Recommendation on the ULURP Applications No. 220131PSM and 220132HAM
New Providence Redevelopment - 225 East 45th Street
by New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development

PROPOSED ACTIONS

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development (“HPD”, the “Applicant”) and the New York City Department of Homeless Services (“DHS” or “Co-Applicant”) are seeking the following Proposed Actions to facilitate the development of a 21-story building housing a 171 bed homeless shelter, 130 affordable units (including 79 units of supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals and 51 units for low-income households at 60% of the Area Median Income, or “AMI”), a superintendent’s unit, and 3,601 square feet of medical clinic space (the “Proposed Development”). The Proposed Development is planned for the site of the current New Providence Women’s Shelter, located at 215-225 East 45th Street on block 1319, lots 8 and 11 (the “Development Site”), within the East Midtown neighborhood of Manhattan Community District 6.

The Proposed Actions include:

1. Designation of an Urban Development Action Area (“UDAA”); approval of an Urban Action Area Project (“UDAAP”);
2. Disposition of City-owned property; and
3. Site Selection approval to remove the capacity restriction approved in a prior Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (“ULRUP”) application (C 930107 PCM) for the site selection/acquisition for the existing community facility.

City-owned properties that are no longer in use or are in deteriorated or deteriorating condition are eligible to be designated as UDAA and UDAAP, pursuant to the Urban Development Area Act (Article 16 of the State General Municipal Law). UDAA and UDAAP provide incentives for private entities to correct substandard, unsanitary and/or blighted conditions. According to New York State General Municipal Law § 694(4), to receive a UDAA and/or UDAAP designation, the City Planning Commission and the City Council must find that:

a) the present status of the area tends to impair or arrest the sound growth and development of the municipality;

b) the financial aid in the form of tax incentives, if any, to be provided by the municipality pursuant to [the tax incentives provisions of the Urban Development Action Area Act] … is necessary to enable the project to be undertaken; and
c) the area designation is consistent with the policy and purposes [of the Urban Development Action Area Act].

Section 197-c of the New York City Charter mandates that the disposition of all City-owned real property (other than the lease of office space) be subject to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (“ULURP”). While no specific findings must be met to make a property eligible for disposition under Section 197-c, Section 1802(6)(j) of the Charter limits HPD to the disposition of residential real property.

BACKGROUND

In the early 20th century, the Development Site was developed for the New Providence Foundation, which operated a convent and orphanage out of four inter-connecting buildings. Northeast of the Development Site at 931 First Avenue, the New York City Human Resources Administration (“HRA”) located its UN School Shelter for Women, which was intended to be a temporary residence for homeless women in the mid-1980s. However, 931 First Avenue was designated as a landmark and HRA was limited in its ability to rehabilitate this location to fully accommodate a shelter. This designation led to the shelter’s relocation to the Development Site.

To allow for the site selection and acquisition pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, an application (C 930107 PCM) was filed to allow the Development Site to be used for transitional housing with onsite social services and/or mental health programs for single women, with a restriction on capacity of 150 people. The City Planning Commission (“CPC”) approved this application on April 4, 1993. It was approved by the City Council later that year (Resolution No. 1452). This action allowed for the development of the New Providence Women’s Shelter at the Development Site, which opened in 1998 and currently occupies the site.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Area Context

The Project Area is located completely within Community District 6 in the East Midtown neighborhood of Manhattan. The Development Site is surrounded by a mix of residential, commercial, and community and institutional facilities.

Residential uses in the area range from 4-to-6 story walkup buildings on midblocks to large towers on Second and Third Avenues with commercial uses. Commercial uses are primarily characterized by high rise and commercial office buildings, concentrated along Second and Third Avenues.

Institutional and community facility uses in the area include the YMCA of Greater New York on East 47th Street, the Bahamas Consulate General on East 46th Street, the Consulate General of Liberia on East 45th Street. The United Nations is also proximate to the Project Area.

The primary zoning districts in the area are C6-4, C5-3, C1-9, C-52, and R10.
Special zoning districts near the Development Site include:

- **Special Midtown District:** This special district, established in 1982 was intended to guide development within the Midtown central business district. It includes, among other urban design restrictions, different bulk and density limits for avenue frontages and midblocks for subdistricts.

- **Special Transit Land Use District:** This special district, established in 1973, is mapped on Second Avenue between Chinatown and East Harlem. It guides development in accordance with the Second Avenue subway line.

The Development Site is well served by transit. Grand Central Station, served by the Metro-North Railroad and the 4, 5, 6, 7, and shuttle subway lines is located two blocks to the west of the Development Site. The Metro-North lines located at this station are Danbury, Harlem, Hudson Line, New Canaan, and New Haven. Local bus service is provided by the M15 bus which runs along Second Avenue, and the M101, M102, M103, QM31, QM35, QM36, and QM44 which run along Third Avenue.

**Site Description**

The Development Site at 225 East 145th Street is comprised of two contiguous lots: Lots 8 and 11 on Block 1319. It has a total area of approximately 10,042 square feet and has approximately 100 feet of frontage along East 45th Street. The Development Site straddles two different commercial zoning districts: C5-3 and C6-4. The portion within C5-3 is also within the East Midtown Subdistrict, a subdistrict of the Special Midtown District.

C5-3 zoning districts allow for a variety of commercial, community facility, and residential uses. This commercial district has an R10 residential equivalent and allows for mixed use commercial/residential buildings. In a C5-3 district, the commercial maximum FAR is 15 and the community facility maximum FAR is 15.

C6-4 zoning districts also allow for a variety of commercial, community facility, and residential uses. This commercial district has an R10 residential equivalent and allows for mixed use commercial/residential building. The commercial maximum FAR is 10 and the community facility maximum FAR is 10. This results in a maximum FAR of 12 for the entire lot for community facility buildings.

The Development Site is currently the site of two existing buildings originally built for convent and orphanage uses. They now are used as the site of New Providence Women’s Shelter, which provides 130 beds for women struggling with substance abuse. There also is a primary care clinic on site. Lot 8 is occupied by a 6-story shelter and Lot 11 is occupied by a 4-story office building used for social service provision for the shelter. These buildings have been altered to function as a shelter since 1998 but the floor plates do not align and therefore the current structures are inefficient for this use.
Project Description

The Applicants propose to demolish the current two existing buildings on lots 8 and 11 and build a single 21-story building in their place. This building would house approximately 171 shelter beds, approximately 130 units of affordable housing, one superintendent’s unit, space for supportive services for shelter and affordable housing unit residents, and a public medical clinic.

The Proposed Development would consist of a single building containing approximately 117,392 zoning square feet of floor area and have an FAR of 11.78. 3,601 zoning square feet would be occupied by the public medical clinic. There would be separate entrances for the clinic, shelter, and residential units.

The proposed shelter would occupy approximately 34,114 zoning square feet of the Proposed Development. The 171 beds would be located on floors two through seven and serve single women. Amenities include an outdoor terrace on the second floor for shelter and supportive housing residents, kitchen areas, dining areas, occupational therapy rooms, and laundry rooms.

The rest of the floors would house 79,677 zoning square feet of residential units. There would be approximately 130 residential units, 79 of which would be supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals and 51 would be for low-income individuals making up to 60% AMI. The seventh floor would include social services for residents, a recreation room, and laundry facilities.

The Proposed Development would be constructed in accordance with Enterprise Green Communities Standards. Sustainable elements include construction waste management, healthier materials selection, green roofs, and access to potable water during emergencies.

COMMUNITY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The Project Area is located within the jurisdiction of Manhattan Community Board 6. HPD presented this ULURP application to Community Board 6 at the public hearing for this project on November 15, 2021.

During their December 8, 2021 meeting, Manhattan Community Board 6 voted to approve ULURP application No. 220131PSM and 220132HAM without conditions by a unanimous vote of 39 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS

New York City has been experiencing a crisis homelessness and a lack of affordable housing. According to the Coalition for the Homeless, homelessness in New York City has recently reached its highest levels since the Great Depression. As of August 2021, there are 47,916 homeless people sleeping in the New York City shelter system. Over the course of 2020, a total of 122,926 different people slept in the shelter system at least once.¹

¹ Coalition for the Homeless. Homeslessness Fact Sheet. September, 2021
Moreover, in September 2021, there were 4,332 single women who slept in the shelter system. These women are often the victim of domestic violence and have unique needs that are served by shelters and supportive housing that cater to them. The New Providence Women’s Shelter has served these women, and the Proposed Development would continue this mission.

The addition of supportive housing and income targeted supportive housing in this project would also further help to ameliorate the homelessness crisis. Supportive housing is key to helping the housing insecure remain in safe and permanent housing. The income restricted units at 60% AMI would serve individuals making up to $50,160, a level at which there is a shortage of affordable units.

In their recommendation of approval for this redevelopment project, Community Board 6 noted that it has long been a position of the Board to encourage the production of affordable units and that CB6 is home to a large population of homeless individuals who would be served by this project. Numerous other groups have cited homelessness as an urgent issue facing the district.

As with any affordable housing project in the city, HPD and the developer should commit to a robust marketing process that guarantees that eligible community district residents would be informed in a timely manner about the availability of the new units. Since many Midtown residents suffer from homelessness, those already residing in the district should be prioritized for the supportive and income restricted housing.

I look forward to the improved facilities located on 225 East 45th Street as Project Renewal can increase the quality of service with a purpose-built structure and increase the number of people they can serve. I anticipate this project will contribute to the vitality of the surrounding neighborhood.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, I therefore recommend approval of ULURP application No. 220131PSM and 220132HAM on the condition that the Applicant agree to:

- Market available units in coordination with local organizations in Midtown to ensure equitable selection of tenants; and
- Prioritize potential tenants who are already residing in the Midtown neighborhood.

Gale A. Brewer
Manhattan Borough President

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2 Coalition for the Homeless. Basic Facts About Homelessness, September, 2021