

May 23, 2017

POSITIVE DECLARATION

Project Identification

West 108th Street WSFSSH Development

CEQR No. 17HPD083M

ULURP Nos. TBD

SEQRA Classification: Unlisted

Lead Agency

Department of Housing Preservation &
Development

100 Gold Street New York, NY 10038

Contact: Aaron Werner

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Name, Description and Location of Proposal:

West 108th Street WSFSSH Development

The proposal involves an application by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (“HPD”) and the West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing (“WSFSSH”), for approval of several discretionary actions subject to City Planning Commission (“CPC”) approval (collectively, the “Proposed Actions”) to facilitate the construction of two new buildings consisting of affordable and supportive housing and community facility uses on West 108th Street in the Manhattan Valley neighborhood of Manhattan, Community District 7 (the “Project Area”). The Proposed Actions include designation of an Urban Development Action Area, approval of an Urban Development Action Area Project (“UDAAP”), disposition of City-owned property, a zoning map amendment to change a portion of Manhattan Block 1863 from R8B to R8A, and a zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the NYC Zoning Resolution to map a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (“MIH”) Area on the Project Area. The project sponsor would seek construction funding from HPD and other agencies at a later date.

The Project Area (aka “rezoning area”) includes Block 1863, Lots 5, 10, 13, 17 and 26, is generally bounded by Amsterdam Avenue to the west, Columbus Avenue to the east, and West 108th street to the south, and is currently part of a larger R8B zoning district. The Project Area has a total lot area of approximately 60,552 square feet (sf). Lots 5, 10, 13, and 26 constitute the Development Site upon which redevelopment would occur as a result of the Proposed Actions. Of the Development Site, Lots 5, 10, and 13 make up the site of proposed Building 1 (the “Western Development”), and Lot 26 is the site for proposed Building 2 (the “Eastern Development”). Lots 5, 13, and 26 are currently owned by the City, whereas Lot 10 is owned by WSFSSH. Lot 17, which is located between Lots 13 and 26, is occupied by the Anibal Aviles Playground and zoned R8B according to Zoning Sectional Map 5d. Although Lot 17 is part of the rezoning area, it is a “public park” for zoning purposes and not subject to zoning regulation. It is also not proposed for any redevelopment under the Proposed Actions.



The site of the Western Development (Block 1863, Lots 5, 10, and 13) has a combined lot area of approximately 30,276 sf and is currently occupied by two City-owned four- and five-story parking garages (combined floor area of approximately 91,190 sf, with a total capacity of approximately 550 spaces), and the approximately 18,730 sf WSFSSH-owned five-story Valley Lodge shelter, which provides transitional housing for homeless older adults. The site of the Eastern Development (Lot 26) has a lot area of approximately 7,569 sf and is currently occupied by a City-owned, approximately 21,800 sf three-story parking garage, with a capacity of approximately 125 spaces. All three garages within the Project Area are active pursuant to lease agreements between the garage operators and the City.

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of an estimated combined 277 affordable and supportive housing units, and approximately 37,400 gross-square-foot (gsf) of community facility space comprising two separate facilities: 1) an approximately 31,000 gsf transitional housing facility for older adults with approximately 110 shelter beds (replacing an existing 92-bed facility), and 2) an additional approximately 6,400 gsf community facility use (the “Proposed Project”). This proposed development would consist of two buildings: the approximately 193,000 gsf Western Development (maximum height of 11 stories) to be located on Lots 5, 10, and 13, and the approximately 45,000 gsf Eastern Development (maximum height of 11 stories) to be located on Lot 26. The Proposed Actions would provide much needed affordable housing (including supportive senior housing) and transitional housing for older adults in this area of Manhattan and optimize the use of large City-owned sites suitable for housing which are located in close proximity to public transportation.

The Western Development would have multiple setbacks, ranging from 6 stories to 11 stories (approximately 118 feet) at its tallest. The Western Development would measure approximately 193,000 gsf and contain a total of approximately 195 units, including 115 studio units set aside as supportive housing for older adults, and 80 affordable units that would accommodate singles and families, consisting of a mix of studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. The building would also contain approximately 37,400 gsf of community facility space comprising two separate facilities: 1) an approximately 31,000 gsf transitional housing facility for older adults with approximately 110 shelter beds (replacing an existing 92-bed facility), and 2) an additional approximately 6,400 gsf community facility use. The rear yard of the Western Development would be developed with a courtyard for use by building tenants. The main residential entrance to the building, as well as entrances to the community facility uses would be located on West 108th Street. Construction of the Western Development is anticipated to begin in 2018 and the building is expected to be completed and fully operational by the end of 2020.

Although complete designs are not yet available at this time, the Eastern Development is expected to have a maximum floor area of approximately 45,000 gsf, and would rise up to 11 stories (approximately 102 feet). It is planned that the building would be comprised entirely of either supportive housing for older adults or affordable senior housing, with approximately 82 units. Construction of the Eastern Development is anticipated to begin in 2023, once the five-year (2017-2022) lease extension on the existing garage expires, and the building is expected to be completed and fully operational by the end of 2025.



SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP)

The Development Site (Block 1863, Lots 5, 10, 13, and 26) would be designated as an Urban Development Action Area and the Proposed Project would be approved as a UDAAP.

Disposition of City Owned Property

HPD, on behalf of the project sponsor, is seeking disposition authority for the three City-owned properties within the Project Area (Block 1863, Lots 5, 13, and 26) to facilitate the construction of the Proposed Project. The disposition of these City-owned properties would be approved pursuant to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (“ULURP”). Lots 5, 13, and 26 are also referred to as the “Disposition Area” in the ULURP application.

Zoning Map Amendment

The Project Area is currently located in an R8B zoning district, including the Anibal Aviles Playground (as noted above). The proposed zoning map amendment (to Zoning Sectional Map 5d) would extend the existing R8A zoning district that is mapped along the Amsterdam Avenue frontage of Block 1863 (at a depth of approximately 100 feet) eastward along the southern half of the block (to include all of Lots 5, 10, 13, 17, and 26), ending at the western boundary of Lot 29, a corner lot at West 108th Street and Columbus Avenue. The northern boundary of the proposed rezoning area would be located along the horizontal centerline of Block 1863 (approximately 100.92 feet north of, and parallel to, West 108th Street), and the eastern boundary of the proposed rezoning area would be located 100 feet to the west of, and parallel to, Columbus Avenue.

Both the existing R8B and the proposed R8A districts are contextual zoning districts, which limit building heights, require buildings to have continuous street walls with setbacks above a certain height, and require residential developments to comply with the Quality Housing program. However, R8A is a higher density district that generally allows mid-sized buildings, and is typically mapped along wide avenues where public transportation is readily accessible, while the R8B district has more restrictive height limits and is typically mapped along narrow streets in the middle of blocks. R8A districts permit residential and community facility uses at a maximum FAR of 6.02 (as discussed further below, 7.2 in areas designated as part of the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing program) and 6.5, respectively. It should be noted however that the Proposed Project would not utilize the entire developable area allowed under an R8A district, but would be built at a lower FAR of approximately 5.3. The restriction to a lower FAR will be enforceable by the City. The building form in R8A districts requires a base height between 60 and 85 feet and a maximum building height of 120 feet.

Zoning Text Amendment

A zoning text amendment is proposed to Appendix F of the NYC Zoning Resolution to map an MIH Area on the Project Area. An MIH Area requires permanent affordable housing to be provided equivalent to either 25 or 30 percent of the residential floor area developed. The MIH Area sets a new maximum permitted residential FAR which supersedes the FAR permitted by



the underlying zoning district. With the designation of the Project Area as an MIH Area, the maximum permitted FAR within the proposed R8A would be 7.2 (also 7.2 for Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors (AIRS)), and the maximum permitted building height would be up to 140 feet for MIH developments and AIRS. As noted above, the Proposed Project would not utilize the entire developable area allowed under an R8A district, but would be built at a lower FAR of approximately 5.3. The restriction to a lower FAR will be enforceable by the City. All of the Proposed Project's units would be affordable for households earning 60 percent or below of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Absent the Proposed Actions, existing conditions throughout the Project Area and Development Site would remain. In addition to the actions described above, the project sponsor may seek construction financing for one or more of the proposed buildings from multiple sources, including: the HPD Supportive Housing Loan Program, the New York City Housing Development Corporation's ("HDC") Extremely Low and Low-Income Affordability Program, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and HDC tax exempt bonds. The HPD and/or HDC funding may include federal assistance originating from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Statement of Significant Effect:

Following review of an Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS), HPD has determined, pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.7, that the Proposed Actions may have a significant effect on the quality of the environment as detailed in the following technical areas, and that a targeted environmental impact statement (EIS) will be required:

1. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning, and public policy in the vicinity of the affected area.
2. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on publicly accessible open space in the vicinity of the affected area.
3. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse shadow impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.
4. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources in the vicinity of the affected area.
5. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials in the vicinity of the affected area.
6. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts to transportation in the vicinity of the affected area.
7. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts to air quality in the vicinity of the affected area.
8. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse noise impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.
9. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related public health.
10. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in the vicinity of the affected area.



11. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse construction-related impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.

Supporting Statement:

The above determination is based on an EAS prepared for the Proposed Actions which finds that:

1. Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy - The Proposed Actions involve a change in existing land uses and zoning within the Project Area.
2. Open Space – The Proposed Actions have the potential to result in direct effects on Project Area open spaces, such as through the introduction of new shadows on the adjacent Anibal Aviles Playground. The Proposed Actions may also have an indirect effect on area open spaces due to increased demand for use of publicly accessible spaces by the new residential population that would be introduced to the area by the Proposed Project.
3. Shadows – The Proposed Actions would introduce new buildings greater than 50 feet tall which would both be located adjacent to the Anibal Aviles playground and across the street from the Booker T. Washington playground, two sunlight sensitive resources. As such, the Proposed Project has the potential to cast new shadows on nearby sunlight sensitive resources.
4. Urban Design and Visual Resources – The Proposed Actions involve changes to zoning and would result in the construction of new buildings taller than what currently exists in the Project Area; therefore, these changes could affect a pedestrian’s experience and may alter the urban design character and visual resources of the surrounding area.
5. Hazardous Materials – The Proposed Actions would result in new in-ground disturbance;. Due to the land use history of this area of Manhattan, subsurface investigations and remediation at one or more parcels may be warranted.
6. Transportation – While the EAS determined that the Proposed Project does not warrant a detailed quantified traffic or pedestrian analysis, the Proposed Actions would result in the elimination of three public parking garages within the Project Area, with a combined capacity of approximately 675 spaces. In addition, the affordable and supportive housing to be developed under the Proposed Actions would not include any replacement parking. The elimination of this number of parking spaces without provision of replacement parking is atypical of most development subject to environmental review under the 2014 *CEQR Technical Manual*. Given this specific combination of factors, and the potential to result in a shortfall of parking in the surrounding area, a detailed analysis of on-street and off-street parking conditions in the surrounding study area will be provided in the EIS.
7. Air Quality – While the EAS determined that the operational aspect of the Proposed Project does not warrant a detailed mobile or stationary source air quality assessment, the Proposed Actions would result in new residential development within 400 feet of industrial sources of emissions. Therefore, an industrial source analysis will be provided in the EIS. The EIS will also analyze construction-related air quality due to emissions over an extended period, particularly at sensitive nearby land uses such as residences and schools.



8. Noise – Construction of the Proposed Project may result in increases in noise levels over an extended period, particularly at sensitive nearby land uses such as residences and schools. In addition, future residents of the Proposed Project would be subject to noise from mobile, stationary, or construction related sources in the area.
9. Public Health – A public health assessment may be warranted at the discretion of the lead agency if an unmitigated significant adverse impact is identified in CEQR analysis areas, such as air quality, hazardous materials, or noise.
10. Neighborhood Character – The Proposed Actions have the potential to alter certain constituent elements of the affected area’s neighborhood character, including land use patterns, open space, shadows, and noise levels.
11. Construction – The Proposed Actions would result in the construction of new buildings with overlapping construction schedules over an extended period. These activities could potentially have a disruptive and noticeable effect on the surrounding neighborhood in terms of transportation, air quality, noise, and other CEQR technical areas.

Public Scoping:

HPD, as CEQR lead agency, hereby requests that the project sponsor prepare or have prepared, at their option, a targeted Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in accordance with 6 NYCRR 617.9(b) and Sections 6-08 and 6-12 of Executive Order No. 91 of 1977 as amended (City Environmental Quality Review).

A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Thursday June 22, 2017 at 4:00 PM at the Edward A. Reynolds West Side High School, 140 W. 102nd Street, New York, NY. Written comments on the Draft Scope of Work will be accepted by the lead agency until the close of business on July 3, 2017 (10 days following the scoping meeting).

This determination has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law. Should you have any questions pertaining to this Positive Declaration, you may contact me at (212) 863-5953.



Aaron Werner, AICP
Director of Environmental Planning, HPD

Date: 5/23/2017

c:

- Eunice Suh (HPD)
- Veanda Simmons (HPD)
- Kevin Parris (HPD)
- Miriam Gonzalez (HPD)
- Jessica Katz (HPD)
- Emily Lehman (HPD)
- Theresa Cassano (HPD)



Hilary Semel (MOEC)
Edith Hsu-Chen (DCP)
Erik Olson (DCP)
Robert Dobruskin (DCP EARD)
William Pugliese (DCP EARD)
John Mangin (DCP)
Naim Rasheed (DOT)
Henry Colon (DOT)
Owen Wells (DPR)
Terrell Estes (DEP)
Mitchell Wimbish (DEP)
Gina Santucci (LPC)
Olivia Brazee (NYSOPRHP)
Sarah Kogel-Smucker (NYC Law)
Venetia Lannon (NYSDEC Region 2)
Chanin French (HDC)
Raju Mann (City Council Land Use Review)
Mark Levine (New York City Council, District 7)
Penny Ryan (District Manager, Manhattan CB 7)
Roberta Semer (Chair, Manhattan CB 7)
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