

***MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING
THE PROPOSED WEST 108TH STREET WSFSSH DEVELOPMENT
OCTOBER 30, 2017***

Community Board 7/Manhattan convened a public hearing on the proposed West 108th Street West Side Federation of Senior and Supportive Housing (WSFSSH) Development on Monday, October 30, 2017 at Goddard Riverside, 593 Columbus Avenue. The meeting is the public hearing required by the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure, and is held under the joint aegis of the CB7 Land Use, Health & Human Services, Transportation and Housing Committees.

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm by CB7 Chair Roberta Semer and Land Use co-chair Page Cowley, after the secretary of the meeting confirmed the presence of a quorum of more than 20% of the members of CB7.

Applications to the Department of Housing Preservation & Development by West Side Federation of Senior & Supportive Housing for:

- **The disposition of property located at 103-107, 137-143, and 151-159 West 108th Street to facilitate the development of affordable housing and community facility space, and**
- **A change in the zoning from R8-B to R8-A.**

1. Presentation by the Department of Housing Preservation & Development – Kevin Parris, Deputy Director, Manhattan Planning, HPD.

Kevin Parris – HPD

- Actions required:
- Rezoning – from an R8-B District to R8-A to allow the desired height of the building -- plan is to build an 11-story structure that would be taller than permitted under R8-B, but not to build to the maximum height allowed by R8-A
- Enroll the site as one eligible for the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) zoning.
- Obtain the designations and approvals required for the disposition of City-owned property.

2. Presentation by WSFSSH – Paul Freitag, Executive Director, WSFSSH.

Paul Freitag – Executive Director of WSFSSH:

- This year marks the 40th anniversary of the founding of WSFSSH.
- WSFSSH currently operates 26 buildings with more than 2,000 residential units located on the Upper West Side and in the South Bronx.
- The comprehensive nature of the WSFSSH mission – to serve both housing and social service needs of its residents/clients is the key to its success.
- After 40 years, the need for affordable housing is greater than ever.
- More than 20,000 seniors are on WSFSSH waiting lists for affordable housing units.

- The proposed West 108th Street project (the "Project") will be a 100% permanently affordable development.
- When all phases are completed, there will be 275 permanently affordable apartments, including studios, 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units.
- The Project also calls for the expansion of Valley Lodge, which is a transitional shelter for homeless seniors that has been in place on West 108th Street (in between the two western-most garages) for decades.

- The Project will be built in 2-phases, with 194 affordable units and approximately 110 Valley Lodge shelter beds included in phase 1, and approximately 81 permanently affordable units in phase 2.
- Phase 1 will comprise the two western-most existing parking garages as well as the demolition and reconstruction of the existing Valley Lodge. Phase 2 will build on the site of the current eastern-most garage.
- Eligibility for the affordable units as permanent housing will be based on AMI (Area Median Income), with certain units accepting tenants with incomes at 60% of AMI, and others at 30% of AMI.

- In the lottery for the allocation of affordable units, there will be a 50% preference for residents of CB7's District.
- The program benefits offered at the facility will serve the greater community.
- WSFSSH is partnering with the Institute for Family Health.
- The Project when built will include a 5,000 square foot health care facility that will be affordable to all.
- The completed building will incorporate rest rooms for Anibel Aviles Playground, enabling the hiring of Playground Associates at this location.
- The facility will provide storage to Bloomingdale Family Services, enabling it to enrich programs for children.
- The facility will also provide ambulance storage and meeting space to the Central Park Ambulance team.
- The flexible meeting spaces to be included in the facility will be accessible directly from the street and made available to community groups.
- The existing condition is an unusual block compared to the mostly residential neighboring blocks.
- Currently 3 City-owned parking garages dominate the north side of the block, with the Anibal Aviles playground.
- The south side of the block includes MS 54 and large playgrounds mapped as public parks.
- The existing garages extend nearly to the rear lot line.
- Phase 1 is on western end of the block, consisting of the sites of two garages and the current Valley Lodge.
- Phase 2 is on east side of Aviles Playground. Construction to be delayed 5 years to keep that garage open longer.
- The Phase 1 building will rise to 11 stories after a setback at floor 7.
- The building will include a rear yard that will be landscaped.
- The design of the façade is articulated to reduce massing along the street.
- The proposed height of the Phase 1 building is contextual to the existing apartment building on the corner of Amsterdam Avenue, with a set-back step-up in the center.
- The ground floor fenestration will include a large amount of transparency to allow views in/out.
- The facility will enliven a block currently dominated by blank facades and garage entrances.
- All residents will use a single lobby staffed 24/7 by WSFSSH staff.
- Goal is to create a building that would match the scale of the area, but still meet needs.
- The needed FAR is 5.3 instead of the 7.2 that would be permitted under R8-A. A land disposition agreement will enforce this limitation.
- WSFSSH conducted outreach and incorporated the feedback of some 30 organizations into the final proposal.

Carol Rosenthal – Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jacobson – counsel to WSFSSH

- The project was certified by the Department of City Planning on 10/16/17.
- The ULURP window for CB7 is 60 days, during which CB7 has the opportunity to make a recommendation on the project. Following CB7's ULURP period, the Borough President's office has 30 days in which to consider the project and make a recommendation, followed by the City Planning Commission (CPC) for 60 days.
- The ULURP process concludes with a vote of the City Council, expected late in the first quarter of 2018.
- The CPC hearing will also serve as a hearing on the DEIS.

Paul Freitag – consultants available at the hearing to assist in answering questions include:

- Bill Stein – Dattner Architects
- Leo Tidd - Louis Berger Associates – Construction Consultants
- Deborah Shapiro – AKRF (consultant for the DEIS)
- Phillip Habib and Norabelle Greenberger from Phillip Habib & Assocs – Land Use Consultants.

3. CB7 members questions of fact.

NONE

4. Community questions and comments.

Jerry Kowalski - resident of Valley Lodge.

- Practiced law in large New York City law firms. Authored a legal textbook.
- At one time had an affluent lifestyle. Since fell on hard times.
- Never addicted to any substance.
- Grateful to Valley Lodge, current housing. Previously was homeless and on the Street.

Michael Hiller, Esq. – on behalf of Save Manhattan Valley, a community group

- [Additional time to speak ceded time from Meryll and Jill Freedman]
- Attorney whose typical practice is representing individuals against developers and the City.
- Believes that the Law is an instrument of social change.
- Currently represents more than 3,000 people who oppose this project.
- Project may appear to be progressive and humanitarian, but is dangerous.
- There are over 3,000 alternate sites available for this project, including 1 within CB7's District.
- The City initially declined to require an environmental examination of the site.
- Hiller and Save Manhattan Valley engaged the firm GHD to examine the site and provide a report.
- Upon completion of GHD's report, the City agreed to undertake an Environmental Assessment of the site.
- Without GHD's report, would not have known about the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) at the site.
- AKRF prepared the DEIS, and was hired by developer. AKRF arrived at opinion that the developer wanted.
- DEIS should be the subject of a multi-level review.
- Areas of concern that should be reviewed include:
 - -- toxic substances, especially for a project across the street from a public school and a playground.
 - -- shadow impacts.
- Note that the developer's Habib report concludes that the project would not create significant incremental shadows or alter the public use of the playground.
- Yet page 4-7 of the Habib Report reveals incremental shadows on the Aviles Playground for 7 hours over 62.4% of the playground in autumn and spring; 9 hours in winter and summer.
- This significant impact was documented from the developer's consultant, not Save Manhattan Valley ("SMV").
- The City and the Community Board should to look into the 3,000 alternative sites for this project.

Geraldine Miller – Former resident of Valley Lodge

- Used to live at City-run shelters. Formerly homeless – would does not wish the City shelters on anyone.

- Valley Lodge provides dignity and care to homeless persons.
- There are just 4 beds to a room instead of hundreds in a gym.
- Valley Lodge teaches financial management, including Social Security benefits. Now lives at the Marseilles.
- Positive real life impact. Most Seniors cannot afford to live in New York City, and not because of problems.

Carmen Quinones – Douglass Houses (NYCHA campus)

- It is a shame to place this project on this site when there are so many other spaces available.
- The City-owned garages were originally intended to provide "temporary" parking – 65 years is enough.
- Concern that parking at the Douglass Houses lots is used by affluent people from Riverside Drive.
- Affordable housing is a right, especially when so many are suffering and living on the street.
- Housing is a right, parking is not. "Enough is enough."

Sarah Kolodny – Upper West Side resident for over 40 years.

- The erosion of affordable housing has been dramatic over recent years.
- Currently parks a car at the project site – parking is affordable and convenient.
- But the choice between affordable parking and affordable housing is a "no-brainer."
- WSFSSH has a stellar track record of facilities management and providing appropriate supportive services for its residents. Can't imagine a better organization. Exciting to see this happen.

David Broxton – former Valley Lodge client.

- Had a terrible fall due to alcohol and drugs – "WSFSSH saved my life."
- Cannot compare parking to housing and services. One cannot complain about the prevalence of the homeless on the street and then deny development of affordable housing.
- The future residents of this project are real people with real needs who happen to have fallen on hard times.
- "Can't just make us disappear."

Ron Hoffman – Resident of Manhattan Valley since 1983.

- Career as a special ed teacher, including as a volunteer with Samaritan Village on West 106th Street.
- The neighborhood above West 96th is a segregated community.
- Opposes this project because of the environmental changes above West 96th Street.
- Manhattan Valley is a poverty area. This project will increase that poverty by more than 2%.
- Collegiate was supposed to build affordable housing on West 61st, but struck a deal with CB7 to move the affordable housing north of 96th Street. Should build affordable housing in the intended affluent area.

Kelley Williams – Executive Director of the Strykers Bay Neighborhood Council.

- Been in the fight for affordable housing since moving to the area with her mother in 1962.
- Could not afford the rent at that time in the supposedly affordable Urban Renewal buildings.
- Remembering John Kowal, who fought for affordable housing on West 91st Street in 1970s.
- Environmental issues will be dealt with so people can live safely.
- WSFSSH and Manhattan Valley Develop Corp. rescued this neighborhood.
- This is a choice between cars and homes – and is a no-brainer.

Albert Bergeret – New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players.

- Does not oppose affordable housing.

- But a reasonable and responsible balance in urban planning is needed.
- This proposal will "drive the neighborhood down."

Francis Curran – Manhattan Valley resident and parishioner at Holy Name/St. Gregory.

- There are 200,000 people on a waiting list for affordable housing. That says all that is needed.

David Dubin – Lived in this neighborhood since 1967.

- There should be a way to do both – meet housing needs and parking for those who need parking for their health or their occupation.
- There are many other places where this project could be built. Many are listed on the SMV website "savemanhattanvalley.org"
- Without these garages there will be 3.5 miles of cars searching for parking. Traffic will cause fatalities.

Laura Mascuch – Supportive Housing Network of New York.

- WSFSSH is a founder of the supportive housing model.
- Laura Jervis took action by taking SROs and converting them into supportive housing with services.
- The highly successful Euclid Hall was years ago the subject of opposition, and now has 3000 supportive units.
- One-third of individuals in City Shelters are over the age of 55. It is the perfect timing for this project.
- WSFSSH is the "gold standard" for supportive housing.

Marsham Castro – Upper West Side resident.

- Now lives in a senior building on West 106 Street. Lovely neighborhood – very diverse.
- No objection to this development.
- Now reaching the peak of Baby Boomers becoming seniors – needs for senior housing will become even greater.
- Those with a concern about quality of life must avoid a knee-jerk response to affordable housing tenants.

Mark Meridy - Exec Director of DOROT.

- DOROT is dedicated to improving the lives of older adults.
- Personally parks on the street.
- DOROT's mission is to alleviate the social isolation of seniors.
- The project will greatly improve the senior community.
- There is a crisis in affordable senior housing – we must take action.
- Since 1983, DOROT has provided transitional shelter beds plus supports to seniors.
- Helped hundreds settle into new homes. Seniors have too few places to turn in times of need.
- A typical wait for affordable housing is over 5 years. Way too long. 200,000 seniors on the list.
- WSFSSH is a responsible and highly regarded community partner.

Ronald James – Lives in Manhattan Valley.

- Seeing this community become less affordable.
- Known Valley Lodge residents as neighbors – many laid off during the recession and became homeless.
- Valley Lodge helped many get back on their feet and obtain affordable housing.
- Asking CB7 to support the project.

Alistair Drummond – Pastor of West End Presbyterian Church on West 105th Street.

- We have a moral obligation to support WSFSSH as a neighbor.
- There is a moral imperative to support those facing rent insecurity in our City in an era of rapidly rising rents.
- Median home prices have grown 19% in a very short time.
- This project will include 195 units of permanently affordable housing, which is truly remarkable.
- The project will also provide community resources to Anibal Aviles playground, healthcare and meeting spaces.
- WSFSSH has a record as a dependable neighbor and partner.
- We must model empathy.

Patricia Ireland - Manhattan Valley resident for more than 20 years on West 108 Street and Amsterdam Avenue.

- Q: The lottery will reserve 50% of the family units for CB7 residents. How many of those will be from Valley Lodge ?
- A: Valley Lodge residents will get first crack at the project's permanently affordable units, since all are elderly residents of CB7's District.
- Concerned about this misrepresentation of a benefit available to CB7 residents.
- Concern about "indecent politics" of the City. When this project was first proposed, WSFSSH sought only a building to replace Valley Lodge. It was HPD that proposed a bigger project.
- It is inappropriate for HPD to sign off on itself, on its own projects. There is a lack of integrity.
- This project is being financed with dirty money from Collegiate.

Maureen McDermott – neighbor.

- Seen affordable housing disappear as Columbia expands and others sell off.
- As people move or die, students move in, and the neighborhood becomes de facto dorms for Columbia.
- It is already too easy for landlords to deregulate apartments.
- There are 5 new buildings proposed for sites owned by the Union Theological Seminary and Jewish Theological Seminary near Columbia, claiming apartments offered at \$2MM to \$5MM as “reasonable.”
- We desperately need affordable housing.
- WSFSSH knows this community well. The project will serve the best interests of the community at large.

Elizabeth Kellner – Lived in Manhattan Valley for 41 years.

- Takes pride in Manhattan Valley – was a pioneer many years ago.
- Uses the parking garages, but can relocate the car.
- The legacy of Manhattan Valley is one of recovery from the effects of and abandonment of buildings by owners, with many buildings seized into City ownership.
- The City gave buildings to WSFSSH and to the Bridge.
- Manhattan Valley already has the highest concentration of supportive housing.
- Takes umbrage at Collegiate relocating the affordable housing it should have built downtown to this neighborhood.
- Opposes the project out of concern for people who can't afford parking and need cars for work. It is not just about parking, as the neighborhood HDFCs and Section 8 housing units have needs too.

Micki Navarro

- Worked as a housing specialist and director of supportive housing centers.
- Every day meets people in need of supportive and affordable housing. At one program alone there are 2,000 on a waiting list for affordable housing.

- There are no sites to which to refer those needing affordable housing.
- WSFSSH will create an opportunity to live in dignity and respect.

Neda Esfan – resident of Manhattan Valley.

- Works as a math and special ed teacher.
- The question is not about the need for affordable housing, but about compromise – where else can this be located?
- The garages hold cars on which neighborhood lives depend.
- Must find a compromise that takes into account what is being lost, and works for all sides.
- SMV is fighting for the quality of life of residents.
- This problem is not that simple.

Michele Samarel

- Parent of 6th grader at MS 54.
- Concern about safety of our children.
- The Parks Department just demolished a handball court wall, creating a lot of dust and debris.
- Wants to know what studies have been done to ensure the health and safety of students, and how protect children in the yard.
- How can we ensure that school building windows can be open during construction.
- A: CB7 Chair: CB7 will hold a separate meeting with the school.
- A: Phillip Habib – DEIS – is online along with construction analysis.
- A: WSFSSH is addressing toxin remediation.

Steven Franco – WSFSSH Security officer.

- Sees first hand WSFSSH's work with residents. Supports the project.

David Taylor – Rutgers Presbyterian Church.

- Supports the project.
- Has supported WSFSSH since the 1980s re Euclid Hall. Those who opposed were concerned that the formerly homeless residents would make the neighborhood unsafe.
- Once the project was approved, it was hard to tell the homeless residents from the general population.
- WSFSSH has a strong management style, and runs a tight ship.

Jerome Kramer – PTA of MS 54.

- The school has been left out of this discussion way more than it should have been.
- The needs of the faculty and staff and 850 kids are significant.
- The school and playground are directly across the street from the project and should not be ignored.
- South side of the street is 1000 kids and teachers.
- Also, the big yard is used continuously after hours and on weekends.
- Should not proceed with construction without assurances that it will be done in the best and safest way.
- School and PTA has offered to be a partner, but have not gotten responses.
- It is disturbing news to hear that there will be a special meeting for the school, and yet as the president of the PTA this is the first to hear of it. All involved must do better by the children and the school.

Cliff Flanders – Manhattan Valley Resident.

- New neighborhood is hospitable and welcoming of many races, ages, sexual orientations.
- Proud to share the neighborhood with Red Oak, Valley Lodge and other supportive facilities.
- No one really believes parking is more important than housing.
- Highlights that the homeless deserve our compassion and support despite being a source of fear.

Arlene Mehlman – SMV.

- Do not understand why this is an "either/or project."
- Should have considered a multi-level parking garage as one part of the overall proposal.
- 750 cars formerly parked in the garages and now circulating for parking will be dangerous.
- Many still need cars for work, visiting aged parents etc.
- Not afraid of homeless – works with homeless populations directly.

Karen Jorgensen – Director of Valley Lodge since 1988.

- Proud of the WSFSSH program, which serves 92 residents.
- Also gets calls daily from those facing eviction, or who are staving off eviction with last of savings.
- Many Valley Lodge residents worked their whole lives but are now forced into the shelter system. Cannot afford apartments on open market while living on Social Security.
- WSFSSH – has only 1 shelter. The other 26 buildings provide permanently affordable housing.

Mirsa Morales – Red Oak resident.

- Fought to save buildings with affordable housing.
- Worry that working class people who pay taxes but who retire on a fixed income will not be able to afford rents required to stay in neighborhood that was home for 50-plus years.
- Need more affordable homes. Must support project.

Glen Levit

- Giving up 700 parking spots for teachers and others who need cars to work is problematic.
- Not realistic to build more low-income housing – that is the way to destroy a neighborhood.

Phil Katzman

- Not against low income housing – happy to be in a liberal voting district and a diverse area.
- Will have a difficult time staying in the neighborhood without a car. Middle class neighbors need parking.
- Should build the affordable housing elsewhere.
- As a teacher who needs a car to go to work, cannot circle the block for an hour looking for parking.

Jean Jaworek – Northwest Central Park Multiblock Association.

- Concerned about the breach in the zoning. This project was originally proposed at a lower profile that did not require a breach in the zoning.
- The City pushed WSFSSH to break the zoning, which would be an important community event.
- Not an ogre – doesn't hate affordable housing. A compromise is needed re the of the project.
- Parking is important to the economic viability of the community (not a parker – but empathizes).

Sue Radmer

- Supports the project.
- Lived in Morningside Heights for 40 years. Parent of children attending PS 165 and MS 54.
- School was window into the great diversity in our community.
- Appreciates WSFSSH and all the interests that must be addressed.
- Need for secure affordable housing continues unabated.
- Upper West Side residents and Manhattan Valley and Morningside Heights residents do not stoop to "NIMBY."
- The claim that the project will rob the area of light and air is a "false flag."

Siobhan Dolan – SMV.

- This is a multi-dimensional issue – hesitant to put a human face on the piles of metal in the garages.
- As nurse who carries large equipment and handouts, must drive to Nassau County and needs a car.
- Was a presence in her late mother's life because of access to an affordable car.
- Project will violate existing zoning and the Fair Share doctrine.
- Proud that Manhattan Valley has 50% of the supportive housing in our District, but should not add to it.
- All 3 garages had contain carcinogens. Parents of students across the street have a right to be nervous.

Deborah Cardona – MS 54 faculty.

- Teacher and resident. Concern that HPD, a City agency, is duping the residents by pushing this project.
- A taller building will force people out of the community. Drawing a parallel to similar development proposals in Washington Heights and Inwood.
- The parking garages are surrounded by brown fields. Developing them will compromise the community.

Floraminde Balmaseda – Red Oak resident.

- Lived in ManhattanValley since 1952. Seen many changes.
- People have been pushed out of the area by higher rents.
- There is no choice here – must protect housing for people over cars. The homeless need security.

Xiomara Pedraza – Enterprise Community Partners Inc.

- Supports this project to provide supportive housing.
- Enterprise invests in affordable housing, but needs continue to grow.
- 19% of seniors now live below the poverty line.
- Affordable housing construction for seniors has not kept pace with demand.
- There is a shortage of available sites for new construction. Fewer still near public transit.
- New project would provide dignity and security.

David Soles-Cohen – neighbor for 32 years.

- Big believer in this type of housing.
- HPD has not been fair to the neighbors in the community.
- Many people rely on cars for work. If can't park in garage, will have to leave the community.
- This is not a case of cars vs people – it is people vs people.
- There is a way to build that would preserve 500 parking spaces – HPD does not want to hear it.
- Embarrassing for the City not to listen to the needs of its established residents.
- City usually builds on vacant lots.

Lorna Lyons – Valley Lodge resident.

- Relocated to Valley Lodge with hopes to reunite the family.
- Successful career in urban planning.
- There are valid concerns re changes in zoning.
- The opponents' claim is that the fix is in – this will be the first time that the fix benefits the poor!

Emily Horowitz – Manhattan Valley resident for 17 years.

- Not about people vs cars – resents that implication.
- Slippery slope in making the neighborhood home to high-rises.
- As a Cancer survivor, concerned about carcinogens – especially with children across the street.
- Needs a car to get to work – need parking. Of course seniors need housing.
- This is not an "either/or."
- Not fair that taxpaying middle class are being punished – should build garage as part of the project.

Thomas Lopez-Pierre – candidate for City Council in the September 2017 primary.

- Lived in Manhattan Valley for 19 years in a Manhattan Valley Development Company Building.
- Undercurrent of classicism and racism around this issue.
- Supports WSFSSH – which is committed to affordable housing and has improved this community.
- This project could be a Trojan Horse for other projects that we don't want.
- Concern that we have a Mayor who abuses the development review process.

John Moscow – neighbor.

- Born and raised in this neighborhood.
- Attended PS 165 and School of Musical Education.
- The City of New York is a living organism.
- Pushing for too much of one thing requires one to give up another.
- Eliminating the garages tells residents that they can't get to work, and tells store owners that they can't come to work. Not as simple as finding another place for the car.
- This is not an emotion or rhetorical issue. We need a proper balance among all of the people involved.

Arthur Pier – SMV.

- Resident of community.
- Issue is framed as "either/or" for parking/housing.
- Taking 700 cars and dumping them on the street without a plan to relocate them, and replacing businesses that pay taxes to the City with a non-profit, is not optimal.
- There is plenty of open spaces in the neighborhood in which to create an alternative.
- Douglass Houses can be used for parking, including building a new parking facility above the existing lots. Don't have to tear anything down.
- Doesn't make sense to tear down these buildings.

Jeff Twine – Upper West Side Recycling.

- Resident for 45 years. Supports finding a compromise that looks at all options.
- There is enough room for both parking and affordable housing.
- Concerned about the toxic brown field issue.

- Citibike also takes up parking spaces, and should be re-examined in this context.
- "Someone is making a lot of money on this project."

Lynn Max – Riverside Drive resident since 1977.

- Supports this project.
- It was a privilege to work with Laura Jervis to provide services to Valley Lodge.
- One WSFSSH building is 2 blocks from her home and is a testament to the skills and dedication of the WSFSSH staff that its residents are so well integrated into community.
- City should have done better at Hudson Yards.

Steven Paluso – General Counsel of Central Park Medical Unit.

- The Unit provides free medical service to Central Park users.
- West 108 Street garages have stored the ambulances for years, free of charge.
- WSFSSH was able to change their plan to accommodate their ambulances and provide meeting spaces.
- Organization cannot formerly opine on this project, but appreciates the accommodations made by WSFSSH.

Judy Steed

- Lived at Valley Lodge for 7 months – had a great experience. Finest staff and supportive services.
- Please let more people have this experience.

Stephen O’Gallagher

- This is all about money. Shocked by the divide between rich and poor in the United States.
- There are plenty of places to park cars.
- If those with the highest incomes leave the City, the tax base erodes. We need a balance.
- Doesn’t want to leave the City, but if parking is eliminated, will leave City and take tax dollars.

Mary Lou Steppacher.

- Member of the Metropolitan Council on Housing.
- Knows and supports Karen Jorgensen at Valley Lodge.
- Seniors’ incomes keep going down; costs keep going up.
- The formerly middle class now need affordable housing.

Thomas Powel – Location Photographer and neighbor.

- Operates a commercial photography business in the neighborhood.
- Needs a commercial vehicle for business, which cannot be parked on the street.
- Losing the garage will require losing his business, putting 10 employees out of work.
- There should not be an argument within the community between these groups and interests – should take this issue to City Hall to resolve this on an equal basis.
- Not objecting to low-income housing, just the loss of livelihoods.

Elisa Wallman – Institute for Family Health.

- Part of a Health Center network in the community.
- The Institute offers training and primary health care centers.

- Worked with WSFSSH since 1999 to coordinate services, including 1000 primary care visits to Valley Lodge per year. Commitment of staff is real.
- Thrilled to be a part of this project, including 5,000 SF of space to serve resident and community health needs.

Stan Reissman – SMV and West 108 Street resident.

- Valley Lodge is a great place – seen first hand the need for placements to affordable housing.
- Does not want to be forced out of the neighborhood of 35 years.
- Needs car for work and family.

William Breedlove – Fifth Ave Presbyterian Church.

- Lives on West 102 Street – supports the project.
- As a residential real estate agent, knows the challenge to find affordable housing.
- Valley Lodge partnered with 5th Ave Presbyterian and West End Presbyterian churches to assist the churches to house 10 homeless people at a time.
- Homelessness damages lives and harms our community. Goal of community is inclusion.
- Must have a commitment to those experiencing rent insecurity.

Andrea Cianfrani – Live On NY.

- Serving seniors who drive the economy to help them stay in the communities they helped to build.
- 200,000 seniors on waiting lists for affordable housing.
- WSFSSH has long history of supporting this population successfully.

- Edward Ubiera – policy director of Local Initiative Support Corp.
- 40 year presence in NYC – financing affordable housing through groups like WSFSSH.
- 30 year history with WSFSSH. Supports the project.
- Affordable housing is a Citywide imperative. Currently 1 in 5 seniors lives in poverty.

Marc Greenberg – Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing.

- Supports the project – understands the concerns expressed and hopes for compromise.
- Committed to finding housing for those in need and helping people stay in their homes.
- Cannot find a more committed group than WSFSSH.
- "These affordable housing units will be life-savers."

Dan Cohen – Friends of Anibal Aviles Playground

- Supports project.

Cassie Madden

- Supports the project for the reasons given.

Margaret Lew

- Lives and parks on West 107 Street.
- Most developers build structures that are out of scale with the area or the needs of the community.
- How great to have a developer interested in the needs of the community.

- "Cars are not the future." Take steps to re-envision the community.

Marvin Nierenberg MD – Valley Lodge.

- Sympathy for those on each side of this issue. Has had to move a car from one garage to another.
- Part-time psychiatrist at Valley Lodge – can vouch for WSFSSH's integrity and staff.
- Valley Lodge never turns over – people stay on for years.
- The benefits of the project exceed its costs. With compromise, all issues can be worked out.

Donald Smith

- Resident of Valley Lodge since April 2017. Had lived there before, and was helped by the staff to find housing in 2013. Lost that apartment due to unabated mold.
- Physical ailments limit potential for jobs.
- Has lived in other shelters and supportive housing – none had WSFSSH's respect for the dignity of seniors.

Sandra Roche – Bloomingdale Family Program.

- Supports project and affordable housing.
- From work in a Head Start program, can see the loss of decent living conditions. Entire families living in a single room; multiple families sharing a kitchen.
- Supports the project for its affording seniors the ability to retire in community that is "home" rather than shipping seniors off to some other, unfamiliar community.

Marion Phyllis Cunningham

- Supporting the WSFSSH project – seen their projects in the community grow over the last 40 years.
- SMV was created 40 years ago – worked on many community issues over the years.
- Seen displacement of many tenants – we need WSFSSH to stabilize the area.
- Should call on WSFSSH to do the best they can to save parking.

Peter Arndtsen – Columbus-Amsterdam BID.

- This project asks us to look into the future.
- This neighborhood has looked to the future for years. It was home to the first Cancer Hospital a century ago. It created a senior center that is the model for DFTA (Department for the Aging).
- This is a diverse community, and all lives are the richer for it.
- The world is changing – NYC's population is increasing and is aging.
- Cars make the community less livable. Need to prepare for the future.

Stephen Lopez – Former Valley Lodge resident.

- Gratitude to Valley Lodge. Helped to move into permanent affordable housing.
- "Please do not compare me to cars."

Carl Joseph Scalisie – West 109 Street - rear yard neighbor of garages.

- Has seen this neighborhood decline and return over the years.
- Orbach Group is invading by buying up apartment buildings that are not affordable.
- Environmental impact of this project will be minimal due to DoB (Department of Buildings) regulations.
- Fumes from cars are more problematic than the demolition of garages.

- Opposition to project is motivated by politics and NIMBY.

Michael Bialek – Hebrew Home for the Aged.

- Director of real estate for Hebrew Home in Riverdale.
- Lives near the proposed 668 foot supertall building proposed at 200 Amsterdam Avenue.
- Working for 42 years on projects for affordable housing and healthcare - those needs continue.
- Long waiting lists for affordable units – what was a significant need 42 years ago has grown exponentially.
- Mayor will announce a goal to build more affordable units for seniors in the coming years.

Susan Nutt – Upper West Side resident.

- As an architect, supports the project's benefits to the community, including the community center, the meeting rooms, the ambulance storage, and the rest room for the playground.
- Fewer cars means more breathable air.
- New residential buildings with services will enliven the block.
- Beautifully designed, contextual building, and steps back to reduce the impact on sunlight.

Bruce Kaufmann – Woodland Valley resident.

- Like most who park on the street, has lots of stories.
- Supports the project.
- Became involved by chance with Valley Lodge – know a resident and an alumnus (and Karen Jorgensen). Very effective in changing lives and creating a future those who thought they did not have one.
- Lack of affordable housing is a threat to the future prosperity of NYC.

Laura Jervis – WSFSSH and Rutgers Presbyterian Church.

- The former Cathedral Parkway Urban Renewal plan included West 108th Street. Through it the City took title to the garages and to Valley Lodge long ago. This area was always planned to be housing.
- City at one time considered and rejected a plan to preserve the garages.
- The Urban Renewal plan wanted the site for housing because there is a need for housing and because many families were displaced from other parts of the neighborhood (as an effort to mitigate the harm to families who were poorly treated in other urban renewal projects).

Linda Prudhomme

- Opposed to the variance. Supported the original proposal for a 7-story building.
- Change in building design from 7 to 11 stories – 75 feet instead of 120 feet.
- CB7 voted for R8-B zoning in response to Extell's oversized development on Broadway at West 100th Street.
- No single variance has been granted since that CB7 effort.
- Dangerous precedent that could open floodgates to other requests for taller and taller buildings.

Robert Prudhomme

- Opposed to the variance – sorry to part company with a project they otherwise support.
- Not fair to push this mass onto the block. Zoning changed 10 years ago represents a "solemn commitment that is inconsistent with current project." Should not do an about-face.
- Not clear why lifting the zoning protections is appropriate, and will create incentive for others.

- Does not meet criteria for granting variance.

Laura Kaplan-Weisman – Doctor at Valley Lodge.

- Should prevent homelessness rather than build more shelters.
- As physician, believes in preventive care.
- Struck by the diversity of residents. Many on hard times due to a plethora of reasons from dementia to hard luck to economic downturn. Supportive services are caring and effective. Staff goes above and beyond.

Nathan Gebert – lives directly behind Valley Lodge.

- Will lose light and air, and parking on the street will be harder with the garages gone.
- Will be inconvenienced, but supports the project.
- "By sharing we only make our City better."

Holly Sedghi

- Supports the project.
- Living in a walk-up, understands need for senior housing.
- Must make sure those in need understand how to participate in the housing lottery.
- Income eligibility rules will exclude many in need.
- What happens to those who have significant need but do not qualify?

David Isaacson – neighbor.

- Supports the project. We need the housing.
- Concern for counter-argument re parking – Manhattan is the transit borough. Affordable parking is not a priority.

The meeting ended at 8:47 pm, after all those who signed up to speak had been invited to be heard.