



CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

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CB 10 Land Use Committee Minutes Thursday, October 19, 2023 6:30 PM

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm, Chair Karen Dixon presiding.

Attendance:

Land Use Committee members:

In- Person: K. Dixon, K. Taylor, C. Harris, D. Patterson, S. Gleaton, C. Wykoff

Virtual: C. Powell, D. Points,

Excused/Absent Committee Members: H. Dukes (E), G. Harrell (A)

Other CB 10 Board Members: Hon. M. Harrison

Chair Dixon welcomed the committee and guests. All committee members introduced themselves.

PRESENTATION

1. 15-21 West 124th Street Project

Presenter

Allison Curreri, Greenberg Traurig, LLP

OVERVIEW: Ms. Curreri provided an overview of the project that is seeking a text amendment change for the parking requirement.

- Development is an as-of-right project located at 15-21 West 124th Street (Manhattan Block 1722, Lots 26 and 27)
- This is a fair market project that is 7 stories, 30,276 sq. ft. of residential space for 33 dwelling units.
- Seeking a text amendment to the parking requirements for R6A zoning districts within the 125th Street Special Districts
- For R6A zoning, the number of parking spots represents 50% of the units (17)
- On zoning lots with 10,001-15,000sf of lot area, parking requirement is reduced to 30%
- When there are 15 or fewer accessory residential parking spaces required on the zoning lot, the parking requirement is waived. Therefore, 33x 30% = 11 spaces, thus waiver is allowed.

Comments/Feedback:

- Project will be certified by DCP on 10/30/23. CB 10 will have 60 days to review the project. This is a non-ULURP.
- Presentation did not specify the size of the units and the amount of the fair market rent.
- Committee requested the owner to attend the next meeting.
- Committee D. Points highlighted concern that with the new congestion pricing initiative coupled with various transportation options in the community, there is significant concern that people will drive to Harlem, park their cars, and get on the subways to go downtown. This would further impact the already limited parking in the community.
- Community member T. Herring recommended that the developer talked with the school on the block to discuss the impact of construction and other issues.
- Developer to provide more information on MWBE plan for the development.

2. 126th Street Harlem African Burial Ground Memorial and Mixed-Use Project

Presenter

Fernando Ortiz, Upper Manhattan & Bronx Borough Director, Assistant VP of Government & Community Relations of NYC EDC

Sarah Dine-Pierre, Project Manager

OVERVIEW: Fernando Ortiz and Ms. Dine-Pierre provided an overview of the Harlem African Burial Ground (HABG) located in East Harlem

- Located at 2660 2nd Avenue and is city-owned (2023).
- Site was previously occupied by the decommissioned MTA bus depot.
- In 1660, Nieuw Haarlem is chartered by the Dutch on indigenous land with the Low Dutch Reformed Church as the founding church.
- In 1869, church leaders began transferring the human remains of white Europeans to new plots.
- Throughout history the site had several uses including a National Guard Infantry Barracks
- The depot was built in 1947, and was occupied by the MTA/NYCT from 1962-2015
- Harlem African Burial Ground Initiative (formerly known as the Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force) was founded in 2009
- Four individuals lead this initiative: Rev. Dr. Patricia Singletary, Melissa Mark-Viverito, Sharon Wilkins, and Melinda Velez.
- In 2015-2016 an archaeological investigation found over 140 human remains on the site. They were disarticulated remains found in one trench near the northern edge of the historic boundary. Two of the remains found were tested and determined to be of African descent.
- Remains are currently stored at NYC Archaeological Repository until they can be reburied at the memorial.

- In 2017, Man. Borough President, City Planning Commission, and the City Council approve actions to facilitate the redevelopment project.
- Project goals
 1. Honor and memorialize the HABG with public outdoor memorial on the entire historic footprint of the burial ground and indoor cultural center.
 2. Address affordable housing and job creation needs in East Harlem on the remainder of the site through a mixed-use program yielding 600-700 housing units, of which 80% will be affordable, include commercial and additional community space.
- As of 8/15/23, the project continues the archaeological work, released an RFP for an Education and Engagement effort, and is currently executing a Social Media Campaign. In September, there was town hall for the community.
- Project leads are women of color, MWBE certified.

Comments/Feedback:

- This project is located in East Harlem
- Committee Powell referenced other projects that included more community engagement and input.
- Committee member C. Powell, Community members M. Bey and G. Baggett highlighted that only two of the remains thus far have been identified as being of African descent. All felt that it might be too soon to determine that the site is an African burial ground and instead might be remains of indigenous people or African American. All cautioned EDC that they should proceed carefully to ensure that Native American and African American history is not lost.
- Committee also requested periodic updates moving forward.

3. MART125

Presenter

Fernando Ortiz, Upper Manhattan & Bronx Borough Director, Assistant VP of Government & Community Relations of NYC EDC

OVERVIEW: Fernando Ortiz provided an update in the MART 125 project.

- Provided an historic overview of MART 125
- In 2022, EDC conducted a feasibility study in order to assess the space and analyze the existing conditions, make recommendations to renovate and bring building up to code, and to provide cost estimates for potential redevelopment programs that would build upon previous community feedback.
- Feasibility study found that the building envelope is in good condition, the roof needs to be replaced, and there are noticeable signs of water infiltration. The mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems require full replacement. The fire alarm and fire suppression systems must be replaced and the elevator needs significant upgrade.
- Images of the interior was shown.

- The initial group hired to complete the community engagement met with more than 150 community stakeholders that included elected officials and community groups. 283 survey results were collected.
- Top recommendations for use of the space were food options, public art and educational display, cultural and retail options, but most-importantly, a community centered, family-friendly location. Additionally, surveys recommendations for Studio Space (181), Visual Arts (166), and Music (138) were listed as top three artistic uses. EDC acknowledged that more extensive community outreach is necessary to better inform the RFI.
- EDC acknowledged that the previous vendor was not widely received by the community and did not bring the redevelopment project to completion for a myriad of reasons. EDC and community wants a more inclusive process where recommendations of the community will inform the RFP and the project selected.
- EDC referenced the Kingsbridge Armory project that included community visioning and formation of task force over a period of eight months.

Comments/Feedback:

- The Committee members stated that EDC previously had an extensive community engagement process and yet they selected a vendor that was not well-received by the community.
- Community members shared that it has been almost a year since the EDC provided an update on this project.
- Committee and community members recommended more frequent and transparent communication, more partnering with stakeholders, and the formation of the community visioning committee. EDC also indicated that they would explore engaging a community based organization to lead the engagement plan with a final goal of creating a community vision plan.
- It was also requested that the RFP include feedback from the community, and that selected candidates must provide all the areas of programming outlined by the community, as well as being fiscally sound.
- Finally, the committee strongly recommended EDC to facilitate a town hall. Mr. Ortiz plans to return to the community board in January with a tentative engagement plan, highlighting that EDC has no fixed timeline for releasing the RFP.

VOTING ITEMS

None

OLD BUSINESS

CB 10 Land Use Study/Equity Development Index(EDI)

J. Max Bond Center will present at the November Land Use Meeting. They provided an EDI Development Roadmap and a summary of ongoing collaborative efforts that includes funding needs. Thus far, 90% of the committee completed the EDI Survey.

District Needs Statement

Chair Dixon reminded committee members to complete the survey if they have not already done so.

NEW BUSINESS

Air Rights & Affordable Housing

Chair Dixon advised the committee that the three documents (more than 300 pages) provided will help the committee prepare for future discussions on air rights and affordable housing.

ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.