



NEXT GENERATION NYCHA COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES FOR WYCKOFF GARDENS



This Summary presents the results of the Wyckoff Gardens' Community Visioning Sessions and meetings with community stakeholders. It identifies critical needs, clear preferences, and desirable solutions for the new buildings, existing development, and overall community. As a community-driven process, it is built upon the ideas, desires, and expectations expressed by participants in these sessions.

NextGeneration NYCHA is a long-term strategic plan that will create safe, clean, and connected communities for its residents and preserve New York City's public housing assets for the next generation. One strategy from the plan is the NextGen Neighborhoods program, which is NYCHA's program to build 50 percent affordable and 50 percent market-rate housing on underutilized land at NYCHA developments. The program will generate revenue to help repair existing public housing while creating affordable apartments for households below 60% Area Median Income (AMI).

In the fall of 2015, NYCHA started the conversation about NextGen Neighborhoods with the residents of Wyckoff Gardens and members of the community through a series of resident engagement sessions. The sessions explained the development process, identified resident questions and concerns, and began to shape the possible benefits and outcomes of the NextGen Program at Wyckoff Gardens. In February of 2016, NYCHA offered two days of visioning sessions with the residents of Wyckoff Gardens. At these sessions, NYCHA described the possible locations for new buildings, discussed the pros and cons of each option, prioritized resident preferences for added amenities, and explained how the feedback from these sessions could help shape the Request for Proposals (RFP).

VISIONING SESSIONS

The format was a series of roundtable meetings which included various group activities designed to understand the strengths and opportunities of the existing development, and pinpoint potential benefits from the NextGen Neighborhoods program at Wyckoff Gardens. Wyckoff Gardens Residents participated in various activities designed to solicit input and feedback, including:

- A community mapping exercise to help residents identify issues and potential improvements;
- Identifying and prioritizing residents' ideas for improvements to outdoor space and the addition of new outdoor amenities;
- Identifying and prioritizing residents' ideas for possible programs in the proposed community facilities, as well as possible ground floor commercial uses;
- Exploring the possible locations, and corresponding heights, of the new building(s) at Wyckoff and developing group consensus around which sites were preferred.

Although opinions differed on certain issues, the findings contained in this summary should be understood as the preferences for which either a clear majority of residents were in favor, or a general agreement was reached amongst residents. As will be stated in the RFP, preference will be given to proposals that align with these findings, which add to the full range of criteria to be clearly stated in the RFP. The preferences expressed in these findings fall into two general categories by which proposals submitted in response to the RFP will be evaluated: Quality of Building & Urban Design, and Program.

QUALITY OF BUILDING & URBAN DESIGN

The three existing buildings at Wyckoff are located within a superblock site with a pedestrian network running throughout. Residents are proud of their development, open spaces, playgrounds, and community, and clearly expressed a hope to preserve this sense of place when new buildings are introduced and improvements to the development are made. After discussing the pros and cons for each of the possible building locations on the development, a clear majority of residents agreed that both the site at the corner of 3rd Avenue and Wyckoff Street, and the site at the corner of Nevins Street and Wyckoff Street, were the preferred locations for new development at Wyckoff Gardens. A clear majority of residents also agreed that two smaller buildings, one on each of these sites, were preferable to a single, much larger building.

BUILDING DESIGN & MASSING PREFERENCES

Residents expressed that any new buildings should be kept in the scale, context, and character of the existing buildings, and should be designed in such a way so as to enhance the existing development and not take away from it. Any new buildings should also be designed in such a way so as to minimize the loss of views for Wyckoff Gardens residents, minimize the amount of shadows cast on the existing buildings, maximize the amount of natural light to the existing buildings, and preserve the natural breezes enjoyed by the current residents of Wyckoff Gardens. A preference for buildings that are shorter than the three existing 21-story towers was clearly stated.

URBAN & SITE DESIGN PREFERENCES

Residents expressed a desire to create a unified sense of community with the addition of the new buildings. Preference was stated for proposals that revitalize and improve the central pedestrian walkway through the development, reactivate common spaces including the centrally-located open space, and create an integrated overall design comprised of new and existing buildings. Any new development should seek to minimize the loss of parking spaces, and make the grounds more accommodating to residents year-round. Site designs should encourage resident interaction, e.g. including a pedestrian walkway that faces the existing buildings. Any site improvements should be accessible to all residents.

OUTDOOR AMENITY PREFERENCES

During the table-based group activities, residents identified and prioritized the following outdoor amenity preferences as part of any site improvements, which would be accessible to both new and existing members of the Wyckoff Gardens community:

- Enhanced security/improved lighting
- New dog walk area
- Improved seating areas
- Improved playground
- Picnic and BBQ areas
- Improved gardening areas
- More parking
- Improved landscaping
- Maintain central amphitheater area open to all residents

PROGRAM

Wyckoff Garden residents would like to see proposed zoning changes that would enable ground-floor Commercial Uses along 3rd Avenue, and were in favor of including Community Facilities along Nevins Street. Residents further stressed that any programming featured in the ground floor of either new building should have the potential to improve the quality of life for all residents at Wyckoff Gardens: both those moving into the new buildings as well as those currently living in the existing buildings. This includes ensuring that all residents would have access to the Community Facilities, and that the commercial tenants would provide goods and services that were generally affordable to households that were below median income. Resident preferences for programs to be featured in any Community Facilities, and the types of Commercial Uses are as follows:

COMMERCIAL USE PREFERENCES

- Affordable Grocery Store (including a good fish market)
- Pharmacy
- Laundromat
- Bank
- Other neighborhood-based retail

COMMUNITY FACILITY PREFERENCES

- Event Space
- Cultural Center
- Early Education Facility
- Small Business Incubator & Vocational Training Program
- Community Legal Services

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS & CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to preferences specifically related to the criteria of Quality of Building & Urban Design and to Program, residents expressed some general concerns and considerations for the overall development process.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Wyckoff Gardens residents expressed concerns regarding safety in their buildings, on their development, and around their neighborhood. To address these concerns residents suggested that proposals include improved security and better lighting. Residents were also sensitive to quality of life issues for children during, and after construction. To address these concerns residents suggested construction staging strategies that would minimize disruption to playground access and safe routes to school, as well as identifying any extra precautions.

AFFORDABILITY

Residents were in favor of proposals that include both deep-affordability, and long-term affordability, for the non-market-rate units. Additionally residents expressed a preference for proposals that include some dedicated senior housing units.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Residents prefer proposals that exceed NYC's Enterprise Green Building standards and proposals that specifically address the need for creative, state of the art storm water management.

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