

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION
ULURP APPLICATION NOS: C 150174 PQX, C 150175 HAX
February 2, 2015**

DOCKET DESCRIPTIONS

C 150174 PQX

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, pursuant to section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the acquisition of property located at 1561 Walton Avenue (Block 2845, Lot 47).

C 150175 HAX

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD);

- 1) Pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:
 - a) The designation of property located at 1561 Walton Avenue (Block 2845, Lot 47), as an Urban Development Action Area: and
 - b) An Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
- 2) Pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the disposition of such property to a developer to be selected by HPD;

To facilitate development of a nine to 11 story residential building with approximately 59 units of affordable housing.

BACKGROUND

Approving these applications will facilitate two objectives:

- 1) **(C 150174 PQX)**-The conveyance of Block 2845, Lot 47 from subsidiary sponsor to HPD, essentially reversing an initial action initiated in 1989 by the New York City Board Estimate to the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).
- 2) **(C 150175 HAX)**-The disposition of Block 2845, Lot 47 from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to a developer selected by HPD.

The project area (Block 2845, Lot 47) consists of approximately 9,193 square feet of property located on the east side of Walton Avenue, between East Mount Eden Avenue on the north and Hawkstone Street on the south. This triangular shaped lot is secured, paved and offers 27 spaces

for vehicles of employees of the Settlement Housing Fund which maintains and operates the New Settlement College Access Center, located at 1563 Walton Avenue. The proposed residential building these applications are considering is to be located at 1561 Walton Avenue. The site is located in Bronx Community District #4 and is zoned R8.

Proposed for construction on Block 2845, Lot 47 is a residential building offering 59 units of housing plus an additional unit for the superintendent. The proposed building will include 11 stories and consist of approximately 66,837 square feet of rental housing for low and moderate income families and homeless individuals. The number of units allocated based on Area Median Income (AMI) include:

40% AMI:	6 Units
50% AMI:	21 Units
60% AMI:	14 Units
90% AMI:	9 Units
Homeless:	9 Units

Unit size will range from one to three bedrooms, plus one studio. The size of each unit consists of:

1 Studio: 455 square feet + exterior garden area offering 200 additional square feet

19 One Bedroom: 600 square feet

30 Two Bedrooms: 700-750 square feet

9 Three Bedrooms: 969 square feet

Qualifying families will range from those families that are homeless with Section 8 vouchers, small families earning approximately \$20,000 per year to larger families with incomes up to \$85,000 annually.

Features to be included at 1561 Walton Avenue include:

A community room for meetings and tenant functions, approximating 300 square feet.

Energy Star appliances

Naturally lit hallways

Exterior garden area for passive recreation

On site laundry facilities and storage accommodations

Development of the surrounding community is predominately comprised of mid rise residential buildings. Retail activity is found on East Mount Eden Avenue, approximately one-half block

from the site. Subway service is available via the 4-Train located within a three block radius of the site and the “D” Train located within a four block radius. Bus transportation operates on the Grand Concourse, one block east of Walton Avenue.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

These applications have been reviewed pursuant to CEQR and SEQRA and received a Negative Declaration. These applications were certified as complete by the City Planning Commission on December 15, 2014.

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Bronx Community Board #4 held a public hearing on these applications on January 15, 2015. A vote recommending approval of these applications with modifications was 28 in favor, zero opposed and one abstaining.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was convened by the Bronx Borough President on January 21, 2015. Representatives of the applicant were present and spoke in favor of this application. One member of the public was present. No other speakers sought to comment and the hearing was closed.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S RECOMMENDATION

Expanding the availability of affordable housing throughout New York City is perhaps the most important challenge we must resolve. It is also essential that such housing accommodate residents with varying incomes as only by so doing can all our communities thrive.

With this caveat in mind I am pleased to note how the proposed development at 1561 Walton Avenue will appeal to individuals and families with a wide range of incomes. As planned, residential units in this building will be available for those currently homeless, to those earning 90 percent of AMI. I also appreciate the fact that of the 59 units to be constructed, nine will offer three bedrooms. This additional room often means that families need never have to worry about relocating and that children can enjoy the dignity of having their “own room.”

I applaud the modifications outlined by Bronx Community Board #4, as they are mandating that Bronx based minority and women owned businesses be given top priority when contractors and building supplies are to be hired and purchased. Such hiring not only benefits our borough’s economy, but when Bronx residents are given opportunity to realize long term living wage employment, these benefits have a profound positive “ripple” effect all across our borough.

I recommend approval of these applications.