



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

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October 6, 2004/Calendar No. 10

C 040442 HAX

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**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD):

- 1) pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:
  - a) the designation of property located at 863 Melrose Avenue and 383, 387 East 160th Street, part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2407, Lots 23, 27 and 28), as an Urban Development Action Area; and
  - b) an Urban Development Action Area project for such area; and
- 2) pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the disposition of such property, to a developer selected by HPD;

to facilitate development of an eight-story building tentatively known as Plazoleta Hall, with approximately 54 units for homeless families and young adults aging out of foster care, to be developed under the HPD Supportive Housing Program, Borough of The Bronx, Community District 3.

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The application was filed by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) on May 5, 2004.

Approval of three separate matters is required:

1. The designation of property located at 863 Melrose Avenue and 383, 387 East 160th Street, part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2407, Lots 23, 27 and 28), as an Urban Development Action Area; and
2. An Urban Development Action Area Project for such property; and
3. The disposition of such property to a developer selected by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

Approval of this application would facilitate the construction of an eight-story residential building with a total of 55 units: 54 units for homeless families and young adults aging out of foster care and one unit for the superintendent. The proposed project is tentatively known as Plazoleta Hall.

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development states in its application that:

The Disposition Area consists of underutilized vacant lots and a vacant building which tend to impair or arrest the sound development of the surrounding community, with or without tangible physical blight. Incentives are needed in order to induce the correction of these substandard, insanitary, and blighting conditions. The project activities would protect and promote health and safety and would promote sound growth and development. The Disposition Area is therefore eligible to be an Urban Development Action Area and the proposed project is therefore eligible to be an Urban Development Action Area Project pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law.

## **BACKGROUND**

Tentatively known as Plazoleta Hall, this proposed eight-story building for low-income families is located in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area. The Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan was adopted by the City Council on June 16, 1994 (C940226HUX). The plan has been facilitating the revitalization of a 34 block area with new residential construction and the rehabilitation of vacant buildings. In addition, the plan includes supportive commercial and community facility uses dispersed along the major avenues and incorporates a system of small parks and public open spaces.

The proposed project site, located on part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area, is an “L” shaped parcel located at the intersection of Melrose Avenue and East 160<sup>th</sup> Street. The 10,445 square foot site consists of three vacant, city-owned parcels. The project site is split between two zoning districts, an R8 zoning district with a C1-4 commercial overlay mapped to a depth of 100 feet from Melrose Avenue, and an R7-2 zoning district with a C1-4 commercial overlay. The UDAAP designation and disposition of this site will facilitate the construction of a new eight-story elevator building with 54 units of rental housing for homeless families referred by the

Department of Homeless Services and young adults aging out of foster care referred by the Administration for Children's Services, plus one unit for a superintendent. The project would include a community room for meetings, a laundry room, offices for on-site social services and an approximately 2,300 square feet landscaped courtyard. The project is to be constructed and developed under the HPD Supportive Housing Program.

A vacant city-owned six-story residential building with ground floor commercial space is immediately south of the site. A gas/service station is immediately north of the site. The remainder of the block consists of residential buildings with ground floor commercial uses, Melrose Commons URA Sites 43 and 46 and two commercial uses. The surrounding area is primarily residential in character with the recently constructed New York City Housing Partnership homes along East 158th and East 159th streets and Melrose Avenue (Sites 19 and 21). Currently under construction is Villa Hermosa (Site 33), an 80 unit housing development for the elderly, located across from the project site on East 160th Street. Retail and service establishments are found along Melrose Avenue, East 161st Street and Third Avenue. The 42nd Police Precinct is located on Third Avenue and East 159th Street, two blocks east of project site.

The site is accessible by several bus lines; the Bx41 which runs along Melrose and Webster avenues, the Bx2 that runs along Melrose Avenue and the Grand Concourse and the Bx 15, Bx21 and Bx55 which runs along Third Avenue, two blocks east of the subject site. The Metro-North commuter rail Melrose station is located on East 161<sup>st</sup> Street and Park Avenue, one block west of project site.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 040442 HAX) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq. and the New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 88-087X. The co-lead agencies were the Departments of City Planning (DCP) and Environmental Protection (DEP).`

It was determined that this application would not result in environmental impacts that would be substantially different from or greater than those described in the 1994 FEIS for the Melrose Commons URA project. In a letter dated March 19, 1998, it was determined that the proposed changes do not alter the conclusions of the earlier review and that therefore the Notice of Completion issued on April 15, 1994 remains in effect.

### **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 040442 HAX) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on May 24, 2004, and was duly referred to Community Board 3 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

#### **Community Board Public Hearing**

Community Board 3 held a public hearing on this application on July 20, 2004, and on that date, by a vote of 7 to 0, the Executive Board adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application with the following conditions:

- a) Proposed developer, The Lantern Group, has agreed to modify the project name from “Plazoleta Hall” to “Jasper Hall”.
- b) Proposed developer agrees to ensure the implementation of baiting, rat prevention and removal measures in the vicinity of the project site before and during construction.
- c) Proposed developer and NYC Dept. of HPD has assure the board that there is evidence of no adverse impact on the environment from the project, preferably in the form of final draft of the Environmental Impact Statement associated with this site and approval by HPD.

This recommendation is non-complying since it was not adopted by a quorum of the Community Board.

#### **Borough President Recommendation**

This application (C 040442 HAX) was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving the application on July 21, 2004.

### **City Planning Commission Public Hearing**

On August 25, 2004 (Calendar No. 1 ), the City Planning Commission scheduled September 8, 2004 for a public hearing on this application (C 040442 HAX). The hearing was duly held on September 8, 2004 (Calendar No. 20). There was one speaker, representing the developer who spoke in favor of the application. There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

### **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that the application for UDAAP designation, project approval and disposition of city-owned property located at 863 Melrose Avenue and 383, 387 East 160th Street, part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2407, Lots 23, 27 and 28) to facilitate the construction of an eight-story elevator building with 54 units for homeless families and young adults aging out of foster care plus one unit for a superintendent is appropriate.

The application would facilitate the development of three vacant city-owned parcels, totaling 10,445 square feet in area that has had a blighting influence on this area for a number of years and also facilitate implementation of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan.

The project site is located partially in an R8 zoning district with a C1-4 commercial overlay and partially in an R7-2 zoning district with a C1-4 commercial overlay. The Commission notes that this project is consistent with the goals set forth in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan to develop new housing on the subject site. The Commission believes that the proposed project offers an opportunity to address the need for supportive housing for homeless youth and families and will contribute to the revitalization of the area.

### **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, that the City Planning Commission finds that the proposed disposition of city-owned property located at 863 Melrose Avenue and 383, 387 East 160th Street, part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2407, Lots 23, 27 and 28), conforms to the objectives and provisions of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan (C 940226 HUX) dated

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June 16, 1994.

**RESOLVED**, that having considered the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), for which a Notice of Completion was issued on April 15, 1994, with respect to this application (CEQR No.88-087X), the City Planning Commission finds that the requirements of the New York State Environment Quality Review Act and regulations have been met and that, consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations:

1. From among the reasonable alternatives thereto, the actions to be approved are ones which minimizes or avoids adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable; and
2. The adverse environmental impacts revealed in the environmental impact statement will be minimized or avoided to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating as conditions to be approval those mitigative measures that were identified as practicable.

The report of the City Planning Commission, together with the FEIS, constitutes the written statement of facts, and of social, economic and others factors and standards; that form the basis of the decision, pursuant to Section 617.11(d) of the SEQRA regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has recommended the designation of 863 Melrose Avenue and 383, 387 East 160th Street, part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2407, Lots 23, 27 and 28), in Community District 3, Borough of The Bronx, as an Urban Development Action Area; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has also recommended the approval of an Urban Development Action Area Project for such property; therefore, be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the City Planning Commission, after due consideration of the appropriateness of the actions, certifies its unqualified approval of the following matters pursuant to the Urban

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Development Action Area Act:

- a) the designation of 863 Melrose Avenue and 383, 387 East 160th Street, part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2407, Lots 23, 27 and 28), as an Urban Development Action Area; and
- b) an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and the City Planning Commission recommends that the New York City Council finds that:
  - a. The present status of the area tends to impair or arrest the sound development of the municipality;
  - b. The financial aid in the form of tax incentives to be provided by the municipality pursuant to Section 696 of the Urban Development Action Area Act is necessary to enable the project to be undertaken; and
  - c. The project is consistent with the policy and purposes stated in Section 691 of the Urban Development Action Area Act; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and the consideration described in this report, the application of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development for the disposition of city-owned property located on part of Site 44 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area at 863 Melrose Avenue and 383, 387 East 160th Street, (Block 2407, Lots 23, 27 and 28), Community District 1, Borough of The Bronx, to a developer to be selected by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, is approved (C 040442 HAX).

The above resolution (C 040442 HAX), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on October 4, 2004 (Calendar No. 10), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

**AMANDA M. BURDEN**, AICP, Chair

**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES**, Esq., Vice Chair

**ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA**, **IRWIN G. CANTOR**, P.E., **ANGELA M. CAVALUZZI**, R.A.,

**RICHARD W. EADDY**, **JANE D. GOL**, **CHRISTOPHER KUI**, **JOHN MEROLO**,

**DOLLY WILLIAMS**, Commissioners