

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT RIVERDALE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
4765 HENRY HUDSON PARKWAY
SEPTEMBER 9, 2013**

PRESENT

AFFILIATION

Charles Moerdler	Chair, Land Use
Martin Wolpoff	Vice Chair, Land Use
Robert Fanuzzi	Chair
Sylvia Alexander	CB8
Bob Bender	CB8
Andrew Cohen	CB8
Lisa Daub	CB8
Anthony Fella	CB8
Philip Friedman	CB8
Rosemary Ginty	CB8
Michael Heller	CB8
Maria Khury	CB8
David Kornbluh	CB8
Dana Lennon	CB8
Patricia Mullen	CB8
Dan Padernacht	CB8
Lamont Parker	CB8
Karen Pesce	CB8
Joyce Pilsner	CB8
Robert Press	CB8
James Rather	CB8
Julie Reyes	CB8
Georgia Santiago	CB8
Gary Singleton	CB8
Mercedes Zegarra-Soja	CB8
Laura Spalter	CB8
Herbert Young	CB8
Nicole Stent	CB8 District Manager
Michael Blaustein	rep. Senator Klein
Andrew Sandler	rep. Councilman Koppell
Juton Horstman	Department of City Planning
Marcia Allina	
Paul Anid	
Michael Bialek	HHAR
Stuart Boynton	
Albert Butzel	
Pamela Luna Caplan	
William Cahill	R C Dolner
Robert Dessel	
Richard Falkenratz	
John Field	Building Studio
Robert Giuriceo	
Elizabeth Haase	
Megan Jin	HHAR
Dennis Kandel	RCC
David Kaplan	

Jennifer Klein	RCC
Betty Klein	
Jody Klein	
Robin Klein	
Peter Kohlmann	
Luz Licheslu	Hebrew Home
Jay Martino	Stagg Group
Kevin Massey	
Aaron Mittman	
Pearl Moerdler	
J. Orifili	
Sherida Paulsen	
Henry Pollach	
Robert Reich	
Anne Shahmoor	
Sandy Shalleck	
Tracey Sokoloff	
Harry Stevens	
Jennifer Sukhdler	
B. T. Volpe	Riverdale Community Coalition (RCC)
Barry Willner	
Penny Wilson	
William Wussell	
Martin Zelnik	RCC

The meeting was held at Riverdale Presbyterian Church.

At 7:31 PM Land Use chairman Charles Moerdler called the meeting to order.

The first item to be heard was 6155 Broadway by Jay Montino of the Stagg Group. Proposed is an 8 story mixed use market rate building. The ground floor will be commercial, there will be 44 units of housing, and two floors underground for 44 parking spaces. Dec. 1st is the ground breaking. Permits are being applied for now, with the hope of no blasting for the 25 foot excavation needed. A demolition permit will be sought for mid-October. The site is the old Riverdale Press building and the house to the south of it, not the gas station or the building north of the Riverdale Press.

C. Moerdler asked for a written plan and onsite parking of any construction vehicles.

C. Moerdler added when told that construction vehicles may be on street and sidewalk that the 50th police precinct would be called to enforce any parking violations. C. Moerdler referred the developer to Traffic & Transportation Chair Dan Padernacht for the traffic plan and the blocking off of any sidewalks.

The next item was the enlargement of the St. Patrick's Nursing home parking lot into a 104 space, 3 level parking garage and storage area. There was a question of the original 1987 building that had not been officially approved but built. That matter was approved by the committee in a resolution to the full board. As for the new parking garage the estimated time of construction is 15 months. Two to three months for foundation and superstructure work, and then interior work will be done. The Saxon Avenue sidewalk next to the property is to be closed as to house construction trailers. Since deliveries will be unloaded in the street next to the parking on the other side of Saxon Avenue will be temporary suspended resulting in a loss of 6

parking spaces. Employees of the home will park at 2 other parking lots (Botanical Garden & Fordham University). The developer said there will be a flagman to which C. Moerdler requested two flag men one at Van Cortlandt and Saxon, and the other at Sedgwick and Saxon.

Bronx Community Board 8 Chairman Fanuzzi mentioned that there were two separate applications tonight. Number 140051ZSX is to approve the 1987 construction, and number 1101022ZSK was for the enlargement of the parking lot. There was additional discussion on fair share policies for places such as this ending with the committee being told that no additional beds will be added to St. Patrick's.

The votes were both 24 in favor with 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

S. Alexander, B. Bender, L. Daub, R. Fanuzzi, A. Fella, P. Friedman, R. Ginty, M. Heller, M. Khury, D. Lennon, C. G. Moerdler, P. Mullen, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, J. Pilsner, R. Press, J. Rather, J. Reyes, G. Santiago, G. Singleton, L. Spalter, M. Wolpoff, H. Young, M. Zegarra-Soja voted in favor.

Next up was a presentation by Hebrew Home CEO Dan Reingold which included a slide show and mention of 7 community meetings to where the project was tonight. Mr. Reingold said that 50% of the proposed buildings were moved from the south campus to the north campus, that instead of 300 units there are now only 170 units on the south campus, there will be 250,000 less square feet usage, that the buildings will be 3 or 4 stories instead of the original 8 proposed, the entrance gate on Palisades has been moved back, and there would be more underground parking. He added that the new plan is environmentally sensitive, has open space, gives access to the Greenway, and will offer the best health care as people age.

There were images of what the finished project would look like, and photos of a similar one in another state. D. Reingold said that the Hebrew Home had met with and listened to its neighbors to adjust to this latest proposal. Drawings were shown of just how this presentation differed to the January 2013 proposal. How more of the buildings have been moved to the north campus from the south campus thus creating more open space that the community wanted.

Ms. Jennifer Klein of the Riverdale Community Coalition thanked the Hebrew Home for their continued conversation with the community, and revisions of the original proposal, but she said that the latest proposal was still too large for the property. Ms. Klein brought up Mr. Martin Zelnick an architect who proposed a different even smaller proposal for the south campus. The argument was that the proposed building did not meet the R11 zoning regulations, and did not conform to the Special Nature Area District as put forth in the 197A plan by CB 8. M. Zelnick argued that the R11 zoning does not permit a one family house over 35 feet in height, and that a 3 story building would be higher than 35 feet. If special permits or zoning text changes were afforded to this proposal that it would affect the entire SNAD area and the 3 boroughs that have SNAD areas.

Mr. Reingold said that he was surprised by the RCC proposal to tell a property owner what to do with their land. He added that the latest proposal does conform to the R11 zoning and the SNAD rules, and when asked by C. Moerdler if it would be as of right the answer by Mr. Reingold was "Yes, senior housing is allowed". Board member R. Ginty said that the R11 zoning is for single family housing period, not multi use housing as proposed. The argument on the R11 zoning continued with the representative from City Planning who was present saying that both side could be right. He added that CPC would have to look at the submitted plan first.

Questions from the audience were then taken. The difference of the two plans is that one would require a special permit. Mr. Zelnick said the R11 zoning would require one since the Hebrew Home proposal falls under group 2 instead of the zoned group 1 use. He then said that the RCC would compromise a little if needed.

C. Moerdler asked for the pricing of the proposed units. Mr. Reingold answered that people could buy in at \$500,000.00 for the estate to get back 50-75% of the value.

Other questions included permits and text changes to which C. Moerdler said that the Community Board has not taken any position on this proposal since the board has not been given any plans by City Planning. Traffic & Transportation Chair Dan Padernacht wanted to know the impact on West 256th and West 259th Streets. D. Reingold said that there would be a reduction of traffic by taking out of service 150 beds in the skilled nursing home, and that there would be less employees and deliveries. This reduction would be done through attrition and moving some people to managed long care to eliminate the highest cost of Medicaid. To a question of people with Medicaid living in the new units Mr. Reingold said it was not for people on Medicaid and that there would be a small monthly maintenance fee also in addition to the buy in.

As to low income senior housing Mr. Reingold said that the Hebrew Home was proud of its high rate of Medicaid patients and would like to incorporate low income housing. As for the RCC proposal Mr. Reingold said that it is far apart on the number of units, but in agreement on the open space, lower traffic, and allowing access to the Greenway and Hudson River. Mr. Reingold said that he wants to get to a place where all can agree on a good plan for all sides and all the issues are addressed. Mr. Zelnick clarified the RCC proposal of the south campus The R11 zoning, which he said the north campus was zoned R4 allowing for different development.

C. Moerdler asked that if only the two buildings were to be built on the south campus as proposed by the RCC are they not concerned with the north side. Mr. Zelnick replied that the RCC cannot control what the Hebrew Home does with the north campus, and what is built there which is already high. It is the open spaces and views that are the concerns of the RCC. Mr. Reingold stated that the RCC plan would not work financially, and for people to get the services the Hebrew Home would lose money. He added that people want to use Metro North to get downtown, not their cars.

C. Moerdler asked how many current and projected future residents use community facilities and local shopping. D. Reingold answered that currently there is a van that travels throughout the community designed for people to age in place. As for access to the Greenway D. Reingold said that there would be no cars, only biking or walking to it, but C. Moerdler interrupted that there was one main obstacle, the Metro North tracks. D. Reingold then said that there was an old trestle on the new property over the tracks that could be used for an access point.

C. Moerdler noted that the tensions tonight, the need to provide for an ever aging community, and not to warehouse them, plus a community that is comprised of low rise housing. C. Moerdler asked "Where is the tradeoff"? He said that no vote would be taken tonight, but there is tension here. Further comments and questions included that the RCC does not speak for the entire community, and if the Hebrew Home was nonprofit to which the answer was yes it was. Another comment was that the community did not want to see over expansion such as the SAR school had done on West 254th Street. More information on the internal roadway of the proposal is needed.

C. Moerdler thanked all for expressing their views and asking their questions in a civil matter. That there has been much movement towards an agreement which has not been met yet ending the discussion on this issue.

Next was Landmarks Preservation Commission application No. 14-5502–4503 Fieldston Road, Fieldston Historic District. C. Moerdler said that Landmarks has already acted on this matter, but was keeping it open for Community Board comments.

The vote was **VOTE**: 27 In Favor, 0 Opposed, and 0 Abstentions.

In favor

S.. Alexander, B. Bender, A. Cohen, L. Daub, R. Fanuzzi, A. Fella, P. Friedman, R. Ginty, M. Heller, M. Khury, D. Kornbluh, D. Lennon, C. G. Moerdler, P. Mullen, D. Padernacht, L. Parker, K. Pesce, J. Pilsner, R. Press, J. Rather, J. Reyes, G. Santiago, G. Singleton, L. Spalter, M. Wolpoff, H. Young, M. Zegarra-Soja.

C. Moerdler spoke on the Self-Help issue from the last Land Use meeting stating that there will be a meeting of the elected officials and Bronx Borough President on the issue. He added that he has met with the Bronx Borough President, commissioners, and others to see where the Self Help project is going. He said that the Community Board was the last to be informed about this project. He also mentioned the governor's executive order to break up mentally disabled homes similar to the current Riverdale Manor on Broadway. Also added was the thought that the project was as of right, but most governmental people (unnamed) C. Moerdler spoke to want this project done. There are issues of parking, the size of the facility, and that 26 of the 86 units will be housed with continuing serious mental people. CB 8 is over saturated with similar buildings, and the issue is not linked to the construction but to concerns over the executive order to closing facilities like the Riverdale Manor. C. Moerdler added that it would demonstrate North Riverdale is no dumping ground.

CB 8 Chair Fanuzzi thanked those board members who visited the Self Help facilities, said that this proposed building seems to be too large for the current zoning, and thanked Mr. Moerdler for his hard work on this issue. R. Fanuzzi also mentioned the meeting last week that he and Councilman Koppell had attended on the issue.

Councilman Oliver Koppell spoke saying that he is the Chair of the Committee of Mental Health for the City Council and is aware of the needs of the city. He mentioned that 50,000 people are still homeless, and in the past mentally ill people were put into institutions to die. Adult homes are not the proper way to take care of mentally ill people, and they need to be included into the community. He repeated Governor Cuomo's executive order to close down large facilities in favor of smaller community based homes. Councilman Koppell said it must be done as of right and here parking is a legitimate concern. He added that Self Help is one of the best groups to do this. He believes with some modification this plan can work.

Board member Laura Spalter went over the 9 criteria items for the 26 units which included very difficult people and from jail. She said she spoke to Self Help and Communitlife and received two different answers to her question about the occupants of the 26 units set aside. She added NYNY3 when using the search engine Google came up with the criteria for this funding which the proposed project is to receive.

A motion to accept the minutes was approved with the same results 27 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

A motion to authorize CB 8 to appear and testify on the matter of 3333 Giles Place was approved 26 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention Dan Padernacht.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Minutes submitted by Robert Press who was drafted by the Chair.