

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

COOPER SQUARE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
(Urban Renewal Plan)

January, 1970

Fourth Minor Change: April, 1991

COOPER SQUARE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

History of Prior Approvals

Original Urban Renewal Plan

Approved by the City Planning Commission: January 7, 1970 (CP 20822A)
Approved by the Board of Estimate: February 13, 1970 (Cal. NO.4)

Minor Change:

Approved by The City Planning Commission: March 26, 1974 (CP22600)

Minor Change:

Approved by The City Planning Commission: April 21, 1982 N820758HCM)

Minor Change

Approved by The City Planning Commission: November 14, 1989 (C890977HCM)

Minor Change

Approved by the City Planning Commission:

COOPER SQUARE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

(Urban Renewal Plan)

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Revised: April, 1991)

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

A. Boundary of the Plan Area

The sites which constitute the plan area (also referred to as the project area) are shown on Map 1, Project Boundary and Land Use Plan, and are described in the attached boundary description, Exhibit A.

B. Urban Renewal Plan Objectives

1. Introduction

Cooper Square is an area characterized by a mixture of sound and deteriorating housing, along with specialty shops and educational, cultural and social institutions that grew to serve a varied population, including low and moderate income families, artists, and "skid-row" individuals. The area also serves a unique function as a combination work, living and show place for individuals and groups in the fine and applied arts, and includes some small industrial and commercial firms.

In short, Cooper Square is an area with a substantial amount of variety and vitality. This Community Development Plan seeks to redevelop the area for the benefit of those living and working there and to maintain and enhance the assets of the area while replacing the most deteriorated structures.

In July, 1961, a group of local residents and businessmen, the Cooper Square Committee, presented to the Mayor and other City officials An Alternate Plan for Cooper Square, the community's answer to the City's plan to clear the entire area for 2,900 units of middle income cooperative housing. Since that time, the Cooper Square Committee has been pressing for its implementation. In 1968, the City agreed to make a start on implementing the Alternate Plan, and provided planning funds and a commitment of financing for the purpose.

Since several years had passed since the original plan was prepared, new studies and analyses had to be made and the plans revised according to the new findings. Many changes have taken place in the interim years. The renewal program itself has changed; more sensitive planning can be undertaken as massive clearance has become less popular. In the area, some buildings have been torn down, while some vacant buildings have been reoccupied. Homeowners have moved into small buildings on East 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Streets; many more artists are living in Cooper Square. The theater district is growing and institutions are expanding.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

But the housing in which most people live has not gotten any better; most of it continues its slow march toward deterioration. While some renovation has taken place along St. Marks Place and occasionally on other streets, this generally means much higher rents and loss of housing for the poor.

The present urban renewal plan, developed in conjunction with the Cooper Square Community Development Committee and Businessmen's Association, represents the first step in the process of meeting the desires and needs of present and future area residents for sound and attractive housing, for both low and moderate income levels, and supporting community facilities and services. HPD will continue to work closely with the Committee and the community to ensure that there is maximum community participation at every stage of planning and implementation.

2. Approach to Area Planning

As an initial step, an analysis was made to locate two types of areas: first, vacant, nearly vacant, or marginally used land; and second, concentrations of residents living in the worst housing. The result of this analysis was a map which showed which areas could be assembled most readily with the least displacement of families or businesses, and which areas could be assembled with the worst housing and the greatest number of families. The objective is to construct housing first on vacant sites, to move the families from the second set of sites into those new buildings and then to develop the remaining sites.

Once the general parameters of the planning program had been agreed to, detailed site investigations got under way, and the actual plan was hammered out at several open planning meetings. Perhaps the most basic of the decisions made was to concentrate development between Stanton and East 4th Streets on the basis that improvement efforts should be concentrated rather than scattered, and also because housing conditions appeared slightly worse south rather than north of East 4th Street.

Following is a description of the proposed sites.

Site 1a: This site is designated for residential and/or commercial use.

Site 1b: This vacant site is basically designated for low and moderate income housing.

The Site - a largely vacant area, is located above the recently constructed BMT - IND connecting link, and presents the most available piece of land in the Cooper Square area.

The development is to include Sect. 8 housing, in order to provide housing resources for the majority of the families to be displaced by the plan.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Site 1c: This site is designated for residential and/or commercial use.

Suggestions have also been made that the group of buildings along the Bowery including Sammy's Bowery Follies be saved. The Buildings located at 255-269 Bowery will be retained for rehabilitation.

Site 2: This site, which is to be acquired immediately, is designated for the development of middle income housing. *Suggestions have also been made that the group of buildings along the Bowery including Sammy's Bowery Follies be saved. In addition, it is the intention of this Plan to provide for the construction of facilities to replace those currently being used by the Church of All Nations. The development will also include shops, an historic building at 305 Bowery, and other community facilities.

East 1st Street and Extra Place are to be closed and made part of the site if technically feasible.

On the blocks between Houston and East 2nd Streets are several uses which strongly influenced the final decisions for this site. The most important of these is the Church of All Nations, a very active settlement house and church facility serving literally hundreds of children and adults every week but whose building is obsolete.

In determining the size of Site 2, several additional factors were influential. Consideration was given to including the entire Bowery frontage between East 1st and 2nd Streets in the site. It later developed that the Palace Hotel, one of the largest lodging houses catering to homeless men along the Bowery (with 620 beds), was also one of the most desired by the men and was fully occupied, compared with an average occupancy of 70 percent in Bowery hotels generally. It was considered imperative to omit this hotel from the first stage development plan; as elsewhere stated, the whole problem of homeless men and its solution will be given full consideration in the planning of future phases.

That portion of the northern block not acquired in this phase (including or excluding the Second Avenue frontage in the study status) is of adequate size for future development.

Site 2a: The area is designated for middle-income housing.* Site 2a is to be acquired when and if it is demonstrated that its utilization is necessary to meet the development objectives of site 2 which include permitting the Church of All Nations and 7 and 9 Second Avenue to remain standing until the replacement facility is completed, and to achieve a feasible Site 2.

* See also Page 6 - C1

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Site 4: This site is designated for low and moderate rent housing, and consists of very poor housing, Channel 1 Theater, ABC Stage City studio rental service, and the Wyoming, a 10-story loft structure.

Channel 1 and ABC Stage City lie directly in the center of some of the poorest housing in the community, and without taking these uses, it would be difficult to replace the housing. However, efforts will be made to develop uses in this site which will advance the cause of the arts and permit the retention of ABC Stage City. Further study is to determine the auspices under which such uses will be built. Present commercial uses will be given the option to remain. The site is to be rehabilitated.

The Wyoming, which is located in the southwest corner of the site, may be renovated for use as artists' housing. The building is currently occupied by a variety of commercial and manufacturing tenants, most with one year leases. It is believed that the building could become a housing and studio building for artists under the multiple dwelling code, and it is projected for such use. 13 E. 3rd Street, which is located midblock on East 3rd Street, will be renovated for low-income housing. The building is currently vacant.

Site 5: This site is designated for moderate and middle income housing, either new or rehabilitated depending on a further analysis of the possibilities. There will be similar efforts to those proposed in Site 4 to advance the cause of the arts.

This is a fairly straightforward site, mostly occupied by tenants in poorly designed old-law tenements. The main discussion about this site was whether the buildings should be rehabilitated or replaced. While these particular buildings would be difficult to improve, a great deal of concern for saving their facades has been expressed. The decision has been deferred pending further study of the possibilities for rehabilitation and the rather extensive need for lower rent apartments for single young people.

Site 5a This site will be acquired and redeveloped as housing for the elderly. It is a marginally used site, with a gas station, parking lot.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Buildings to be Converted for Artists' Use. In addition to the Wyoming, one or more buildings may be acquired and converted for use by AIR's to be displaced by the program. Several buildings are being investigated for such use; an amendment to the plan will be proposed for acquisition as needed.

C. Phase II Planning

In the next phase, serious consideration will be given to the area below Houston Street, and every effort will be made to designate sites which will result in the clearance and construction of housing in that area, with due regard for the problems of businesses, employees, homeless men, and the most appropriate use of land. It is also understood that sites north of Houston Street which are occupied by a hundred more families seeking better housing will continue to be selected so as to insure the continued implementation of the Alternate Plan.

Type of Proposed Renewal Actions

1. Staging

The area will be developed in essentially two stages:

Stage 1 - All properties in Sites 1a, 1b, 2 and 5a will be acquired and, with the exception of the historic building at 305 Bowery, cleared and redeveloped with low-rent public and moderate rental housing, community facilities, parking and retail uses. Site 1c, presently part of Site 1a, will be rehabilitated. On Sites 1 and 2, approximately 470 units of low-rent public housing and 280 units of middle-income housing will be constructed. If it is determined to acquire and develop Site 2a, a similar overall proportion will be maintained. A joint development of these sites may take place with coordinated design, leading to a mixture of public and middle-income housing. Attempts will be made to insure units which are suitable for artists. Site 5a will be developed with housing for the elderly.

In conjunction with this development, space will be provided for a new Church of All Nations facility, the day-care portion of which could be developed as the community facilities portion of the public housing. A K-2 school is also proposed; immediate discussions with the Board of Education on its inclusion in the project will be initiated by HPD and the community. Finally, shops and other community spaces are to be provided both north and south of Houston Street on the ground floors of the buildings.

Stage 2 - When the buildings projected for Stage 1 are completed, families from Sites 4 and 5 (as well as families displaced from other sites) will be rehoused in the new buildings. Demolition and rebuilding or rehabilitation

would then take place on these two sites. While plans have not been finally set for the use of these sites, Site 4 has been reserved for low income housing, while Site 5 will be for middle income housing. In designing both Sites 4 and 5, attention should be given to the development of further facilities for the theater arts along East 4th Street. One or more small theaters should be built as should ground floor space for boutiques and similar uses. A more careful feasibility study of the possibility for the rehabilitation of Site 5 should be conducted as well. The Wyoming could be used for artists housing and studios, with a theater or similar use on the ground floor.

2. Clearance and Redevelopment

Sites 1a, 1b, 2, and 5a will be acquired and, with the exception of the historic building at 305 Bowery and 13 E. 3rd Street which are not to be demolished, cleared and redeveloped with housing for low and moderate income families and with accessory uses. Site 2a will be acquired for redevelopment as and if feasibility and desirability are determined. ABC Stage City of Site 4 (Tax Block 459; Tax Lots 19 and 21) will be acquired upon the condition that a determination is made by The Department of Housing Preservation and Development that its acquisition is necessary to assure the feasible development of Site 4.

3. Rehabilitation

In the event that the rehabilitation of Site 5 or other specific properties is deemed feasible and desirable, such properties may be designated for this treatment. Therefore, rehabilitation will be considered an alternative to clearance. If a commercial building is found which is suitable for Artist in Residence (AIR) occupancy, it will be rehabilitated for this use.

4. Street Closings

Future action will be required to demap certain streets in order to effectuate this Plan. Such changes are as indicated in the Land Use Plan below.

III. LAND USE PLAN

A. Map 1. Project Boundary and Land Use Plan

Map 1, Project Boundary and Land Use Plan, dated January, 1970 revised April, 1991.

1. The sites included in this Plan and their proposed reuse. The proposed reuse is residential with commercial, community facilities, accessory recreational and parking uses permitted and all other uses excluded.

III. LAND USE PLAN

2. All thoroughfares and streets. The closing and demapping of Extra Place and East 1st Street will be required to effectuate the development of Site 2 for residential use.

B. Land Use Provisions and Building Requirements

Reference in the controls set forth in this Urban Renewal Plan to the provisions of the Zoning Resolution covering the land use and building requirements, controlling the permitted use of redevelopment parcels, maximum residential densities (rooms per parcel), required setbacks, maximum heights of buildings and required off-street parking and loading areas, etc. shall be as defined in the Comprehensive Amendment to the Zoning Resolution of The City of New York, as published in the City Record of November 10, 1960 and as amended. With respect to any property acquired or to be acquired in accordance with this plan, in any case in which a specific control of the Plan conflicts with a provision of the Zoning Resolution, the Zoning Resolution will govern until acquisition and the more restrictive of the two will govern after acquisition, unless overridden pursuant to Legal Authority under appropriate circumstances.

1. Permitted Uses

As shown on Map 1, Land Use Plan, dated January, 1970, revised April, 1991 the following uses shall be permitted and all others excluded:

a. Residential

Residential with appurtenant commercial, recreation, community and parking facilities.

It is intended that all residential areas will be built according to R-7-2 zoning specifications.

It is intended that Sites 1a, 1b and 2 be developed with an appropriate mixture of moderate and low income housing, at least 60% to be reserved for low income; Sites 4 and 5 will be rehabilitated for low and moderate income families.

b. Commercial

Commercial uses allowed within C-6-1 zoning requirements will be permitted in order to maintain the character of the Cooper Square area and to encourage the development of a compatible mix of residential and special commercial uses such as the theater and art-related uses that now characterize the area.

c. Public and quasi-public uses

Public and quasi-public uses shall be developed as appropriate.

2. Duration of Land Use Provisions and Requirements

The foregoing land use provisions and building requirements shall remain in effect for a period of forty (40) years from the date of approval of this Urban Renewal Plan by the Board of Estimate of The City of New York.

IV. PROPOSED ACTION

A. Land Acquisition

All of the real property within Sites 1a, through 5 (with limitations as shown elsewhere) will be acquired for clearance and redevelopment. The attached boundary description and map describe the property to be acquired.

B. Redeveloper's Obligations

1. The regulations and controls set forth in this Plan will be implemented, wherever applicable, by appropriate covenants and agreements for land disposition and conveyance executed pursuant thereto.
2. The redeveloper shall begin and complete the development of the land and the construction of improvements, for the uses required in this plan and agreed upon in the respective land disposition contracts, within a definite and reasonable time as determined and set forth in such contracts between The City of New York and the redeveloper.
3. The redeveloper shall devote the land solely to the uses specified in this Plan.
4. The redeveloper of project land shall not sell, lease, or otherwise transfer such land at any time prior to the completion of the redevelopment thereof without the prior written consent of the City of New York.
5. No covenant, agreement, lease, conveyance, or other instrument shall be effected or executed by The City of New York, or by a redeveloper or any of his successors or assigns, whereby land in the project area is restricted in use or occupancy upon the basis of race, color, or national origin.
6. Site plans, architectural drawings, outline specifications and schedules of materials and finishings for the construction of improvements on the land, all in sufficient detail to permit determination of compliance with the intent and controls of this

Plan and the design and character of the proposed construction, shall be submitted for review and approval to the Department of Housing Preservation and Development by the redeveloper prior to the commencement of construction. Any material changes proposed after approval of the plans by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development shall be similarly submitted for review and approval.

V. OTHER PROVISIONS NECESSARY TO MEET STATE AND LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

The following statements are set forth to indicate compliance with Article XV of the General Municipal Law of The State of New York and, more particularly, Section 502, subdivision 7 thereof.

A. Statement of Proposed Land Uses

See Section III of this Plan.

B. Proposed Land Acquisition, Demolition and Removal of Structures

See Section IV of this Plan.

C. Proposed Public, Semi-Public, Private and Community Facilities or Utilities

See Section II (B) (2) of this Plan.

D. Proposed New Codes and Ordinances or Amendments Thereto

No new codes or ordinances are anticipated in order to effectuate this Plan.

E. Proposed Acquisition of Air Rights and Concomitant Easements or Other Rights of User Necessary for the Use and Development of Such Rights

None.

F. Proposed Methods or Techniques of Urban Renewal

See Section II (C) of this Plan.

G. Proposed Program of Code Enforcement

The standard code enforcement program of The City of New York will be in effect.

H. Proposed Time Schedule for the Effectuation of this Plan

Estimated Completion Date of Project: 1995

	<u>Estimated Starting Date</u>	<u>Estimated Completion Date</u>
1. Land Acquisition	September, 1970	Spring, 1971
2. Relocation of Site Occupants	Fall, 1970	Spring, 1992
3. Demolition and Site Clearance	Fall, 1970	January, 1993
4. Site Preparation, Including Installation of Project Improvements	Winter, 1974-75	June, 1995
5. Disposition of Land in the Project Area	Winter, 1974-75	March, 1993

VI. CHANGES IN APPROVED PLAN

This Urban Renewal Plan may be modified at any time by The City of New York, provided that if modified after the disposition of any land in the project area, such modification must be consented to, in writing, by the purchaser or lessee of the specific property covered by the modification.

This shall not be construed to require the consent of the purchaser or lessee of any other parcel in the project area.

VII. MINOR CHANGES

Where, owing to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the restrictions, in regard to the physical standards and requirements referred to in Sections III and IV of this Community Development Plan would result in unnecessary hardships, involve practical difficulties, or would constitute an unreasonable limitation beyond the intent of these restrictions, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development shall have the power, upon appeal in specific cases, to authorize such minor changes in the terms of these restrictions as conform with the intent and purpose of this Plan. No variation shall be permitted, however, which is less restrictive than applicable state and local codes and ordinances.

EXHIBIT A

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Cooper Square Community Development Plan, also known as the Cooper Square Renewal Plan, encompasses the following sites which are within the area bounded by East 9th Street, 2nd Avenue, Chrystie Street, Delancey Street, Bowery, and 3rd Avenue in the Borough of Manhattan.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Block</u>	<u>Lots</u>
1 a	427	p.o. Lot 1
1 b	427	p.o. Lot 1
1 c	427	p.o. Lot 1
2	456	1,5,6,7,9,10,12,13,14,15,17,18,19,20, 21,22,26,27,34
	457	1,3,4,28,36,44,52,55,56
2 a	457	29,32,33
4	459	14,15,16,17,18,19,21,22,36,37,38,39, 40,43,45,46,
5	460	48,49,50,51,52,53,54,55,56,58
5 a	460	1,8,10,12

COOPER SQUARE

January, 1970
Revised: December, 1981

Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area
Minor Plan Change
April, 1991
FACT SHEET

Reason for Minor Plan Change

To allow the retention and rehabilitation of buildings currently designated for clearance and redevelopment on Sites 1A, 4, and 5.

The plan has been retyped for legibility.

Specific Changes (Page numbers are those in the current plan)

- Page 4 - Site 1C is added and the reference to the buildings along the Bowery as deteriorated and not suitable for long term retention has been
- deleted since these buildings are to be rehabilitated.
- Page 5 - Permits moderate income as well as middle income housing
on Sites 4 & 5 which are to be rehabilitated.
- Page 6 - Adds new site 1C, presently part of Site 1A, for rehabilitation.
- Page 7 - Eliminates Sites 4 and 5 from clearance and redevelopment.
- Page 8 - New Language has been substituted by the Law Department to B.
Land Use Provisions and Building Requirements to allow for a
Zoning Override in the Cooper Square U.R.A. HPD requested the
Zoning Override on April 15, 1991 to reinstate the former tax lots
and zoning lots which had been merged. A Zoning Override is necessary
to a) permit the Commissioner of Buildings to certify that the parcels
to be created comply with the applicable zoning laws and b)
subsequently allow the Department of Buildings to review and approve
plans for the rehabilitation of the buildings and issue work permits.
- Adds Site 1C to Permitted Uses under a. Residential.
- Page 10 & 11 - References in V.H. the Estimated Completion dates are updated.
- Exhibit A - Site 1A has been subdivided into Sites 1A and 1C.

Pages Affected

Pages 4-8,10,11, Exhibit A, and the Project Boundary and Land Use Plan.