



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

April 27, 2005/Calendar No. 5

C 050214 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 3044, 3046, 3048, 3049, 3050, 3051, 3053, 3054, 3057 and 3058 Third Avenue; 491, 493 and 499 East 156th Street; 741, 745 and 749 Brook Avenue; and 829, 831, 833, 837-39 and 841 Washington Avenue, Site 1, p/o Site 3 and Site 28 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23- 24); Block 2378, Lots, 62, and 64-66; Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60), 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 on three sites, tentatively known as Melrose Commons Cornerstone Sites 14 A, C and D, with approximately 232 units of housing and commercial space, to be developed under HPD's Cornerstone Program, Borough of the Bronx, Community Districts 1 and 3.

Approval of three separate matters is required:

1. The designation of property located at 3044, 3046, 3048, 3049, 3050, 3051, 3053, 3054, 3057 and 3058 Third Avenue; 491, 493 and 499 East 156th Street; 741, 745 and 749 Brook Avenue; and 829, 831, 833, 837-39 and 841 Washington Avenue, Site 1, p/o Site 3 and Site 28 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 - 24); Block 2378, Lots, 62, and 64-66; Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60), 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.

The application was filed by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) on December 9, 2004.

Approval of this application would facilitate construction on three sites in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Sites 1, 28 and a portion of 3), tentatively known as Melrose Commons Cornerstone Sites 14 A, C and D. These developments would generate 232 units of housing primarily targeted towards low and middle income families. In addition, 33,100 square feet of commercial space and 19,550 square feet of open space would also be created. The proposed project would be developed through HPD's Cornerstone Program utilizing the Quality Housing Program and be conveyed to a developer selected by HPD.

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

The proposed development is located in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (URA). 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 distributed along the major avenues and incorporates a system of small parks and public open spaces.

Melrose Commons URA Site 1 - 3044-3058 Third Avenue, 741-749 Brook Avenue and 491-499 East 156th Street (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 24) within Community District 1.

This project site is located on the block bounded by East 156th and East 157th streets, Brook and Third avenues. The site, 32,507 square feet in area, consists of twelve vacant city-owned parcels, and is partially zoned R8 with a C1-4 commercial overlay to a depth of 100 feet from Third Avenue with the remainder of the site zoned R7-2. The proposed project consists of 6, three-family townhouses facing Brook Avenue and East 156th Street, and 2, two-family townhouses with approximately 3,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space facing Third Avenue. In addition, the project includes a 61 unit, 9-story apartment building with approximately 5,200 square feet of retail space facing Third Avenue. In the rear of the building, a green lawn and patio space, measuring approximately 4,480 square feet, is proposed. All together, Site 1 is proposed to be developed with 83 residential units, 8,200 square feet of commercial space and 11,430 square feet

of private open space.

Other uses on the block include, a 5-story residential building with ground floor commercial use, a vacant 1-story commercial building, a 3-story commercial building undergoing renovation and an occupied 5-story residential building. Flynn Playground is located to the north of the subject site across East 158th Street.

Site 3 - 3049-3057 Third Avenue (Block 2378, Lots 62, 64-66) within Community District 1.

This site is located on the block bounded by East 156th and East 157th streets, and Elton and Third avenues. The site, 12,706 square feet in area, consists of four vacant city-owned parcels. It is partially zoned R8 with a C1-4 commercial overlay to a depth of 100 feet from Third Avenue with the remainder of the site zoned R7-2. The proposed development consists of a 58 unit, 9-story apartment building with approximately 6,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space facing Third Avenue. In the rear of the building, an outdoor courtyard with patio space and play area, measuring approximately 5,320 square feet, is proposed.

Abutting the project site along Third Avenue are a 4-story residential building with ground floor commercial uses to the south, and several commercial buildings and a house of worship to the north at East 158th Street. The remainder of the block includes the balance of Melrose Commons URA Site 3 which contains Plaza los Angeles, a development of eight, 3-family townhouses. A house of worship is located at the intersection of Elton Avenue and East 156th Street.

Site 28 - 829-841 Washington Avenue (Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60) within Community District 3.

This site is located on the block bounded by East 159th and East 160th streets, and Elton and Washington avenues. The site, is city owned, 12,706 square feet in area, and consists of four vacant parcels and one which contains a vacant one-story commercial building that is to be demolished after disposition. The site is partially zoned R8 with a C1-4 commercial overlay to a depth of 100 feet from Washington Avenue with the remainder of the site zoned R7-2. The proposed development consists of a 91 unit, 8-story building with approximately 18,900 square feet of ground floor commercial space facing Washington Avenue. A 23 space parking garage will be located at rear of the building with access provided from East 160th Street. A 2,800 square foot outdoor courtyard and play area adjacent to the laundry and community rooms would also be provided in the second floor of the building.

Three, 5-story apartment buildings, four 2-family townhouses, a parking lot and a community garden occupy the remainder of the block. Intermediate School Pyramid House is located to the north of the project site, across East 160th Street and the 42nd Police Precinct Station House is located to the east across Washington Avenue.

The area surrounding all three project sites is primarily residential in character with recently constructed subsidized housing including: Puerta de Vitalidad with 60 units and 7,000 square feet of ground floor retail on Third Avenue and East 158th Street; Parkview Commons with 110 units

of housing and 7,000 square feet of retail on Elton Avenue and 161st Street; and Melrose Court with 200 units is located on Brook Avenue and East 156th Street. St. Peter and Paul Church, school and rectory are located at Third Avenue and East 159th Street. Retail and service establishments are found along Third Avenue and along East 161st Street.

The project sites are accessible by the following 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 traverse Third Avenue.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 050214 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 050214 HAX) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on December 20, 2004, and was duly referred to Community Board 1 and 3 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearings

Community Board 1 held a public hearing on this application on February 24, 2005, and on that date, by a vote of 16 to 0 with 0 abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

Community Board 3 held a public hearing on this application on February 8, 2005, and on that date, by a vote of 20 to 2 with 2 abstention, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

Borough Board Recommendation

The Bronx Borough Board did not submit a recommendation on this application.

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 050214 HAX) was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving this application on March 24, 2005.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On March 16, 2005 (Calendar No. 2), the City Planning Commission scheduled March 30, 2005, for a public hearing on this application (C 050214 HAX). The hearing was duly held on March 30, 2005 (Calendar No. 19). There were three speakers who spoke in favor and none opposed to the application. The speakers included the project architect, a local property owner and a representative from HPD.

The project architect testified on behalf of the project and was present to answer questions from the Commission. A local property owner spoke in favor of the project. A representative of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development was present to answer questions.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the application for the UDAAP area designation, project approval and disposition of city-owned property located at 3044, 3046, 3048, 3049, 3050, 3051, 3053, 3054, 3057 and 3058 Third Avenue; 491, 493 and 499 East 156th Street; 741, 745 and 749 Brook Avenue; and 829, 831, 833, 837-39 and 841 Washington Avenue, Site 1, p/o Site 3 and Site 28 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21- 24); Block 2378, Lots, 62, and 64-66; Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60) is appropriate. Jointly, these developments would generate 232 units of housing primarily targeted towards low and middle income families. In addition, 33,100 square feet of commercial space, 19,550 square feet of open

space and 23 parking spaces would also be provided. As proposed, all three development sites would be built under the Quality Housing program. The proposed project would be developed through HPD's Cornerstone Program and conveyed to a developer selected by HPD.

The project would facilitate the development of 21 city-owned parcels, totaling 66,603 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 sites are located in an R8/C1-4 and R7-2 zoning district and are consistent with the goals set forth in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan (Sites 1, 28 and a portion of 3) to develop new housing and retail on the subject sites. The Commission believes that the proposed project offers an opportunity to address the need for affordable housing for low and middle 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 3044, 3046, 3048, 3049, 3050, 3051, 3053, 3054, 3057 and 3058 Third Avenue; 491, 493 and 499 East 156th Street; 741, 745 and 749 Brook Avenue; and 829, 831, 833, 837-39 and 841 Washington Avenue, Site 1, p/o Site 3 and Site 28 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 - 24); Block 2378, Lots, 62, and 64-66; Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60), 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 FEIS will be minimized or avoided to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating as conditions to the 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 city-owned property located at 3044, 3046, 3048, 3049, 3050, 3051, 3053, 3054, 3057 and 3058 Third Avenue; 491, 493 and 499 East 156th Street; 741, 745 and 749 Brook Avenue; and 829, 831, 833, 837-39 and 841 Washington Avenue, Site 1, p/o Site 3 and Site 28 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 - 24); Block 2378,

Lots, 62, and 64-66; Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60), in Community Districts 1 and 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 Development Action Area Act:

- a) the designation of city-owned property located at 3044, 3046, 3048, 3049, 3050, 3051, 3053, 3054, 3057 and 3058 Third Avenue; 491, 493 and 499 East 156th Street; 741, 745 and 749 Brook Avenue; and 829, 831, 833, 837-39 and 841 Washington Avenue, Site 1, p/o Site 3 and Site 28 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 - 24); Block 2378, Lots, 62, and 64-66; Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60) 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 3044, 3046, 3048, 3049, 3050, 3051, 3053, 3054, 3057 and 3058 Third Avenue; 491, 493 and 499 East 156th Street; 741, 745 and 749 Brook Avenue; and 829, 831, 833, 837-39 and 841 Washington Avenue, Site 1, p/o Site 3 and Site 28 within the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (Block 2364, Lots 2-5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 - 24); Block 2378, Lots, 62, and 64-66; Block 2381, Lots 52, 56 and 58-60), Community District 1 and 3, Borough of The Bronx, to a developer to be selected by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, is approved (C 050214 HAX).

The above resolution (C 050214 HAX), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on April 27, 2005 (Calendar No. 5), 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
IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E., **ANGELA M. CAVALUZZI**, R.A., **ALFRED C. CERULLO, III**,
CHRISTOPHER KUI, **JOHN MEROLO**, **KAREN A. PHILLIPS**, **DOLLY WILLIAMS**,
Commissioners

RICHARD W. EADDY, **LISA A. GOMEZ**, Commissioners, recused