



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

March 24, 2010/Calendar No. 2

C 100162 HAK

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**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 295 Eldert Street (Block 3413, Lot 1); 801, 799 and 797 Knickerbocker Avenue (Block 3413, Lots 2-4), 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 six-story building, tentatively known as Knickerbocker Commons, with approximately 24 residential units and community facility space, to be developed under the New York State Housing Trust Fund Program, Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 4.

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Approval of three separate matters is required:

1. The designation of property located at 295 Eldert Street (Block 3413, Lot 1) and 797-801 Knickerbocker Avenue (Block 3413, Lots 24) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
2. An Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
3. The disposition of such property to a developer selected by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

The application for the Urban Development Action Area designation, project approval, and disposition of city-owned property was filed by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development on November 20, 2009.

Approval of this application would facilitate construction of a six-story building containing approximately 24 dwelling units for low-income individuals and families and approximately 4,957 square feet of community facility space located on the first floor. The proposed project is

tentatively known as Knickerbocker Commons.

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development states in its application that:

The project area consists of underutilized vacant property that tends to impair or arrest the sound development of the surrounding community, with or without tangible physical blight. Incentives are needed in order to induce the correction of these substandard, insanitary, and blighting conditions. The project activities would protect and promote health and safety and would promote sound growth and development. The project area is therefore eligible to be an Urban Development Action Area and the proposed project is therefore eligible to be an Urban Development Action Area Project pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is seeking Urban Development Action Area designation, approval as an Urban Development Action Area Project, and disposition of City-owned property for 295 Eldert Street (Block 3413, Lot 1) and 797-801 Knickerbocker Avenue (Block 3413, Lots 2, 3 and 4), to facilitate construction of a 6-story, 24-unit building with a total floor area of 28,390 square feet and a building height of 55 feet. The site is 10,000 square feet in area, entirely contained within an R6 zoning district and is currently vacant. The proposed building would be built to a total FAR 2.9. The proposed building would have 4,957 square feet of community facility space, which is intended for a senior citizen center, and 3,769 square feet of recreation space for the building's tenants. Seven parking spaces would be provided in an at-grade parking area at the rear of the site. The project would be developed under the New York State Housing Trust Fund Program.

The city-owned site is located at 295 Eldert Street (Block 3413, Lot 1) and 797-801 Knickerbocker Avenue (Block 3413, Lots 2-4) at the northwest corner of Knickerbocker Avenue and Eldert Street, in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn, Community District 4.

The surrounding area is primarily residential. The blocks to the south, west, and east contain one and two-family homes and multi-family walk-up buildings that are primarily 3- and 4- stories in

height. Community facilities are scattered throughout the general area: a house of worship and PS 151 are located two blocks northwest of the project site. Irving Square Park, a 2.5 acre park, is located two blocks to the southwest. Ground floor commercial uses exist two blocks to the east on Knickerbocker Avenue between Covert Street and Schaefer Street. Light manufacturing districts, an M1-1 and an M1-4, exist one block to the north and the northeast, respectively. The area is served by public transportation via the L train at the Halsey Street Station, located two blocks to the northeast. Additionally, the B26 and the B60 busses operate in the vicinity.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C100162HAK) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq. and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 10HPD0015K. The lead agency is the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

After a study of the potential impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on November 25, 2009.

### **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C100162HAK) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on January 4, 2010, and was duly referred to Brooklyn Community Board 4 and the Borough President, in accordance with Title 62 of the Rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02 (b).

### **Community Board Public Hearing**

Community Board 4 held a public hearing on this application on January 20, 2010, and on that date, by a vote of 38-0, with 1 abstention, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

### **Borough President Recommendation**

This application (C 100162 HAK) was considered by the Brooklyn Borough President who issued a recommendation on February 19, 2010, approving the application.

### **City Planning Commission Public Hearing**

On February 24, 2010 (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled March 10, 2010 for a public hearing on this application (C100162HAK). The hearing was duly held on March 10, 2010 (Calendar No. 14).

Three speakers spoke in favor of the application. Speakers included representatives of the architect, the project sponsor, and HPD. The sponsor's representative provided background information on the project, and the architect's representative highlighted the design and cost saving features of the building. The representative from HPD also testified in favor of the application.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

### **CONSIDERATION**

The Commission believes that the approval of this application for an Urban Development Action Area designation, project approval and disposition of city-owned property, is appropriate.

The proposed project will consist of a 6-story building with 24 dwelling units of affordable housing. In addition the project would have 4,957 square feet of community facility space. Seven parking spaces would be provided via an at-grade parking area at the rear of the site.

The Commission notes that the approval of the UDAAP for the development site would facilitate the development of vacant City-owned property and that the project will address the need for affordable housing in the Bushwick neighborhood.

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has recommended the designation of 295 Eldert Street (Block 3413, Lot 1) and 797-801 Knickerbocker Avenue (Block 3413, Lots 2-4) as an Urban Development Action Area; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development has also recommended the approval of an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area;

**THEREFORE**, be it further **RESOLVED**, that the City Planning Commission, after due consideration of the appropriateness of the actions, certifies its unqualified approval of the matters pursuant to the Urban Development Action Area Act:

- a) the designation of property located at 295 Eldert Street (Block 3413, Lot 1) and 797-801 Knickerbocker Avenue (Block 3413, Lots 2, 3, 4) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
- b) an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and the consideration described in this report, the application of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development for the disposition of city-owned property located at 295 Eldert Street (Block 3413, Lot 1) and 797-801 Knickerbocker Avenue (Block 3413, Lots 2-4) to a developer to be selected by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, is approved (C100162HAK).

The above resolution (C100162HAK), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on March 24, 2010 (Calendar No. 2), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

**AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP Chair**  
**RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,**  
**ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, BETTY Y. CHEN, MARIA M. DEL TORO,**  
**RICHARD W. EADDY, NATHAN LEVENTHAL, ANNA HAYES LEVIN,**  
**SHIRLEY A. MCRAE, KAREN A. PHILLIPS, Commissioners**