



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**Lowell D. Kern**  
Chair

**Jesse Bodine**  
District Manager

November 12, 2020

Signe Nielsen, President  
Public Design Commission of the City of New York  
City Hall, Third Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Justin Garrett Moore, Executive Director  
Public Design Commission of the City of New York  
City Hall, Third Floor  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: 495 Eleventh Avenue, Slaughterhouse Site for Preliminary Review**

Dear Ms. Nielsen and Mr. Moore,

On October 14, 2020, at Manhattan Community Board 4's (MCB4) Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use (CHKLU) Committee meeting, Radson Development (the "Developer") presented an updated design concept for the Slaughterhouse site at 495 Eleventh Avenue between 39<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Streets ("Site"), as a part of the Public Design Commission's (PDC) preliminary review. The two-tower design concept was developed in consultation with MCB4 and envisions two towers, one for a hotel, the second for permanently affordable residential housing.

**At its November 4, 2020, regularly scheduled Full Board meeting, MCB4 with 44 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible, voted to recommend approval of the updated design.**

**Background**

The latest iteration of the program and the design ("Proposed Development") on the Site is an end product of six years of working together, with 45 meetings, briefings, and conference calls with MCB4, the Empire Development Corporation (EDC), the Speaker's Office, and City Council Land Use on this development, along with numerous MCB4 letters (Appendix A). MCB4 believes that the reworked design responds well to community concerns and needs, as

well as MCB4's design requests, especially with the degree of permanently affordable housing achieved in the development.

### **Current Proposed Development**

MCB4 voted to support the Proposed Development in October 2019, stating the proposed two-tower concept "offers the opportunity to meet community needs and comes closer to the project envisioned by this Board a decade ago." The Board also noted in 2019 that the Project's proposed design would:

- Contribute to the mixed-use character of the built environment, adding vibrancy to this newly developing neighborhood.
- Use materials which relate to the industrial past of the site.
- Integrate the pedestrian and vehicle scale of Eleventh Avenue through a three-story base building covering the entire site, supporting two towers, to create a more appealing pedestrian and streetscape experience.

This two-tower design echoes the stone and brick architecture to the north and the east. The two-tower design concept fits in the historic industrial fabric of the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood.

In a press release from EDC in 2015, the Housing Preservation and Development's (HPD) then Commissioner Vicki Been said: "Housing New York envisions the type of community engagement and interagency cooperation that results in the creative reuse of City-owned sites." The Proposed Development is a fulfillment of that goal.

### **Recommendations**

MCB4 endorses the design concept, commending the Developer for certain design changes and recommending further possible improvements under the following conditions and comments:

#### ***Design matters***

MCB4 appreciates:

- The relocation of residential entrance to the 40<sup>th</sup> Street corner, to create better separation between the commercial co-working space and residential entrance. The affordable housing entrance now has a more residential feel.
- The addition of brick elements throughout the façade, is more-aesthetically pleasing and referential to the industrial vernacular of the surrounding blocks.
- The design of a more solid building's base, creating a better sense of scale from the street. (Note: While there was a consensus in favor of the improved design to the building base, there was a request from a member to consider further refinement of the southeast corner of the residential tower, suggesting it seems to "float" somewhat about the solid, brown brick (at the location where it changes from the limestone to the brick color and is back by about five to six feet). The goal would be to anchor that corner to the newly solid building base.)

***Other matters***

MCB4 also requests, the Developer:

- Clarify future presentations to include sites in construction across the street to better detail how the Development will relate to the immediate neighborhood.
- Follow up on details of the Development's containerized trash disposal operation.
- Create a stacking plan to show how affordable and supportive housing will be fully integrated throughout the building. The plan should ensure that the Supportive Housing units are not segregated to lower floors.
- MCB4 requests further discussion with the Developer and Supportive Housing Program Provider on the targeted populations to arrive and agree upon a successful overall, integrated affordable housing program.

**Conclusion**

With consideration of the CHKLU's recommendations and concerns, the Board approves and recommends the Developer's design update to PDC in its preliminary review for the Proposed Development.

Sincerely,



Lowell D. Kern  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4,



Jean-Daniel Noland  
Chair  
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee

Cc: Radson Development