



# BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

3024 THIRD AVENUE

BRONX, NEW YORK 10455

(718) 585-7117 • Fax (718) 292-0558 • E-mail: brxcb1@optonline.net

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-LAND USE & HOUSING MINUTES January 9, 2019

### PHIPPS HOUSES

**Ms. Kay Real from HPD** said that we co-applicants along with Phipps Houses proposing a new development located on the southeast corner of East 1565<sup>th</sup> Street Brook Avenue. The development site is made up of two adjacent lots 1 and 3 lot 1 is a formerly abandoned railroad and Lot 3 is city owned. We willing to convey the city lot to Phipps Houses this assemblage will allow for 54 units of low affordable housing with one Superintendents unit and a new 9-story building. A little background the railway was put out of use in 1969 when the tunnel was no longer accommodate trains. It was formerly abandoned in 2003 and the state released the rights for any transportation use in 2005. So for years the trench has been abandoned and filled with trash you know a site for undesirable uses so we're hoping that this development will remove that blight. As a ULURP application it was certified on December 3<sup>rd</sup> the actions that you will be voting on are the disposition of city owned property, zoning map amendment to rezone the development site from R7-2 to a C6-2 which essentially allows for greater density and is consistent with the surrounding area and with the rezoning Mandatory Inclusionary Housing.

**Mr. Michael Wadman Vice President** said that as Kay mentioned we were certified for ULURP in the beginning of December and we'll be back here in a couple of weeks for your Full Board meeting with the Public Hearing that's required of the ULURP. Not much has changed since we were here last year in September.

To remind you of what Phipps Houses is we're a non-for-profit everything we do is part of our charitable vision to provide housing and services to low income people. It was established in 1905 we're the oldest housing group I think in the country and the largest in New York City. We developed about 11 thousand units of housing something like 8,300 of which we still own we manage them ourselves and we also have an affiliated Social Services agency Phipps Neighborhood which is very active in this neighborhood. Phipps and its affiliates will own the property. I should also say Melrose is particularly close to our hearts with a couple of thousands of those 8 thousand apartments so it's one of the larger single neighborhood that we're active in, so we're pleased to be here again. Bill and Jen are from Dattner Architects that does a lot of affordable housing we have not formerly selected a Contractor yet it will be someone that is familiar with this type of housing and is a good fit for this type of project. The General

**Pg. 2**

Contractor will work on local hiring and the sub-contracting HPD oversees that and will make sure that they follow all those requirements. Then as I mentioned we have a Property Management Company that will manage the property.

These are the specific actions that Kay mentioned zoning map changes, Mandatory Inclusionary, the railroad. For us everything we do is affordable so the Inclusionary Housing sets the bare minimum it's 20-30 percent but this project will be 100 percent affordable. That's the zoning map change the markings are the site in question. As Kay mentioned its 55 total units one for the Super the only other element of the building is there's 1,100 sq. ft. community facility space that's right on the corner of 156<sup>th</sup> and Brook so it's not a very big space but we'll come up with a program that will be housed there. So this is the two lots that were mentioned. You all probably see this more than I do since you live around here but it's been a pretty derelict site for quite a while. So let me let Bill and Jen talk a little bit about the design of the building.

**Mr. William Stein Dattner Architects** said that so as Kay and Michael said the proposed building is a 9-story. It's a challenging site with its narrow dimensions it's a triangular site so fitting a building on this is definitely a design challenge and what we've done you might say is design an L-shape building. So one leg is along East 156<sup>th</sup> Street and then the building angles up towards Brook Avenue and a small courtyard along Brook Avenue that will be partially planted where it says mass setback from Brook Avenue that area will be planted. Then there will be an entrance to the building this is all residential with a community facility there will be a fitness center for the residents we will have windows facing the street and then at the northern corner will be the community room again primarily for the residents but may from time to time be open for public events. As Michael has said before the southern corner at the intersection of Brook and 156<sup>th</sup> will be a community facility most likely to be operated by Phipps Neighborhood and then right next to that along Brook Avenue one more use that will have a window is a laundry room for the residents will be on the ground floor not in the basement. So what we tried to do is activate the street frontage and create a sense of presence in the neighborhood.

So we have 1-unit on the ground floor the Superintendents unit and the rest of the apartments are on floors 2 to 9. Not shown here we are planning to have solar panels on the building to provide a portion of the energy needs of the building. These renderings depict what the building will look like on the left hand side you're standing north of the building, south is Via Verde which is south of 156<sup>th</sup> Street and rendering on the right is looking from the south. What we are proposing to do is use 3-types of brick and at the base of the building we're using an orange glazed brick and we think that this introduces an element of color, vitality and visual interest. Incidentally as glazed brick it has a smooth surface it is graffiti resistant any graffiti can be cleaned off easily and then above the ground floor part of the building the southern part we're looking at a very light gray off-white brick to reduce the massiveness of the building and create a sense of scale and on the northern side a darker kind of almost charcoal brick and what we're proposing to use if you're familiar with Via Verde is the same brick that was used at the base of Via Verde. Although it's a dark brick it's multi-colored and changes in the light so when the lights shinning on it, it looks a lot lighter and when it's cloudy it looks a little darker. There's a lot of depth and liveliness because each of the bricks have different tones. We've also in the window frames are proposing to use an orange color for the window frames that more or less matches the glazed brick that I mentioned at the base of the building that accent a bright color a vibrant color and also on the north side you approach from the north going south on Brook Avenue to introduce spots or elements of the glazed brick as a kind of texture on darker brick. We do have some structural issues here and for structural reasons that north wall has to be mostly solid because it's a very narrow building and one of the things our Structural Engineer is

concerned about is lateral stability so that the building doesn't move horizontally and so that end wall is really a structural wall. The other thing I'd point out is that the southwest corner where the community facility is that we are opening up that corner so there will be visibility for the community facility and there will be a lot of interaction between our community facility and the life of the street around the building.

So this is a floor plan of the building the ground floor plan so as I mentioned this is Brook Avenue on the bottom of the drawing 156<sup>th</sup> Street is over here Melrose Commons is kind of up here the parking area is in here. Basically the community facility will have an entrance off of Brook Avenue the windows that open to the street are around here. The residents will enter through this small courtyard and I think we have a rendering of the lobby that I will show you in a moment. You come through the lobby and as you enter the lobby you have a view of the elevators and that enhances security so when you come in you can see exactly where the two elevators are. Mailboxes are adjacent to the entrance in the lobby. As I mentioned right next to the lobby is a fitness room that will have fitness equipment it's an amenity for the residents and at the north end of the building the darker yellow colors are the community room which again will be primarily for the use of the residents but may be scheduled for occasional community events. In addition to being a large room with windows it has a bathroom and a pantry for preparation of light refreshments and for resident events. As I mentioned this blue color is a 2-bedroom apartment. The idea for this apartment being on the ground floor is we need a Superintendents apartment so that we really have eyes on the comings and goings and eyes on the street. We also as I mentioned have a landscaped area not meant for use it's meant for visibility with a low fence around it but we're planning on a variety of native planting in that area that will be both a benefit for the residents as they enter and leave the building but also hopefully for the community as people walk up and down Brook Avenue or walk by 156<sup>th</sup> Street and look up the block. We also have a small rear yard area it's only 10 ft. deep this will be surrounded by a fence and this will be developed with planting and also a sitting area for the residents. Although it's not a lot of space the residents will have an outdoor space that's private for their use. There is a cellar in the building but the cellar maintains primarily utility space that is required. The building has bicycle parking and there is no car parking that's included. So this rendering is a rendering of a lobby you've just come through the flooring will be porcelain tile and then the walls are planned to be also in tile but tile that kind of looks like wood and we'll have decorative light these are the elevators and if you turn to the left there's the fitness room and the community room if you turn to the right there's the Super's apartment and I didn't mention one other element of the ground floor the laundry room located at the end of that corridor with a window out to 156<sup>th</sup> Street. There will be Enterprise Green Communities certification, high energy efficiency, solar energy and the lighting fixtures will be LED.

**Mr. Michael Wadman Vice President** said that in terms of the income levels of the people who will live here it's a mixed income building ranging from 30 percent of the Area Median Income up to 80 percent. It will have the homeless set aside that is required in city projects we are proposing about 15 percent of the project to be that set aside. The amenities Bill talked about there is a fair number of two and three bedroom units. It will have basically because of the small triangular building as Bill mentioned it's much harder to get larger apartments because so many of the walls are supportive of the structure. It's still a decent amount of two and three bedrooms but will have more ones and studios than usual and our thought there is to do outreach to senior groups to try to get seniors to apply. We can't set aside a portion of the building to be seniors only so they will be applying through the lottery like anybody else. This is the distribution in a little more detail and these numbers are given as ranges with the idea of covering everybody from poverty level to sort of moderate.

**Pg. 4**

It's about a \$30 million dollar project and the construction is about \$19 million the sustainable design, construction employment opportunities. We are seeking financing from the State we applied in December and that's a competitive process if we are awarded this would be State financed and we're looking at getting started in the latter part of this year say September or so they hand out the awards in May or June. HPD is providing funding through its ELLA Program and then this also a Brownfield cleanup site by the State Department of Environmental Conservation. With the December certification of a required 7-month process. We hope to close financing in late 2019 with construction commencement and environmental remediation immediately thereafter. Generally it takes 2-years for construction completion. With lease marketing and occupancy of tenants during by mid-2022.

### **Questions and Comments**

**The Chairperson called for a motion to adjourn.**

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

**MEETING ADJOURNED.**