



OFFICE OF THE

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**Mark Levine, Borough President**

**Recommendation on ULURP Application No. 240301HAM  
Malcolm Shabazz Harlem Plaza  
By HPD - NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development**

## **PROPOSED ACTION**

NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD), the owner of Malcolm Shabazz Harlem Plaza (Manhattan Block 1599, Lots 9, 61, 62, and 64) is seeking designation of an Urban Development Action Area (“UDAA”), approval of an Urban Development Action Area Project (“UDAAP”), and disposition of City-owned property (“Development Site”) currently being utilized as the African Vendor Market in Central Harlem, Manhattan, Community District 10. These actions would facilitate a residential development with approximately 108 affordable housing units, plus one superintendent’s unit and a vendor’s market. HPD proposes the disposition of the City-owned development site to a developer selected by HPD to facilitate the proposed mixed-use affordable housing development.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Development Site is located within the Milbank Frawley Circle West Urban Renewal Area, which was first approved in 1997 as a spin-off of the 1967 Milbank Frawley Circle Community Development Plan/Urban Renewal Plan. Since then, amendments have been approved twice, both in 1998 and 2003. Both of these amendments altered the area impacted by the Plan and were coupled with zoning map amendments rezoning areas to C4-5X districts. In 2005, the City disposed of 14 sites immediately east of the Development Site which facilitated the development of the Kalahari, a development of 249 affordable housing units. The C4-5X district was further extended in 2011 to the east and north of the site to facilitate the redevelopment of 23 West 116<sup>th</sup> Street, which contains 192 units including 83 condominium and 109 affordable apartments,<sup>1</sup> and 11 West 116<sup>th</sup> Street, which has 30 condominium units.<sup>2</sup>

A vendor’s market has been in operation on the Development Site since 1994, with 46 vendor stalls, each around 8 square feet. Vendors generally sell items that include health and beauty supplies, clothing, art, jewelry, and more.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.corcoran.com/building/south-harlem/186158>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hlres.com/buildings/nyc/the-patagonia-11-west-116th-street/787373/condo#:~:text=THE%20PATAGONIA%20is%20a%20distinguished,diverse%20array%20of%20living%20options.>

**Proposed Development**

The proposed building would have 109 units as shown below.

<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>30% AMI</b>	<b>50% AMI</b>	<b>80% AMI</b>	<b>Formerly Homeless Households</b>	<b>Super's Unit</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% Units by Unit Type</b>
Studio	2	10	10	2		24	22%
1 Bedroom	3	12	23	7		45	42%
2 Bedroom	2	6	13	4	1	26	24%
3 Bedroom	3	6	1	4		14	13%
Total Units	10	34	47	17	1	1	
% Units by AMI	9%	31%	43%	16%		109	100%

The ground-floor community facility space would serve as a permanent space for the vendor’s market that is currently located on the lot, and will include approximately 60 stalls, with 11 potential food business incubators. During construction, around 36 vendors would temporarily relocate to a nearby vacant City-owned lot located four blocks to the west at 68 West 116<sup>th</sup> Street in temporary enclosures that are similarly sized to their current 8-foot by 8-foot stalls. The temporary relocation site will be maintained by the development team. Ten tailoring vendors would permanently move to a Central Harlem retail space that will be identified six months prior to construction. The vendors’ floor would be fully enclosed and include a 1,000-square-foot event space. Market entrances on West 115<sup>th</sup> and West 116<sup>th</sup> Streets would be set back six feet from the property line to mitigate disruption to pedestrians.

The residential floors would rise to approximately 95 feet on both West 115<sup>th</sup> and West 116<sup>th</sup> Streets, and curb cuts on both streets would remain in place. The residential floors would be connected by an 8,474-square-foot open second-floor terrace for tenant use. Other amenities for tenants would include laundry and community rooms, as well as basement bicycle and storage areas. The Proposed Development would be built to Enterprise Green Communities standards and incorporate sustainable design features.

**Area Context**

The development site is located in Central Harlem within Community District 10. The surrounding area includes a mix of residential, commercial, community facility, public, and parking uses. The predominant zoning districts are R7-2 and C4-5X. R7-2 districts allow for mid-density residential buildings with height factor or Quality Housing regulations. The C4-5X district permits commercial and residential buildings with higher FAR and density than surrounding areas and has no parking requirements. A C1-4 commercial overlay along surrounding streets allows local retail like grocery stores, restaurants, and salons on the ground floor.

The area is characterized by low- to mid-rise multifamily walk-up and elevator buildings, as well as commercial buildings. Nearby developments include the NYCHA Martin Luther King Jr.

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Towers totaling 14 stories and 527 units south of the site, and the Kalahari with 12 stories and 249 affordable units to the east. The median monthly rent in CB 10 is around \$2,900,<sup>3</sup> while median average income is \$62,056.<sup>4</sup> 44% of CB 10 residents are rent burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on rent; that percentage jumps to 75% for households that earn less than \$50,000. In Council District 9, which encompasses much of Community District 10, affordable housing construction has lagged behind other districts, and is ranked 19<sup>th</sup> citywide.<sup>5</sup>

The area benefits from robust transit access and is located within the Transit Zone. The site is approximately 350 feet from the 2/3 subway at West 116<sup>th</sup> Street, and about a half mile from the 116th Street station served by the B/C lines. The M7 and M102 provide area residents with service uptown and downtown, while the M116 bus provides service crosstown.

### **COMMUNITY BOARD RESOLUTION**

On June 5, 2024, Manhattan Community Board 10 voted to recommend approval of the application. During its evaluation of the application, Board members noted the importance of receiving consistent updates from the development team about the location of the permanent relocation for the tailors as well as the developer's marketing and outreach plan for their units as well as a commitment from the development team to hire locally.

### **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

The Malcolm Shabazz Harlem Plaza project promises to bring much-needed affordable housing and preserve the vibrant African vendor market, a cultural and economic asset in Harlem. This long-awaited development, supported by Manhattan Community Board 10 over four years ago, is exactly the kind of development we want to see on our publicly owned land near major transportation – deeply affordable, prioritizing local entrepreneurs, and providing desperately needed units for Harlem residents.

That's why, in my report "Housing Manhattanites," I identified this site as a prime candidate for development and committed to accelerating it through ULURP. After working closely with Community Board 10, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), and other stakeholders, I am thrilled to lend my full support to this project.

As this proposal makes its way through the process, I urge the development team to secure substantial buy-in from the African vendors who currently operate on the site. With an estimated 1,000 daily visitors, this market is an economic engine and cultural touchstone for Harlem. The development team must present a comprehensive relocation plan that ensures the vendors' approval of both their permanent and temporary relocation during construction and maintains the market's vibrancy.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://streeteasy.com/blog/data-dashboard/?agg=Total&metric=Inventory&type=Sales&bedrooms=Any%20Bedrooms&property=Any%20Property%20Type&minDate=2010-01-01&maxDate=2022-11-01&area=Flatiron,Brooklyn%20Heights>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<sup>5</sup> <https://tracker.thenyh.org/>

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Lastly, I urge HPD to think holistically about this entire city block. The agency should return to Community Board 10 with a redevelopment proposal for the lot that will temporarily accommodate the vendors during construction. This site contains up to 18,168 square feet of developable space – enough to deliver about 30 additional affordable housing units.

**BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

I therefore recommend **approval of Application No. 240301HAM with the following conditions.**

1. That the Applicant demonstrate vendors' buy-in for the project;
2. That the Applicant work with local service providers to inform and connect with Harlem residents in need of housing;
3. That the Applicant maintain consistent communication with the community about the status of the storefront location for tailoring tenants, including timeline, cost to tenants, and move-in date; and
4. That the Applicant hire locally for the construction of the Proposed Building.



Mark Levine  
Manhattan Borough President