

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**  
**ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 170087 ZMX**  
**Whitlock Avenue and East 165<sup>th</sup> Street Rezoning**

**DOCKET DESCRIPTION**

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by The Ader Group LLC (the applicant) pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment to the Zoning Map, Section No. 6c:

1. Changing from an M1-1 District to an R8A District property bounded by East 165<sup>th</sup> Street, Whitlock Avenue, and a line 100 feet easterly of Longfellow Avenue; and
2. Establishing within the proposed R8A District a C2-4 District bounded by East 165<sup>th</sup> Street, Whitlock Avenue, and a line 100 feet easterly of Longfellow Avenue;

Borough of The Bronx, Community District #2, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated January 30, 2017, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-413.

**BACKGROUND**

Approval of this application will eliminate an existing M1-1 District and adopt a R8A/C2-4 District. This amendment will facilitate construction of two mixed-use residential buildings which will offer a total of 472 units of affordable housing. This amendment also incorporates a commercial overlay to facilitate the inclusion of retail locations within these buildings. The site yields 61,586 square feet of property located on Block 2756, Lots 85 and 90. It is bounded by Whitlock Avenue on the east, East 165<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, Longfellow Avenue to the west, and Aldus Avenue on the south.

Existing development of this property includes one-story garages and auto-related facilities, all of which will require demolition. The applicant is committed to working with the Sunrise Cooperative to identify alternative locations for these businesses.

The proposed development of this site includes construction of two residential buildings, each of which will rise 14-stories along the Whitlock Avenue frontage. The first of these buildings will commence construction during 2017, the second will commence following completion of the first. It is anticipated that all construction will conclude by 2022. The height of the building located on the northwest corner of Whitlock Avenue at East 165<sup>th</sup> Street, will gradually “step-down” from 14-stories on the east, to eight stories and then to six stories, going from east to west along East 165<sup>th</sup> Street. Taken together these two buildings will total of 426,107 square feet of space (6.79 FAR). Additional totals include:

- Total dwelling unit count: 474 dwelling units
- Community facility floor area: 9,520 square feet in Building #1
- Commercial floor area: 14,937 square feet in Building #2
- Garage vehicle parking space: 69 spaces
- Exterior garden & recreation space: 13,628 square feet

- Public accessible garden area: 4,776 square feet
- Community room: Building 1: 5,855 square feet  
Building 2: 7,834 square feet

The percentage of units and their net square foot measurements for this project include:

20% studios at:	364 square feet
40% 1-bedroom units at:	520 square feet
24% 2-bedroom units at:	754 square feet
15% 3-bedroom units at:	1,015 square feet
Plus 2 units for superintendents	

The affordability of the units provided include:

10%:	Our Space
5%:	30% Area Median Income (AMI)
2.5%:	40% of AMI
25%:	50% of AMI
33%:	60% of AMI
2.5%:	70% of AMI
33%:	80% of AMI

Development in the surrounding community is typified by auto-related retail activity on Whitlock Avenue. Residential development includes low-rise, one and two family homes which are located on the western side of on Block 2756, and front on Longfellow Avenue. Numerous mid-rise residential development, including four and five story buildings are located within a three block radius of the development site. Retail activity and bus transportation are found on Westchester Avenue, approximately four blocks west of the site. The Sheridan Expressway and an elevated section of the #6 are both located on the east side of Whitlock Avenue, opposite the proposed building site. Access to the #6 train at the Whitlock Avenue station is conveniently available within a two block radius. Starlight Park, Concrete Plant Park and The Bronx River are all within six blocks of the building site.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION**

This application was reviewed pursuant to SEQR and CEQR and received a Type II Designation. This application was certified by the Planning Commission as complete on January 30, 2017.

**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING**

Bronx Community Board # 2 held a public hearing on this application on March 29, 2017. A vote recommending approval of this application with modifications/conditions was 24 in favor, four opposed and zero abstaining.

## **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING**

The Bronx Borough President convened a public hearing on this application on April 20, 2017. Representatives of the applicant were present and spoke on favor of this application. Representatives of Bronx Community Board #2 were also present and offered testimony noting the Community Board's record of support and the modifications/conditions submitted for consideration. No other members of the public were present and the hearing was closed.

## **BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

The West Farms/Longwood community, located west of the Sheridan Expressway, is now experiencing one of the largest residential developments being constructed in The Bronx. Currently over 1,300 units of affordable housing are under construction, with the potential of 2,600 units, thanks to the rezoning starting a half-mile north of an area between Jennings Street and East Tremont Avenue along West Farms Road and Boone Avenue. I am therefore especially pleased the rezoning of Whitlock Avenue as this application proposes, will facilitate additional affordable housing development. When completed the two new buildings proposed herein will offer 472 units of needed accommodation. I also contend that given this site's proximity to mass transportation, access to multi-acre parkland that borders the Bronx River and retail activity found on Westchester Avenue, within the scope of this development accommodations specifically designed for our senior citizen community need to also be included. I believe that so doing not only will help to reduce the growing demand for good quality senior citizen housing, but affords all those residing here with benefits only realized through multi-generational living environments.

As I consider the merits of this application, I am also mindful of the automotive development that is currently in place. I strongly support the applicant's decision to engage the Sunrise Co-Op planned for Hunts Point to help identify alternative sites for those businesses now in place on Whitlock Avenue. I also applaud the applicant's decision allowing the general public access to a portion of the open space that will offer 4,776 square feet for passive recreation. The way by which building heights on East 165<sup>th</sup> Street "drop down" means that the surrounding community will not be subjected to a perpetual shadow. Owing to the installation of this development's exterior garden areas, the low-rise homes on Longfellow Avenue will not be "towered over."

As the need for an ever increasing number of affordable units continues to grow and construction costs continue to rise, I am aware of how developers are reducing the actual living space available in each unit. When necessary I have commented on such submissions. I am therefore pleased to point out that this project will yield units that exceed the minimum size allowed. To be sure, if families are to consider where they live their home, I believe it is essential that where they reside is safe, clean and comfortable.

I recommend approval of this application.