



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

May 25, 2005/Calendar No. 21

C 050286 HAM

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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 454, 452, 450, 448, 462, 460, 458 and 456 Manhattan Avenue (Block 1946, Lots 18-21, 44-47); 313, 311, 309, 307, 305 and 303 West 119<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 23-28), and 306, 308 and 310 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 39-41) 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 454, 452, 450, 448 and 458 Manhattan Avenue (Block 1946, Lots 18-21 and 46); 313, 311, 307, 305 and 303 West 119<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 23-24, 26-28) and 306, 308, 310 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 39-41) to a developer to be selected by HPD;

to facilitate development of three buildings, tentatively known as Cornerstone III Site 11, with approximately 186 units of housing, to be developed under HPD's Cornerstone Program, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 10.

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Approval of three separate matters is required:

- 1) The designation of property located at 454, 452, 450, 448, 462, 460, 458 and 456 Manhattan Avenue (Block 1946, Lots 18-21, 44-47); 313, 311, 309, 307, 305 and 303 West 119<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 23-28), and 306, 308 and 310 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 39-41), as an Urban Development Action Area; and
- 2) An Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
- 3) The disposition of 454, 452, 450, 448 and 458 Manhattan Avenue (Block 1946, Lots 18-21 and 46); 313, 311, 307, 305 and 303 West 119<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 23-24, 26-28) and 306, 308, 310 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 39-41) to a developer to be selected by HPD.

The application for the proposed Urban Development Action Area designation and project, and disposition of city-owned property was submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation

and Development (HPD) on January 26, 2005. The requested action would facilitate the development of 186 units of affordable housing under the city's Cornerstone Program.

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

The project area consists of seventeen underutilized vacant properties 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 those substandard, insanitary and blighting conditions. The project activities would protect and promote health and safety and would promote sound growth and development. The project 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 Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) seeks approval of an Urban Development Action Area designation and project, and related disposition of city-owned property to facilitate the development of 186 new residential units under the HPD's Cornerstone Program. The project site is located in the southern portion of Central Harlem, Manhattan Community District 10.

The proposed project complements ongoing efforts by HPD to comprehensively redevelop blocks located along Frederick Douglass Boulevard, St. Nicholas Avenue and Manhattan Avenue, between West 116<sup>th</sup> and West 124<sup>th</sup> streets.

### ***Prior Approvals***

On May 6, 1998, the City Planning Commission approved an application ( C 980237 HAM) for Madison Place, a 287-unit mixed residential/commercial project to be built on the proposed project site and two neighboring blocks. On May 29, 1998, the City Council approved the project with the condition that a relocation plan be formalized prior to disposition. The condition was in response to concerns raised during the public review regarding the treatment of tenants in two partially occupied buildings comprising a portion of the project site. The project was never built. The subject application enables HPD to advance residential development with a new developer on the proposed project site.

### ***Project Description***

The site includes portions of Block 1946, which is bounded by West 119<sup>th</sup> and West 120<sup>th</sup> streets, Manhattan Avenue and Frederick Douglass Boulevard, and includes 13 city-owned vacant lots, and one privately owned vacant lot and three vacant buildings that are owned by the selected developer. The vacant buildings would be razed. The project would be built on three (3) separate sites: Cornerstone Site 11A: (Block 1946, Lots 18-21 and 44-47), Cornerstone Site 11B: (Block 1946, Lots 23-28) and Cornerstone Site 11C: (Block 1946, Lots 39-41). The sites have an area of approximately 41,914 square feet and are located on a block that was recently rezoned from R7-2 (3.44 FAR) to R7A (4.0 FAR), as part of the Frederick Douglass Boulevard rezoning

( C 030436 ZMM), approved by the City Council on November 6, 2003. R7A districts allow residential and community facility uses up to 4.0 FAR. The street wall could rise to 65 feet before setback, with a maximum building height of 80 feet.

The project would provide affordable rental and homeownership units for middle-income families in three buildings that would rise to six and eight stories. Site 11A is planned as an eight-story, 122-unit building, Site 11B as a six-story, 27-unit apartment building and Site 11C would be developed with an eight-story, 37-unit building. The buildings would have 184,026 square feet of floor area and would be built at 3.72 FAR. In addition to 186 affordable housing units for middle-income families, the project would also provide 14,968 square feet of landscaped, rear-yard open space and new street trees would be planted to improve the surrounding streetscape.

The proposed project zoning lot includes the proposed development site (Block 1946, Lots 18-21, 23-28, 39-41, 44 and 45-47) and an adjoining church (Block 1946, Lot 22), which is not part of the requested UDAAP and disposition action.

***Area Description***

The surrounding neighborhood is predominantly residential in character, typified by 3-4 story row houses and 4-5 story multiple dwellings. Moreover, the area has several churches, schools and community facilities. Ground floor retail activity can be found along West 116<sup>th</sup> Street and along portions of Frederick Douglass Boulevard. The neighborhood is well served by mass transit, with subway access provided at West 116<sup>th</sup> Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard and

at West 125<sup>th</sup> Street and St. Nicholas Avenue by the IND Sixth and Eighth Avenue lines. Bus service is also available on all major streets.

Over the past five years, more than \$100 million in public and private funds have been invested in the area to build housing that redeveloped city-owned vacant land. These projects include Brownstone Lane, which comprises 48 condominium units in two, four-story townhouse buildings on the midblocks of West 118<sup>th</sup> and West 119<sup>th</sup> streets; 444 Manhattan Avenue, a new eight-story, 123-unit building currently under construction; Harriet Tubman Gardens, a recently completed 73 -unit residential development located on the west side of Frederick Douglass Boulevard between West 120<sup>th</sup> and West 121<sup>st</sup> streets and Rosa Park Gardens, a 65-unit condominium development located on the west side of St. Nicholas Avenue between West 118<sup>th</sup> and West 119<sup>th</sup> streets.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 050286 HAM) 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 designated CEQR number is 05HPD009M. The lead agency is the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on January 7, 2005.

## **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 050286 HAM) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on January 31, 2005, and was duly referred to Community Board 10 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

### **Community Board Public Hearing**

Community Board 10 did not submit a recommendation.

### **Borough President Recommendation**

This application was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation approving the application on March 16, 2005.

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

On April 13, 2005 (Calendar No. 7), the City Planning Commission scheduled April 27, 2005, for a public hearing on this application (C 050286 HAM). The hearing was duly held on April 27, 2005 (Calendar No.36). There were two speakers in favor of this application and none in opposition.

Those speaking in favor included a representative from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the project's architect, who provided information on the project's design and housing mix.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

## **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that the proposed Urban Development Action Area designation and project, and disposition of city-owned property, are appropriate. The requested actions would facilitate the development of a new 186-unit residential project to be built under the city's Cornerstone Program.

The proposed project is located on Block 1946, which is bounded by West 119<sup>th</sup> and West 120<sup>th</sup> streets, Manhattan Avenue and Frederick Douglass Boulevard, and includes three adjoining sites: Cornerstone Site 11A: (Block 1946, Lots 18-21 and 44-47), Cornerstone Site 11B: (Block 1946, Lots 23-28) and Cornerstone Site 11C: (Block 1946, Lots 39-41). The sites are located on a block that was recently rezoned from R7-2 (3.44 FAR) to R7A (4.0 FAR), as part of the Frederick Douglass Boulevard Rezoning ( C 030436 ZMM), approved by the City Council on November 6, 2003.

The project would provide affordable rental and homeownership units for middle-income families in three buildings that would rise to six and eight stories. Site 11A is planned as an eight-story, 122-unit building, Site 11B as a six-story, 27-unit apartment building and Site 11C would be developed with an eight-story, 37-unit building. In addition to 186 affordable housing units for middle-income families, the project would also provide 14,968 square feet of

landscaped, rear-yard open space and new street trees would be planted to improve the surrounding streetscape.

The Commission believes that the proposed project complements ongoing public and private redevelopment efforts on neighboring blocks, and supports the city's commitment to redevelop the Frederick Douglass Boulevard corridor. Moreover, the project underscores the city's intent to provide affordable housing for Harlem residents. The Commission, therefore, believes that the proposed Urban Development Action Area designation and project, and disposition of city-owned property, are appropriate.

## **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, that the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant impact on the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has recommended the designation of property located at 454, 452, 450, 448, 462, 460, 458 and 456 Manhattan Avenue (Block 1946, Lots 18-21, 44-47); 313, 311, 309, 307, 305 and 303 West 119<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 23-28), and 306, 308 and 310 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 39-41), in Community District 10, Borough of Manhattan, 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 property located at 454, 452, 450, 448, 462, 460, 458 and 456 Manhattan Avenue (Block 1946, Lots 18-21, 44-47); 313, 311, 309, 307, 305 and 303 West 119<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 23-28), and 306, 308 and 310 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 39-41), 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 find 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;

**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, 454, 452, 450, 448 and 458 Manhattan Avenue (Block 1946, Lots 18-21 and 46); 313, 311, 307, 305 and 303 West 119<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots 23-24, 26-28) and 306, 308, 310 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 1946, Lots

39-41), in Community District 10, Borough of Manhattan, to a developer to be selected by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, is approved (C 050286 HAM).

The above resolution (C 050286 HAM), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on May 25, 2005 (Calendar No. 21) 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**  
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.  
ANGELA R. CAVALUZZI, R.A., RICHARD W. EADDY,  
JANE D. GOL, LISA A. GOMEZ, CHRISTOPHER KUI,  
JOHN MEROLO, KAREN A. PHILLIPS, **Commissioners**

DOLLY WILLIAMS, **Commissioner, recused**