

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION
ULURP APPLICATION NUMBERS:
C 160218 MMX, C 160285 ZMX, C 160286 HAX, C 160290 ZSX, C 160307 ZSX
Related Applications
N 160287 ZAX, N 160288 ZRX, N 160289 ZRX, M 160291 ZXX
Lambert Houses Redevelopment
August 4, 2016**

**DOCKET DESCRIPTIONS
Matters Subject to ULURP**

C 160218 MMX

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and Phipps Houses, pursuant to Sections 197-c and 199 of the New York City Charter, and Section 5-430 *et seq.* of the New York City Administrative Code for an amendment to the City Map involving:

- The narrowing by elimination, discontinuance and closing of a portion of East Tremont Avenue from Boston Road to East Tremont Avenue; and
- The adjustment of grades and block dimensions necessitated thereby;

Including authorization for any acquisition or disposition of real property related thereto, in Community District #6, Borough of The Bronx, in accordance with Map No. 13137 dated April 27, 2016, and signed by the Borough President.

C 160285 ZMX

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and Phipps Houses pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 3d:

1. Changing from an R7-1 District to and R8 District property bounded by:
 - a. A line 230 feet southeasterly of Vyse Avenue, East 180th Street, a line perpendicular to the northeasterly street line of East 180th Street distant 336 feet northwesterly (as measured along the street line) from the point of intersection of the northeasterly street line of East 180th Street and the northwesterly street line of Boston Road, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 180th Street, 100 feet northwesterly of Boston Road, 100 feet southwesterly of East 180th Street, 100 feet southeasterly of Boston Road, a line 140 feet northeasterly of East 179th Street, Boston Road, East 179th Street, 100 feet of Boston Road, and 120 feet southwesterly of East 180th Street; and

- b. Boston Road, East 179th Street, the easterly street line of former Bronx Street, East Tremont Avenue*, and West Farms Road; and
2. Establishing within a proposed R8 District a C1-4 District bounded by a line 100 feet northwesterly of Boston Road, Bronx Park South, Boston Road, and East 179th Street;

Borough of The Bronx, Community District #6, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated April 25, 2016.

*Note: a portion of East Tremont Avenue is proposed to be demapped under a concurrent related application C 160218 MMX

C 160286 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 Boston Road (Block 3139, Lot 50), 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 a mixed use development containing approximately 1,665 affordable residential units, approximately 86,608 square feet of retail space and approximately 110 accessory parking spaces in Community District #6, Borough of The Bronx.

C 160290 ZSX

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and Phipps Houses pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the grant of a special permit to Section 78-312(d) of the Zoning Resolution to modify the height and setback requirements of Section 23-632 on the periphery of a large-scale residential development, in connection with a proposed mixed-use development within a proposed large-scale residential development, on property generally bounded by Bronx Park South, Boston Road, east 180th Street, the Bronx River, East Tremont Avenue*, Boston Road, East 179th Street, a line approximately 170 feet southeasterly of Boston Road, a line approximately 240 feet southwesterly of East 180th Street, Boston Road, East 179th Street, a line

approximately 230 feet southwesterly of Vyse Avenue, East 180th Street, the northwesterly street line of former Bryant Avenue, East 181st Street, and Bryant Avenue (Block 3132, Lot 1, Block 3138, Lot 1, Block 3139, Lots 1, 19 & 50, and Block 3140, Lot 7), in R7-1, R7-1/C1-4, R8*, and R8/C1-4** Districts, Borough of The Bronx, Community District 6.

*Note: a portion of East Tremont Avenue is proposed to be demapped under a concurrent related application C 160218 MMX.

**Note: portions of the site is proposed to be rezoned by changing from R7-1 District to R8 District and establishing a C1-4 District within the proposed R8 District under a concurrent application for a Zoning Map change (C 160285 ZMX).

Plans for this proposal are on file with the City Planning Commission and may be seen at 120 Broadway, 31st Floor, New York, NY 10271-0001.

C 160307 ZSX

IN THE MATER OF an application submitted by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and Phipps Houses pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the grant of a special permit to Section 78-312(d) of the Zoning Resolution to modify the height and setback requirements of Section 23-632 on the periphery of a large scale residential development, in connection with a proposed modification of an existing large-scale residential development, on property generally bounded by Bronx Park South, Boston Road, East 180th Street, the Bronx River, East Tremont Avenue*, Boston Road, East 179th Street, a line approximately 170 feet southeasterly of Boston Road, a line approximately 240 feet southwesterly of East 180th Street, Boston Road, East 179th Street, a line approximately 230 feet southeasterly of Vyse Avenue, East 180th Street, the northwesterly street line of the former Bryant Avenue, East 181st Street, and Bryant Avenue (Block 3005, Lot 65, Block 3130, Lots 20 & 100, and Block 3136, Lots 1, 20 & 101), in an R7-1 District, Borough of The Bronx, Community District #6.

Plans for this proposal are on file with the City Planning Commission and may be seen at 120 Broadway, 31st Floor, New York, NY 10271-0001.

BACKGROUND

Approval of these applications will facilitate the demolition of what is currently referred to as the Lambert Houses and the reconstruction of an entirely new complex of residential accommodations, also to be known as the Lambert Houses. The site of this complex is located in the West Farms community of The Bronx on the former Bronx Park South Urban Development Renewal Area (the project area). Lambert Houses occupies 11.8 acres of property located on Block 3138, Lot 1, Block 3132, Lot 1, Block 3140, Lot 7, Block 3139 Lots 1 and 19 and property currently owned by the City of New York's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Block 3139, Lot 50. Consequently, the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and Phipps Houses are co-applicants. It is anticipated that

this entire project will be completed in the year 2029, and will approximate an investment of \$600 million.

The Current Lambert Houses Complex

The current complex known as the Lambert Houses was constructed between 1970 and 1973. Consequently this complex is 43 years old and includes 14 residential buildings offering 731 dwelling units. All residences are included in a series of three Project-based Section 8 contracts. A commercial building offers 40,000 square feet of retail and office accommodation. The following sites make up a portion of the existing Large Scale Redevelopment Plan and will comprise the new Large Scale Redevelopment Plan

Parcel 1: Block 3138, Lot 1

- 2.9 acres
- 237 housing units

Parcel 3: Block 3132, Lot 1

- 4.5 acres
- 325 housing units

Parcel 5: Block 3140, Lot 7

- 1.75 acres
- 169 housing units

Parcel 10: Block 3139, Lots 1, 19

- 2.5 acres
- 40,000 sq. ft. retail & garage providing 375 spaces

Parcel 10: Block 3139, Lot 50

- 3,720 square feet pedestrian plaza

The existing development profile of Lambert Houses is composed of 14 interconnected, six and seven story buildings, located on the previously approved Large Scale Residential Development (LSRD). Several deficiencies of the current development include:

- 42 locations for access and egress making site security virtually impossible to maintain
- Long narrow corridors
- Exterior open space that is undefined and therefore perceived as dangerous
- Super-blocks that discourage street activity
- No definable entry points from the surrounding West Farms neighborhood
- Heating is entirely provided by electricity making such heating extremely costly
- Undersized waste lines for building sewage prompting frequent waste water backflow
- Poorly constructed buildings prone to wall cracks
- No sustainable elements of any kind

Given these significant flaws, the applicants have determined that the most cost effective way by which this development can best serve its residents is to adopt a plan which will allow for the

demolition of specific residential buildings while providing residents living in these buildings with a new, on-site dwelling.

The Proposed Lambert Houses Complex

As a means of accommodating residents of those buildings which will be demolished, Phipps Houses intends to construct new residences which will offer a larger number of units than are provided in those buildings being prepared for demolition. Residents in buildings set to be demolished will be relocated to appropriately accommodating units corresponding to their current family size in newly-constructed buildings. Residents not wishing to relocate to a new unit will have the option of identifying units available at other locations that are owned by Phipps. The new construction will include 12 new residential buildings, the first of which will occupy a site on which a vacant building is currently standing. This initial building will rise to 18 stories and offer 163 residential units. Highlights of this redevelopment plan include:

- Approximately 1,700 new dwelling units thereby increasing the number of such accommodations by approximately 1,000 units
- Approximately 61,000 square feet of retail space thereby increasing the amount of such space by approximately 20,000 square feet
- 110 parking spaces
- Enclosed courtyard and exterior locations for passive recreation thereby improving security
- Potential for retail development on Boston Road
- The reestablishment of previously demapped portions of East 181st Street between Bryant Avenue and Boston Road and on Bryant Avenue between East 179th Street East 181st Street. These locations will remain private property but will function as vehicular right-of-ways within the Lambert Houses complex
- The existing retail development at West Farms Square, which is also well served by both bus and subway access, will be reconstructed and serve as the area's "downtown." A new public school *may* be constructed on property included in this reconstructed community

Parcel Identification and Proposed New Development Buildout

Parcel 1: With the reintroduction of East 181st Street, this parcel will be divided into two blocks:

Block 1: Will be bounded by Bronx Park South on the north, East 181st Street on the south (which will remain a privately owned right-of-way) Bryant Avenue on the west, Boston Road on the east.

Block 2: Will be bounded by East 181st Street on the north, (which will remain a privately owned right-of-way) East 180th Street on the south, Bryant Avenue on the west, Boston Road on the east.

It is anticipated Parcel 1 will accommodate four new buildings ranging in height from seven to 15 stories. The four buildings will offer at total of 494 units.

- Building 1A: 135 units
- Building 1B: 104 units
- Building 1C: 162 units
- Building 1D: 93 units

Parcel 3: With the reintroduction of Bryant Avenue, this parcel will be divided into two blocks:

Block 1: Will be bounded by East 180th Street on the north, East 179th Street on the south, Bryant Avenue (which will remain a privately owned right-of-way) on the west, Boston Road on the east.

Block 2: Will be bounded by East 180th Street on the north and East 179th Street on the south Vyse Avenue on the west, Bryant Avenue (which will remain a privately owned right-of-way) on the east.

It is intended that the first newly constructed residential building will rise to approximately 18 stories and include 163 residential units. This building will be situated on Parcel 3A, located on the southeast corner of East 180th Street and Bryant Avenue (which will remain a privately owned right-of-way). The anticipated unit breakout for Building 3A includes:

- 12 Studio Units
- 60 1 Bedroom Units
- 60 2 Bedroom Units
- 31 3 Bedroom Units

Existing development on parcel 3A consist of a vacant building which will be demolished, thereby facilitating the new construction with no residential relocation required.

Overall, a total of six new residential buildings will be constructed on Parcel 3. These six buildings will offer 737 units, divided thusly:

- Building 3A: 163 units-18 stories
- Building 3B: 89 units- 8 stories
- Building 3C: 125 units-13 stories, plus ground floor retail*
- Building 3D: 156 units-14 stories, plus ground floor retail*

Building 3E: 76 units-10 stories
Building 3F: 128 units- 9 stories

*Retail space will approximate a grand total of 6,000 square feet (i.e. 3,000 square feet in each building)

Parcel 5: Bounded by East 180th Street on the north, East 179th Street on the south, Boston Road on the west and the Bronx River on the east. Overall, a total of two new buildings will be constructed on Parcel 5 and will include 301 residential units, divided thusly:

Building 5A: 164 units- 8 stories
Building 5B: 137 units-16 stories

Parcel 10: Bounded by East 179th Street on the north, East Tremont Avenue on the south, Boston Road on the west and the Bronx River on the east. Overall, a total of one mixed use building will be constructed and will offer 133 residential units. This building will also include 44,568 square feet of retail on the ground floor and will rise to a maximum of 15 stories.

New retail space will be situated on the northeast corner of Boston Road at East Tremont Avenue. Approximately 50 accessory parking spaces will be located on the roof of the one-story portion of the building fronting on Boston Road. Pursuant to the C1-4 requirement of one space per 1,000 square feet of floor area, 45 spaces are mandated.

The School Construction Authority (SCA) will have the option to acquire property located on the eastern edge of Parcel 10, where the Bronx River Greenway intersects East Tremont Avenue. Pending the need for additional elementary school seats approximating 500, the new school would offer 86,608 square feet of floor area. If the SCA deems this new building unnecessary, a five-story residential building offering 55 units would be constructed instead.

Summary of ULURP Actions

To facilitate this development approving the necessary ULURP applications will:

- 1) Modification of the previously approved Large Scale Residential Development (LSRD) to remove Lambert Houses from the limits of the original LSRD and a Special Permit pursuant to ZR 78-312 to ensure that no new non-compliances are created in the modified previously approved LSRD
- 2) Disposition of city-owned property pursuant to UDAAP designation and project approval
- 3) Zoning Map amendment to change portion of the Project Area from R7-1 and R7-1/C1-4, to R8 and R8/C1-4.

- 4) Zoning Authorizations pursuant to ZR 78-311 to allow relief from height and setback requirements and to permit distribution of the total floor area and open space without regard for zoning lot lines or zoning district boundaries
- 5) Zoning Special Permit pursuant to ZR 78-312 for minor variations in the height and setback regulations on the periphery of the LSRD and to permit a lot line abutting a public park to be considered a street line for the purposes of applying the requirements of Section 23-8 (Minimum Distance Between Legally Required Windows and Walls or Lot Lines)
- 6) Zoning text amendments to designate Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Area that applies to the requirement of Option 1 and to establish that in R7-1 and R8 Districts within Bronx Community District #6 where a lot line abuts a public park, such lot line may by Special Permit of the City Planning Commission be considered a street line for the purposes of applying the requirements of Section 23-86 (Minimum Distance Between Legally Required Windows and Walls or Lot Lines).
- 7) In conjunction with these actions, a concurrently related application for an amendment to the City Map (C 160218 MMX) is being proposed to eliminate a portion of East Tremont Avenue, designated Block 3139, Lot 50, which would be removed from the mapped street.

Existing development in the surrounding community includes retail activity and mass transit access at East Tremont Avenue. Here subway service via the IRT 2 and 5 trains is available, as well as bus service provided by the BX9, 21, 36, 40, 42 and Q44, and the BxM10 Express Bus. The development is also immediately served by the Cross Bronx and Sheridan Expressways and the Bronx River Parkway. Excluding the existing Lambert Houses development, residential accommodations are typified by midrise multiunit buildings and low-rise, wood-frame, one and two family dwellings. This community is also bounded by the Bronx River, along the banks of the Bronx River Greenway. Bronx Park, which includes the Bronx Zoo, is situated at the northern boundary of the Lambert Houses community.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

These applications have been reviewed pursuant to CEQR and SEQR and received a Positive Declaration. The City Planning Commission certified these applications as complete on April 25, 2016.

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was called by Bronx Community Board #6 on June 22, 2016. A vote recommending approval of these applications was 14 in favor, seven against, two abstaining.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was convened by the Bronx Borough President on July 26, 2016. Representatives of the applicants were present and spoke in favor of this application. A member of the public offering testimony on behalf of 32BJ SEIU submitted a written statement expressing opposition to the applications being considered. There being no other members of the public wishing to offer testimony, the hearing on these matters was closed.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

For decades the most critical challenge confronting the City of New York has been affordable housing for those whose income is low, or even extremely low. By way of meeting this need, the Lambert Houses were constructed by Phipps Houses between 1970-1973, at a time when so much of The Bronx was being ripped apart by arson-for-profit. A key provision of this new development was it being subject to "project-based Section 8 contracts." Essentially, this designation meant that all those residing at the Lambert Houses would benefit from the subsidies provided through Section 8, so long as they remained a resident of the Lambert Houses. This subsidy, along with the park-like surroundings that defined the Lambert Houses, made this development one of the most desired addresses a person or family with limited means could hope to acquire. Today, this model is no longer sustainable, practical or even functional. Among these shortcomings are poorly-designed common areas, lack of defensible exterior boundaries along with 42 points of entrance egress, defective construction and the use of inferior building materials, as well as a complete lack of any sustainable design and energy conservation measures. Therefore, to satisfy what we today consider to be a well thought-out, planned-out and built-out large scale development, Phipps is presenting an entirely new vision for the Lambert Houses community.

As proposed by Phipps, the new Lambert Houses will be entirely demolished over a period of approximately 15 years and completely reconstructed. The key to making this possible is that for each current building being demolished, a new building will be completed and offer more accommodations than what is being torn down. Consequently, two objectives are met. First, residents who wish to remain a resident of the Lambert Houses need not worry about being forced to relocate and thereby have to sacrifice their Section 8 benefits. Second, at a time when the demand for such housing is at historical highs, when completed the new Lambert Houses will offer 12 new buildings with 1,665 units, approximately 1,000 more than exist today.

Needless to say, I am most supportive of this proposal while noting the many benefits Phipps and those residing at the new Lambert Houses community will realize. Highlights include:

- The reintroduction of the street-grid. Rather than having large areas of unsecured open space that are considered to be unsafe by both residents and management, as proposed the new plan reintroduces the "city block." As such, people are better able to define their community and create venues for neighborly interaction. This will serve to improve security and allow for a more congenial place for all to enjoy.
- Modern, energy efficient and sustainable buildings will be constructed, including naturally lit common areas and, perhaps most importantly, the

elimination of what is now a complex entirely heated by electricity and replaced by state-of-the-art climate control services.

- Enclosed courtyard areas, which will improve security and afford residents an amenity they will feel at ease using.
- Interior common areas that can be monitored for both security and ease of maintenance.
- Venues for additional retail activity on Boston Road and construction of a major retail site at West Farms Square.
- Buildings that are well constructed and served by new water and sewage systems that are appropriately designed.
- Increasing the residential density of the Lambert Houses, mindful of its proximity to both subway and bus services.
- A site allocated for the potential construction of a new 500-seat elementary school, pending the determination that the new Lambert Houses requires such a facility.

I support the vision as proposed by Phipps. I am confident that the \$600 million investment that this redevelopment represents will assist our city's neediest families, a community from which all who live here will realize a sense of dignity and pride. This is truly a legacy project that will help define the future of affordable housing in New York City.

I recommend approval of this application.