



BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-LAND USE & HOUSING

November 10, 2021

MINUTES

PHIPPS HOUSES

Mr. Matthew Washington, Vice President and Chief of Staff said that were excited to talk with you about a project, Phipps Houses and its development partner Douglaston Development we're also joined by Datnar Architects.

This project we call Madison Bridge Landing as I mentioned in cooperation between Phipps Houses and Douglaston Development as we went through the introductions a little bit ago, I'm joined by my colleague at Phipps Houses Michael Wadman and joined by our partners at Douglaston Arden Sokolow, Reia Tong and Russell Lang. So, I just wanted to go through some slides for you of the project where it is and what we are doing. A little bit of background on our team Phipps Houses is the oldest and largest non-profit developer of affordable housing in New York City we have affiliated companies that do construction management as well as, social services and we build and manage our projects. Similarly, Douglaston Development builds and manages its projects and we're happy to work together on this project. In Bronx Community District 1 Phipps and Douglaston combined for eight developments totaling 1024 housing units and approximately 107 thousand sq. ft. of community facility and open space so, a lot of experience we have in the neighborhood.

So, the site that we are talking about is located at 110 East 138th Street adjacent to the Madison Avenue Bridge next to the Major Deegan Expressway and it is right next to the Harlem River. There are two sites that will talk about tonight as you will see on the screen, parcel 7 which is a privately owned site and parcel 8 which is a city owned site. Our goal through this process is to go through a sole source designation so that we can combine parcel 7 and parcel 8 for what we think would be a great project. So just in terms of our project status we've had some initial conversations with HPD about the sole source designation and those conversations are ongoing, we certainly in the process of designing parcel 7. Some of the site constraints and some of the issues if you look at the city lot or parcel 8 it's a challenging site will see a little bit later on in the presentation where there is a significant grade change from Exterior Street which is running right along here to the actual site and so we think that combing these two

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sites, with the privately owned site we create a real opportunity to access both sites at grade for future residents it just increases safety and pedestrian access. Instead of separating it we believe that this creates the best opportunity for these sites for affordable and to create what would be a public walkway.

Just to talk a little bit about the development program based on the zoning the FAR that is in the area what we are currently proposing for Phase 1 which is right on 138th Street it's parcel 7 on the privately owned site is to build approximately 231 units of senior affordable housing 2,300 sq. ft. of retail space and space for social services this is all based on zoning and we're still in conversations with HPD and expect that we could develop a building that would reach 12 stories, and on the public owned site currently we could generate around about 253 units of family housing a mixed of units that would create opportunities for families with 5,600 sq. ft. of community facility space a residential space and about 18 stories. As you can see from this map there are a number of developments that have gone up along the waterfront, you all are very familiar with them so, we're talking about creating affordable housing for families right along the waterfront and it's two blocks away from the 4 or 5 train stop at 138th Street, and we think this is an exciting opportunity along the waterfront.

Mr. Michael Wadman, Vice President of Development said that you all are probably fairly familiar with this site, but the pictures here just give you an, up close feel for what the site is like now. So, the first one you see on the upper left is looking down East 138th Street the building on the left is on the site of where the senior building will be, and part of our plan is really to unify and make this sidewalk and street area welcoming again, slide two is looking down Exterior Street looking south it's pretty barren over there as you can tell, three, is across the street you're walking west toward the project site, four is part of the city lot the southern end of it, five, is looking north, six, looking past the Madison Bridge entry looking north towards Manhattan. So, it's a pretty challenging site, grade changes, the waterfront, it's very narrow all those things so we think we've come up with really a great plan. One thing I should just say that we're at the very, very beginning here. We're also all ears in terms of your thoughts and input.

So, this is a site plan, and you can see the two buildings one is marked family and one is marked senior. If you look at the kind of purplish dotted line by the water that shows you the shore public walkway so that will be publicly accessible as required by the waterfront zoning. So, it's pretty expansive and you also have some area that's for the residents, so you have kind of a backyard to the building and you also have this public walkway as well. So, what we're looking at here is the lowest level of the building which is actually the cellar because of that grade condition that I mentioned the bottom floor of the building will open for residents directly from the rear yard and will include the amenity and service space for the seniors and will also include

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some family units for amenities in the family building. So, this is the street grade and if you look in the lower right corner, that's the corner of 138th and Exterior that's where the central entry area would be for the retail store would be, we're hoping for a convenience store, cafe and maybe some sidewalk tables once we really change 138th Street. What you see right next to that is a portal and what that is, it's there to allow a visual corridor to see through the building to the river and to Manhattan. It's part of the residential project and the and the family building people will walk through that portal and it shows you how they would enter their building. This floor would have more service space than the senior building and then we're proposing a community facility space in the family building on Exterior and most of the units on the first floor of the family building. This will give you a little bit of an idea what the shore public walkway might look like, the examples you see at the bottom of the slide are other parts of the waterfront area and also one of them was developed by Douglaston. So that's kind of what we have in mind for the shore front with the inlet there and then the upland areas. So, this is what the building would feel like on that corner you have prominent signage for the waterfront walkway, the entrance is down at the end of the block there, you walk past the building and heading down towards the water and enter. You see that portal area that I described that's on the left providing the visual corridor and the lobby is right near to the left of the waterfront sign. Really the intention here is to really make 138th Street both functional, clean and active again, so the tree plantings on the sidewalk that kind of thing. So, this is looking from the opposite side so this is the shore public walkway where you see all of the people walking on, there's this inlet that would be setup like a seating area, and then if you're looking at the yard area where people are sitting kind of further up the hill. As I said architecturally, we're very early on so I wouldn't focus on the building very much, this just kind of shows you the feel for the public walkway and also you see the entrance on 138th. So, this is just kind of in summary I think the first piece of our program is an important one to mention again is that this entire two building almost 500 unit property we are proposing to be affordable to 80 percent of the AMI and below so tax credit level of affordability, the senior building HPD Program requires a 30 percent senior homeless set aside so that's about 60 folks in that building that we would be providing services to and then in the family building you'll have a mix of incomes again 40, 50, 60 80 percent AMI and the 15 percent homeless set aside that the city requires. Given that so much of the waterfront development has been market rate you know on that map that Matthew walked you through all but two or three of the large buildings are market rate and I think this is a great opportunity to lock up a real chunk of this waterfront to be affordable and to be affordable to the long term. Phipps has been around since 1905 we virtually never sell any of our properties, we keep them affordable as long as we own them. So, I think the fact that we were able to buy the private site and make it work for affordable housing and make this application to the city for the other site, I think it's really exciting, obviously, it will make that corner lot more esthetic.

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PROCIDA DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Mr. Ted Weinstein, Director of Bronx Planning HPD said that this is going to be an informational presentation it doesn't require a vote now and the reason is that this will require ULURP. The team will officially have to come back to the Board in the future. Just a little bit of the history so you understand the concept of this and then I'll turn it over to Procida. In 2004 we're going back a long time, at that time as we do now by issuing RFP's Request for Proposals is a way of selecting developers for a project to develop affordable housing on city owned properties. Many of you can remember that 30 years ago or so Melrose Commons was just, blocks and blocks of empty land of vacant buildings and that became an Urban Renewal Area and one by one we started financing development of affordable housing on various sites within Melrose Commons. One of the RFP's that we did at that time which offered sites all over the city not just here, offered as a cluster a group of 4 sites within Melrose Commons and the team that was selected for those 4 sites was the team of Procida, L&M, Nos Quedamos and an entity of the Architects. They were selected to build on 4 separate sites eventually it became 5 sites then it was decided that one of the sites was large enough to split into two. Of those 5 sites 4 of them built, completed and occupied, these are all buildings along the Third Avenue corridor that I'm sure many of you are familiar with. One of the sites was the one that was across from the 42nd Precinct on the south side of Third Avenue which makes it one side in District 1 and the other side in 3 and for that one many of you remember there was that abandoned railroad line that ran through the South Bronx and including that site and so the feeling of the development team was that it would be very difficult to develop upon that particular site because of the trench that runs behind the Police Precinct and then across the Street. Again, that trench became a situation with Via Verde and a situation with a number of other projects. So, they felt that they would rather hold off until something could be done about these trenches along the abandoned railroad line, that has now happened. Many of you know the areas around 156th Street that DOT has contracted to fill in underneath the cross Streets where the Street goes over the railroad line that's a bridge and so they're filling in under these bridges so that they won't be a problem anymore, that has now happened. So, we refer to this as site B2 and we've been talking to Procida who's done it from that team for the past year or two about what might work, and we feel that we can proceed and get more intensely into pre-ULURP. So, they are going to present to you tonight that project and then they'll be back of course like I said because it will require ULURP to go to the Community Board, the Borough President, and City Council. When it does come back with the ULURP the action will be disposition of city property, UDAP designation, and the Urban Renewal Plan and the height limit. Procida will explain what they're proposing at this point.

Mr. Peter Procida said that as Ted mentioned we're very early on in the process and we're here to talk about one project across two sites. The sites as Ted mentioned are B2 which is at the end of Third Avenue and Brook. This was a site that we were in front of the Board back in 2017 which went through ULURP which is 599 Courtlandt and 151st and 152nd. A little bit of background Ted mentioned a lot of this so won't spend too much time on it, Procida's been based in the Bronx since the 1970's, we're a family owned, General Contractor we focus on the construction of affordable housing mostly in the Bronx. The map on the right represents the buildings in the red are developments we worked on within the Melrose Commons Urban

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Renewal Area. Overall, we've development about 600 units of affordable housing and over 100 thousand of retail within the redevelopment area and just outside of the redevelopment area we did the bazar on 163rd Street and Washington.

As I mentioned a quick update on 599 Courtlandt due to challenges in financing small projects the process was stalled after the completion of ULURP. 599 Courtlandt is an eight-unit, project and we came before the Board in 2017 we sort of put two projects together as one, so, we're probably two or three years out from starting anything. B2 as Ted mentioned is the final phase of the cornerstone site which we're developing in partnership with Nos Quedamas whose been a good non-for-profit partner and we're looking forward, to continue to work with them. As Ted said the site stalled due to the rail lines that went right through the middle of the site and made it very challenging to develop. All, of the bridges have been filled in on Third Avenue it makes it a bit more feasible to develop this site. Right now, as you can see on the righthand side we're still very early on but what we're intending to do on the roof have an accessible terrace for the tenants with a recreation area. We're proposing about 160 units and there will be eight units on that 599 Courtlandt site and then 152 units on the B2 site. The units will range from 30 percent of AMI all the way up to 100 percent of AMI and there will be a 15 percent set aside for formerly homeless. I know a question came up previously currently for 30 percent of AMI a family of one which would be the lowest income other than the homeless units would be \$25,000 and 100 percent of AMI for a family of six which I think would be the largest three bedroom unit approximately 138 thousand and rents for 30 percent of AMI for a family of one in a studio would be \$419 dollars and then rents for 100 percent of AMI for a three bedroom unit just under \$3,000 dollars a month, those would be reduced slightly for utility allowances. I think Ted would be upset if I didn't mention that we're still under negotiation with HPD and obviously we're in the midst, of a changing Administration and the program and requirement of HPD's could change. Right now, it's preliminary where we are the AMI is below 60 percent on average so, this is what we have. In terms of the ground floor plan on Third Avenue we're planning to do about 4,000 sq. ft. of retail it's likely that this will breakup into two or three smaller stores. The residential entry will be on Brook you'll have a lobby, amenity space for the tenants including a gym, laundry room, community room there will also be a social services office. Your typical floor will have about ten units on it and then again, the roof drop terrace. That's sort of where we're at, we came here to speak with you. One of the actions that we're requesting is the removal of the height limit, currently the building would be restricted to a height of nine stories and that would limit us to 94 units if we remove the height restriction it allows us to get up to the 150 or so units. That's kind of what we've laid out and we really wanted to have a collaborate conversation and get feedback from the Community Board before we got to far in the designs to really have input from the Land Use Committee of what you guys would like to see within your community.

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SOUTH BRONX UNITE

Mr. Mychal Johnson, Co-Founder said that it's a pleasure being here because I served on this body for a, number of years. That, being said I want to now share my screen. I am the co-founder of South Bronx Unite and we're a coalition that works specifically right here in Mott Haven focusing on environmental justice, social justice and economic justice. I'm a resident a family member and have been residing here in Mott Haven for more than two decades, and served on this body for about 9 years. As you know there have been a great deal of inequities in our ability to get clean air. Here we've been trying to focus on publicly owned available vacant space that we could create pathways to better outcomes for our community for our residents who have been suffering from what has been placed here without any fault of their own.

This building here is located at 341 East 140th Street which was previously recognized as the Lincoln Recovery Center. Served as a location to establish a better quality of healthcare services they actually created an acupuncture clinic out of this space, was used to help folks recover from substance abuse. A holistic approach to health was being utilized at this center and enabled our community to fight substance abuses, with the drugs that had heavily impacted our community. As of 2011 the services that were being conducted in this property were relocated to Belvis. It's still an active program, however this building has been sitting vacant at East 140th Street, between Alexander Avenue and the dead end for 10 years. As you can see from these photos it was life giving services to the community.

Will be giving acupuncture and real services for a better life for our residents. This is an initiative from the ground up not like what you heard tonight we're going to do more housing, yes we need housing we need to fight even now against addiction. So, with the myriad of challenges facing around Port Morris with air quality as I mentioned earlier there is also a lack of public spaces to gather and to do community organizing. To bring the community together to help solve some of these problems. We as residents who live here have an expert point of view. Instead of there being more of this there is actually no public use that we have for multiple purposes, for use for multiple organizations, do organizing around youth and adults, for senior care and senior programming. So, we are looking at how this site can be that it's only 5,000 sq. ft. but we know that there is a need that needs to be met. As residents we know, we have a good idea of how important it is so we've created a process of Community Visioning Forums where we brought the community together to actually think about what can be used effectively in this 25 thousand sq. ft. facility that's located in Mott Haven to bring forth healthier outcomes of other needs besides housing that we have in the community. That we can together decide how to best achieve these goals. So, through Community Visioning we determined there's a serious need for health because 1 in 4 children has asthma, we have the highest obesity and diabetes rates our asthma hospital rate is 8 times the national average. We have power plants

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on our peninsular, highways all around us and one of the largest maritime industrial areas in the city where they put all industry because they don't want it anywhere else. They planted that in our community making our children sick. What we learned from institutions like Columbia University Public Health and other institutions we've done a deep dive into health effects in our community and education that there is a direct link to the illness of our children from the air they breathe that's why we have the poorest performing school district which is in Mott Haven and Port Morris. This is an opportunity for us as a community to come together to determine the best way forward with health, education and also the arts. We're a community that's rich in culture we help to create to two music genres Hip Hop and Salsa and graffiti artists and there's no place for that to be exhibited our youth who are in desperate need for that to be in their curriculum. So, we came up this Vision Session and came up with the HEART Center and we were able to get funding from the New York Foundation. The City of New York will not be looking at our community not having a plan, so we went and did the deep dive in to bring in Architects. Program consultants and went into this building determining the existing condition it was left vacant without heat with running water, so the pipes froze under these conditions we went into this building about 3 year ago, it's gotten significantly worse because there is no heat in the property. It's idle there was 6 feet of water in the basement they had to pump out, it took one truck to bring the water level down two inches, there was just that much water in the basement. This building has been left to rot we know what happens to properties in our community like the castle on the Concourse. We had Architects and Engineers in here to give us a feasibility of what it would cost. So, with the Architect we hired as consultant we did a deep dive into how, can we make this project work, we've had even Community Base organizations being displaced.

So, this HEART Center can be a place where local organizations can do the work around the three pillars of health, education and the arts. We need to do the work because it necessary for us to have a healthier outcome and a better quality of life. So, if you get a blowup of what's here, you'll see what's in the HEART Center the building is located just East of Alexander Avenue before you get to the Mott Haven projects, but it's right adjacent to PS49, it's right down the Street from the 40th Precinct Police Department. This is in a unique location because it's right where I kids are going to school at now, we can bring them into this structure to offset the health disparities, the educational needs that our children need to bring them within the arts something that is needed to show them our culture. This is a rendering of the building we had done. We saw that we could do an auditorium a performance space for our youth for the arts and then space for the local CBO's, also space for an anchor tenant that would pay two thirds of the operation costs for this structure so we can keep it affordable for the people that are already doing the work in the South Bronx. So, the city has already recognized the importance of this building as a community center. It took a lot of work to recognize us they wanted to do housing again, they want to put housing on top of this building or knock it down

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and put housing. But we know that we have to have somewhere where our local grassroots organizations can continue to do their good work. So, there will be an RFP from EDC when the new Administration comes into play. We need the Community Board input and there is a link where you can actually give us input on what you think in terms of what kind of organizations should be in there, what type of services should be provided. We know we can't solve all of the problems, but we definitely have to give it a try and it can't be only housing as the answer when we know we need education and we definitely have to embrace our culture to make sure that we put our stake in the ground for our future. So, reach out to me at Mychal Johnson at South Bronx Unite. We need your help we need this project to work, and we know we have to do planning from grassroots up.

Questions and Answers

NEW YORK CITY HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Lyna Saad, Senior Planner said that, so we actually came to the Board a couple of months ago about 351 Powers Avenue, on Powers Avenue just south of St. Mary's Park. We'd like to do an overview and then get your input as to what you'd like to see on the site. So, again this site is on 351 Powers a portion of lot 1 on block 2571 the size is approximately 4 basketball courts. It's estimated that we can get 35 to 80 affordable housing units on the site. Currently it's being used for parking, PS65 is just to the south of it, there's also Diego Beekman buildings that we're looking at in this picture behind it. Diego Beekman had done a Neighborhood Study a couple of years ago and also identified this site as a priority for housing in their study and across the Street there's a family shelter and there's a planned supportive housing building as well. So, again this is just an overview of the location, this is the site we're talking about, this is the PS65 playground. We're currently in the process of getting community input and we're doing this in various ways so one is through a survey which I'll share the link for, we also conducted a community workshop the other evening and would like to take this time with you all to actually get some input for the program of the site as well as what income levels we should target. If it's okay with you if we could have a conversation next it would be helpful for us. Right now, we're in a pre-RFP stage so before actually releasing a Request for Proposal we want to get as much community input as possible, we thought we would just take a few minutes with you all to just hear your thoughts. We have some options on how to prioritize the population, I'm assuming that everyone here is sort of familiar with the HPD Programs. We could regulate our building so that it targets a specific population there's low-income seniors, households and mixed-use buildings, people with disabilities, formerly homeless individuals and families.

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The Chairperson Mr. Freddy Perez, Jr. asked if they could send to Board the link for suggestions and comments related to the project so that it could be given out to all the Board Members. That he was now opening up the floor for suggestions of what the committee members would like to see built at this site.

Committee Member Josephine Fernandez-Byrne said my suggestion would be if housing is to come to this area, it's a real tricky situation. In that area because you have Diego Beekman, you have the supposed jail coming a block or two away so it's kind of hard to figure more housing in that area it's already an extremely congested area with many problems of its own which are not being taken care of by the Police Department so I'm not quite sure that more housing is the answer. So, I'm not going to choose one or the other because I don't think we need more housing.

The Chairperson Mr. Freddy Perez, Jr. said thank you Ms. Byrne. The good thing is that he's going to send us the link and so will have a little time to really think hard about what we need on the site, and it's not just the committee we're going to make sure that the rest of the Board gets it.

The Chairperson called for motion to adjourn.
Motion made to adjourn. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed.

MEETING ADJOURNED