites. So, these are different programs that we're involved in. Again, currently we just started this program this year, currently operating programs in Manhattan, Bronx. We actually Catholic Homes has, on-site services at Betances and at Second Farms and beginning this program in Highbridge. That's just a little bit of an overview.

Mr. Drew Kirizides, Catholic Homes said that these slides, shows initially the AMI range, 40 to 70 percent AMI, an earlier slide at 30 percent AMI that would be what was required formerly homeless the rent is set at that rate 30 percent, but for the general population it's 40 to 70 percent AMI. What you see below is a range of rents from 40 to 70 it's studios, one-bedrooms, two-bedrooms and three-bedrooms which this project has.

Ms. Susan Albrecht, Catholic Homes said that so, we've done extensive outreach to the residents of the Bronx specifically in this community through Community Board, community groups, local parishes encouraging people to apply, and we have found that has worked well some of our other housing and then a lot of times it is people that move into these buildings and really like to encourage that to keep a sense of community. Then finally, as we mentioned we're looking at the different financing options in HPD and HCR regardless any publicly funded housing there is some component for the homeless at least 30 percent and at least we will have 15 percent. Again, this is the range, and we haven't finalized the numbers yet we're working on it, but it really depends on the financing how that will run the room sizes and distribution will be. Then there's the timeline so, we officially certified our application the first, we're here tonight to get your recommendation and then go to the Borough President, so that the Borough President will be able to achieve this before the end of the year. It goes immediately to him, but it might be the next Borough President, goes to City Planning, the City Council and then we look to start late next year probably early 2023 with a 26-month construction period, occupancy in 2025. That concludes our formal presentation, I know that there have been questions that appear in the Chat so, I think I'll have to close out this to be able to look at those. We really hope that you will vote in favor of our proposal, if there are any conditions or concerns will be happy to address them.

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Questions and Answers

Mr. Ted Weinstein, Director of Bronx Planning for HPD said that the question about community preference the process is computerized it's all on the computer so, what happens first the computer pushes forward those applications where people have said that they meet the categories for the set asides to the 2percent and the 5 percent those area addressed first once that is addressed then the Community District preference. The computer then pushes forward people who have applied in Community District 1 and that continues until 50 percent of the available units have been allocated, then the computer opens it up to everybody else. So, it's straight forward in the process but it is true because each building gets thousands of applications there are many people who are just never contacted because the numbers never get to them.

The Zoning Resolution for the City includes provisions as to what the requirements would be to provide on-site parking it varies depending on the zone and what type of housing is being built then as a ration as a percentage it says how many spaces there are likely to be. The situation was such that we were finding, City Planning was finding that some of the buildings where it was built with parking, whether it was surface parking or underground garage parking they just were not being utilized to make it worthwhile. Every time that you do provide parking it's a use of scarce resources not just the money but the specs itself and so, the proposal was to try to change that so that the buildings being built that were, I'll use the phrase lower income and in transit zones subways for example then there would not be a need to provide parking. The buildings that have somewhat more middle income then the ratios might still apply. That was the required ULURP for the Community Board, the Borough President, Planning Commission and City Council. So, the buildings that have somewhat moderate-income units then the ratios might still apply. That was the required ULURP approval of Community Boards, the Borough President and the City Council. So, each building that gets proposed now must take a look at that resolution and see how they would qualify and what might have to be done. I know that Mr. Torres in previous meetings has asked and I have spoken to the City Planning Department to see if they would come up and provide with whatever numbers or studies they have.

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson said that so for the record in the Bronx the Community Board voted no and the Elected representatives voted against their constituents and voted not to have parking so that more housing could be built so, that's how we got here. That, being said does any other Boardmember have any questions, issues or concerns related to this project. At, this time we're going to allow the Chair of the Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee Freddy Perez, Jr. to give his report and recommendations to the Board and thank you everyone for your questions.

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Mr. Freddy Perez, Jr. Chairperson Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee

said thank you Madam Chair. The presentation you just heard the same presentation that was made on the first at the Economic Development-Land Use & Housing meeting, present there were 10 Committee members including myself. The concerns by the Committee were as follows:

1. The construction of a two 9-story building without parking for the incoming tenants.
2. The height of the buildings being constructed 9-stories each which would create shadows and eliminate sunlight for the current homeowners.
3. The oversaturation of the area, the fact that more people would be moving in approximately 200 new units of 100 percent affordable housing with a set aside of 15 percent homeless.
4. The impact of the construction on Alfred E. Smith High School and the first responder's EMS, Police and Fire on East 150th and 151st Streets that are extremely very narrow streets.
5. The impact and the over saturation of more people moving in would create a burden on Lincoln Hospital and School availability.
6. Concerns about public safety, transportation and the environmental impact on the community because of the construction of such a large project.

After I pooled every member for any other questions that they had, I requested a motion on the former Lady of Pity Zoning Map Amendment from R6 to R7A to facilitate the two new 9-story residential buildings on East 150 and 151st Streets. The Committee members voted as follows 9-no votes, and 1-yes vote. Therefore, Madam Chair and members of the Board the Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee recommends not to approve support for the Zoning Map Amendment presented. This concludes my report and I yield back to you Madam Chair.

Arline Parks, Chairperson said thank you for your report and recommendation to the Full Board. Based on the Chair's recommendation to the Board we will now take a roll call vote on the matter of the rezoning for this project. So, can we have a motion for this project, and a second.

Motion made to accept the recommendation of the Chair of the Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee to not support the project due to the number of reasons stated. Motion duly seconded. A roll call vote was taken with 22-no for support of the project and 1-

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yes for support of the project. Motion carried not to grant a letter of support to the former Our Lady of Pity rezoning project.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson said that the New York City Economic Development Corporation has presented a proposal on a Park, the Lower Concourse Park and they presented design guidelines to the Municipal Services Committee on multiple occasions. So, they're looking for a letter of support for the design guidelines to develop the park and they're also saying that they've secured a million dollars toward the development and creation of the park. So, that being said can we have a motion to support the creation and development of the Lower Concourse Park.

Motion made to support the creation and development of the Lower Concourse Park project. Motion duly seconded. A roll call vote was taken with 16-yes for support of the project and 3-abstentions. Motion carried for support of the design guidelines, creation and development of the Lower Concourse Park.

Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson said that the final item on the agenda is regarding a request from the Westside Federation for Seniors and Supportive Housing regarding ambulate parking for senior citizens at 570 East 137th Street. They want to be able to have parking accommodations for their seniors from Monday through Friday. They reached out to the President of the Tenants Association at Millbrook Houses who agreed with them so, that they could have senior parking Monday through Friday. This is a voting item for the Board to be able to grant a letter of support for this issue.

Motion made to grant a letter of support for ambulate parking at 570 East 137th Street of 3 parking spaces Monday through Friday 7AM to 7PM only. Motion duly seconded. A roll call vote was taken with 19-yes. Motion carried to grant a letter of support Westside Federation for Seniors and Supportive Housing for 3 ambulate parking spaces at 570 East 137th Street Monday through Friday 7AM to 7PM only.

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Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson said that I want to take this time and opportunity to basically say who I am to be afforded the opportunity to lead this Board, we have a lot of work I the upcoming year. We're going to be reaching out to everyone to remain diligent, do the hard work and continue to really represent the district and lobby our cause until we get what we need in this district. I want to close out by saying I wish everyone here a blessed, happy holidays, and a really good healthy safe new year and everybody get everything they want and need in the upcoming year, thank you so much for your support. Can I have a motion to adjourn.

Motion made to adjourn. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed. Motion carried.

MEETING ADJOURNED.

