



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

August 13, 2014

Vicki Been
Commissioner
NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development
100 Gold Street
New York, NY 10007

**Re: 525 West 52nd Street
Inclusionary Housing—Lower Income Housing Plan Application**

Dear Commissioner Been:

The Lower Income Housing Plan Application (the “Application”) for Taconic Investment Partners’ and Ritterman Capital’s (the “Applicant”) project at 525 West 52nd Street (the “Project”) was discussed at the June 19, 2014 meeting of Manhattan Community Board 4’s (CB4) Housing Health and Human Services (“HH&HS”) Committee. CB4 voted to recommend **approval** of the Application **with conditions**, some of which have already been agreed to by the Applicant (see attached letter dated July 17, 2014).¹

The Project: An Overview

The Project is located through block between West 52nd and West 53rd Streets between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues on the former Clinton Urban Renewal Area (“CURA”). On June 26, 2014 the Project received Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (“ULURP”) approval for a rezoning for M1-5 to R9 and the creation of a Large Scale General Development (“LSGD”). That rezoning also overlaid the Project site as an Inclusionary Housing Designated Area. Based on these factors, the site is eligible to bonus from a base FAR of 6.0 to an FAR of 8.0 via the provision of 20% of the residential units in the building as permanently affordable housing. The Applicant has elected to pursue this Inclusionary Housing bonus.

The Project will be one building with a 22-story wing and a 14-story wing. The Project includes ground floor retail to accommodate an existing site tenant as well as 392 residential units, 79 of which will be reserved for low-income individuals and families. Those 46 units include 19 studios, 39 one-bedrooms, and 21 two-bedrooms.

¹ Joe Restuccia, a member of CB4 who serves on the Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee, is Executive Director of Clinton Housing Development Company. Mr. Restuccia openly acknowledged his interest and recused himself from voting.

Housing Program

The Project is an 80/20 rental building financed with tax-exempt bonds from the New York State Housing Finance Agency. The 80/20 Program requires that 20% of the apartments, 79 units, be affordable to low income individuals and families. Those same 20% low income units are made permanently affordable through a deed restriction under the New York City Inclusionary Housing Program. The Application, submitted to the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (“HPD”) by the Applicant will govern the 79 apartments which will be created under the Inclusionary Housing program and made available to those at or below 60% of Area Median Income (“AMI”). CB4 is pleased that all of the inclusionary units for the Project will be developed on-site. CB4 celebrates its diversity and the Project, if fully integrated, will celebrate that diversity.

NOW, therefore, be it resolved that Manhattan Community Board 4 recommends approval of the Application for 525 West 52nd Street, *provided the following conditions, which have been agreed to by the Applicant, are included in the Lower Income Housing Plan executed by HPD:*

Amenities

- The Project features amenities that have not yet been finalized by the Applicant. However, all amenity space will be available to the low-income residents of the building either free of charge or at a substantially reduced rent in line with the tenants’ incomes.

Finishes

- All of the units in the building will have the same finishes in the kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms, and living areas.

Permanent Affordability

- A Restrictive Declaration be filed that requires development of 79 units of housing in the Project, affordable *in perpetuity*, to those earning less than 60% of AMI.

Marketing

- The Inclusionary units will be subject to a 50% community preference.

Jobs

- Applicant will apprise CB4 of job opportunities the can be filled by community residents so that CB4 may post those opportunities on its website.

Apartment Distribution
Among Floors

- Applicant has agreed to distribute the affordable units throughout at least 83% of the floors. CB4 acknowledges that HPD only requires apartment distribution throughout 65% of the floors and appreciates that the Applicant has met that minimum and exceeded it by providing units on 83% of the floors. However, CB4 reiterates its longstanding position that apartment distribution should be among 100% of the floors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and submit recommendations on this important Application.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair
Community Board 4

[signed 8/12/2014]

Barbara Davis
Co-Chair
Housing, Health & Human Services Committee

CC:

Adriano Espaillat, NYS Senator
Brad Hoylman, NYS Senator
Linda Rosenthal, NYS Assemblymember
Jerrold Nadler, Congressman
Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Corey Johnson, NYC Councilmember
Gabriella Amabile – HPD
Thehbia Walters – HPD
Sara Levenson - HPD
Taconic Investment Partners
Ritterman Capital
Al Fredericks - Kramer Levin
Councilmember Johnson