

## BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

### MINUTES OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 7, 2013, AT THE CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE 475 WEST 250<sup>TH</sup> STREET

#### PRESENT

**CB8:** S. Alexander, B. Bender, A. P. Creaney, L. Daub, R. Fanuzzi, A. Fella, P. Friedman, M. Goodman, M. Heller, M. Khury, G. O. Koppell, D. Kornbluh, D. Lennon, C. G. Moerdler, D. Padernacht, L. Parker, J. M. Pilsner, R. Press, J. Rather, G. Santiago, G. Singleton, L. Spalter, I.W. Stone, M. Wolpoff

N. Stent – CB8 District Manager

**Guests/Community Members:** J. Dinowitz – Assemblyman, P. Beitchman, B. Unger, T. Durham, D. Walsh, R. Bub, J. Gasser, R. Patt, C. Scheele, H. Augenbraum, S. Havman, A. Gleason, S. Weeks, I. Obernesser, L. Cohen, M. Gothelf, A. Monahan, S. Shahrigian – Riverdale Press, N. Levinson, D. Pitula – St. Gabriel's School, J. Lutz, L. Lagdamen, S. Soohoo, E. Pers, A. Gordon, R. Dornbush, M. Newman – Montefiore, B. Unger – Riverdale Review, M. Curanas – Salvatores of Soho, M. Moulton, J. Fletcher, L. Eidelman, D. Kohavy, T. Rivera – NYCDCC, J. Pachman, D. Weinstock, K. Knowles, J. Xlhet, H. Rosen, M. Newman – Newman Design, J. Kelleher – Simone, E. Gansea, E. Dunnion, J. Demko – Ofc. of Assemblyman Dinowitz, Dunnion, B. Dunnion, M. Mannion, S. Mannion, A. Cohen, M. Gwertzman, J. Levin, C. Levin, S. Benardo, A. Noonan, M. Blaustein – Ofc. of Senator Klein, L. Perlmutter, S. Ramos-Alame, J. Moerdler – Mintz Levin, M. McLoughlin, A. Cohen – Ofc. of Council Koppell, C. Pantazis, A. Pantazis, M. Fitzgerald

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Charles Moerdler (CM) at 7:25PM.

CM spoke about changes to the Self-Help proposal now that Communlife had pulled out of the deal. He mentioned the 197A plan by CB 8 10 years ago, and spoke of down zoning parts of the CB again. A sub committee of Land Use will be set up with Ms. R. Ginty (Chair of Law & Ethics) as Co-Chair of the sub committee with CB 8 Treasurer P. Friedman, and asked for volunteers to let the board office know of their interest to be on the sub committee.

CM disclosed that one of the presenters of Item #3 on the agenda is a blood relative to him, and he will exclude himself from the issue to be presented. The Vice-Chair will be in charge of discussion on Item #3.

Agenda Item #1 – Stagg Group LLC proposal for a 6 story mixed use commercial, community, and residential building with a 2 level parking cellar at 5959 Broadway & W. 242<sup>nd</sup> Street. CM said that an as of right market rate housing building has a community facility, and is being built on top of an old gas station. The site has an LITTLE E designation by the Mayor's Office of Remediation from 2008 when the gasoline tanks were taken out. A question of the contamination of the soil was answered that if it is track 1 or 100% clean no remediation is

needed. If it is Track 4 the soil is trucked off site to be cleaned of contaminants, and is monitored for 9 years.

The 6 story building will have 2 sub levels of parking (33,000 total Square feet) to hold 110 cars. The first floor is to be retail, the second floor is to be for a community facility (i.e. charter school or medical offices), and the top four floors are to be 72 units of housing. Any extra parking spots will be open to the community, and the developer will manage the building like another property on 6151 Broadway.

Mr. Dan Walsh identified himself as being from OER, and said that the local library has the facts on the property on depository, and it is also on [nyc.gov/oer](http://nyc.gov/oer) in the document depository link.

Item #2 ULURP # N 110346 ECX, DCA # 1391747 Dale Restaurant was laid over since the applicant was not present.

For Item #3 CM turned the meeting over to Vice-Chair M. Wolpoff. A presentation by Simone Management of demolition, construction, and development plans of property 3741 & 3735 Riverdale Avenue, and 3644 Oxford Avenue for a proposed 11 story medical facility with parking.

Mr. Wolpoff announced that this is an as of right building, and there were five speakers to the item after the presentation. Mr. Jeff Moerdler of Vince Levin gave the presentation He announced who was present from Simone and Montefiore, and went on to discuss how the site was identified as to accommodate all of the West-Med & Montefiore facilities to be implemented. Mr. J. Moerdler said that Monti-West Med needs no approval, but wants to be a good neighbor and that was why they came tonight. He said he wanted the community to have accurate information about the project, and to hear the concerns of the CB and community.

J. Moerdler said that he is the contact person for the project, and introduced Dr. Racine the Chief Medical Officer for Montefiore Hospital. Dr. Racine said that Montefiore has been in the Bronx for 100 years, and its mission is that of bringing high quality medicine to 22 sites in the Bronx and Westchester County. 300,000 people are in its medical group, and 100,000 others receive primary care and specialized medicine from Montefiore. This site will be full service of medical care, in walking distance, driving area, and of public transit where 1,000 people a week can get medical, rehabilitation, and pharmacy needs in the most efficient way thanks to their partner West Med.

Dr. Schwartz of West Med said that West Med has five sites for one stop medical care, and that patients currently include some who come from the Riverdale area. He said that there would be 50 doctors and ancillary services. 20 – 30 specialist would be on site, and doctors from the area would be sought to join them.

There was a slide show of renderings of how the building would look. It would be 10 feet set back off the Riverdale Avenue side with an entrance. It would be set back 100 feet from Oxford Avenue for a circular driveway entrance and be 11 stories total in height. The ground floor space on Riverdale Avenue would be administrative and house a pharmacy. There would be three floors of parking to house 109 cars (later corrected to 120 cars), and eight floors of office space. The building would be seven feet higher than the eleven story coop currently next door on Oxford Avenue. It will be almost 100 percent recessed from the coop and little rock removal will be needed to level the parcel.

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz thinks that Montefiore is a great institution (which has his Gall Bladder), and he thinks the building is good for the community, but is concerned about the size of the building. He mentioned that there is a pharmacy a few doors down from the site as well as others nearby, and the cafe for the workers should not duplicate the fine eating establishments on Riverdale Avenue or Johnson Avenue. As for the numbers he does not see 1,000 patients a week coming from Riverdale, and suggested the following. The need to have more off-site parking for staff, and the possibility of making Oxford Avenue a one way street.

Councilman Oliver Koppell said that the project is completely out of scale, and he is against the proposal. He said it is not needed, the population of Riverdale is only 40,000 people.

Councilman elect Andrew Cohen expressed caution by saying that Montefiore needs to listen to the community concerns.

The speakers list was next with the owner of the house south on Oxford Ave speaking first. He said there is stone under his house, his doctor is in Greece, and the project is too big.

Ann Noonan of 3660 Oxford Avenue showed a photo of a dumpster on the old driveway on Oxford Avenue held back by only a piece of wood. She mentioned while Asbestos was being removed the workers were not wearing protective clothing, and when questioned they wet down the materials in the dumpster.

S. Ganter President of the Fieldston Garden Apartments Coop said that two and one half million dollars was spent to purchase the old DJ Drug building alone. He said that there is an urgent care facility in the Skyview Shopping Center, and the only place other than Riverdale that has more doctors per square foot is Forrest Hills Queens.

Mr. Jim Grossman also of the FGA Coop Said he remembered the fight against the proposed 18 story Atria nearby that was reduced to 14 stories before being built. He said that people from outside of Riverdale would come to this building, and said that Montefiore has a building currently on Johnson Avenue. He added that there was an imaging center on Johnson Avenue that went bankrupt, and that Montefiore has a two story building in Yonkers with 20 doctors and 60 parking spaces. He vowed to fight this proposed 11 story building.

M. Blaustein of Senator Jeff Klein's office said that Senator Klein would be working with Montefiore Hospital and the community on the proposed plan.

Vice Chair Wolpoff asked if there will be any blasting of the rock, and the answer was about 2 – 3 feet of rock may have to be removed but no answer as to how it would be done. J. Moerdler said that the project is not finalized yet, the land was acquired and preliminary plans were drawn up. Montefiore came to let the community know of their plans which he said are still evolving, and announced that the pharmacy will not be included in this plan. He added that the Cafe is not a restaurant, and that urgent care will be on the first floor.

There was a comment from the audience that Montefiore is coming into the Riverdale area not to make a fast buck, but provide quality health care.

S. Bernardo a former CB 8 member said that there are things the board can do such as the staging area with DOT. He said this will negatively affect the property values in the area.

A resident of 3660 Oxford Avenue said he is a long time resident and parking has been a problem ever since he moved in.

A resident of the new 6 story building next to the site said that the Montefiore building would face right into her apartment.

CM said that Montefiore has agreed to back to the drawing board and come back next month with a better plan. When asked if the current ongoing demolition would be halted, J. Moerdler said it is ongoing and will continue. He added that no construction would begin and that Montefiore and West Med would be back next month with a revised plan.

Councilman Koppell advised as an ex office of the board that anyone who wants to speak should. Let it be noted that no Community Board 8 members other than the chair of CB 8 and both the chair and vice chair of the Land Use Committee spoke, and at times to restore order as in this case. The minutes were stopped as people yelled out statements that could not be heard and more than one person spoke at a time.

Minutes submitted by Robert Press.