



Melinda Katz
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Community Board No. 2

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Patrick A. O'Brien
Chairman

Debra Markell Kleinert
District Manager

June 3, 2016

Mr. Carl Weisbrod, Chair
City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street, Room 2 West
New York, New York 10007

RE: **ULURP Application - Barnett Avenue Rezoning**
Application Number # C 160103 ZMQ

Dear Mr. Weisbrod:

On May 18, 2016, Community Board 2 held a public hearing concerning the ULURP Application on the Barnett Avenue Rezoning, Application Number #C 160103 ZMQ.

At the Community Board meeting on June 2, 2016, a motion was made and seconded to oppose the ULURP Application for the following reasons. The vote was 38 in favor of the motion with 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS NOT AFFORDABLE ENOUGH- Income tiers of 20% at 50 % AMI, 30% at 100% AMI and 50% at 130% AMI do not adequately represent need of CB2 community. According to a 2015 Furman Center study 75% of CB2 residents have incomes below 100% of AMI.
2. SIZE AND SCALE OF PROPOSED BUILDING are out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood. A new 10 story building in the M1 zone alters the low rise context of the community and puts added pressures on services, transportation, etc. The absence of land cost will enable the developer to maximize profits for this albeit "affordable" building. Scaling back the size of the building will provide relief to local residents.
3. REMOVAL OF PARKING - the current parking facility serves surrounding residents and local businesses. While Phipps Houses has no obligation to provide community parking, removal of the existing lot will add to the already severe scarcity of parking in Sunnyside Gardens.

4. **IMPACT ON LOCAL BUSINESSES** - The project is not characteristic of the surrounding neighborhood. The Barnett Avenue M1 zone has been occupied by local businesses including an upholsterer, glass fabricator, car repair service, parking lot, and shoe manufacturer. They have historically coexisted with the low-rise character of Sunnyside Gardens.
5. **NEGATIVE PRECEDENT** - New residential development will likely establish a speculative precedent for the change in use of the M1 zone along Barnett Avenue, through zoning changes or BSA applications. This will threaten local businesses and make the Barnett Avenue corridor ripe for speculative residential development by developers seeking to maximize profits at the expense of the existing commercial uses.
6. **ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT IN CB2 WITHOUT COROLLARY ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND CITY SERVICES** - This project will place pressure on existing city services, including schools, community facilities, public transportation, parking and physical infrastructure. These city services are already drastically over-burdened, and there is no current commitment of sufficient capital funds or planning to meaningfully mitigate or alleviate these deficiencies.

The Board also recommended that the applicant amend and modify the application to satisfactorily address the Board's concerns as follows:

- a. The inclusion of more, and deeper, affordability bands that would make residents earning 50 and 100% AMI eligible for units;
- b. A reduction of the size and scale of the proposed building to bring it more in line with the surrounding buildings;
- c. The inclusion of a larger community facility space that would provide a much wider variety of needed community services than solely UPK, including but not by way of limitation day care and/or senior activities, to serve a much wider range of community residents through a partnership or other arrangement with a reputable, qualified not-for-profit service provider;
- d. Full and proper remediation of all existing environmental issues on the site.
- e. The relocation of parking that is being removed;
- f. A firm and reliable commitment to work with our elected officials, Community Board No. 2, and federal, state and city agencies toward sidewalk improvements along the rest of Barnett Avenue, the siting and construction of a middle school in the community, and the improvement of transportation infrastructure; and
- g. A commitment to use union labor.

Please contact Community Board 2 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Debra Markell Kleinert
District Manager

DMK/mag

cc: Honorable Joseph Crowley, US Congress
Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney, US Congress
Honorable Grace Meng, US Congress
Honorable Nydia M. Velazquez, US Congress
Honorable Michael Gianaris, NY State Senate
Honorable Michael DenDekker, NYS Assembly
Honorable Margaret Markey, NYS Assembly
Honorable Catherine T. Nolan, NYS Assembly
Honorable Elizabeth Crowley, NYC Council Member
Honorable Jimmy Van Bramer NYC Council Member, Majority Leader
Honorable Daniel Dromm, NYC Council Member
Honorable Melinda Katz, Queens Borough President of the Borough of Queens
Honorable Melva Miller, Deputy Borough President
Irving Poy, Queens Borough President's Office
Yoni Bokser, Queens Borough President's Office
John Young, Department of City Planning
Penny Lee, Department of City Planning
Scott Solomon, Department of City Planning
Alexis Wheeler, Department of City Planning
Michael Wadman, Phipps Houses
Sunnyside-Barnett Associates LLC
Adam Weinstein, Phipps Houses
Cara McAteer, Phipps Houses
Denise Keehan-Smith, Chairwoman, Community Board 2
Patrick A. O'Brien, Chairman, Community Board 2
Lisa Deller, Chair, Land Use Committee CB 2