

Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 500-Year Floodplain

To: All Interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals,

This is to give notice that the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), as Responsible Entity and lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) in accordance with 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 58.2(a)(7), and the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), serving as local project sponsor and joint-lead agency in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.7(b) has determined, under 24 CFR part 58, that the following Proposed Project located in the City and State of New York, on tax lot parcels designated as Block 714, Lot 31, Block 715, Lot 10, Block 716, Lot 17, and Block 717, Lot 19 (collectively “Fulton Houses Project Site”); and Block 723, Lots 1 and 15 and Block 724, Lots 1, 10, and 15 (collectively the “Elliott-Chelsea Houses Project Site”) (together the “Project Sites”), is partially located in the coastal Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined by using the Federal Flood Standard Support Tool, which calculated that the western portion of the Fulton Houses Project Site and the southwestern corner of the Elliott-Chelsea Houses Project Site are located in coastal FFRMS floodplains. Although there is not a detailed survey of the FFRMS floodplain that would allow for an exact calculation of the area of the Project Sites in the FFRMS floodplain, it is estimated to be less than one acre. Therefore, HPD and NYCHA will be identifying and evaluating whether there are practicable alternatives to locating the project in the floodplain and the potential impacts on the floodplain from the Proposed Project, as required by Executive Order 11988 as amended by Executive Order 13690 and Executive Order 11990 in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

The Proposed Project includes the staged demolition and replacement of existing residential and community facility spaces across NYCHA’s Fulton, Elliott, Chelsea, and Chelsea Addition Houses in Manhattan, as well as the staged development of additional new mixed-use buildings across the Project Sites. After more than 60 years of continual use, the buildings and units on the Project Sites have become severely deteriorated and substandard, negatively impacting residents’ quality of life. Since the Project Sites are located over 900 feet inland from the Hudson River within a densely developed urban area, they do not contain any features characteristic of floodplains in closer proximity to coastal areas, such as beaches or waterfront vegetation. The Project Sites do not contain any significant natural features, such as wetlands, that ameliorate flooding conditions or provide other natural beneficial functions.

There are two principal purposes for the Proposed Project: (1) to improve the quality of life and housing stability for existing public housing residents of the Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea Houses through the Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT) program and the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program, which together will allow for the disposition of public housing property as authorized under Section 18 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 as amended and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 970 (Section 18), and for the conversion of subsidies under Section 9 of the US Housing Act of 1937, 42 USC § 1437g, to project-based vouchers (PBVs) subsidies under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, 42 USC § 1437f; and (2) to facilitate the construction of additional affordable and market-rate housing units to address the critical shortage of affordable housing and housing in general in New York City and financially support the PACT and new affordable housing components of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would also facilitate the development of accessory open space, commercial space, and additional community facility spaces for the benefit of existing and future residents of the Project Sites as well as the surrounding community.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the floodplain, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate impacts. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

This notice is being published concurrently with the Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement, as permitted by 24 CFR 55.20(b)(1). The initial evaluation of practicable alternatives to locate the project within the FFRMS floodplain will be included as an appendix to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which may be viewed at HPD's website: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/environmental-review.page> as well as NYCHA's website: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/pact/chelsea-fulton.page>. Written comments on this notice, the evaluation, and the DEIS must be received by HPD at the following address on or before May 12, 2025:

Department of Housing Preservation ATTN: Anthony Howard
100 Gold Street, #7-A3
New York, NY 10038
212-863-7248

Hours of Operation: 9 AM – 5 PM, Monday through Friday, except Federal and State Holidays

or via email at nepa_env@hpd.nyc.gov. The minimum 15-calendar-day comment period for this notice pursuant to 24 CFR 55.20(b)(2) is being extended to run concurrently with the DEIS Comment Period, which will run for 45 days after publication.

Date: March 28, 2025