



CICELY HARRIS
Chairperson

SHATIC MITCHELL
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
215 West 125th Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10027
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

LAND USE

Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 17, 2022, 6:30PM

Hon. Karen Dixon, Chair

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS (5 minutes)

- A. CB10 Land Use Committee Members – Hon. K. Dixon, C. Harris, C. Powell, H. Dukes, G. Harrell, K. Taylor. K. Bitterman, S. Gleaton, L. Downing D. Glover
- B. CB10 Board Members – S. Brannon, D. Brown-Blackmon, M. Franklin, D. Boyce

PRESENTATION

1. The Empowered Block

Presenter

Raquel Vasquez – Founder & CEO. Professional experiences include both public and private community development advocacy, policy development and analysis, and community engagement strategies and activities.

Ms. Vasquez is also a former member of the community board and former chair of the Transportation committee.

OVERVIEW: The Empowered Block presented a proposal for a Land Use Study for Manhattan Community Board 10.

- The Empowered Block organization with a mission that is community-based and equity driven.
- The organization is a NYS limited liability corporation that provides community development that addresses policy challenges in historically disinvested neighborhoods.
- The Empowered Block has expertise in urban planning, economic development, community development, racial equity for community development projects, community engagement strategy as well as program evaluation and analysis.
- Through consultation they work to cultivate meaningful, purposeful, and impactful community projects.
- Manhattan Community Board 10 has outlined in our recent district needs statement concerns regarding AMI levels, lack of home ownership and affordable housing, MIH regulations, displacement, and inadequate representation resulting in fewer or no seats at decision-making tables.



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- The proposal includes three phases: Community engagement; Analysis of existing policies, regulations, zoning, and land uses; Policy recommendations that includes community vision.
- The goal of the Empowered Block is to incorporate community engagement in the process, ensure that there is a community voice in recommendations to leadership, along with an implementation plan.
- The anticipated timeline for the project is 5 – 6 months at a cost of \$10k.

Discussion/Concerns

Members of the land use committee thanked Ms. Vasquez for the presentation. Member Powell asked if there were any pitfalls we should anticipate. Ms. Vasquez emphasized the importance of community engagement in the process as most studies are assessment and analysis of existing land uses within a community. Community engagement creates a more interactive process with the potential for support of recommendations or plans.

Member Glover inquired about experience with community planning, land trust, or urban planning. Ms. Vasquez stated that she has not been directly engaged in the formation of a community land trust but expressed knowledge and understanding of the policy. She added that she has also facilitated policy studies related to land uses and rezoning. Member Glover stated that the Racial Impact Study Coalition worked with the Public Advocate to get the racial impact study requirement passed in the city, and suggested that Ms. Vasquez contact the Association for Neighborhood Housing Developers (ANHD). Ms. Vasquez expressed that she previously was a fellow with ANHD and Morgan Stanley doing community development work. Chair Dixon also stated that several attempts were made to contact ANHD to no avail.

Member Gleaton asked what would be the biggest problem with the land use study. Ms. Vasquez stated that there is an opportunity to develop relationships with newly elected officials, as well as leadership in general. The greatest opportunity would be to build stewardship with them in order to formulate a policy framework that is collaborative and inclusive. But it is essential that recommendations should reflect the current needs of the community.

Community member B. McClure asked whether housing for those formally incarcerated would be assessed. Ms. Vasquez acknowledged that justice involved individuals would be a part of the community engagement aspect of the study.

2. The Pratt Center for Community Development

Presenter

Paula Crespo – Senior Planner



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OVERVIEW: The Pratt Center for Community Development presented a proposal for a Land Use Study for Manhattan Community Board 10.

- The Pratt Center that was founded in 1963, out of the graduate program at Pratt Institute, but today is a separate non-profit organization.
- Their planners have expertise in various aspects of urban planning and community development. The organization believes in the importance of engaging communities who are being impacted by planning and elevating their voices to meet their needs.
- The Pratt Center always partners with an organization in the community with a goal of enhancing the capacity of local non-profits to plan and advocate for their own future. Preferring a future that is community driven instead of by developers.
- The Pratt Center does work at the neighborhood level but they also apply it to citywide policy work in an effort to advance policies at a citywide level.
- Currently, development is mainly facilitated by private developers, often resulting in insufficient number of adequate housing units, a significant influx of market rate apartments, a loss of neighborhood character, and displacement.
- The proposal will be an assessment of existing land uses in the district and build a foundation for a land use plan that will guide and advance the vision for future development in the district.
- Initial task will be to review previous studies, including reports on city led rezoning.
- Second task would be the land use analysis and synthesis. Review residential, commercial, industrial, vacant lots, vacant commercial spaces, and institutional locations in the community. Low, medium, and high density areas will also be reviewed. Analysis and synthesis would be done by using a combination of secondary publicly available data to describe land uses.
- Third component would be community outreach.
- Final aspect would be a report that includes recommendations on how CB 10 could better leverage its role in the land use review process. Report would be available online and could be used for internal and external purposes. Additionally, it would serve as the first phase of the development of a land use plan.

Discussion/Concerns

Board asked a question related to assessing the environmental impact of various land uses. Ms. Crespo responded that the Pratt Center recognizes the importance of the relationship between various land uses and the impact on climate change. This is an area that disproportionately impacts communities of color and low-income communities.

Community member G. Baggett acknowledged the work of the Pratt Center and how it has been helpful with the A. Philip Randolph park project. He specifically asked if there was a possibility for the Pratt Center to partner with the community and a non-profit through the



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Community Board to raise additional funds to do a project. Ms. Crespo responded that approach of the Pratt Center is to work with community-based organizations. She added that they would be interested in exploring joint fundraising activities.

Community member B. McClure asked whether the study would impact revitalization. Ms. Crespo stated that the study is considered foundational, and would probably take 6 – 8 weeks to complete. She does not anticipate that the study will retroactively influence other plans. Additionally, the final report is informational and will have some use later as part of a comprehensive planning process.

Chair Dixon thanked Ms. Vasquez and Ms. Crespo for their presentations. She added that the land use study is a starting point of the process. Assessment and analysis, community input and feedback, policy recommendation, and the possible development of a 197A plan are the goals of the process. The board will select a vendor to facilitate the study but the actual study and report can be completed in the next fiscal year.

The next steps is that there will be 1-2 more presentations in the March 2022 Land Use meeting. The committee will select a vendor in the March meeting that will be presented to the Executive Committee, followed by the full board in the April 2022 General Board Meeting.

Chair Dixon thanked Member Glover and Community Member G. Baggett for recommending several individuals and organizations for consideration, Chair Dixon also thanked District Manager S. Mitchell for participating in preliminary meetings with each of the vendors.

NEW & OLD BUSINESS

1. One45/Museum of Civil Rights

Chair Dixon explained that the project has an amendment to the ULURP package that was previously deliberated by the community board. This amendment relates to the signage for the Museum of Civil Rights that was discussed with the community board during both public hearing sessions. The amendment was distributed to the committee and the full board. Jose Trucios and Annie White from DCP were present. No action is required by the board.

The second document that was sent to the committee, the full board, and posted on CB 10 website was the notification of the City Planning Commission (CPC) Public Hearing on the project scheduled for 3/2/22 at 10 am. The notice included instructions to join the meeting via zoom, to send in written comments, and/or to make a statement.



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Valerie Campbell, attorney for the project from Kramer Levin, stated that after a suggestion from a commissioner at CPC, they requested an increase in the required museum signage so that it could be higher up on the façade and project further out (approximately 18" more), thus giving the museum more visibility.

ADJOURNED

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.