



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 6
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 Honorable Vanessa L. Gibson, Bronx Borough President
 Honorable Oswald Feliz, New York City Council Member, 15th District

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OSWALD FELIZ
 THE COUNCIL OF
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October 19, 2023

Nina Kubota
 President & Chief Executive Officer
 New York City School Construction Authority
 30-30 Thomson Ave., Long Island City NY, 11101

In June 2016, Bronx Community Board 6 voted to approve the rezoning of Lambert Houses, a large residential complex that will be home to 1,665 units upon completion. A key part of this rezoning was an agreement between the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) and Phipps Houses, where Phipps would provide the SCA with space to construct a new school. We are extremely disappointed to learn that the SCA is now backing out of this agreement. If Community Board 6 and the local City Council Member were told there would be no school in Lambert, the rezoning would likely not have been approved.

School District 12, where Lambert Houses is situated, currently has 21.2 students per class for grades K-3. The new State mandated school class size limit for these grades will be 20 students per class. For District 12 to comply with the law, more elementary schools are going to be needed. According to the School Construction Authority, District 12 has an overall need of 1,029 additional seats. However, email communication from the School Construction Authority to Community Board 6 has repeatedly claimed that there is “no seat need”. The existing need will only increase as the new buildings in Lambert are occupied.

Phipps Houses, the owner of Lambert, reports that it is still reserving space for a school onsite, and that it will likely take several years for the plot of land that a school can be placed on to be developed. The Board is concerned that when this land is available, the SCA will not take up the option on a false claim that there is no seat need. Email communication from the SCA to CB6 has also claimed that “the SCA has not received an option notice from the developer”. We are unclear as to how the SCA can preemptively refuse a future option to build when Phipps has already relayed that this land will take several years to be ready.

Bronx Community Board 6 would like clarification from the SCA on seat need in District 12 in writing, its intentions in Lambert Houses, and its right to build in the Lambert complex. In addition, we request that the SCA affirm its commitment to build a new elementary school in Lambert Houses in the upcoming 5-year Capital Plan.

Regards,

Evonne Capers
 Chair
 Bronx Community Board 6

Oswald Feliz
 Councilmember, District 15, Bronx