



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

September 8, 2004/Calendar No. 24

C 040521 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 at 3104, 3106 and 3110 Park Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 2-4), 308, 314 and 320 East 159th Street (Block 2418, Lots 10, 12 and 14), 821 and 817 Courtlandt Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 16 and 18), 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 317 and 321 East 158th Street (Block 2418, Lots 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-34), Site 22 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area, 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 a five-story building, tentatively known as Courtlandt Avenue Apartments, with approximately 167 units of housing for low-income families and one unit for a superintendent, to be developed under HPD's Cornerstone Program, Borough of The Bronx, Community District 1.

The application was filed by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) on June 11, 2004.

Approval of three separate matters is required:

1. The designation of 3104, 3106 and 3110 Park Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 2-4), 308, 314 and 320 East 159th Street (Block 2418, Lots 10, 12 and 14), 821 and 817 Courtlandt Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 16 and 18), 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 317 and 321 East 158th Street (Block 2418, Lots 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-34), Site 22 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area in the Borough of The Bronx, as an Urban Development Action Area;
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 a five-story residential building with a total of 168 units: 167 units of rental housing for low-income families and one unit for a superintendent. The proposed project is tentatively known as Courtlandt Avenue Apartments.

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

The Disposition Area consists of underutilized vacant lots and vacant 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 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 Courtlandt Avenue Apartments, this proposed five-story housing 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 rehabilitation of vacant buildings. In addition, the plan includes supportive commercial and community facility uses distributed along the major avenues and incorporates a system of small parks and public open spaces.

The proposed project site is located on Site 22 in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area. The site a “through” lot with frontage on East 158th and 159th streets, Park and Courtlandt avenues is approximately 55,980 square feet in area. The project site consists of 16 city-owned parcels, three lots are used for community open space, two are vacant buildings and the remaining parcels are

vacant. The project site is located within an R7-2 zoning district. This application will facilitate the construction of new a five-story elevator building with 167 units of rental housing for low income families and one unit for a superintendent. The project would include community rooms for meetings and laundry rooms. In addition, an accessory parking garage with 27 spaces would be provided at the center of the site with access from East 158th Street. Landscaped interior court yards totaling approximately 17,600 square feet in area would also be provided between the two residential segments flanking the parking garage. This project is funded under HPD Cornerstone's Program.

The project site is abutted by residential uses including 2-3 family houses and 5-story apartment buildings with ground floor commercial uses. In addition, there are two city-owned vacant lots; one located along Courtlandt Avenue and the other along Park Avenue. The area surrounding the project site is primarily residential in character, including (NYCHA) Andrew Jackson Houses with 865 units at East 158th Street and the Morrisania Air Rights housing project with 842 units at Park Avenue. A fire station and Melrose Commons URA Site 38 with seven vacant city-owned lots are located across from the project site along East 159th Street. In addition, the recently constructed New York City Housing Partnership Homes project (Site 21) with 60 units is located on Courtlandt Avenue. Retail and service establishments are found along Third Avenue, East 161st Street and along Melrose Avenue. P.S. 29 is located south of the project site at Courtlandt Avenue and East 156th Street.

The site is accessible by several bus lines including the Bx41, the Bx2, the Bx 32 and the Bx 6 which run within two blocks of the site. The Metro North Railroad's Melrose station is located on East 161st Street and Park Avenue, two blocks of project site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 040521 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 040521 HAX) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on June 21, 2004, and was duly referred to Community Board 1 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 1 held a public hearing on this application on June 24, 2004, and on that date, by a vote of 18 to 2 with 1 abstention, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 040521 HAX) was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving this application on August 3, 2004.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On July 28, 2004 (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled August 11, 2004, for a public hearing on this application (C 040521 HAX). The hearing was duly held on August 11, 2004 (Calendar No. 6). There were two speakers who spoke in favor and none opposed to the application. The speakers included a representative from HPD and a representative of the developer. There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the application for the UDAAP area designation and project approval and disposition of city-owned property located at 3104, 3106 and 3110 Park Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 2-4), 308, 314 and 320 East 159th Street (Block 2418, Lots 10, 12 and 14), 821 and 817 Courtlandt Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 16 and 18), 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 317 and 321 East 158th Street (Block 2418, Lots 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-34), Site 22 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area to facilitate the construction of five-story elevator buildings with 167 units of rental housing for low income families plus one unit for a superintendent is appropriate.

The project would facilitate the development of 16 city-owned parcels, totaling 55,980 square feet in area that has had a blighting influence on this area for a number of years and would further facilitate implementation of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan.

The project site is located in an R7-2 zoning district and is consistent with the goals set forth in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan (Site 22) to develop new housing on the subject site. The Commission believes that the proposed project offers an opportunity to address the need for affordable housing for low income 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 3104, 3106 and 3110 Park Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 2-4), 308, 314 and 320 East 159th Street (Block 2418, Lots 10, 12 and 14), 821 and 817 Courtlandt Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 16 and 18), 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 317 and 321 East 158th Street (Block 2418, Lots 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-34), Site 22 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area, conforms to the objectives and provisions of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan (C 940226 HUX) dated 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, 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 3104, 3106 and 3110 Park Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 2-4), 308, 314 and 320 East 159th Street (Block 2418, Lots 10, 12 and 14), 821 and 817 Courtlandt Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 16 and 18), 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 317 and 321 East 158th Street (Block 2418, Lots 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-34), Site 22 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area, in Community District 1, 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 Development Action Area Act:

- a) the designation of the 3104, 3106 and 3110 Park Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 2-4), 308, 314 and 320 East 159th Street (Block 2418, Lots 10, 12 and 14), 821 and 817 Courtlandt Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 16 and 18), 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 317 and 321 East 158th Street (Block 2418, Lots 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-34), Site 22 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area 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 at 3104, 3106 and 3110 Park Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 2-4), 308, 314 and 320 East 159th Street (Block 2418, Lots 10, 12 and 14), 821 and 817 Courtlandt Avenue (Block 2418, Lots 16 and 18), 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 317 and 321 East 158th Street (Block 2418, Lots 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-34), Site 22 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area, Community District 1, Borough of The Bronx, to a developer to be selected by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, is approved (C 040521 HAX).

The above resolution (C 040521 HAX), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on September 8, 2004 (Calendar No. 24), 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

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