

February, 2024

Nevins and Third

Community Visioning Report

NYCTM
Housing Preservation
& Development

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What?

Development Informed by Community

The NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) conducted community outreach from June through November of 2023 to gather input on the development of new affordable housing and neighborhood amenities at 153 Nevins Street and 108-114 Third Avenue, two City-owned properties in the Boerum Hill neighborhood of Brooklyn.

The goal of the outreach was to identify priorities for the new development from community members who have an intimate understanding of neighborhood conditions and needs, and New Yorkers at large. This report summarizes the results of the engagement process and is available on HPD's website at www.nyc.gov/nevins-and-third-rfp. It will also be attached to the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued for 153 Nevins Street and 108-114 Third Avenue. Development teams responding to the RFP are strongly encouraged to consult this report and thoughtfully respond in their proposals. HPD will evaluate how well development teams incorporate the community vision from this report in their submissions.

The screenshot shows the NYC Housing Preservation & Development website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the NYC logo and the text "Housing Preservation & Development". To the right of the logo, there are links for "Español" and "Translate", and a "Text-Size" option. Below the navigation bar, there is a search bar and a menu with options: "Home", "About", "Services and Information", "Media", "Events", and "Contact". The main heading of the page is "Nevins and Third RFP". Below the heading, there are social media sharing options (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Email) and a "Print" button. The central part of the page features a large graphic with an aerial view of the Boerum Hill neighborhood. The graphic includes the text "Affordable Housing Coming to Boerum Hill!" and "Share Your Opinion Now!". Two specific sites are highlighted with red location pins: "108-114 3rd Avenue" and "153 Nevins Street". At the bottom of the graphic, there are four buttons: "Sites Overview", "How to Get Involved", "RFP Process and FAQ", and "Submit an RFP Response".

Project Website

Where?

The Sites

The sites are located in the Boerum Hill neighborhood in Brooklyn Community District 2, across the street from Community District 6.

The **Nevins Street site** is located at the corner of Nevins Street and Wyckoff Street. This site is approximately 11,500 square feet and is currently used as a parking lot. It is across the street from the Boerum Hill Historic District.

The **Third Avenue site** is an “L”-shaped lot that fronts both Third Avenue and Wyckoff Street. This site is approximately 7,200 square feet and is currently used as a parking lot.

Both sites were rezoned from manufacturing districts to medium-density residential districts in 2022. They are both across the street from the Wyckoff Gardens NYCHA campus, in proximity to several bus routes, and within four blocks of the Barclays Center and Atlantic Terminal with access to ten subway lines and the Long Island Railroad.



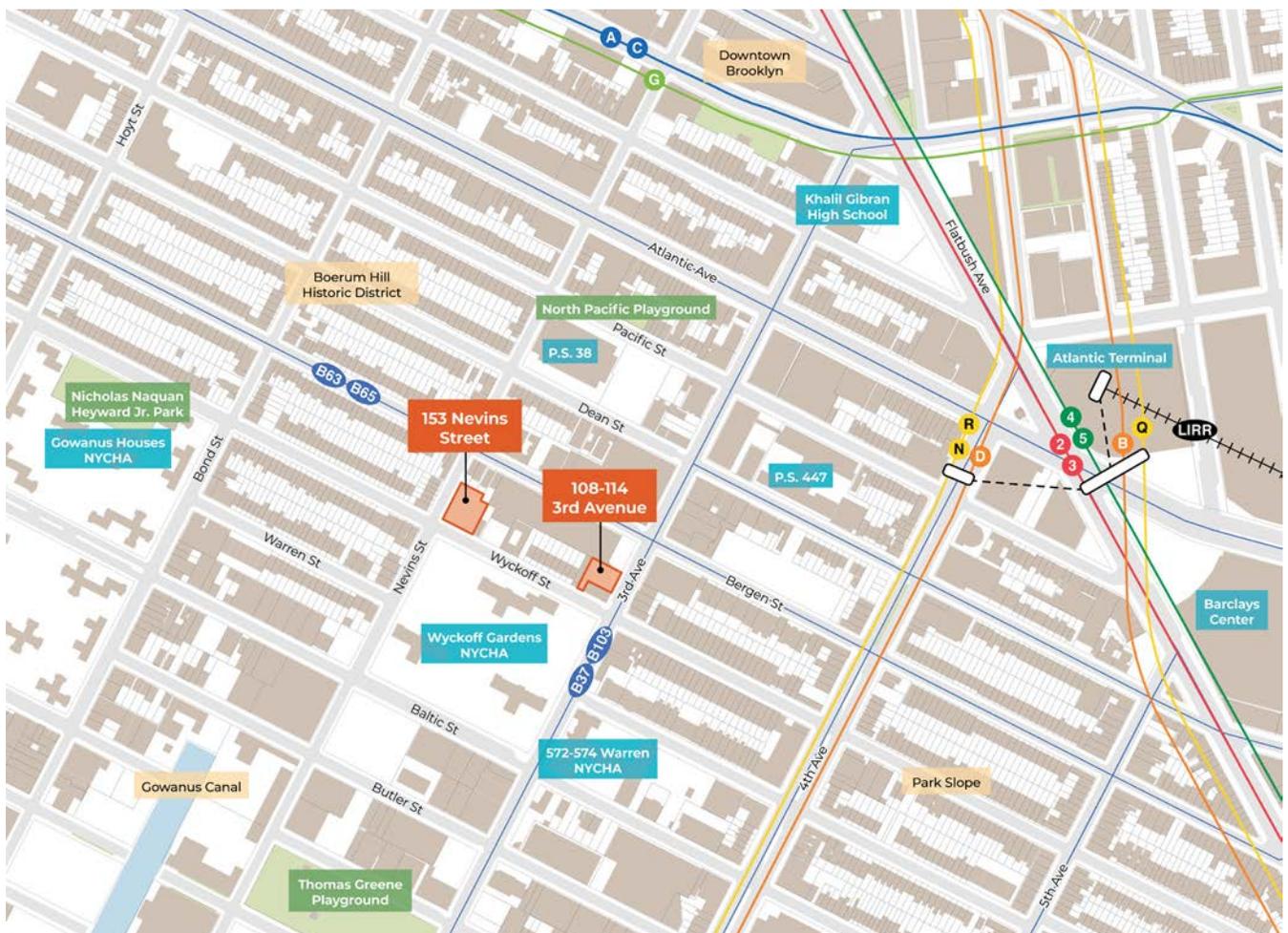
Sites Aerial View

Where?

The Context

Public facilities and institutional uses in the surrounding area include the Wyckoff Gardens Community Center, the Human Resources Administration on Bergen Street, and the schools P.S. 38 The Pacific School, P.S. 447 Brooklyn High School of the Arts, P.S. 133 William A. Butler School, and P.S. 261 Zipporah Mills. The nearest public library is the Pacific Branch, four blocks from the sites. There are also several religious institutions in the surrounding neighborhood including Bethel Baptist Church, the Temple of Restoration, the Brooklyn SGI USA Buddhist Centre, and the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The sites are in proximity to major commercial corridors including Atlantic Avenue, Fourth Avenue, Fifth Avenue, and Smith Street. The Nevins Street and Third Avenue commercial corridors primarily host neighborhood-serving retail including delis, boutique shops, convenience stores, and a gas station.



Neighborhood Map

How?

Community Engagement

HPD partnered with city councilmembers Lincoln Restler and Shahana Hanif, the local NYCHA Tenant Association leadership, and the Boerum Hill Association over the course of five months to organize several stakeholder meetings and neighborhood outreach events listed in the **Engagement Events Timeline** below. When sharing information with the community and gathering input, HPD communicated the project goals established during the 2022 rezonings of the two sites.

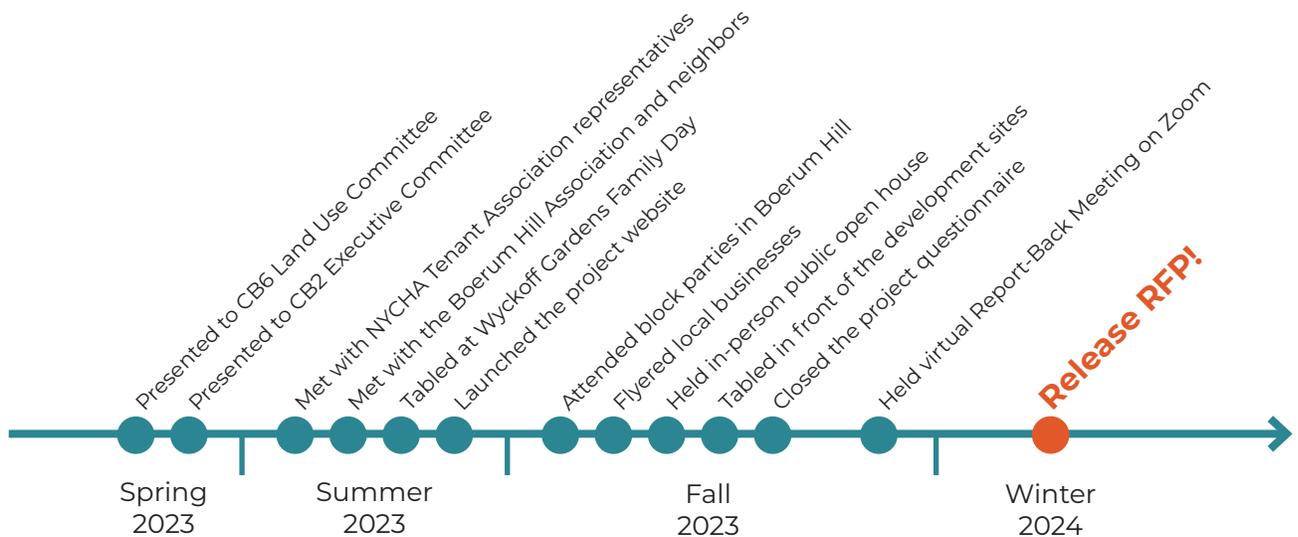
Project Questionnaire

The project questionnaire was one of the primary methods of collecting community input. 202 community members provided input on housing issues and neighborhood-wide needs, potential ground floor uses that could provide services for the future residents and the broader community, stormwater flooding, and more.

Public Open House

Over 50 stakeholders and community members attended the Nevins and Third Public Open House at the Wyckoff Gardens Community Center on October 17, 2023. HPD engaged community members with information and interactive activities about housing needs and affordability, ground floor uses, and design, followed by a presentation and Q&A. Live interpretation for Spanish, Cantonese and American Sign Language was provided to accommodate all language requests. The presentation slides are available on the project website.

Engagement Events Timeline



How?

Outreach Strategies

In addition to the individual events listed in the Engagement Events Timeline on page 6, HPD promoted the project in the following ways:

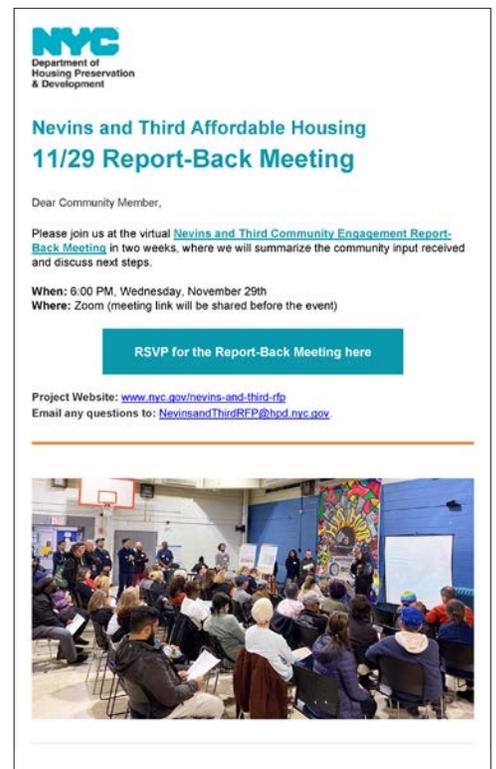
- Conducted targeted outreach to individual community-based organizations and stakeholders throughout the engagement period.
- Engaged Community Board 2 and Community Board 6 equally; although the sites are in Community District 2, they are across the street from Community District 6.
- Sent several email blasts to a growing contact list of over 400 subscribers.
- Posted on social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) to promote ways to provide input throughout the engagement period.
- Posted flyers with links to the project website and questionnaire across the neighborhood.
- Promoted the project questionnaire to ensure community members had ample time to submit their input before the questionnaire closed on October 31, 2023.



Instagram Advertising

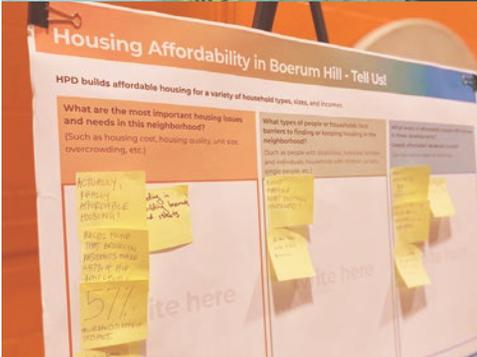


Twitter Advertising



Email Blast

How?



10/17/2023 Nevins and Third Public Open House

Findings

Though participants communicated many different visions for the sites, certain themes emerged as priorities.

The Summary of Findings below is reflective of direct results and quotes from the 202 questionnaire responses, documented input from the more than 50 attendees of the 10/17 Public Open House, and conversations HPD had with community members during the various outreach meetings and events.

RFP submissions will be evaluated based on the quality and feasibility of the proposals, as well as how well they respond to the priorities and needs articulated by the community.

Summary of Findings

HOUSING ISSUES AND NEEDS

- **Housing cost is a barrier to enter and stay in the neighborhood for low- and moderate-income households, from single people, to families, to seniors.**
- **Deeply affordable housing is needed for people with disabilities and those facing housing insecurity.**
- **There is support to maximize the number of people housed on these sites.**

GROUND FLOOR (NON-RESIDENTIAL) USES

- **There was not a majority consensus on the preferred ground-floor uses. Affordable childcare was the most popular use, followed by pharmacy or general store, and community center.**
- **Ground floor uses should serve the needs of the broader community, including NYCHA residents, and are an opportunity to build community in the neighborhood.**

GENERAL FEEDBACK

- **There is a desire for contextual design, especially for the Nevins Street site, in order to limit light and shadow impacts on adjacent properties.**
- **There are concerns about potential impacts during construction related to noise, stormwater management, traffic, and environmental remediation, especially because of the planned private developments on the same block.**

HOUSING ISSUES AND NEEDS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

At the 10/17 Public Open House, HPD asked community members about housing issues and needs in the neighborhood using the questions listed below, and many questionnaire respondents also provided feedback about these topics.

1. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT HOUSING ISSUES AND NEEDS IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?

Such as housing cost, housing quality, unit size, overcrowding, etc.

Community members feel that housing cost is a major barrier to enter and stay in the neighborhood. There are minimal rental options for families in the neighborhood, and aging residents (especially aging NYCHA residents) said they lack senior housing options that would allow them to age in the neighborhood.

2. WHAT TYPES OF PEOPLE OR HOUSEHOLDS FACE BARRIERS TO FINDING OR KEEPING HOUSING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Such as people with disabilities, homeless families and individuals, households with children, seniors, single people, etc.

HPD heard that low- and moderate-income households, from single people, to families, to seniors face barriers to finding or keeping housing in the neighborhood. Deeply affordable housing for people with disabilities is needed. Additionally, community members experiencing housing insecurity expressed interest in this future development.

3. WHAT LEVELS OF AFFORDABILITY SHOULD HPD INCLUDE IN THESE DEVELOPMENTS?

People referred to HPD's income charts to help answer this question.

HPD heard repeatedly that deeply affordable housing is needed in the neighborhood; for example, housing for incomes between \$20,000 and \$50,000; for households making "at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI)," and references to a study that concluded "Brooklyn residents make ~57% of HUD AMI Levels." Community members also expressed the importance of accommodating households with a wide range of incomes, all of which face cost barriers to entering and staying in the neighborhood.

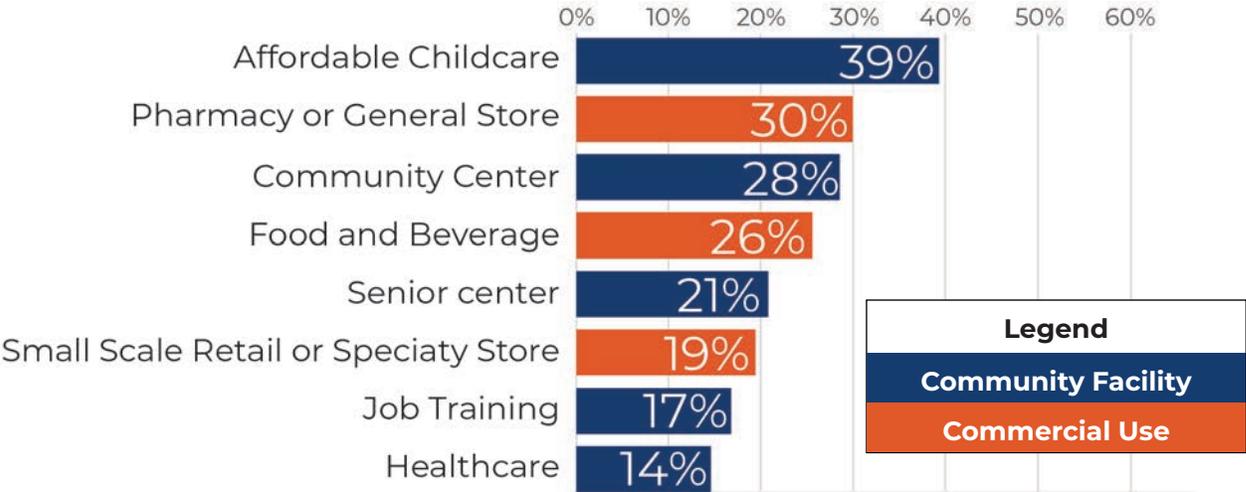


GROUND FLOOR (NON-RESIDENTIAL) USES

In addition to providing affordable homes, HPD-financed buildings can provide ground floor uses that serve the whole neighborhood. Respondents were asked to select categories of businesses and services that would be useful to locate on these sites. HPD also engaged community members on this topic at the Public Open House.

4. WHICH TYPES OF SERVICES OR BUSINESSES WOULD BE BEST FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Select up to 2.



98% of questionnaire respondents answered this question.

The zoning district of the Third Avenue site requires a non-residential ground floor. This could include retail (orange bars on the graph), community space or services (blue bars on the graph), or a combination of both.

The zoning district of the Nevins Street site allows residential and/or community space or services (orange bars on the graph) on the ground floor, but prohibits retail.

In the questionnaire results there was not a majority consensus on the preferred ground-floor uses. Affordable childcare was the highest voted with 39%, followed by pharmacy or general store at 30%, and community center at 28%.

“Affordable housing must include affordable childcare and affordable grocery options.”

“Need for a friendly pharmacy with good hours around these sites.”

“Teen center”

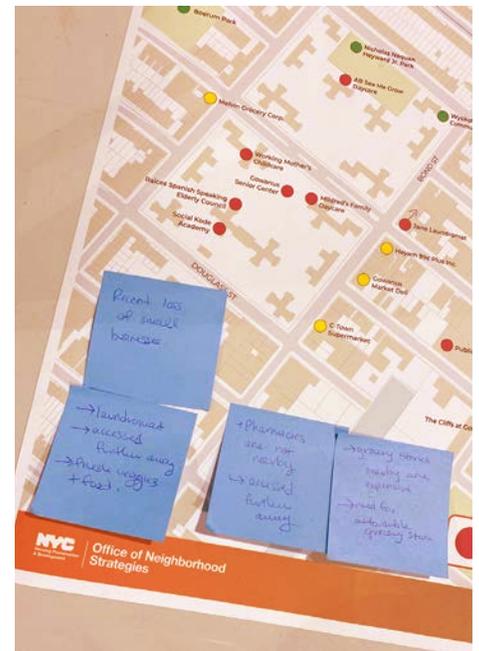
“Community kitchen”

“Incubator kitchen”

GROUND FLOOR (NON-RESIDENTIAL) USES *(continued)*

Several community members spoke of multiple pharmacies and convenience stores closing in the neighborhood in recent years. Community members also shared their desire for this building to serve the needs of the broader community, not just the buildings' residents.

“Grocery store” was not included as an option in the questionnaire because the Third Avenue site is not large enough to house a grocery store on the ground floor. Additionally, the private developer on this block has committed to including an affordable grocery store as part of their development, which would be around the corner from these future buildings. However, community members spoke about the need for fresh food access and an affordable supermarket in the neighborhood in the questionnaire and at outreach events.



Public Open House: Ground Floor Uses

“I’d advocate for spaces that serve NYCHA residents—their voices should be honored first. It would be cool if the space was able to bring neighbors together.”

“We are always in need of affordable services and public spaces that are free or provide community events.”

“Need to have stores that sell to low income and working-class people.”

“There is a need for Seniors in the area to have access to a community center.”

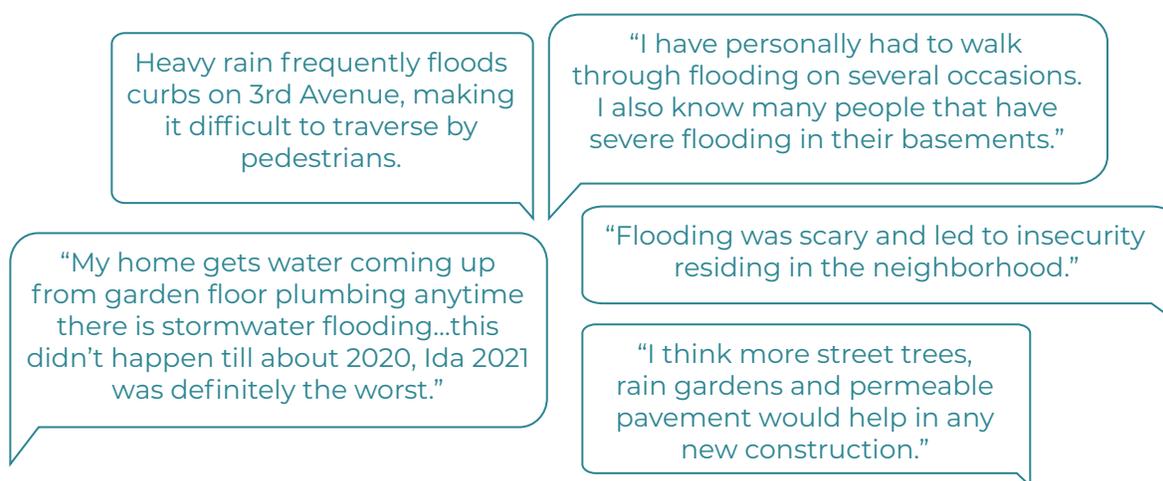
NEIGHBORHOOD CLIMATE RESILIENCY: STORMWATER FLOODING

HPD knows these neighborhoods have experienced flooding in recent years, especially after intense rainstorms like Hurricane Ida in 2021. Questionnaire respondents were asked about their personal experience with stormwater flooding in the neighborhood.

5. WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH STORMWATER FLOODING ON NEVINS STREET, WYCKOFF STREET OR 3RD AVENUE? HOW ABOUT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Many community members shared their personal experiences of flooding on their streets, in their buildings and basements, and how extreme weather events of increasing frequency and severity have made them feel unsafe. Neighbors on the block expressed that the stormwater management strategy should consider the flooding challenges and infrastructure needs of neighboring properties.

Some of these responses are highlighted below.



77% of respondents answered this question.

The City has begun major infrastructure investments around the Gowanus Canal to manage flooding caused by more frequent and intense storms resulting from climate change. These investments include a growing number of curbside rain gardens, upgrades to the combined sewers, and the addition of separate stormwater sewers. The City has also increased requirements for the amount of stormwater that new and redeveloped properties (such as the Nevins and Third sites) must manage on-site to reduce the demand on the sewer system during storms.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND GENERAL FEEDBACK

Below is additional general feedback HPD received during the Community Visioning phase. HPD had the opportunity to speak to several residents of this block who will be future neighbors to these buildings, and their questions and concerns are reflected as well.

6. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THESE SITES, OR ANY OTHER IDEAS YOU WANT TO SHARE?

HPD received comments and feedback that supported maximizing the number of homes and deep affordability on these sites. Community members also discussed the benefits of providing housing opportunities for a wide range of incomes in the neighborhood.

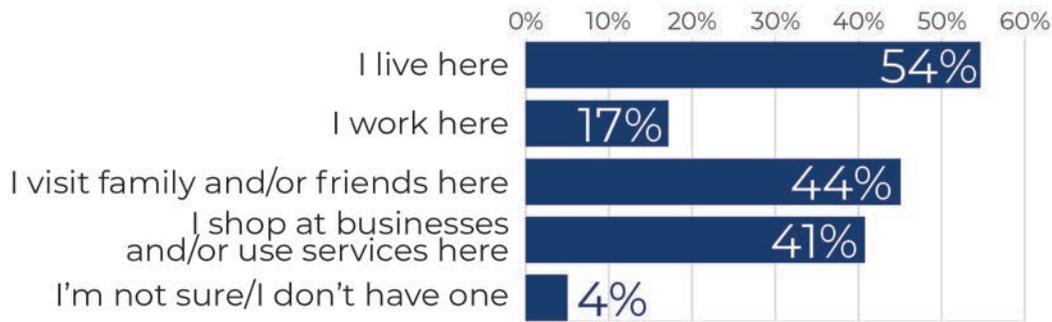
Additionally, HPD received questions about light and shadow impacts adjacent to the Nevins Street site, and neighbors who live north of the Nevins Street site, on Bergen, have expressed concerns about shadow impacts on their open space and apartments in the back of the buildings.

A few community members also expressed concerns about the potential impacts during construction, especially considering all of the private development in the pipeline on the same block.

- “You should try to maximize the number of apartments and provide deep affordability if possible. The Wyckoff Houses are already pretty tall, and it’s so close to Downtown Brooklyn.”
- “This area has a lot of very high income families and lots of lower income families living very close to each other but without a lot of interaction. This building should bridge the gap, create relationships and should have the AMI priced for the lower income families, not the community average!”
- “Let’s house as many people as possible! As a former DOE teacher, I know how tired kids who are staying in shelters are during the school day. Let’s give them a quiet home so they can rest.”
- “If possible it would be good if the highest portion of the Nevins St building favored the southeast corner - lower on the North & Nevins side.”
- “Ideally it would be great if our new neighbors on Nevins between Bergen and Wyckoff could have their property set back a bit to still allow the sun to come in.”
- “Very concerned about toxic remediation and vapors on this site. Very happy for 100% affordable housing but make sure it’s for people making far below AMI. Their options are so limited now and we need space for them in NYC!”

Profile of Respondents

A. WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO THE NEIGHBORHOODS (BOERUM HILL AND GOWANUS) AROUND THE TWO DEVELOPMENT SITES? Select as many as apply.

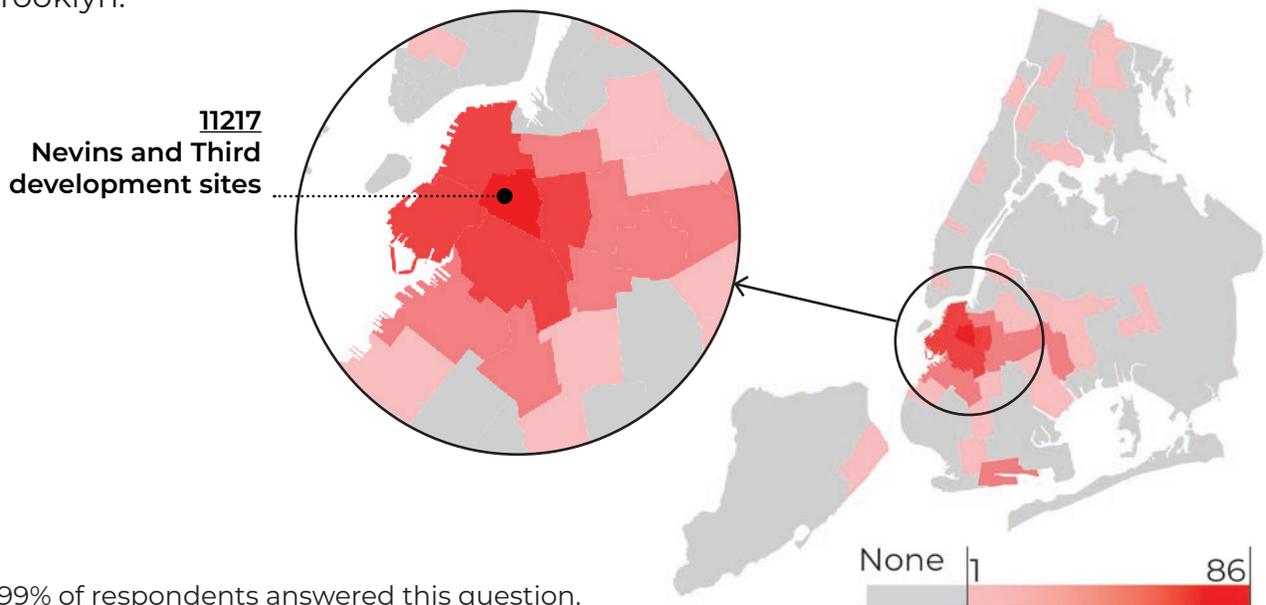


100% of respondents answered this question.

When asked about their relationship to the area, a majority of respondents said they lived nearby. Additionally, over 40% said they either visit family or friends in the neighborhood, or shop at businesses and use services in the neighborhood.

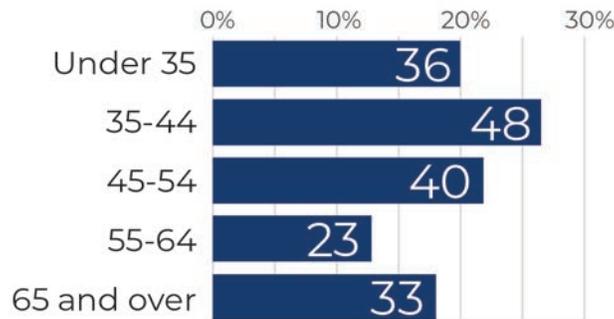
B. NEIGHBORHOOD OF RESIDENCE:

The sites are located in the 11217 ZIP code. 69% of respondents who gave their zip code live in the 11217 ZIP code or a directly adjacent ZIP code (11215, 11231, 11201, 11205, or 11238). Additionally, 90% of respondents gave a home zip code located in Brooklyn.



C. AGE:

Questionnaire respondents had a wide variety of ages. The youngest respondent was 22 years old, and the oldest was 84. Around 20% of respondents were under the age of 35, while an additional 31% were over the age of 55. The median age of questionnaire respondents was 46 years old, skewing older than Brooklyn Community District 2 and 6's respective median ages of 34 and 37.



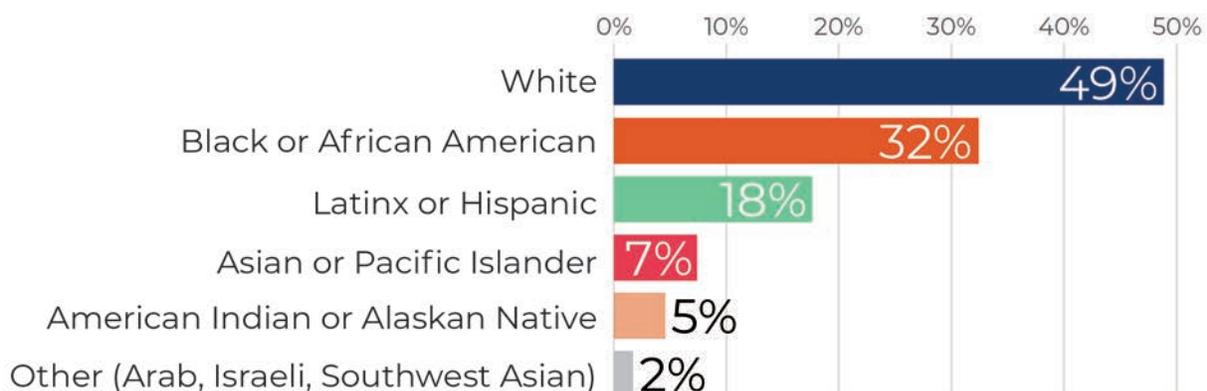
89% of respondents answered this question.

D. RACIAL AND/OR ETHNIC GROUP:

Respondents were asked to select as many racial and/or ethnic identities as applied to them. White and Black or African American were the two most frequently selected groups. Of the respondents who gave demographic information, 12% selected two or more racial and/or ethnic identities.

- **With what racial and/or ethnic group do you identify?**

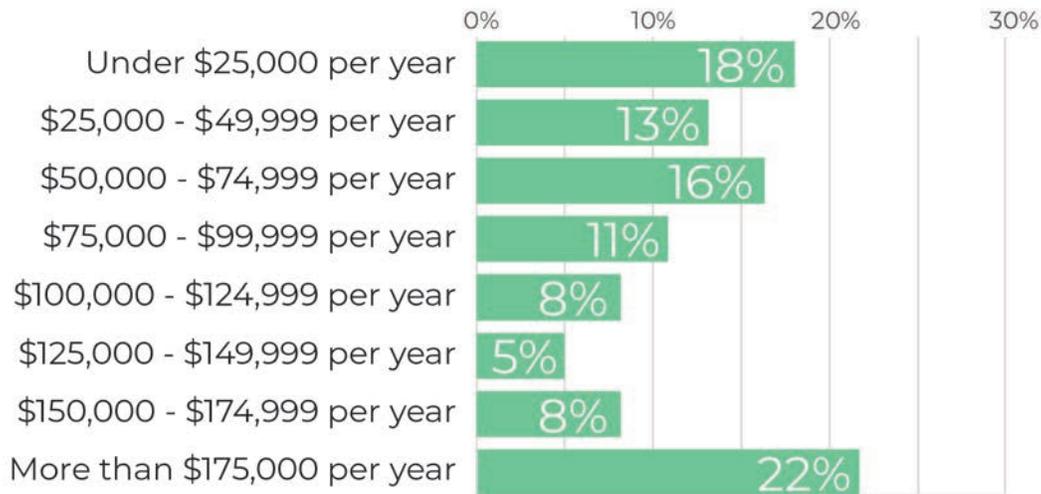
Select as many as apply.



88% of respondents answered this question.

E. INCOME:

Around 31% of respondents who gave their income make less than \$50,000 per year, and around 18% make less than \$25,000 per year. Around 30% of respondents make over \$150,000 per year. The median household income of respondents was \$75,000-\$99,999 per year. This skews substantially lower than Brooklyn Community District 2 and 6's respective median household incomes of approximately \$119,000 and \$150,000 per year.

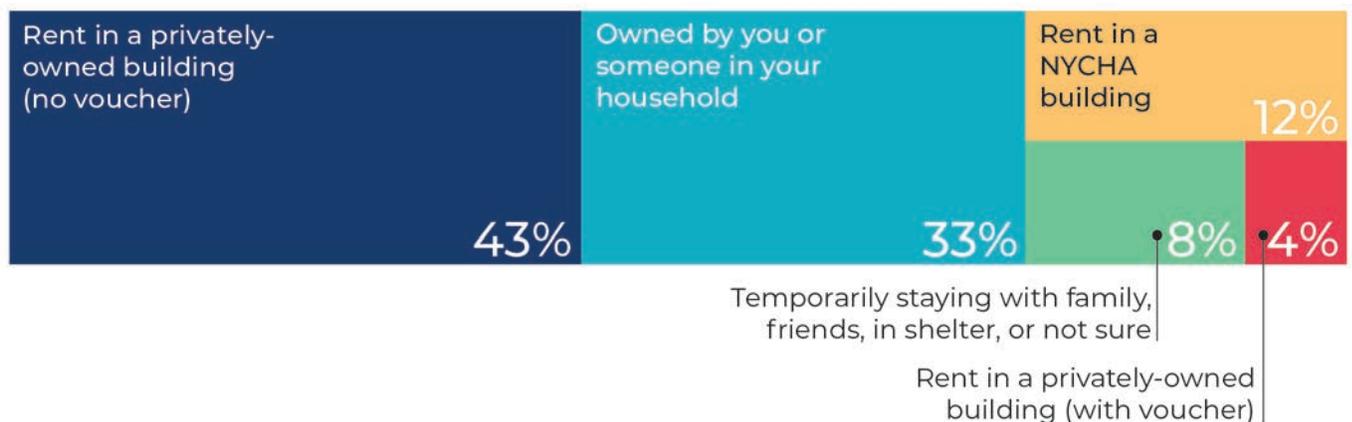


92% of respondents answered this question.

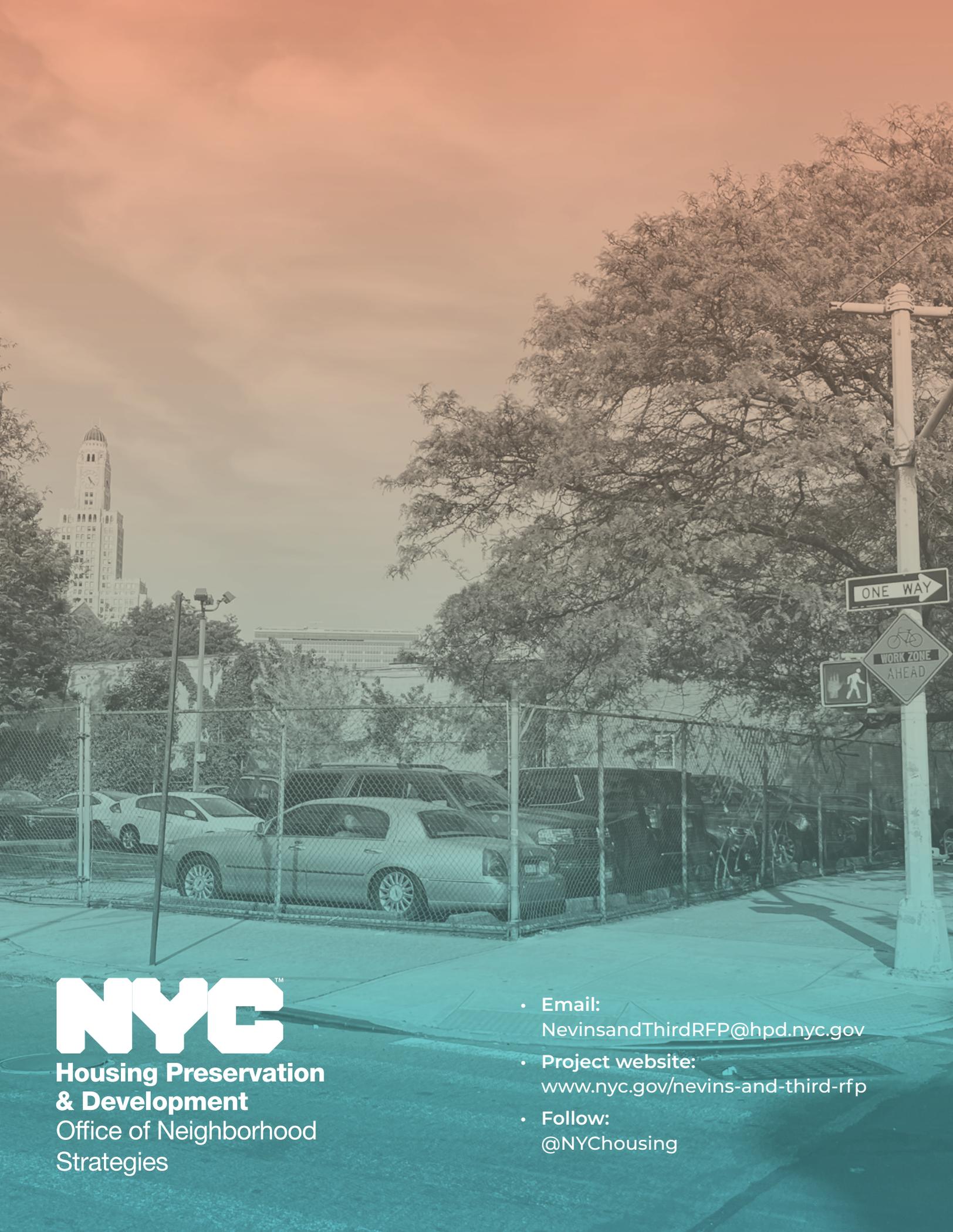
F. HOUSING SITUATION:

Respondents were asked about their current housing situation and were given options reflecting a wide range of experiences. The majority of respondents are renters. 43% rent in a privately-owned building without a voucher, 4% rent in a privately owned building with a voucher (e.g. Section 8, CityFHEPS) to pay part of their rent, and 12% rent in a NYCHA building. 33% of respondents are homeowners, and 8% are temporarily staying with family, friends, or in shelter.

- Which of the following best describes your house, apartment, or place of dwelling?



93% of respondents answered this question.



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& Development**
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