



OFFICE OF THE

MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

1 Centre Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007
(212) 669-8300 p (212) 669-4306 f
431 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027
(212) 531-1609 p (212) 531-4615 f
www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov
Mark Levine, Borough President

March 31, 2025

**Recommendation on ULURP Application Nos. 250149PPM, 250150PQM, N250147ZRM,
and 250148ZMM – Carmen Villegas Apartments
By The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development**

PROPOSED ACTIONS

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (“HPD”) and Ascendent Neighborhood Development Corporation, Xylem Projects, and Urban Builders Collaborative (the “Applicants”) are proposing multiple land use actions to facilitate the development of a new 28-story residential building (the “Proposed Project”) located at 100 East 111th Street (Block 1638, p/o Lot 1), in Manhattan Community District 11 (the “Site”).

The Applicants propose the following actions:

1. Acquisition of the Site by the City;
2. Disposition of the Site by the City;
3. A zoning map amendment to rezone the Site, as well as the remainder of Block 1638, Lot 1, Lot 66, and the western portion of Lot 8 (the “Project Area”) from R7-2 and R7B zoning districts to an R9-1 zoning district; and
4. A zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the New York City Zoning Resolution (ZR) to establish a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area within the Project Area.

These actions would facilitate the development of Carmen Villegas Senior Apartments, a 28-story building containing approximately 210 affordable housing units and ground-floor community facility space.

BACKGROUND

Lot 1 currently contains the Casita Park Housing for the Elderly (“Casita Park”), a six-story building with 94 residential units for seniors. Lot 1 was previously owned by the City, and in 2000 HPD received approval for the designation of an Urban Development Action Area, an Urban Development Action Area Project (“UDAAP”), and a disposition to facilitate the development of Casita Park. The proposed location for the Proposed Project is the existing underutilized surface parking lot with 12 parking spaces that were required for Casita Park at the time of project approval. Future renovation of Casita Park is anticipated after the completion of Carmen Villegas Apartments.

A portion of the Project Area is located in the East Harlem Rezoning area. The East Harlem Neighborhood Rezoning began with a community engagement process, leading to the release of the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan in 2016. The East Harlem Neighborhood Rezoning was enacted in 2017, identifying opportunities for housing, open space, community resources,

transportation and infrastructure, and economic and workforce development. While the majority of Site is not included in the East Harlem rezoning area, the portion of the Project Area in the midblock (Lot 66, a portion of Lot 1, and a portion of Lot 8) was rezoned for medium-density residential.

The Proposed Project is named after the late East Harlem-based activist Carmen Villegas (1954-2012), a former member of Manhattan Community Board 11 and former board chair of Ascendent Neighborhood Development Corporation.

Proposed Development

The proposed actions would facilitate a 28-story, 290.5-foot, 139,319 zoning-square-foot (ZSF) building with approximately 210 affordable housing units for seniors, 7,138 ZSF of community facility space for a senior center, and outdoor recreation space.

The Proposed Project would include 92,461 ZSF of AIRS floor area for affordable residential units for seniors ages 62 and above. This would include a unit mix of 114 studios and 33 one-bedrooms, affordable to seniors making up to 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI). The additional 39,720 ZSF of residential floor area would be a 30% set aside for formerly homeless households ages 55 and above. There would be 49 studios and 14 one-bedrooms for those households. There would also be one superintendent's unit.

Building amenities are proposed to include a lobby, ground-floor inner courtyard, landscaped terrace on the sixth floor, laundry room, three community rooms, bicycle room, and a potential future connection to Casita Park. There would be three entrances to the Site located on East 110th Street – the westernmost entrance for the senior center, the main residential building entrance further east towards the midblock, and the adjacent entrance to “Salsa Way”, which would be a corridor leading to the courtyard and accessible to both Carmen Villegas and Casita Park residents.

The 7,138 ZSF of ground-floor community facility space would be occupied by a senior center operated by SAGE. SAGE operates senior centers across the city with LGBTQ+ affirming care. The senior center would be open to the public, not just residents, and inclusive of seniors of all identities. SAGE would separately provide on-site services for residents of Carmen Villegas.

HPD's Senior Affordable Rental Apartment (“SARA”) program would be used to finance the proposed development, which requires the 30% set aside for formerly homeless households included in the Proposed Project. Section 8 rental assistance vouchers have been secured to ensure households pay no more than 30% of their income on rent, with no minimum income requirements for residents.

The Proposed Project also has various planned sustainability elements. The Proposed Project would be built to Enterprise Green Community Standards and incorporate Passive House principles, including insulation, airtight construction, and solar panels. A geothermal system would provide energy and heating systems for the building, as well as Casita Park upon future renovation. Flood resiliency measures would include elevating mechanicals and the lobby

vestibule above sea level rise elevation and a subgrade stormwater retention tank. The project also was a winner of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Buildings of Excellence Competition.

Area Context

The Site is located in Manhattan Community District 11 in the East Harlem neighborhood. The surrounding area is primarily zoned R7-2, R7B, and R7D with C2-4 and C1-5 overlays along the Avenues. The block between East 111th and East 112th Streets from Park to Madison Avenues is zoned R9 and occupied by the Sendero Verde affordable residential development. The Special East Harlem Corridors District is located along Lexington Avenue and partway up Block 1638, though not reaching the Site.

The Site is well served by transit by the 6 train at 110th Street and Lexington Avenue and the M101, M102, M103, M1, M2, M3, and M4 buses.

COMMUNITY BOARD RESOLUTION

Over the course of hearings and discussions at the Land Use, Landmarks, and Planning Committee and full board of Manhattan Community Board 11 (“CB 11”), board members asked various questions of the Applicants, which were answered by HPD in writing on March 6, 2025. The answers included the following:

1. The project’s construction timeline would be 33 months followed by 9 months for lease-up. Phase II of the project, the renovation of the adjacent Casita Park, would occur once financing sources are identified;
2. Information on financing, including that federal funding changes are not anticipated to impact this project, the project would be tax exempt under 420-c, and funds would be set aside for long-term operations;
3. The building would be all electric and utility costs are anticipated to be lower due to sustainability plans;
4. Succession rights would be protected under New York State Rent Stabilization Law, so while an older adult is required to be in the household at initial move-in, occupants who are eligible for succession rights would not have to meet age requirements; and
5. Vacancies would be re-leased through Housing Connect.

On March 25, 2025, CB 11 voted to recommend approval of the project with the following conditions:

1. That the developer commits to CB 11’s local hiring preference guidelines of 35% for pre-construction jobs, 35% for construction jobs, 50% for post-construction hiring, and 35% of the total value of all contracts awarded to businesses located in the community district; and
2. That the developer commits to proactively establish partnerships with local workforce development organizations to source qualified residents of the community district for employment opportunities at all phases of the Proposed Project.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS

Carmen Villegas Apartments is exactly the type of project I am excited to see in this borough. Facing a housing crisis where vacancy rates have hovered at around 2% in Manhattan and average rents at around \$5,000 a month, we need to continue our efforts to create housing that Manhattanites can afford. This crisis affects all New Yorkers, including the elderly and those on a fixed income, and it is especially important that we create housing that is affordable to low-income seniors, who are among the most vulnerable New Yorkers.

This project accomplishes just that, with apartments that would be affordable to seniors making up to 50% of the Area Median Income and no minimum income requirements. Formerly homeless households would be able to access stable, permanent housing. This project aims to bring additional benefits to the residents and the community, including SAGE’s senior center, outdoor space, and sustainable building design. I encourage the Applicants to continue working with local partners and adhere to Community Board 11’s local hiring and workforce development guidelines to provide further opportunities for the local community.

Where there was once required parking for 12 cars, there will now be 210 affordable housing units for Manhattan’s seniors. With parking requirements now eliminated for developments in the majority of Manhattan, I hope to see many more projects just like this one in the future.

Lastly, I can think of no one better to name this development after than Carmen Villegas. As the former chair of Ascendent’s board and member of Community Board 11, she was an activist who fought against displacement in her community and worked to address the HIV/AIDS crisis. This project will be a testament to the work she did as a community advocate in East Harlem.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, I recommend **approval** of ULURP Application Nos. 250149PPM, 250150PQM, N250147ZRM, and 250148ZMM.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Levine".

Mark Levine
Manhattan Borough President