



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

June 18, 2008/Calendar No. 10

C 080195 HAM

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 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 and 60 East 131st Street (Block 1755, Lots 45-49 and 146), 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 six-story building, tentatively known as Heritage House, with approximately 40 residential units, to be developed under the Department of Housing Preservation and Development's Cornerstone Program, Borough of Manhattan, Community District 11.

Approval of three separate matters is required:

1. The designation of property located at 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 and 60 East 131st Street (Block 1755, Lots 45-49 and 146), as an Urban Development Action Area; and
2. An Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
3. The disposition of such properties to a developer selected by HPD.

The application for the Urban Development Action Area designation and project approval and disposition of city-owned property was submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) on November 30, 2007.

Approval of this application would facilitate the development of a six-story building with 40 rental units for low and moderate-income families.

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

The Project Area consists of underutilized vacant property that tends 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 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) is seeking approval of an Urban Development Action Area designation and project, and disposition of city-owned property to facilitate the development of Heritage House. The proposed project is located in East Harlem, Manhattan Community District 11.

The site is located on the south side of East 131st Street between Madison and Park avenues. Situated within an R7-2 zoning district, the site comprises six city-owned lots (Block 1755, Lots 45, 46, 47, 48, 49 and 146) with an area of approximately 12,490 square feet.

The site has a community garden on Lots 47, 48 and 49. This garden is subject to development and HPD has offered the garden's sponsors alternative sites, which they did not accept. The remaining lots, Lots 45, 46, 146, are used as a neighborhood parking lot; however, these lots are not leased from the City for parking purposes.

The remainder of the block is developed with residential buildings that range from three to six-stories. A six-story loft building anchors the block's Park Avenue frontage. The surrounding area is primarily residential in character, with a mix of mid-rise residential buildings and community facilities. P.S. 24, P.S 133 and JHS 201 are located within a three-block radius of the site.

Located opposite the site, are two HPD-sponsored projects, The Nave and All Saints Housing, which are also being developed under the Cornerstone Program. Both projects are currently under construction. When completed, these projects would provide approximately 217 units of

affordable housing.

Local retail is found along portions of Madison and Fifth avenues. The area is well served by mass transit, with subway service provided by the IRT No. 2 and 3 lines at Malcolm X Boulevard (Lenox Avenue) and West 135th Street. Bus service is available on all major avenues.

The requested actions would facilitate the development of a six-story building with 40 rental units to be built under the Quality Housing Program. The project would have 5 one-bedroom and 35 two-bedroom units to be made available to low and moderate-income families making no more than 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). The project also includes six units that would be reserved for formerly homeless individuals or persons living with HIV/AIDS who make no more than 30 percent of the AMI. On-site amenities include 1,396 square feet of community space, 3,598 square feet of outdoor recreation space, tenant storage space and laundry facilities. Five street trees would be planted.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 080195 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 07HPD032M. The lead agency is the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

After a study of the potential impact of the proposed actions, a Negative Declaration was issued on May 21, 2007.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 080195 HAM) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning

on February 11, 2008, and was duly referred to Community Board 11 and the Manhattan Borough President, in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b).

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 11 held a public hearing on this application on April 15, 2008, and on that date, by a vote of 40 to 0 with 0 abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application, with the following condition:

“Include additional two bedroom Section 8 units to accommodate families.”

Borough President Recommendation

This application was considered by the Manhattan Borough President who issued a recommendation approving the application on May 20, 2008.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On May 21, 2008, (Calendar No. 3), the City Planning Commission scheduled June 4, 2008 for a public hearing on this application (C 080195 HAM). The hearing was duly held on June 4, 2008 (Calendar No. 16). There were three speakers in favor and none in opposition.

Those speaking in favor included a representative from HPD and the project’s sponsor who gave an overview of the proposed project. The project’s sponsor also described future sponsor-related development activity on neighboring blocks. The Director of Land Use for the Manhattan Borough President also spoke in favor of the proposal. The project architect also appeared in favor.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that the proposed Urban Development Action Area designation and project (UDAAP), and disposition of city-owned property are appropriate. The requested actions would facilitate the development of Heritage House, a new project to be developed under City's Cornerstone Program.

The site is located on the south side of East 131st Street between Madison and Park avenues. It contains six city-owned properties (Block 1755, Lots 45-49 and 146) that total approximately 12,490 square feet.

The site has a community garden on Lots 47, 48 and 49. This garden is subject to development and HPD has offered the garden's sponsors alternative sites, which they did not accept. The remaining lots, Lots 45, 46, 146, are used as a neighborhood parking lot; however, these lots are not leased from the City for parking purposes.

This application would facilitate the development of a six-story building with 40 rental units that would be made available to low and moderate-income families making no more than 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). The Commission notes that 35 of the units would be two-bedroom units. The Commission also notes that the project includes six units that would be reserved for formerly homeless individuals or persons living with HIV/AIDS who make no more than 30 percent of the AMI. On-site amenities include 1,396 square feet of community space,

tenant laundry facilities and 3,598 square feet of outdoor recreation space.

The Commission believes that this application would facilitate the development of new affordable housing for East Harlem residents. The project complements ongoing public and private redevelopment efforts on neighboring blocks and underscores the city's commitment to redevelop Harlem. The Commission, therefore, believes that the proposed Urban Development Action Area designation and project (UDAAP), 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 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 and 60 East 131st Street (Block 1755, Lots 45-49 and 146), 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 properties;

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 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 and 60 East 131st Street (Block 1755, Lots 45-49 and 146), 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 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;
- c) The project is consistent with the policy and purposes stated in the 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 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 and 60 East 131st Street (Block 1755, Lots 45-49 and 146), in Community District 11, Borough of Manhattan, to a developer to be selected by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, is approved (C 080195 HAM).

The above resolution (C 080195 HAM), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on June 18, 2008 (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, FAICP, Chair
KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice-Chairman
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