

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX
MINUTES OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD DECEMBER 9, 2009
AT KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CENTER. 3101 KINGSBRIDGE TERRACE**

BOARD MEMBERS: Robert Abbott, Sylvia Alexander, Steven Balicer, Bob Bender, Andrew Cohen, Anthony P. Creaney, Warren S. Dolny, Thomas Durham, Robert Fanuzzi, Philip Friedman, Ari Goldman, Damian McShane, Charles G. Moerdler, Daniel Padernacht, Sergio Villaverde, Martin Wolpoff

STAFF:

N. Stent, District Manager

GENERAL PUBLIC/REPRESENTATIVES: Attendance sheet is on file in the board office.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Informal presentation by St. Patrick's Home for the Aged and Infirm, a Use Group 3, nursing home located at 66 Van Cortlandt Park South, on proposal to enlarge its nursing home by constructing a 17,880 sq. ft., three-level, 107 space accessory parking facility with additional space for programs and storage, and a rooftop recreation deck.

Carol Slater from the law firm Slater & Beckerman presented on behalf of the St. Patrick's Home for the Aged. She explained that this is only an informational meeting and she is not currently looking for any approvals from the board.

The applicant would like to build a 17,880 SF structure on top of the existing parking lot. This would create 107 off-street parking spaces for the residents, staff and visitors. The applicant will also create a recreation deck/terrace on the top floor of the new structure and more storage space for the facility.

The applicant is currently looking for temporary parking while the structure is being built. The applicant might be able to rent from Amalgamated or from a church nearby. The new structure will only be as high as the 2nd floor of the current facility.

Timing: Construction will take approximately 18 – 24 months (and will be done in phases).

The applicant will need to make arrangements with the general contractor on where the construction trucks will be parked because the trucks will not be able to park on the street. The chairman recommended that this be put in the GC's contract with a penalty clause if the GC does not adhere to this provision.

The next time the applicant comes before the Board; the applicant should have a plan for the substitute parking during construction, and a plan stating that all the exits from the building will be clear and open during all times during construction. The chairman asked the applicant to please create a master plan explaining to the board what development plans the applicant has in their pipeline so the community will know.

The applicant's intent is not to drill or blast. They would like to build on the existing grade of the parking lot. The applicant is not sure if they will need to micro pile.

The applicant will pour the concrete on-site.

There is a possibility that the applicant will share the new off-street parking spaces with the community once it is built (especially at night when the staff does not need the spaces).

Building 6 of Amalgamated will lose some of its views after the structure is built.

The entrance to the new structure will be the same as the current entrance to the parking lot.

The applicant has a budget of approximately \$15 million.

The applicant does not need a change in zoning since this is an as of right. However, since this is a change to a nursing home, the applicant will need City Planning approval and a variance for lot coverage (will need to go through the ULURP process, which takes a significant amount of time).

2. Continued discussion on plans for development at 3469 Cannon Place.

The chairman explained that THEORETICALLY, Urban Pathways ("U.P."), the developer, can build a 90 unit building as-of-right and does not need any special approval from the board.

U.P. has not created any plans and has only come before the board to obtain the community's feedback before they start to design a site. U.P. would like to work with a community group to decide if a building can be built and if so, what type of building it would be.

The chairman explained that approximately 6-12 months ago, NYC sold off the last of its sites that could be used for this type of project and therefore groups like U.P. are having a more difficult time in finding sites to develop.

U.P. would like to build a 90 unit building where 40% of the units would be for families with median income of \$30k to \$40k and 60% would be for veterans and people with mental illnesses. U.P. has realized that they will need sufficient amount of parking spaces for its residents and will not be allowed to blast at this site during construction. They have engaged an architect and engineers. These consultants have created three different diagrams to get an idea of what the community is looking for. U.P. then went through each diagram. Option 3 cannot happen because blasting would occur and Option 2 is the only one with sufficient off-street parking.

U.P. invited anyone in the community to come visit their site located at 459 West 46th Street (btw 9th and 10th Avenue) to see how U.P. runs their facilities.

After the U.P. presentation, the audience was allowed to speak.

Robert Baker: His building is next to the site. He stated that there is a lot of supportive housing in the area. The Kingsbridge Heights Nursing Home has created a lot of problems for the neighborhood.

Howard Levenger: He fought the illegal supportive housing that was torn down. The nursing home has over 400 beds. The area already has too much supportive housing.

The chairman stated that the Padavan Law was poorly written legislation and that the pool to decide if a certain area has too much supportive housing is too large to be effective. If the opposition to this project tries to use the Padavan Law, the opposition will be disappointed in the outcome.

Cliff Stanton: This project would kill the neighborhood.

Josephine Terrace: Currently, the area is a safe neighborhood. This project will make the area less safe.

Margaret Groarke: She encourages people to go on U.P. website. She thinks we are getting ahead of ourselves by opposing something that we do not have all the information for. Currently, the site is a vacant lot and she feels unsafe in front of the lot. Also, we should be asking questions about who will be moving into the facility. Maybe, the residents are not "ax murderers." Also, veterans need our help too. She mentioned that she is posting information about this project on www.fipna.org.

Another resident spoke about the area already being overcrowded and too much traffic. The resident has not heard how this supportive housing will actually help the neighborhood. Adding more people to the area will not be helpful.

Another resident stated that there are six to eight vacant lots in Riverdale. Why doesn't U.P. purchase one of these lots to build their housing? If it is just veterans living in the housing, then she would not have any problem with the project. However, since no veterans with mental disabilities will be living in the housing, she is worried about the safety of the neighborhood.

Assemblyman Dinowitz: He has always been supportive of group homes. However, he would not want a 90 unit building next to his building and therefore, he would not support a project that is this large. He understands that promises that are made now are not always kept in the future. If this was a 10 unit building, he would have no problem supporting this project.

The chairman stated that he would like to setup a date for the week of January 11th to have another public meeting. He also asked four people in the community to have a meeting with U.P. before the next meeting to let them know their concerns and to obtain more information about the project.

Submitted by,

Ari Goldman