



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 13, 2005 / Calendar No. 10

C 050311 HAX

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 1345 Shakespeare Avenue (Block 2520, Lot 53); 1407, 1401, 1397, 1391, 1404, 1418, 1426, 1430 and 1450 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35-38, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189) 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 1345 Shakespeare Avenue (Block 2520, Lot 53); 1407, 1404, 1418, 1426, 1430 and 1450 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189), to a developer selected by HPD;

to facilitate the development of four buildings, tentatively known as Highbridge Apartments, with approximately 315 residential units for low income families, Community District 4, Borough of the Bronx.

Approval of three separate matters is required:

1. the designation of property located 1345 Shakespeare Avenue (Block 2520, Lot 53); 1407, 1401, 1397, 1391, 1404, 1418, 1426, 1430 and 1450 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35-38, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
2. an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
3. the disposition of 1345 Shakespeare Avenue (Block 2520, Lot 53); 1407, 1404, 1418, 1426, 1430 and 1450 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189), to a developer selected by HPD.

The application for the Urban Development Actions Area designation and project approval and disposition of city-owned property was submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) on February 23, 2005.

Approval of this application would facilitate the development of four buildings, tentatively known as Highbridge Apartments, with approximately 315 residential units for low income

families.

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

The Project Area consists of underutilized vacant properties and underutilized buildings 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 UDAAP 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.

RELATED ACTION

In addition to approval of the UDAAP designation and disposition of City-owned property which is the subject of this report, implementation of the proposal also requires action by the City Planning Commission on the following application which is being considered concurrently with this application:

C 050318 PQX Acquisition of property located at 1407-1450 Jessup Avenue
(Block 2872, lots 35, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189)

BACKGROUND

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is seeking an Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP) designation and project approval for four sites located at 1345 Shakespeare Avenue, 1391-1407 and 1401, 1430 and 1450 Jessup Avenue (Block 2520, lot 53 [site 1]; Block 2872, lots 35, 37, 38 [site 2]; Block 2872, lots 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 [site 3]; Block 2872, lot 189 [site 4]). The project sites are located in the Highbridge neighborhood within Community District 4 and are zoned R7-1 with a portion of site 1 located in a C1-2 commercial overlay.

Portions of site 2, Block 2871, lots 36, 37 and 38, are privately owned and subject only to UDAAP designation and project approval. Site 1, Block 2520 Lot 53, is a city-owned site and subject to a disposition. Portions of site 2 and all of sites 3 and 4, Block 2872 lots 35, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189, are subject to acquisition, under the related action (C050318 PQX) and disposition. These sites were previously disposed of and programmed for development under HPD's New Foundation program. These sites are being acquired and disposed of through these actions to allow for the development of more units of housing than would be possible under the New Foundation program.

The proposed project, tentatively known as Highbridge Apartments consists of four residential apartment buildings ranging in height from six to eight stories, with approximately 315 units. The units will be affordable to families making up to 60% of the Area Median Income.

Each building will be developed pursuant to Quality Housing regulations and will provide community rooms, laundry facilities, street trees and open space for tenant use. 1345 Shakespeare Avenue will be a six-story building with approximately 44 residential units. 1391-1407 Jesup Avenue will be a seven-story building with approximately 84 residential units. 1404-1430 Jesup Avenue will be an eight-story building with approximately 142 residential units and 22 accessory parking spaces, which will be accessible from Jesup Avenue. 1450 Jesup Avenue will be an eight-story building with approximately 45 residential units.

The sites are currently vacant except for two unoccupied detached single-family homes, owned by the sponsor, located at 1391 and 1397 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, lots 37 and 38). These structures will be demolished by the sponsor. Site 1 (Block 2520, Lot 53) is an abandoned garden, which has not been in use since 2003. Other uses on the block include five and six-story

apartment buildings, attached and semi-detached one and two-family homes, mixed commercial-residential buildings and neighborhood commercial uses. The surrounding area consists of five and six-story apartment buildings, neighborhood retail uses along Edward L. Grant Highway and a light manufacturing area along Cromwell Avenue, to the east of the project sites.

The area is served by public transportation, including the Bx35, which runs along Edward L. Grant Highway and the Bx11, which runs along W. 17th Street. Both buses connect to the #4 train on Jerome Avenue and cross the Washington Bridge into Manhattan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 050311 HAX) in conjunction with the related action (C 050318 PQX), 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 City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The lead agency is the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

After a study of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on February 1, 2005.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 050311 HAX), in conjunction with the related action (C 050318 PQX), was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on February 28, 2005, and was duly referred to Bronx Community Board 4 and the Bronx Borough President, in accordance with

Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 4 held a public hearing on this application on April 26, 2005, and on that date, by a vote of 17 to 0 with 2 abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

Borough President Recommendation

This application was considered by the Bronx Borough who issued a recommendation approving the application on May 17, 2005

with the following conditions:

1. Wherever possible, old growth trees at 1391-1407 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35-38) should be preserved.
2. I encourage façade lighting designed to enhance security, but installed so as not to intrude on neighboring residences.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On May 25, 2005 (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled June 8, 2005 for a public hearing on this application (C 050311 HAX). The hearing was duly held on June 8, 2005 (Calendar No. 13) in conjunction with the hearing on the related action (C 050318 PQX). The project's sponsor and architect were present to answer questions from the Commission.

There were no other speakers on the application and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the application for UDAAP designation and project approval and,

the disposition of city-owned property are appropriate.

This application, in conjunction with the related application for the acquisition of property (C 050318 PQX), would facilitate the development of four buildings with approximately 315 residential units affordable to families making up to 60% of the area median income. The properties proposed for acquisition were previously disposed of and programmed for development under HPD's New Foundations Program. Their inclusion in this proposal will allow more units of housing to be built within the Highbridge community. The Commission believes that the design of the building will enhance the built character of the area.

The return of these properties to productive use would eliminate their blighting influence on the neighborhood and would enable these city-owned properties to be developed with uses that would serve the needs of Community District 4 and the City of New York.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has recommended the designation of property located 1345 Shakespeare Avenue (Block 2520, Lot 53); 1407, 1401, 1397, 1391, 1404, 1418, 1426, 1430 and 1450 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35-38, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189) 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 Development Action Area Act;

- c. the designation of property located 1345 Shakespeare Avenue (Block 2520, Lot 53); 1407, 1401, 1397, 1391, 1404, 1418, 1426, 1430 and 1450 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35-38, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
- d. an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and

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 if any, to be provided by the municipality pursuant to Section 696 of Article 16 of the General Municipal Law is necessary to enable the project to be undertaken; and
- c. The policy is consistent with the policy and purposes stated in Section 691 of Article 16 of the General Municipal Law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, 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 1345 Shakespeare Avenue (Block 2520, Lot 53); 1404, 1418, 1426, 1430 and 1450 Jesup Avenue (Block 2872, Lots 35, 58, 60, 62, 66, 68 and 189), Community District 4 Borough of the Bronx, to a developer selected by HPD, is approved.

The above resolution (C 050311 HAX), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on July 13, 2005 (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 Chairman
RICHARD W. EADDY, **JANE D. GOL**, **LISA A. GOMEZ**, **CHRISTOPHER KUI**,
JOHN MEROLO, **KAREN A. PHILLIPS**, **DOLLY WILLIAMS**, Commissioners

IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E., Commissioner **RECUSED**