#### Testimony of Jeff Mandel Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Deputy Mayor Robert Steel

City Council Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions Hon. Stephen T. Levin, Chair

#### **September 19, 2012**

Hearing on Land Use Application nos. 120226 ZMM, 120227 ZRM, 120228 ZSM, 120229 ZSM, 120231 ZSM, 120233 ZSM, 120234 ZSM, 120235 ZSM, 120236 HAM, 120237 PQM, 120245 PPM, and 120156 MMM

- Good afternoon. My name is Jeff Mandel, I am a Senior Policy Advisor to the Deputy
  Mayor for Economic Development, Robert Steel, and am here to speak in support of this
  project on behalf of the Bloomberg Administration.
- Thank you to Chair Levin, Chair Comrie, and the Committee for the opportunity to present here today.
- And thank you to Councilmember Chin and her staff for all that they have done to advance this project; as well as the Staff from the Speaker's Office.
- And, of course, we are grateful to the leadership of CB3, who are here today, and its Land
  Use Committee, who have labored, literally, for years, in order to pave the way forward for
  the long-overdue redevelopment of the historic Seward Park Extension sites.
- The Seward Park Mixed-Use Development project is all of our opportunity to help ensure that the much needed housing, retail, and other development that has eluded this area for 45 years can come to fruition, and we are pleased to submit it for your consideration.
- The project contemplates as much as 1.65 million square feet of mixed-use, mixed-income development at the foot of the Williamsburg Bridge, transforming sites cleared pursuant to an urban renewal designation made in 1965, but which have languished since then, most recently serving as surface parking lots.
- And as many of you know, there have been several unconsummated efforts to redevelop this area.
- The reason we have been able to make progress over the past few years is because of the leadership of the local Community Board. The Community Board demonstrated unfailing dedication to ensure the lots don't continue to sit vacant, convening a broad set of stakeholders who worked to transcend long-standing disagreements in order to deliver a set of actionable ambitions.
- If this project is permitted to go forward, the history books will trace the DNA of it back from nearly 3 years ago to today when the CB invited the City to participate in a series of discussions about what should be done with these sites. Following that, and 2 years of hard work, in January 2011, the CB unanimously approved a series of guidelines for Seward Park, which are the core guidelines for the ULURP application you are evaluating.

- Building on that success, the Community Board unanimously passed a resolution approving this ULURP application with conditions, followed by support from the Manhattan Borough President and the City Planning Commission.
- We are respectfully hopeful that your committee, and then the Council at large, will provide the final series of approvals that this project needs, in order to take the leap from half-century ambition to reality.
- My colleagues from the NYCEDC and HPD team will now go into further details on the project.

#### Testimony of Alyssa Cobb Konon Executive Vice President, NYCEDC

City Council Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions Hon. Stephen T. Levin, Chair

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- My name is Alyssa Konon, and I'm an Executive Vice President in the Planning, Development and Transportation Division at NYCEDC. Good afternoon.
- The Seward Park sites lie at the intersection of Essex and Delancey Streets, just west of the Williamsburg Bridge, totaling approximately 6 acres. Sites 1-6 sit south of Delancey, Sites 8-10 north of Delancey.
- The remarkable aspect of the CB3's consensus guidelines was the definition of a program. This program articulated that 60% of the project should be residential; 40% of it should be commercial and other community uses. Of the residential units, 50% of the units would be affordable.
- The City has taken this historic agreement as the underpinning to our application, layering on the CB3 urban design guidelines—also unanimously passed—and created a framework, in anticipation of future developers, for what we aspire will become a vibrant community, wholly part of the cloth of the LES. In doing so, the project will create 900 units of housing, retail activity where now there is none, the opportunity for office space and community facilities, and a new neighborhood park: resulting in approximately 1,000 construction jobs and upwards to 5,000 permanent jobs.
- At the cross-roads at Essex and Delancey Streets, Site 2 is a prominent location. This site is conceived of as one that can accommodate more density, and as having the greatest opportunity for an all commercial building, should the market exist for that.
- Delancey Street, a major thoroughfare—250' at its widest—the gateway to the Williamsburg Bridge, is conceived of as a street that is appropriate for more intense use, including a strong commercial presence on the ground-floor. Street life on Delancey will be shaped by a few noteworthy elements:
  - o There will be a requirement for at least two stores per block-face.
  - o Parking and loading entrances will be located on the side streets.
  - NYCDOT is implementing extensive safety measures, including shortening crossing distances, sidewalk extensions and plantings.
- To help set the stage at Site 2, and to anchor the development, the City proposes an expanded Essex Street Market on the ground floor. The ESM is currently on Site 9, where it is very

space constrained and with little visibility from the street. A new, expanded and relocated ESM on Site 2 provides the opportunity to make it a more visible market that is better integrated into the public realm, promising new capital investment and the vendors modern, energy-efficient space. The market is to be 50% larger, creating new business opportunities for existing vendors and new entrepreneurial opportunities, as well as a vibrant entranceway to the project. The market would remain a publicly-owned and operated market, as it is today.

- Broome Street would be developed at a lower scale, with more of a neighborhood feel, extending the smaller-scale retail environment from the west, also echoing the historic use of this corridor. To do this:
  - o The City is requiring at least three stores per block along Broome Street.
  - A new 10,000 sq. ft. open space will built on Broome Street, creating a neighborhood draw and amenity at the heart of the project. There will be a public process after the RFP that will allow the community to be involved in the design for the future open space.
- Parking will be underground, accommodating the CB's request that the project include approximately the same amount of public parking as currently exists.
- Gabriella Amabile from HPD will discuss more details on the housing program.

#### Testimony of Gabriella Amabile Director of Large Scale Planning, HPD

City Council Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions Hon. Stephen T. Levin, Chair

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- My name is Gabriella Amabile and I am the Director of Large Scale Planning at the
  Department of Housing Preservation and Development. I am pleased to be before you today
  to testify about the Seward Park Development Project.
- HPD is excited by the progress we've made so far on this project and we believe that this is a momentous occasion for our agency, the City team, and the neighborhood.
- We worked very closely with the Community Board as they developed their housing proposal for Seward Park, and as a result of their tremendous effort, this housing program directly reflects their Guidelines. We will be continuing our partnership into the future phases of the project, including our ongoing work with the Community Board and Councilmember Chin's office regarding outreach to help identify and work with former site tenants.
- A key component of this redevelopment plan is affordable housing. The proposed project contains 900 housing units, half of which will be affordable to individuals and families at a range of incomes, from low to middle. Importantly, because of the avid support and advocacy of Councilmember Chin and Councilmember Mendez, the affordable housing will be permanently affordable.
- Fully consistent with the CB3 guidelines, the program requires 20% low-income units, 10% senior units, 10% moderate-income units, and 10% middle-income units. The current approximate incomes for these ranges are:
  - o Up to \$49,000 for a family of 4 or \$34,000 for an individual for the low income range,
  - O Up to \$107,000 for a family of 4 or \$75,000 for an individual for the moderate income range, and
  - Up to \$136,000 for a family of 4 or \$95,000 for an individual for the middle income range, based on the New York City Area Median Income, provided by HUD.
- This affordable housing complements the goals of the New Housing Marketplace Plan, Mayor Bloomberg's plan to create or preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing, and we are looking forward to implementing it with the support of the City Council and the local community.
- My colleague David from NYCEDC will now discuss the urban design and how it was developed, as well as the application itself and the process going forward.

#### Testimony of David Quart Senior Vice President, NYCEDC

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- My name is David Quart and I'm a Senior Vice President in the Development Department at NYCEDC.
- Under today's existing zoning, it is likely that a developer would build tower-in-the-park buildings, potentially looking like what is shown in this illustrative slide.
- To address the issue of urban design, the City engaged the planning and design firm Beyer, Blinder, Belle, who facilitated a public process engaging hundreds of community members in an interactive series of design workshops and a large open house event, using interactive site models to explore different design ideas. From this effort, a design vision emerged, and the CB adopted urban design guidelines.
- These guidelines, and the City's subsequent ULURP application, propose a set of design principles and building forms which combine the best aspects of the surrounding neighborhoods. They extend the walkable street grid, human-scaled streetwalls and active storefronts which currently exist north of Delancey and west of Essex. They also draw on the character of the "towers in the park" south of Delancey and Grand Streets to provide light, air, views and separation between towers.
- Here is an illustration of the desired urban form, with heights capped at ~14 stories on most sites, with the exception of Sites 2 and 4, which are capped at ~24 stories.
- The ULURP actions being requested would accomplish the programmatic and urban design goals of the project as we've just discussed.
- The bulk of the application consists of the large scale general development special permits, which is the zoning mechanism that will allow the project to be built in accordance with the Community Board's urban design principles.
- The other major actions required include a commercial overlay to ensure vibrant active ground floor uses, site disposition, special permits to allow for underground parking, and a mapping application to ensure the streets as they exist today are accurately reflected on the official city map.
- To briefly recap where we've been: years of groundwork by the CB which led to passing two sets of guidelines last year; this allowed for the City to officially proceed with the environmental review process and ULURP application.

- If the ULURP is approved, the City will begin an RFP process to solicit proposals for development under the approvals and select one or more developers to implement the proposed vision.
- As part of this RFP, the City has committed to working with a Community Board formed Task Force that will have substantive input on the RFP. The City will incorporate community priorities into the RFP selection in a robust way: the responsiveness to the preferences identified by the community Task Force will be one of the competitive selection criteria.
- These and other interactions with the community are vital to the success of the development plan, and the City looks forward to our continued partnership with the local community.
- Thank you.

For the Record

## SAVE THE ESSEX STREET MARKET

Hi, my name is Cynthia Lamb. When I first learned the Essex Street Market had been added to the SPURA development site I was surprised. This neighborhood icon was both flourishing and serving an important role in our food landscape, thanks to the hard work of vendors and the EDC. And it was doing so in its historic location. It struck me as wrong to trifle with it, and I figured our community would push back against the idea.

When I made my case to the EDC, I was met with the following words: "I guess we're victims of our own success." I failed to see exactly who was victimized by a successful public market serving neighborhood needs in a historically important location. When I rallied support for the market at Community Board hearings to Save the Essex Street Market, including a petition signed by several thousand people, our voices initially fell on deaf ears. But persistence led to acknowledgement of the market's importance in the CB3 SPURA guidelines, including a preference for keeping the market in its current location and support for the current vendors.

I'm saddened that the fight to preserve the Essex Street Market in its current historic location is no doubt over. It has been lost in the SPURA shuffle. Perhaps it was a done deal from the get go. The loss of a historic site is a loss for our Lower East Side neighborhood, which is fast losing its history, yet another thing to get lost in the shuffle.

Things, yes, but people should not.

The people who rely on the Essex Street Market and the vendors who work hard to serve them are what has kept this historic site thriving. These vendors—some multigenerational—risked their finances via capital buildups at the Essex Street Market. Specifically I ask for provisions to assure current vendors will not be put out of business by the hardship of a relocation, and that the current mix of vendors that serves us so well will be maintained in the new market at their existing rental terms. Presently, there is nothing to prevent pulling the rug out from under these small businesses, some of whom have served us for decades. This is wrong. CB3's guidelines regarding the Essex Street Market should be restored in full to the RFP. Not just to preserve the character of this market that serves our community, but to assure that the people who serve us—the vendors—are not lost in the shuffle.

Cynthia Lamb
SaveTheEssexStreetMarket.org, SaveTheESM@gmail.com

FOR THE RECORD!!

To members of the Council and to all present here today. We gather here to ask for representation on a vote. A vote that will impact our community in profound ways. A community that 50% of residents earns \$35,000.00 or less. And 30% earns \$15,000.00 yearly. This vote will test our representatives and those represented. S.P.U.R.A will mark New York City history. Will it be remembered for building big Box store? Or perhaps it will be remembered for bringing back Mom & Pop stores that gave one a sense of community. Will it be remembered for building much needed School that alleviated overcrowding in the area. Or building a Hotel that added one more to the already existing ones in the area. What were the needs of this community in 1967 when a small group decided for a larger group what was the general good. That decision displaced 1,800 families and razed a neighborhood. Created an empty barren land and maintained it for forty-five years. Low income housing is not only feasible it is needed in our community. Families faced with the prospect of not finding affordable housing will

face the possibility of becoming a non-working family. For the pressures become insurmountable when affordable housing is non existent. What is the general good? A housing shortage in Lower Eastside/Chinatown would devastate an already fragile situation. We ask members here today to vote no if this development does not take into account a communities will, needs, and desires. The challenge to all of us is to include the will of the people in our decision making process. We must make this process mean something or for certain destroy the meaning in the why we are here. Thank You.

David Nieves 64 Essex Street N.Y.C 10002

## Seward Park SEIU LOCAL 32B)

Hello, my name is Maurice Allen. I am a proud member of the labor union SEIU 32BJ. Some of our members have spoken at other hearings, which you may remember, but I want to repeat our concerns about job standards here.

We all know that living in the City is expensive, and gets more expensive each year. Being a member of Local 32BJ with a good salary and benefits, I have been able to raise my family and afford living in the city. All New Yorkers deserve the same.

Regarding the Seward Park project, I am worried about whether the jobs created from the development of these sites will be jobs that pay wages and benefits that people can support their families on.

Too often developers benefit from city-sponsored projects and rezoning paid for by taxpayers and then turn around and don't even provide good paying jobs.

If developers are going to benefit from our tax dollars then they should make sure that they create the kinds of jobs that can support families along with enough permanent affordable housing that middle-class people like me can afford.

So, I ask that the council recommend that there be standards attached to this project that will provide for good jobs and keep out low-road employers.

Hello, my name is Richard Grande and I'm a proud member of SEIU 32BJ. Our union represents over 120,000 building service workers, including 1,000 who live in this community.

I'm glad that the City and community are working together towards rebuilding the land near Seward Park and have worked on the issue of affordable housing. I think the project has the potential to provide a helpful economic boost to this neighborhood.

However, I'm worried about whether the jobs created from this development will be jobs that pay wages and benefits that people can support their families on. As a Local 32BJ with a good salary and benefits, I have been able to raise my family and afford living in the city. All New Yorkers deserve the same.

So I ask the City to ensure that standards are attached to this project that will provide for good jobs and keep out low-road employers.

September 19, 2012

Good afternoon

My name is Fran Marino

I am a long time resident of the Lower East Side. And I am a parishioner of St. Mary's Church. St. Mary's is a proud member of the Seward Park Redevelopment Coalition (SPARC).

I am happy to see the ULURP process moving forward with this longdelayed Redevelopment Plan for Seward Park.

All around us high rise condos and luxury hotels are rising up without any consideration for the needs of our community. We need affordable housing, and small retail stores that will provide goods, services and jobs.

I support the compromise agreement that was reached by the many stakeholders in the Land Use Committee of CB#3 and unanimously approved by CB#3 in January 2011 and again on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012.

I wish that more affordable housing could be built on the SPURA sites. Still, I support the 50/50 housing compromise; 50% affordable housing and 50% market rate housing to help subsidize the affordable housing. I understand the financial and political realities.

Nevertheless, I urge the City Council to build on the work of CB#3 by adding language in ULURP resolution calling for additional affordable housing on the SPURA site or elsewhere in Community Board 3 area. We could use more Senior Citizen housing.

We want housing that is affordable to many income groups <u>within</u> the categories of low, moderate and middle -- not just the high end of each category! We want both rental housing and cooperatively-owned housing—like the Grand Street Co-ops used to be-- with a low buy-in price and resale restrictions in perpetuity.

I am concerned about how those resale restrictions are going to be monitored and enforced. We need a Lower East Side Community Land Trust that will

retain ownership of the SPURA land and then lease it to the developers. The CLT can then monitor the restrictions designed to protect the affordability of the housing.

The City must keep its promises:

- ♦50% of all jobs (both permanent and construction-related) should go to residents of our community.
- ◆Develop small retail stores and not Big Box stores that will drive our small merchants out of business and pay very low wages to the workers.
- ◆ The workers must be paid a living wage, enough to be able to live in NYC.
- ◆ The Essex Street merchants were promised relocation expenses. The City must keep its promise.
- ♦ And yes, we do need a school.

For 45 years we have waited for the City to keep its promises. Now is the time for the City to deliver on its promises!

Thank you very much
Han Marino

My name is Jeanette Eileen Toomer, and I spent the first 17 years of my life in the Lower East Side. I am a member of GOLES, and I also work there.

I live in Brooklyn where I had to move to because I was priced out of my home neighborhood. I did everything right: I went to college, I got a job, and, even working full time, I still can't afford to live where I grew up. My roots are here and my family's here, but I can't afford to live in this neighborhood.

Real, affordable housing in the Lower East Side should be mandatory, especially at SPURA. Out of respect for the people who were displaced over forty years ago, the whole development should be affordable. At the very least, the plan needs more low-income housing.

There's nothing but so-called luxury apartments popping up. And it hurts that I have to walk past these beautiful apartments in my own neighborhood, and I can't live in them. I know that I'm worth living wherever I want to live, and it's unfair that developers can put a price on that. It's also unfair that the community's voice isn't valued. Housing is a human right, but it doesn't seem like that's a reality now in the Lower East Side.

I get compliments everywhere I go on my style, on my point of view, and that's because I grew up in this culturally diverse area. So, I have to give credit for a lot of that to my neighborhood. But the LES has lost a lot of its flavor because only a certain demographic are now being awarded the opportunity to live here. Cool people have all kinds of incomes.

Also, I have little cousins and my friends have children who deserve to go to school in their neighborhood, and often they have to travel an hour to go to school in another neighborhood, and if they go to school in this neighborhood, it's overcrowded. There needs to be a school at SPURA.

I came here to stand in solidarity with the 2,000 people who were displaced from SPURA and to stand in solidarity with my community members who are just like me. Real affordable housing with income ranges that reflect the families of this neighborhood and schools with a low student-to-teacher ratio shouldn't be an option in the Lower East Side; it should be the reality. The City Council needs to make these changes to the ULURP or make them in a restrictive declaration. Don't pass the buck to the RFP! A plan without more low-income housing is an unacceptable plan.

## 市议会关于苏域柏土地发展的公听会 9/19/12

我是『保护華埠/下东城联盟』華埠小商户的代表宋美容。 我反对市府在苏域柏土地的发展计划,因为不符合社区的需要。

目前,華埠小商户的经营都很困难,租金飞涨,各种不公平的罚单直接影响生意,政府和市议员都不关心我们的困难和要求。

《以民为先》土改方案的发展计划,关注苏域柏土地的发展。小商户非常需要可以负担得起租金的店铺,为社区民众提供更好的服务。尤其在《以民为先》土改方案的发展计划中,小商户会和社区民众一起努力,参加万人签名运动,要求市议会认真听取民意,支持在苏域柏建 100%低收入房屋,建学校、托儿所、青年中心和健康中心,并且提供小商户可以承担得起租金的店铺:还要把这个计划产生的工作优先给社区的工人。

要求市议会的议员对市府的计划投反对票。

My name is Gwen Simpson. I'm a member of NMASS.

I live very close to SPURA. I am worried about what will happen to us, the people, if the City puts up luxury highrises across the street from where we live.

If you pass the City's plan, many of us are going to be priced out of this neighborhood. Many of us are going to be homeless, living in overcrowded shelters especially those of us on fixed incomes — with nowhere to go. This is what happened when I lived in Harlem, I saw the whole community destroyed because most of us could no longer afford the high rent. Putting up luxury towers near low-income housing is not fair to us. You can't expect people to just lay down and you just roll over them. You can't take our community away from us.

Is it fair to those of us who built this community to see there is no place for us in the City's plan for SPURA? That none of us will be able to afford a single apartment that the city constructs? That there will be no businesses that we can afford to shop at? That there will be no schools for our kids or other programs for our community? No this is not fair.

That is why I'm excited to hear that there is a developer

who is willing to develop 100% low-income housing on SPURA. And that is why I ask that you vote NO to the City's plans for SPURA. And that you support 100% low-income housing, spaces for small businesses and community programs, and that our community have priority for jobs at SPURA.

My name is Vaylateena Jones. I am a Registered Nurse and resident of the Lower East Side. I am a member of Manhattan Community Board 3.

The Mixed-Use Plan for Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) which provides for permanent affordable housing with a percentage that would be affordable for a variety of people including First Responders such as Firemen, Police Officers, Paramedics, Emergency Medical Technicians as well as Registered Nurses and Teachers is commendable.

I urge you to consider Health in planning some of the commercial space.

Consider space for Sub Emergency Services, Urgent Care Centers and stipulations that promote healthy living. The impact of the Affordable Care Act on the use of Emergency and Primary Care Services should be explored. There are various opinions and a major consideration will probably be the health care services covered in the least expensive health care insurance policies. The District Needs Statement for Manhattan Community Board 3, 2013 states: "..with the recent closure of St. Vincent's Hospital, nearby hospitals are experiencing severe overcrowding" According to NYC Vital Signs A data report from the New York City Health Department November 2010, vol 9, no.5 "Neighborhoods with the highest proportion of ED visits that are related to alcohol for both adults and underage drinkers are: Lower Manhattan...." Research can be done on utilization of Emergency Services, Urgent Care Centers and other Sub Emergency Services. Consider researching the basis for the increase in Urgent Care Centers in Manhattan, wait time for Emergency Services in the area, wait time for transfer out of the Emergency Rooms in the area to a hospital bed.

According to a Community Board 3 statement "with the exception of a possible supermarket, no single retail tenant should exceed 30,000 square feet in size." Consider including a stipulation for any supermarket to provide healthy Cooking classes. Whole Foods on Greenwich Street occasionally provides healthy cooking classes. According to the District Needs Statement of CB3, for 2014, to be voted on "Diabetes disproportionately impacts CB-3...Needs include: ..access to affordable, healthy foods and how to prepare them" Cooking classes that address interesting ways to cook vegetables, low fat; low salt, low/no sugar dishes could be beneficial and stipulated.

Consider restaurants that have full menus including appetizers, entrees with sides and possibly alcoholic beverages and stipulations. According to the Centers for Disease Control "excessive alcohol use also cost the United States about \$185 billion each year in health care and criminal justice expenses, as well as lost productivity" (CDC, pg 2 col. 1). The Centers for Disease Control "recommends on the basis of strong evidence the following interventions to prevent excessive alcohol use and related harms: ..Regulation of alcohol outlet density, which is the number of places that sell alcohol in a defined geographic area...Maintaining limits on the days and hours when alcohol can be sold" (CDC, pg 3, col. 2). According to the statistics from City-data.com zips 10003, 10009 and 10002 are among the "zip codes with the most alcohol drinking places" in the nation. The following recommendations are based on the assumption that Seward Park Urban Renewal Area is a planned residential area. Menus that included a

healthy meat and vegetarian entrée choice could be encouraged. Menus that include a healthy salad as an appetizer choice can be encouraged.

Centers for Disease Control. Excessive Alcohol Use: Addressing a Leading Risk for Death, Chronic Disease and Injury at a Glance 2011.

The Council of the City of New York Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions Public Hearing on the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area September 19, 2012

Public Testimony by David Garza, Executive Director of Henry Street Settlement

David Garza Executive Director Henry Street Settlement 265 Henry Street New York, NY 10002 (212) 766-9200

#### Introduction

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to testify at the New York City Council about the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area development ("SPURA"). My name is David Garza. I am the Executive Director of Henry Street Settlement, a settlement house founded in the 19th Century to support the transitioning, immigrant, and working-class neighborhood of Manhattan's Lower East Side. Our Workforce Development Center guides a wide range of low-income New Yorkers and LES residents through the major challenge of securing employment amid local gentrification and an immense national economic recession. Our goal is to promote the health, wellbeing, and economic self-sufficiency of this incredibly diverse and historically rich community and all New Yorkers.

#### **Lower East Side Employment Network**

I am proud to say that my colleagues and I have invested five years in building an effective local hiring vehicle to take advantage of the unprecedented SPURA opportunity. Working in close partnership with Community Board 3 and our local elected officials, five prominent non-profit organizations with long histories of delivering social services in Lower

Manhattan have come together to form the Lower East Side Employment Network

("LESEN"): Chinese-American Planning Council, Chinatown Manpower Project, The Door
and University Settlement, Good Old Lower East Side, and Henry Street Settlement. We
have united to engage all community residents and prepare them for employment in
growth market sectors. Local developers and a range of public and private stakeholders
already recognize our potential and we have extensive experience working effectively with
the city's existing workforce development system; including the Workforce 1 Career
Centers, Business Solutions Centers and all city agencies that resource workforce
development initiatives. It is notable that although our services primarily target local
residents from Community District 3, that we are inclusive and serve job seekers and
employers from all five boroughs of New York City.

#### **Lower East Side Redevelopment**

The Lower East Side is undergoing an impressive economic and residential makeover. It is at a major turning point as seemingly opposing forces contend for available and newfound opportunities: long-time and incoming residents; mom-and-pop stores and high-end boutique shops and restaurants; small businesses and multinational corporate brands.

Vulnerable residents are among these competing and common interests. Indeed,

Community Board 3's residents were the most vulnerable among all of Manhattan's districts – 51 percent were on some form of income support in 2011, including TANF, SSI, and Medicaid benefits¹ – and faced some of the greatest income disparity in New York City.²

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Community Board 3 District Profile: http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/lucds/mn3profile.pdf#profile

Witnessing the neighborhood's shifting landscape, LES low-income residents know they potentially stand the most to win or lose out on the area's changes.

#### Seward Park Urban Renewal Area Proposal

The SPURA development will bring jobs, housing, and increasingly vibrant street life and social services. Good jobs are at the top of this list because one might say that stable, dependable employment is at the core of healthy families, streets, and communities.

This is where the proposal for SPURA development presents some of the starkest potential victories or losses for the LES. As a development on public land and financed with public funds, I believe the proposed development and RFP process must include a few crucial components if it will truly forward a self-sufficient community:

- First, the project requires living wage jobs for businesses located in the development;
- Second, stakeholders provide requisite priority access to qualified local residents with very low and low incomes;<sup>3</sup>

http://www.aafny.org/cic/briefs/lowermanhattan.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lower Manhattan area profile based on 1990 and 2000 censuses:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act;

- Third, the project formally recognizes the Lower East Side Employment Network in the RFP as a vehicle to work in partnership with the city to facilitate access to employment opportunities for local residents and job seekers across the city;
- Last, the local hiring component of the project creates and adheres to a transparent system of measurable results, with defined goals and expectations as opposed to "best efforts."

Including these crucial steps into the RFP process will help bring self-sufficiency for underprivileged LES residents and residents city-wide that are facing powerful waves of neighborhood and economic change. Other neighborhoods have confronted many of the same issues and concerns as the Lower East Side. We can look to their developments as examples: the AOL/Time Warner Center at Columbus Circle; the proposed Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment; and the ongoing 125th Street Rezoning and Revitalization in Central Harlem. The message is clear: low-income communities thrive from development that requires livable wage jobs with local priority access. By utilizing the Lower East Side Employment Network, SPURA can improve upon models previously introduced and tested by these notable projects.

The LESEN is uniquely positioned to meet the goal of providing access for qualified job seekers and provide quality services and to employers and developers. It has built and is improving the necessary infrastructure to funnel these residents to livable wage employment. We ask for a final SPURA development that formally expands this funnel. We

ask for development that promotes a healthier, safer, and more vibrant Lower East Side and economically supports all residents and stakeholders.

Thank you.

#### HERMAN F. HEWITT

212 Forsyth Street # 1-4 New York, NY 10002 Tel: 212-475-5845 Fax: 212-995-5737 C. 917-418-5972 E-Mail: hew212@aol.com

**September 19, 2012** 

#### **TESTIMONY**

Re: Seward Park Urban Renewal Area Plan

#### Good Afternoon Everyone

I am here to support the development plan as worked out between the community residents and various stakeholders. As a long time resident of the lower east side, I have seen the changes in the Lower East Side on a daily basis. Some of these changes have enhanced the quality of life for our residents, but not all for the good.

One of those negatives is the ability of existing residents and their families to maintain affordability in where they reside, or for their children to return and secure affordable housing in the area.

The plan as it sets out at this time meets many of the intent of the community to provide some affordable housing, which I think could have been more, however there are many other also important things I would like the City Council to consider and which should be included in the final plan by the City of New York, there are:

- 1. Preference for former site tenants and existing residents of Community Board #3 for a minimum of 50%
- 2. Provision for preferences for short and long term employment, and job training for CB3 residents
- 3. Language which will eliminate, or restrict the location of oversize stores in the development
- 4. Strong consideration for fair treatment for the existing merchants in the Essex Street Market, including relocation cost, rent, and set-up fees
- 5. All affordable development should include community development partnerships to make sure the affordable housing remain permanent.
- 6. Family entertainment facilities, for adults and children which is lacking the area.
- 7. Affordable retail and offices spaces for small businesses and other entrepreneurs.

As a community developer of affordable housing, I have come to see some of the affordable housing in our community has become unaffordable, either by natural forces or in a manner cause by high real estate, water tax, or lack of proper oversight.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to express my support for this plan and hope the Council will support the community's wishes.

Herman F Hewitt

我是王天森,在華阜的餐馆做 10 多年企台。我要求市议员不要投票通过市府的苏域柏发展方案。因为完全不符合華阜/下东城民众和社区的需要。

最近几年我看到華阜居住环境没有改善,越来越多的居民被房东逼迁;有很多朋友是低收入的家庭,因为交不起飞涨的房租而需要和别人挤在同一个柏文居住,带来很多的不方便和社会问题。我们工人的工资从 5.25 元慢慢增加到现在的7.25 元,但一房一厅的房租已经从 600 多元增加到 1500 元以上,一般的工人家庭怎么承担得起!我们的社区太需要低收入房屋了。年收入 10 万的家庭有太多的选择,我们低收入家庭就非常需要政府的关心。

苏域柏是政府的土地,又是我们低收入社区的土地,应该发展社区的需要,100%建低收入房屋,有学校、托儿所和各种活动中心,解决社区民众急切需要房屋和良好服务的要求;并且为社区民众提供更多的就业机会。

今天的报纸报道了发展商支持《以民为先》的苏域柏发展计划。是一个很鼓舞人心的好消息。请市议员不要逆民意而行。



# THE CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 3

59 East 4th Street - New York, NY 10003 Phone (212) 533-5300 - Fax (212) 533-3659 www.cb3manhattan.org - info@cb3manhattan.org

Gigi Li, Board Chair

Susan Stetzer, District Manager

September 19, 2012 City Council Zoning Subcommittee Submitted Testimony of Dominic Berg, former Community Board Chair, In Support With Conditions of the Seward Park Mixed Use Project ULURP

Good day City Council Members. My name is Dominic Berg. Up until June 30th, I had been the Chairperson for Community Board 3, Manhattan since July 1, 2008. It was during my leadership that the application before you came to fruition. We overcame an acrimonious debate that had left the Lower East Side divided for over 40 years. It took a careful and methodical four-phase process over three-and-a-half years that led to a strong unanimous vote to approve the Seward Park Mixed Use Project with conditions this past May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Phase One started in October 2008 and gained steam in January 2009. During this time the CB's Land Use, Housing, Zoning, Public and Private Housing Committee ("the Committee") grew to include a range of community stakeholders that had historically been on opposite sides of the table. However, there was a civil tenor that allowed us to forge ahead with vignettes, brainstorming sessions, and eventually a set of Guiding Principles, which were adopted in June 2009. It was clear that there was a will for the first time in six years to find a compromise to turn the parking lots on the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) site into housing, commercial, community, and open space. The first step in a very transparent process was started by adding a section on the Community Board 3, Manhattan's web site to document and archive these early meetings and decisions.

Phase Two is best characterized as the Guidelines and Consensus Phase. The eight months following the adoption of the June 2009 Guiding Principles proved to make slow progress while the Committee tried to take care of other business, so it was agreed to start meeting once a month for a dedicated SPURA meeting. It was also during this time period that the committee asked me to formally invite the Economic Development Corporation, Housing Preservation & Development, and City Planning to become engaged partners in the process. In April 2010, the EDC hired a respected urban planner to facilitate what started as four planned meetings, but was extended to seven.

All of these meetings had Mandarin, Cantonese, and Spanish translators, except for one that did not have a Mandarin translator. No one from the public ever expressed an inability to participate due to a language or any other kind of barrier. Most of these meetings had a public session before each plenary session and often allowed the public to provide input during some points in the meeting. The meeting locations were held in various parts of the district in order to capture a diverse constituency, including the Lower East Side and Chinatown.

All of the discussion and input, along with the June 2009 Principles, led to draft guidelines being presented for thorough review over our last three facilitated meetings. This was a uniquely

transparent point in the process for a Community Board. Each meeting yielded a more refined version of the document. The public was able to submit written comments via email before each meeting. These comments were collated and organized and then addressed during the meeting, along with Committee members' own input. As the document was updated or comments were made during the meeting there were dual projectors that showed the original guidelines and their changes. Finally, on January 24, 2011, a unanimous vote was taken to approve formal guidelines, which would be our compass as we entered the Design and ULURP phases. Over 43 years of division had been ended!

Phase Three was a continuation of the community's strong involvement in the process as we tackled the design for the project site. We adopted the "Urban Design Principles for Sites 1-6 (those South of Delancey Street)" in June 2011 after four intense meetings that included giving the public and committee members the opportunity to move around Styrofoam buildings in order to imagine different designs. We also called for priority hiring requirements for CB 3 residents in stores with over 15,000 square feet. The end of this phase concluded with us commenting on the Environmental Impact Scoping Draft at EDC's hearing, which included a call for some of the key points that were reflected in our ULURP conditions and have been mentioned here today.

Phase Four was the ULURP Phase, which started in March of this year. It was heartening to see many of our January and June 2011 Guiding and Urban Design Principles reflected in the ULURP. It showed that the City had been a good partner and listened closely, however, there were very stark and significant principles that still had not been met. A Town Hall meeting on April 18 and our May committee meeting reflected a unanimous viewpoint that the City must offer permanent affordable housing as part of the final plan. 48 speakers spoke at the Town Hall meeting and we accepted email submissions as well. There were multilingual translators at the Town Hall and the May committee and full board meetings, which also included public sessions. The agreement by the City to provide an unprecedented CB role in the RFP process as well as their acquiescence to provide permanently affordable housing led the board to vote unanimously, again, for the fourth and final major vote, in favor of the ULURP with important conditions that others will stress remain today.

One condition that is personally very important to me is for this project to include a Pre-K-8 public school within it. I have provided an Appendix that describes Community Board 3's "condition" for why a school is necessary.

# The Case for a School Within the Seward Park Mixed Use Development: Appendix to Community Board 3's Comments on the SPMUD ULURP

The Seward Park Mixed Use Project Site plan includes a potential 1,000 housing units. Of this total, at least 50 percent will be affordable housing. The entire development can be expected to attract families who will send their children to a local public school, for reasons of both affordability and quality. There is ample evidence, particularly in Manhattan and Brooklyn that market rate residents are choosing to send their children to public schools rather than private schools as the quality of public schools and quality of life has improved under this administration<sup>1</sup>

Even before adding the 1,000 planned units, an examination of data from the DOE 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 "Blue Books" shows that public school enrollment is growing faster in District 1 than in any other district in the entire city--by far--at 4.1 percent per year. The current enrollment growth shows no sign of abating. Indeed, there has been a double-digit percentage increase of over 12 percent in Kindergarten enrollment alone between 2009 and 2011. Moreover, the Department of City Planning anticipates overall population growth for Manhattan, with a 4.4% percentage change of school-age population from 2000-2030. Birth data for Manhattan from 2000 to 2009 from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shows a percentage change of .5% for the borough.

The enrollment increases are already contributing to rising class sizes, with 52 percent of District 1 General Education, Gifted and Talented, and CTT Kindergarten classes exceeding the benchmark of 19.9 students in K-3 in the City's Contract for Excellence Plan (established by law to settle the Campaign Fiscal Equity lawsuit in 2007) with 20.1 students in the 2011-2012 school year. The possibility of 30 children per class exists for District 1 schools in 2012-2013. Further contributing to space constraints is the infusion of charter schools into the community, which reduces the availability of classrooms as well as much-needed spaces for purposes such as cluster rooms, therapy areas for special education students, and libraries, all of which are vital to delivering a quality education. The district's significant percentages of special education and ELL pupils already create specific educational needs and will continue to do so. According to one projection, the number of special education students alone is expected to double, comprising over 16 percent of the total elementary and junior high enrollment by 2018. The district currently has approximately 14 percent English Language Learners. It is a priority for schools to meet these students' needs.

Over the last decade, School District 1 has seen the greatest improvement of any

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Coplon, Jeff. "Five Year Olds at the Gate: Why are Manhattan's Elementary Schools Turning Away Kindergarteners? How the Bloomberg Administration Missed the Baby Boom it Helped Create." New York Magazine, May 24, 2009. Web: http://nymag.com/print/?/news/features/56942/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "New York City Population Projections by Age/Sex and Borough, 2000-2030," New York City Department of City Planning, December 2006. Web: <a href="http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/projections-briefing-booklet.pdf">http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/projections-briefing-booklet.pdf</a>

district in the city in terms of student achievement, despite an economically and ethnically diverse population, in large part because of two critical factors: the provision of full-day pre-Kindergarten and small class sizes in the early grades. These are the only two education reforms that have been proven through rigorous evidence to narrow the achievement gap.

If residential growth in CB3 is allowed to continue without any planning for a school, the schools in District 1 and 2 will likely lose their Pre-K programs, and class sizes will continue to increase in size to far above optimal levels. The 2,400 children on waiting lists (as of May 22, 2012) for their zoned Kindergarten both this year and last are testament to a severe lack of planning for large scale residential development.

Also, in grades 4-8, class sizes have increased in District 1. They rose from 20.1 students in a class on average in 2009-2010, to 20.6 in 2010-2011, and then jumped to 23 in 2011-2012. This now tops the Contract for Excellence Plan's goal of 22.9 for grades 4-8. It is worth noting that while the "Blue Book" assumes a class size of 28 in grades 4-8, this capacity number is not aligned with the City's own state-mandated Contract for Excellence Plan of an average class size of 23. The disconnect between policy and school construction is stark.

Unfortunately, the DOE cannot be relied upon to accurately forecast the need for school space. It is alarming to compare actual data to the DOE's own 2009 Grier report, which projected a five-year enrollment growth for District 1 of 7.6 percent from a 2008 baseline: the actual increase of 4.1 percent in 2008-2009 alone already surpassed the half-way point of the five-year projection. The consistent discrepancies in DOE's projections and actual enrollments have been documented in several reports, including studies by the Manhattan Borough President, NYC Comptroller, and other non-profit and industry analysts.

District 1 and District 2 are growing at a comparable rate. While District 2 suffers from extreme overcrowding, new schools are being built; yet this is not expected to satisfy the population increase in District 2 based on housing start projections. According to the NYC School Construction Authority's projected new housing starts, which are used for the 2010-2014 Capital Plan, enrollment projection show an additional 1,880 housing units between 2009 and 2018 for District 1.3 While housing starts had declined following the recession in 2007, the US Census Bureau and the Manhattan Borough President's office have reported on an increase in Manhattan since 2009.4

Therefore, for the reasons cited above as well as based on data gleaned by multiple governmental and industry reports, the need for a dual District 1 and District 2 Pre-K to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Projected New Housing Starts as Used in the 2009-2018 Enrollment Projection 2010-2014 Capital Plan," New York City School Construction Authority. Web: <a href="http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Housing/2009-2018HousingWebChart.pdf">http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Housing/2009-2018HousingWebChart.pdf</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "School Daze: Fuzzy Numbers Mean Overcrowded Schools," Office of Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer, September 2009. Web: http://mbpo.org/uploads/policy\_reports/schooldaze.pdf

8<sup>th</sup> grade school on the Seward Park Mixed Use Project site is critical. A dual district school would provide flexibility and consistency with the Department of City Planning's own recommendations for responsible planning around new residential developments.<sup>5</sup> The school should also be considered part of District 1's "District of Choice" policy whereby any District 1 student can rank the new school as their top choice school to enroll into and any child from District 2 who resides within CB3's boundaries can request to enter this school over their zoned school, yet will be able to attend the latter should a lottery system be employed at the new school and the child cannot attend the new school on the Seward Park Mixed Use Project site. This school would preferably serve CB3 children primarily within an approximate ½ mile radius of the school site with a 50/50 mix of District 1 and District 2 children as the first priority for acceptance. CB3 and the City shall work with the State legislature to amend the current boundaries to allow for this dual district system.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Community Facilities and Services: Developing Mitigation," CEQR Technical Manual, January 2012 edition, Page 6-15. Web: <a href="http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/downloads/pdf/2012">http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/downloads/pdf/2012</a> ceqr tm/2012 ceqr tm ch06 community facilities and services.pdf

Mi nombre es Aurelinda Checo. He vivido en Lower East Side desde 1978. Tuve una tienda por ocho anos, pero tuve que cerrarla porque la renta era demasiado alta.

Vote NO al plan de la Ciudad, porque toda la gente de bajo ingreso van a estar forsada a salir de la comunidad--mas familias separadas--por que no hay suficiente vivienda para gente de bajo ingreso.

Los jovenes necesitan programas, viviendas, trabajos. Ahora ya hay muchos jovenes desorientados.

Por eso, queremos viviendas de bajo ingreso a SPURA—100%. Y tambien queremos espacios para programas para los jovenes, una escuela y otras programas educativos. Y queremos trabajos para nuestra comunidad.

Gracias.

English translation

My name is Aurelinda Checo. I have lived in the Lower East Side since 1978. I had a store for eight years, but I had to close it, because the rent was too high.

Vote NO on the City's plan, because all the low-income people are going to be forced to leave the community—

more families separated--because there is not sufficient housing for low-income people.

The young people need programs, housing, jobs. Already now there are many disoriented young people.

For this reason we want low-income housing at SPURA—100%. And also, we want space for programs for the youth—a school and other educative programs. And we want jobs for our community.

Thank you.



#### Testimony of Mark Miller, LES BID President Regarding the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area's Redevelopment

September 19, 2012

Good afternoon, my name is Mark Miller I am the President of the Lower East Side Business Improvement District. I am also a third generation property owner of a building that has been in our family for over 100 years. I am submitting testimony regarding the development of the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area and the impacts it will have on the Lower East Side's local economy.

It is our strong belief this project will provide a vast array of benefits for residents, businesses, and other neighborhood institutions, such as our local cultural groups. The addition of approximately 900 new housing units and the possible development of commercial office space will enhance the ability of both our merchants and eateries to prosper and enjoy continued success.

The combination of increased residential density and office space for professionals will help generate weekday business activity for the Lower East Side and promote the neighborhood as a "daytime destination" not only for visitors, but for its own residents and local employees. The project program described within this ULURP application also represents a compromise solution that members of the Community Board Three unanimously supported.

Our organization emphatically agrees with this compromise and it is our belief this plan represents the best path forward in developing long vacant sites that are in desperate need of improvement. This project holds tremendous promise for all stakeholders in the Lower East Side. Its transformative effects will be instrumental in assuring the growth of our local economy benefiting property owners, merchants and residents alike.

In conclusion, we urge you to support this application and help the Lower East Side continue to grow and prosper. The effects of this project will be great, and represent a tremendous opportunity for our community. We remain confident that the benefits of this proposal will both enhance the quality of life of our residents and provide new opportunities for the growth of our small businesses.

For the Keeord



Testimony of Michael Forrest, LES BID Vice President Regarding the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area's Redevelopment

September 19, 2012

Good afternoon, my name is Michael Forrest and I am the Vice President of the Lower East Side Business Improvement District. As a local property owner I am testifying today on the potential impacts of the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area's redevelopment.

It is my strong belief this project has the potential to provide the daytime foot traffic our community desperately needs through the inclusion of commercial office space on Site 2. We enjoy a robust dining and lounge scene during the evening, we however lack daytime workers who can support local merchants and restaurateurs.

This lack of daytime foot traffic has in our view prohibited a vibrant daytime economy that can support a diverse mix of retail establishments. The development of commercial office space in combination with the increased residential density this project will provide has the potential to drastically shift the current trajectory of our community's growth.

Our local economy continues to evolve, in recent years we have seen the growth of art galleries and creative entrepreneurs locating within our community. Unfortunately, there is a lack of available space for these businesses to expand, especially for those desiring office space. We know the demand for this space exists, in recent months two co-working spaces have located on the Lower East Side and anticipate full occupancy.

Cornell University President David Skorton often refers to the "F-train tech corridor" as an emerging hub of technological and creative innovation. Site 2 is located directly above the Delancey/Essex F train station making it ideally situated to take advantage of this growth. It is our strong belief that the development of the Cornell's applied sciences campus and the continued growth of the technology industry in downtown Brooklyn make this location a desirable mid-point in Manhattan for technology and creative businesses to locate.

In addition, the project also calls for the relocation of the Essex Street Market to an improved space on Site 2. The inclusion of office space above a new market will assist in ensuring the growth of market retailers and combined with easy subway access create an ideal setting for a variety of businesses seeking Class A office space in a unique and emerging community.

I urge you to support this proposal and assist our community in continuing to build a local economy based upon the documented industry growth of both technology and creative entrepreneurs.

Hello, my name is Lisa Davis. I am a life-long resident of the Lower East Side. I'm also a member the GOLES community organization on the Lower East Side that has been working with residents and their housing issues for 35 years.

As a resident of the Lower East Side, I am her to share my concern about the proposal for the mixed-use plan for Seward Park (SPURA) area.

While many of us in this community are pleased to hear that the SPURA proposal will be permanently affordable, we would like to see the market rate be 40% instead of 50%. The affordable rate should be 60% and the low-income division or the low-income senior division under the affordable rate should gain the 10% that could come from the middle-income division, which should be joined under the market rate division anyway, due to their large acceptable wage. In other words, it would be 50% low-to-moderate income housing and 50% middle- to market-rate housing.

As a member of the GOLES Healthy Aging Program, I would hope that there will be more senior housing included in the 50% affordable housing.

We would like if affordability is more clearly defined and more inclusive to long-time Lower East Side residents whose incomes are often fixed and more typically side with low-income.

Thank you for your consideration.

My name is Gilbert Alicea, I'm a member of GOLES, and I live on the Lower East Side. Real affordable housing for people in this neighborhood is the low-income housing. We want to see more low-income housing in the SPURA plan and more housing for low-income seniors. The senior citizens now are the baby boom generation, so there's going to be a lot of senior citizens, and they're going to need housing. I might add that there are 1.2 million elderly in NYC- 35% living alone.

In my opinion, with an income of \$100 - \$130,000 yearly, the middle-income housing should go with the market-rate housing. It could be 50% low-to-moderate and 50% middle-to-market. That way, there could be more low- and moderate-income housing or more low-income senior housing. It's just a suggestion, considering how many low-income families were displaced from those buildings. Increasing the low-, moderate-, or low-income senior portions of the housing is a step towards justice, and it's what's right for this community.

Lastly, when this construction starts, I want to know what housing units will be built first, and will there be guarantee that the low-income housing will get built first or at least at the same time as the rest of the development?

I thank the City Council for their time and consideration.

## Statement of SPARC: Seward Park Area Redevelopment Coalition ULURP Hearing: before the City Council Committee on Land Use September 19, 2012 at 1:00pm, City Hall Council Chambers

My name is Harriet Cohen and I am the Chair of SPARC – the Seward Park Area Redevelopment Coalition — a volunteer organization of Lower East Side residents, community-based and faith organizations, tenant associations and former site tenants. In various formations we have been active for the last 40+ years since the first bulldozer began destroying an important part of our community: 2,000 families lost their homes, and several hundred small business owners lost their stores, shops and livelihoods. We've witnessed the broken promises and the decades of vacant land.

We've knocked on doors, held rallies and vigils, circulated petitions and sent thousands of postcards, reached out to successive Mayors and Administrations, to HDA and its successor HPD -- always insisting that affordable housing be built on the site and former site tenants restored to new homes. It's been a long and contentious history. More recently we joined the Community Board #3 Land Use & Housing Committee that worked for 3 years to produce a compromise between various stakeholders in the community that had differing priorities for the site. In the end we voted for the compromise and joined with everyone to support a mixed use development plan that is before you today. We didn't get all we wanted – we fought for far more than 50% affordable housing and for units for our most low income and vulnerable residents. This is important and necessary, not only because of the history of the site, but because of the rampant gentrification on the Lower East Side that is turning our once economically integrated community into one that is increasingly divided between the haves and the have nots.

### We support:

- At least 50% permanent affordable housing, serving our low, moderate and middle income, and senior residents. We'd like to see more if not on SPURA, than a City commitment to build it in other parts of the Lower East Side. And we'd like to see the City's on-the-record commitment to permanent affordability written into the ULURP.
- Retail stores, but not big boxes that would displace our existing small businesses and change our community character.
- A new Essex Street Market (southeast corner of Essex and Delancey Sts), with relocation of existing vendors with city-paid moving costs and comparable rents.
- A commitment of at least 50% of all full-time jobs for residents of CB #3, at prevailing wages for construction and living wages for all others.
- Honoring the commitment to former site tenants by locating and informing them of their right to return, apply for and receive first priority for any new housing.
- Further consideration for a new school that is for our community's children.
- An open, equitable and transparent rent-up process for all new affordable housing.

This development is a long time coming. It's been a difficult and painful birthing that has not yet come to fruition. We are here today as part of the coming together of different interests within the community that sat and talked, argued and negotiated over 3 years, and came to an Agreement. Let us hope that as we move forward, the spirit of this compromise and the civility and reconciliation that was gained, will be reflected in all the uses, but especially in the housing and people who will call this new neighborhood home. The Lower East Side is a brand, a beacon, a symbol the world over: home to successive waves of global immigrants, tolerant of difference, and with an openness that has allowed people from different walks of life — be that income, race, ethnicity or disability — to live and work together here and feel they really belonged. Let's make sure this strength of our community's character is reinforced and shows up in all that is built on the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area.

Good afternoon to all of the City Council Officials and to the NY who are here today. My name is Joyce Ravitz; I am the Chairperson of the CSC; LES resident for over 45 years; and a member of CB#3. I was delighted when the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) compromise plan was finally passed by our community board. I hope that the City Council will do the same. The best part of this plan is that the affordable housing will be affordable forever. But I hope that the City Council will make the SPURA plan even better.

First, I hope that you will find a way to make more low income housing in the plan or close to the plan. My community is desperate for more low income housing.

Second, I believe that the city should do all it can to find the former tenants so that they can move back into the community they were forced to leave over 45 years ago.

Third, I hope that you help this mixed use community to create more jobs with livable wages for our LES'ers and other NY'ers. There are too many people unemployed or underemployed in our community. This is a chance to improve the lives of my neighbors and other New Yorkers.

Fourth, I hope that you will include Community Board Three's recommendation that there be no "Big Box Stores" on this site. Stores like Walmart are not good for the vibrancy of a community as you have heard or will hear today.

Finally, please be sure that the Essex Street Market vendors are fairly compensated for their relocation expenses. I look forward to shop in the new and improved, larger public market that we have been promised on the south side of Delancey Street.

I believe that these suggestions will make this plan even better than it is. Please pass the best ULURP for the people of the Lower East Side and for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for listening my ideas regarding Seward Park. Have a good day.

Hello, my name is Lisa Davis. I am a life-long resident of the Lower East Side. I'm also a member the GOLES community organization on the Lower East Side that has been working with residents and their housing issues for 35 years.

As a resident of the Lower East Side, I am her to share my concern about the proposal for the mixed-use plan for Seward Park (SPURA) area.

While many of us in this community are pleased to hear that the SPURA proposal will be permanently affordable, we would like to see the market rate be 40% instead of 50%. The affordable rate should be 60% and the low-income division or the low-income senior division under the affordable rate should gain the 10% that could come from the middle-income division, which should be joined under the market rate division anyway, due to their large acceptable wage. In other words, it would be 50% low-to-moderate income housing and 50% middle- to market-rate housing.

As a member of the GOLES Healthy Aging Program, I would hope that there will be more senior housing included in the 50% affordable housing.

We would like if affordability is more clearly defined and more inclusive to long-time Lower East Side residents whose incomes are often fixed and more typically side with low-income.

Thank you for your consideration.

My name is Gilbert Alicea, I'm a member of GOLES, and I live on the Lower East Side. Real affordable housing for people in this neighborhood is the low-income housing. We want to see more low-income housing in the SPURA plan and more housing for low-income seniors. The senior citizens now are the baby boom generation, so there's going to be a lot of senior citizens, and they're going to need housing. I might add that there are 1.2 million elderly in NYC- 35% living alone.

In my opinion, with an income of \$100 - \$130,000 yearly, the middle-income housing should go with the market-rate housing. It could be 50% low-to-moderate and 50% middle-to-market. That way, there could be more low- and moderate-income housing or more low-income senior housing. It's just a suggestion, considering how many low-income families were displaced from those buildings. Increasing the low-, moderate-, or low-income senior portions of the housing is a step towards justice, and it's what's right for this community.

Lastly, when this construction starts, I want to know what housing units will be built first, and will there be guarantee that the low-income housing will get built first or at least at the same time as the rest of the development?

I thank the City Council for their time and consideration.

## Statement of SPARC: Seward Park Area Redevelopment Coalition ULURP Hearing: before the City Council Committee on Land Use September 19, 2012 at 1:00pm, City Hall Council Chambers

My name is Harriet Cohen and I am the Chair of SPARC – the Seward Park Area Redevelopment Coalition — a volunteer organization of Lower East Side residents, community-based and faith organizations, tenant associations and former site tenants. In various formations we have been active for the last 40+ years since the first bulldozer began destroying an important part of our community: 2,000 families lost their homes, and several hundred small business owners lost their stores, shops and livelihoods. We've witnessed the broken promises and the decades of vacant land.

We've knocked on doors, held rallies and vigils, circulated petitions and sent thousands of postcards, reached out to successive Mayors and Administrations, to HDA and its successor HPD — always insisting that affordable housing be built on the site and former site tenants restored to new homes. It's been a long and contentious history. More recently we joined the Community Board #3 Land Use & Housing Committee that worked for 3 years to produce a compromise between various stakeholders in the community that had differing priorities for the site. In the end we voted for the compromise and joined with everyone to support a mixed use development plan that is before you today. We didn't get all we wanted — we fought for far more than 50% affordable housing and for units for our most low income and vulnerable residents. This is important and necessary, not only because of the history of the site, but because of the rampant gentrification on the Lower East Side that is turning our once economically integrated community into one that is increasingly divided between the haves and the have nots.

### We support:

- At least 50% <u>permanent affordable housing</u>, serving our low, moderate and middle income, and senior residents. We'd like to see more if not on SPURA, than a City commitment to build it in other parts of the Lower East Side. And we'd like to see the City's on-the-record commitment to permanent affordability written into the ULURP.
- Retail stores, but not big boxes that would displace our existing small businesses and change our community character.
- A new Essex Street Market (southeast corner of Essex and Delancey Sts), with relocation of existing vendors with city-paid moving costs and comparable rents.
- A commitment of at least 50% of all full-time jobs for residents of CB #3, at prevailing wages for construction and living wages for all others.
- Honoring the commitment to former site tenants by locating and informing them of their right to return, apply for and receive first priority for any new housing.
- Further consideration for a new school that is for our community's children.
- \* An open, equitable and transparent rent-up process for all new affordable housing.

This development is a long time coming. It's been a difficult and painful birthing that has not yet come to fruition. We are here today as part of the coming together of different interests within the community that sat and talked, argued and negotiated over 3 years, and came to an Agreement. Let us hope that as we move forward, the spirit of this compromise and the civility and reconciliation that was gained, will be reflected in all the uses, but especially in the housing and people who will call this new neighborhood home. The Lower East Side is a brand, a beacon, a symbol the world over: home to successive waves of global immigrants, tolerant of difference, and with an openness that has allowed people from different walks of life — be that income, race, ethnicity or disability — to live and work together here and feel they really belonged. Let's make sure this strength of our community's character is reinforced and shows up in all that is built on the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area.

### **COOPER SQUARE MUTUAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

59-61 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor New York, NY 10003 Phone: 212-477-5340 Fax: 212-477-9328

September 19, 2012

Hon. Mark Weprin Chair Zoning and Franchises Sub Committee of the NY City Council Land Use Committee

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maxine Fee and I am the Chairperson of the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association, a low-income cooperative housing association in the Lower East Side of Manhattan.Cooper Square MHA is a member of the Seward Park Redevelopment Coalition (SPARC). I am here to urge you to vote YES on ULURP items number 0688 through 0699, for the redevelopment of the Seward Park Urban Renewal Site.

After 45 long years of broken promises and vacant lots, and 3 years of recent hard work by neighborhood stakeholders, Community Board #3, voted unanimously on May 22, 2012, to support a historic agreement for mixed use (housing, community facilities and commercial) redevelopment on the site. Since that historic vote, both the Manhattan Borough President and the NYC City Planning Commission by a unanimous vote added their voices in favor of the long delayed project.

We support approval of the proposed mixed use redevelopment plan, which will include several major agreements, but urge the NY City Council to use its best efforts to improve it.

- The plan calls for at least 450 units of <u>permanently affordable housing</u> for low, moderate and middle income, and senior residents. But we believe that the plan could be made better by increasing the percentage and number of affordable housing units by requiring additional housing for Senior Citizens or Supportive Housing weather on the SPURA site or off-site within Community Board #3 area. 50% of the units must be set aside for Lower East Side (CB#3) residents
- Retail stores. We support the commercial redevelopment of the SPURA site. But we want no Big Box stores (over 30,000 square feet), such as Wal-Mart. Superstores will kill our existing small businesses and drastically change our community character.

### COOPER SQUARE MUTUAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION 59-61 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor New York, NY 10003 Phone: 212-477-5340 Fax: 212-477-9328

- We support a new Essex Street Market, on the Southeast corner of Essex and Delancey Sts., because it will be nearly twice as big, will be handicapped accessible and have both storage and garbage facilities. . But the City must live up to its promise to provide relocation payments and similar rents for the existing vendors.
- Economic development on the SPURA site will mean hundreds of new jobs. But the jobs must pay at least living wages and 50% must be set aside for Community Board #3 residents.
- The City has agreed in principle, but it must honor in practice their commitment to locate qualifying former site tenants to notify them of their right to return, apply for and receive first priority for any new housing.
- Last but not least our community needs a new school to accommodate our present population as well as the children of the 900 to 1,000 new families that will be moving in.

VOTE YES ON THE SEWARD PARK PLAN. BUT ALSO VOTE TO MAKE IT BETTER May e Ste

Thank you,

Maxine Fee

Chairperson

### AFIYA DIANE DAWSON 455 FDR DRIVE 1802 NEW YORK, NY 10002

September 19, 2012

Good morning, my name is Reverend Afiya Diane Dawson. I have lived on the Lower East Side for more than 60 years. I was raised in the Vladeck Houses on Madison St. My 88 year old mother still lives there. I still live on the Lower East Side. I raised my children here.

When the new housing is built we will obviously need more schools. I am a retired Guidance Counselor. I was a Guidance Counselor in School District One right here on the Lower East Side. I worked at PS 134 and PS 97.

I saw first hand how the children of the Lower East Side are discriminated against, shut out of the schools in their own community.

Board of Education properties that were once open to them were made into "Specialized Schools". We Guidance Counselors were told that the children in School District One would be given first priority to these schools, but the fact of the matter is that instead they have been pretty much shut out. I am speaking specifically of Bard High School formerly PS 97, NEST formerly JHS 22 and Shun Wen formerly PS 134.

This cannot happen again. We need more schools in this community but they MUST be schools that are open to ALL the children in our community.

Hello, my name is Teresa Pedroza. I am a GOLES member. I also have lived in the Lower East Side over 52 years.

What happens in SPURA directly affects my family, being that just over 8 months ago, my 12 year old granddaughter Dashane Santana was struck and killed by a mini-van on Delancey Street. According to the EIS, with the addition of even 4 cars to the existing traffic, traffic would be at a stand still. This plan calls for a special permit to allow Use Group 10, which is a big box store that generates considerable traffic. Please do not put Use Group 10 in your plans. Deny the special permit.

We also would like to see more senior housing in the plan especially being that the people displaced from SPURA are senior citizens by now, since they've been waiting over 45 years for the redevelopment of the area.

Also, the addition of so many children would further overburden our existing schools, so we would like to see a school put in the plans. Another concern is jobs — we need a commitment of at least 50% hiring for local residents. Last but not least, the Essex Street Market vendors need to be compensated for the loss of revenue and relocating and moving costs and their rents to stay the same.

Thank you for your consideration.

Level Quelon



50 Broadway, 29th Floor New York, NY 10004 T 212 631 0886 F 888 370 3085 www.ALIGNny.org Thank you for giving me the opportunity today to comment on the proposed zoning amendment at Seward Park Urban Renewal Area. My name is Maritza Silva-Farreli, and I'm an organizer at ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York. ALIGN is a community-labor coalition dedicated to creating good jobs, vibrant communities, and an accountable democracy for all New Yorkers. We are also a member of the Walmart Free NYC coalition.

We urge the Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions to modify the current proposal for SPURA. Without the modifications for which the Lower East Side community has advocated included in the plan, the legacy of this project will be tarnished. Without such modifications, a developer could bring in Walmart as a tenant, leading to drastic consequences for the neighborhood and its small businesses.

We recommend the following modifications:

- 1. 30,000 square foot size limit on all retail development
- 2. Wage standards for all workers
- 3. 50% local hiring target for all commercial businesses
- 4. Protect the Essex Street Market vendors

The key to successful development is ensuring that the values of the neighborhood and its members are upheld, despite the changes that come from large scale development. The modifications we recommend are similar to the guidelines for development that were agreed upon by Community Board 3. If these guidelines are disregarded by the Subcommittee Planning, Disposition and Concessions it would alienate the community from this development. It is of utmost importance that these modifications be made, to protect the interests of the residents of the Lower East Side.

We urge the Subcommittee to include our recommended changes in the ULURP zoning amendments. However, if the Subcommittee is unable to include such recommendations in ULURP, we recommend that they be included in either a restrictive declaration or in the RFP. As a final alternative, a Community Benefits Agreement or MOU could incorporate these requests.

#### 30,000 SF Size Limit

The zoning amendment should reflect the goal of residents to support local, small business. Studies show that locally-owned businesses retain twice the local revenue in comparison to national chain stores. The benefit to the community is therefore much larger when such businesses are supported. In addition, small businesses can co-exist with other competitors, while large businesses often drive out competition, leading to less commercial diversity and fewer shopping options for residents. The character of a neighborhood is often defined by the amount and type of local businesses. Once streets are lined with dozens of chain stores, the neighborhood loses this unique character, undermining the quality of life in the Lower East Side.

There is one retailer that stands out among all others as the most powerful, manipulative, and destructive of community. This retailer is Walmart. Walmart is as large as its six closest competitors combined, in terms of revenue. It has such large influence over the supply chain that it forces its suppliers to undermine their job and environmental standards in order to meet Walmart's demand for low priced goods, lowering standards on a global scale.

Because of Walmart's size, influence, and low-road business practices, it erodes standards throughout every community in which it locates: Businesses close, wages decline for all retail workers, and there is a net loss of jobs in the local community. The City Council would be doing the Lower East Side long-term harm if steps are not taken to guard against Walmart. Limiting store size greatly reduces the chance of Walmart entering into SPURA. However, other measures must be taken as well, such as wage standards, to ensure that high road retailers create the quality jobs that the community needs and wants.

### Prevailing Wage and Living Wage Standards

It should be required that all businesses in SPURA pay the prevailing wage to construction and building service workers, and a living wage, as defined by \$10/hr with benefits, or \$11.50/hr without benefits, to all other workers. There is direct connection between the rezoning of land for large scale development and the socioeconomic impact on the community and workers of the Lower East Side. SPURA will reshape the socio-economic landscape of the neighborhood, and accordingly the residents must be guaranteed that such a reshaping does not undermine the standards that the community has set for itself. These wages are not unreasonable, and will ensure that those employed at SPURA are making enough money to be consumers at SPURA.

### Local Hiring Requirement

A 50% local hiring requirement, both for temporary construction jobs and permenant jobs should be included for all commercial businesses in SPURA. Local residents must be guaranteed a stake in the benefits of this development. If they are not, there is little chance that these benefits will be passed on to the community, and the development will only serve to push out local residents and gentrify the neighborhood. Local hiring can help to prevent the negative impacts of gentrification on the Lower East Side.

#### Essex Street Market

Protect Essex Street Market vendors by incorporating into ULURP a commitment from the city to cover the vendors' moving costs and capital losses and to guarantee them commensurate rents with increases on a comparable schedule to existing contracts.

In conclusion, the residents of the Lower East Side deserve to be respected as the city embarks on a redevelopment of the community. The failure to abide by the community's guidelines for SPURA would destroy the community's faith in the land use process and the city's commitments to quality economic development. With no specific requirements for livable wages, benefits, local hiring and store size limitations considered during the ULURP, a developer may try to bring in Walmart as a tenant similar to what almost happened in East New York. Community members had to fight after the development was approved by this body to make sure that high road retail would be part of the Gateway II development as there were few specific community benefits requirements within the ULURP process. We should prevent that from happening again.

SPURA can do a great deal to improve the quality of life for Lower East Side residents, but only if done right.

Thank you,

Maritza Silva-Farrell



## Remarks by the Walmart-Free NYC Coalition to New York City Council Land Use Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions, and Concessions regarding SPURA September 19, 2012

### Submitted by: Jonathan Landsman/ Contact: walmartfreenyc@gmail.com, 347-387-3549

Walmart-Free NYC believes that the SPURA development has the potential to bring significant opportunity to the surrounding neighborhood. However, to ensure that the development has a positive impact on the community, we suggest making modifications that would include a 30,000 square foot size limit on all retail development to preclude big box stores, like Walmart, from entering into the development with a large format store. Additionally, we urge the City Council to consider the inclusion of wage standards for commercial businesses and local hiring requirements.

If we wait until the ULURP application has been approved and merely include our recommendations in an RFP, we forfeit the ability to ensure a *requirement* that our hoped-for standards be met, leaving it to the whim of what a developer deems realistic or possible for our community.

If this project passes ULURP in its current form, there must be *some* mechanism built in to ensure that *any* developer awarded the project would bring in tenants/employers that are agreeable to the community, and time and again we have heard that NO big box store is welcome at SPURA, much less a Walmart. With over 600,000 square feet of retail, this development could be considered an attractive destination for big box retailers. However, choosing tenants with proven track records of supporting worker's rights, good wages, and affordable benefits, and choosing local stores over national big box retailers, are essential to neighborhood-friendly commerce.

We are concerned, however, that with no specific requirements for livable wages and benefits, local hiring or store size limitations considered during the ULURP that a developer may try to bring in Walmart as a tenant, a move that would have serious consequences for the community's residents, workers and small businesses. We urge the City Council not to approve plans that do not at least contain recommendations we have discussed. And later through the RFP process, we recommend that any developer awarded a portion of the project containing a retail component enter into an agreement stating that they will not choose Walmart as a tenant, recognizing the community opposition.

As we have learned time and again during this important part of the ULURP process, it is important to receive assurances that these recommendations will not just be considered, but be included as part of the ULURP requirements for this project by included modifications to the plan itself or through the use of a restrictive declaration.

If Walmart were to try to enter New York City through the SPURA project, it would not only devastate and drive down wages for retail workers across the city, but the city would also likely have to contend with a host of environmental issues such as increased traffic and carbon emissions. These are costly financial burdens to taxpayers that Walmart has been reluctant to mitigate in the past in other localities.

It is in the interest of the City Council, community boards, our elected and appointed officials to ensure that the workforce in New York City is protected from employers like Walmart, who are more concerned with their bottom line than their workers. For example, Walmart has recently cut hours and health benefits for its employees, and eliminated profit sharing. For this reason, we are urging you in this case, and any case that comes before you, to consider including work standards, community enriching components, and protections and priorities for small businesses in any approved ULURP plans. The ULURP process should work to plan smart development that lifts up our communities and economic opportunities, rather than compromise the health and economic welfare of both longtime and new residents and workers.

#### BACKGROUND:

As we know, Walmart is spending millions of dollars on advertising, lobbyists and donations in its campaign to enter New York City (and other cities), even though they refused to show up to public hearings held by the City Council. Having saturated rural and suburban markets, the company views NYC and other large cities as its last, best opportunity to expand.

Should Walmart's expansion occur throughout our city, it could threaten the livelihoods of New York's hundreds of thousands of wage earners. Several studies have shown that the presence of a Walmart store tends to reduce earnings for retail workers and for wage earners generally. A 2005 paper titled "The Effects of Wal-Mart on Local Labor Markets" found evidence that "total payrolls per worker and per person decline, by about 2.5 and 4.8 percent, respectively, implying that residents of a local labor market do indeed earn less following the opening of Wal-Mart stores."

And those are the workers who manage to keep their jobs. A 2007 study found that Wal-Mart store openings kill three local jobs for every two they create by reducing retail employment by an average of 2.7 percent in every county they enter. (see more on impacts at http://www.pugetsoundsage.org/downloads/Walmart-Fowler-Report-2012-04-06\_1.pdf).

If Walmart were to come to NYC, New York's diverse retail landscape would drastically change due to the impact a Walmart store often has on small businesses and their employees. In fact, if Walmart wanted to open the number of stores in NYC needed to match its national grocery market share of 21%, the city could stand to lose as many as 3,900 jobs, according to a study released by ALIGN. (see http://www.alignny.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/The-Walmartization-of-NYC-Sep-2011.pdf).



New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council, AFL-CIO • 707 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10036 • Telephone: (212) 245-8100 • Fax: (212) 977-5714

### Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions Testimony by Josh Gold, Director of Political & Strategic Affairs

The New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council represents hotel, hospitality and gaming workers in New York & New Jersey. NYHTC represents over 30,000 non-managerial employees working in all hotel departments in over 300 Hotels across New York City.

We are currently in the middle of a boom cycle in hotel development in New York City. Seventeen percent more hotels are under construction in the city than a year ago. Hotels have been selling at higher and higher prices. Last year, 21 hotels changed hands in the city, up 75% from 2010. Six hotels were sold through mid-February of this year. If that pace continues, the number of hotel sales this year would catapult nearly 70% to about 35. The average cost to buy a hotel room jumped 39% to \$488,000 last year. Hotel financing was some of the first financing to come back after the recession, with losses on hotel room loans in 2009 the lowest of any real estate sector.

The area surrounding this proposed rezoning has been especially active during this boom. Unfortunately, most of that development has been completed as-of-right and provides strain on the surrounding community without proper input by the impacted residents and business owners. We believe that the Council should require any hotel component to undergo an additional, extensive community review process.

A review process would give the community a much stronger voice in any potential hotel development. Hotels have a greater impact on the nearby area and put a greater strain on services than virtually any other use. With a few noteworthy exceptions, hotels are designed to be densely occupied, with a primary function of housing one or more persons in relatively small living spaces. Service areas per floor are relatively small and most hotel workers do not have space set aside for them but perform their duties in rooms and common areas. Common space is typically found only on the ground floor and many newer hotels provide virtually no common space beyond the amount necessary for egress and a functioning front desk.

Hotels operate 24 hours a day and generate an enormous amount of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic at both peak and non-peak hours. Hotel guests typically leave the premises for most meals and spend

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> HNN Newswire, "STR Reports U.S. Hotel Pipeline for February 2012," March 13, 2012.

http://www.hotelnewsnow.com/articles.aspx/7736/STR-US-hotel-pipeline-for-February.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Theresa Agovino, "Jolly Madison Hotel Could Fetch Giddy Price," Crain's New York Business, April 18, 2012,

http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20120418/REAL ESTATE/120419888#ixzz1v4MFrPgw

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Michael Stoler, "Hotel Financing No Longer in Doghouse," The Real Deal, February 28, 2011

http://therealdeal.com/issues\_articles/michael-stoler-hotel-financing-no-longer-in-doghouse/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Nadja Brandt and Dakin Campbell, "Hotels Attract JPMorgan As Loan Recoveries Beat Other Properties," *Bloomberg*, Nov 29, 2010 http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-11-29/banks-increase-hotel-financing-as-loan-recovery-beats-all-u-s-properties.html



New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council, AFL-CIO • 707 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10036 • Telephone: (212) 245-8100 • Fax: (212) 977-5714 much of the day and night outside of the actual hotel room and in public areas of the city. An increasing number of new hotels lack any food or beverage services at all, requiring guests to leave the premises for any food or beverages that cannot be provided in a vending machine.

At a minimum, hotel guests require transportation for baggage at the beginning and end of their typically short stays and many utilize taxis for most or all trips off hotel premises. Laundry and catering services, if any, require substantial truck traffic at most hotels. And hotels larger than 100 rooms are entitled to "no standing" zones in front of the hotel which reduces available parking or loading zones in the area.

As such, we urge the Council to consider an enhanced community review process for any possible hotel use. Thank you.



## THE CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 3

59 East 4th Street - New York, NY 10003 Phone (212) 533-5300 - Fax (212) 533-3659 www.cb3manhattan.org - info@cb3manhattan.org

Gigi Li, Board Chair

Susan Stetzer, District Manager

### TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS, AND CONCESSIONS

**September 19, 2012** 

### Re: Seward Park Mixed Use Development

Good afternoon. I am Gigi Li, chair of Manhattan's Community Board 3, and I am here to testify in support of the Seward Park Mixed Use Development. I want to begin by thanking Chair Levin and the subcommittee for holding this important hearing and for the opportunity to testify.

### Background

Around 4 months ago, on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, after 3 ½ years of debate, discussions, and public input, members of community board 3 voted unanimously to support the Seward Park Mixed Use Project with conditions. The board believes that the plan before you represents the kind of responsible and balanced development that the communities surrounding the Seward Park sites would like to see come to fruition.

We are all aware that there is a lot more work ahead of us, and our resolution details the outstanding concerns that the board would like to see addressed. These concerns include adhering to the design guidelines as approved by the Community Board, construction related issues (stages of development/multiple developers/partnering with local developers), local hiring, accommodations for former site tenants, the future of Essex Street market, efforts to curb big box stores, and the development of a new school on the site.

However, after over 40 years of vacant lots, this community has finally been able to come to a consensus on the major components of a development plan, and Community Board 3 is fully in support of the plan moving forward.

### To that end, I would like to highlight several points:

- Diversity of stakeholders: Community Board 3's Land Use, Housing, Zoning, Public and Private Housing Committee, which consists of 22 members represents a wide array of stakeholders, including residents of Chinatown, Lower East Side, and East Village, locally based housing groups, social service non-profits, business owners, and former Seward Park site tenants. We were intentional in appointing committee members who represent the diversity of viewpoints that reflect our community.
- Collective effort with City agencies: At the board's request EDC and HPD have attended Community Board 3's Land Use Committee meetings for the past year to continuously

engage board members as well as the public in key issues. HDP and EDC's coordination efforts and willingness to work together have been extremely helpful. Together, with the support of Councilmembers Chin and Mendez, we were able to secure permanent affordability for the subsidized housing units to be built on the sites, which will represent 50% of the approximately 900 residential units to be developed.

• Community Board 3's continued involvement: a taskforce consisting of a majority of Community Board members, as well as representatives from local not-for-profits and Councilmembers Chin, Mendez, and Borough President Stringer's offices will be convened to participate with the City in both the RFP design and developer selection process. This ensures that the community's voice will continue to be heard.

For too long, the development of Seward Park has been a hurdle that this community has not been able to overcome. The proposal before you represents a unified vision for the future of our community, and we hope that you will join the community board in supporting the plan.

Testimony of David McWater on behalf of Manhattan Community Board 3 to City Council, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Hello, I am David McWater, chair of Manhattan Community Board 3's Land Use committee. I thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

In 2008 CB3 began new deliberations about the SPURA site. Coming fresh off the success of the Lower East Side Rezoning we felt it was time for us to deal effectively with this issue that eluded our community for so long.

The Land Use Committee since the zoning has been run almost as a blue ribbon panel. We have many public members added to it, leaders from many of our different communities and public organizations, so that we have great informed minds that represent broad constituencies on the committee.

We began the process by finding out what we had in common. For too long people had focused on what divided us in regards to SPURA, we soon found that many, many, things unites us on SPURA and that our divisions were not as great as they were once believe to be.

Many joked during the process that what we were trying to do was find the way that everyone lost the least. In the end, however, I think we found a way where everyone is a winner. People were worried about jobs in the area, this plan will create 400,000 square feet of commercial development and an estimated 25 million a year in jobs. People were worried about affordable housing but this plan will provide five times as much affordable housing as the last plan to make it this far, which was over 30 years ago. People were worried about keeping the development contextual, a difficult chore in a place where two different architectural styles meet, yet this plan is contextual on both sides of Delancey.

By any measure this plan is made up almost entirely of "wins". In fact there are very few groups that are at risk of losing anything. We are very close to having produced, through cooperation, a program that is far greater than the sum of its parts.

There are, however, still people who could lose and why should we tarnish our success with any loss when we are so close now?

The Essex Street Market will most likely be moved to a rehabbed and far greater facility during this process. This is a win. The current facility is not adequate for the modern world. However, at this point the city has backed off early assurances that the current vendors would have their relocation costs paid for by the city. These are very small businesses thriving in a novel experiment that has incubated these businesses. If they are forced to pay the relocation costs it will mean closure for many of these great New York City entrepreneurs. The cost to move them in the scale of this project, however, is a trifling. Let's not make these vendors, the last vestige of true American entrepreneurship, be the losers in a plan where everyone can win. Please mandate that their expenses for moving be paid.

The other potential losers are the young children and unborn children of the almost one thousand families who will populate the homes in this program. Build them a school! Don't wait until it's too late and they are traveling long distances to attend overcrowded schools. Have the vision to insist that a school be built now so that we are prepared for their needs in the future.

Testimony of David McWater on behalf of Manhattan Community Board 3 to City Council, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012

This is a great and wonderful project and it was an honor to play a role in the development of it. I am proud to see it get this far. I thank the tireless work of the committee members, the full board of CB3 for all of the faith they have shown us, and our partners at the city, namely EDC, hDP and DCP for their very earnest cooperation throughout this process. This program is great and will be a wonderful miracle for our neighborhood, but it can be even more, it can be that rare event in life, and event with no losers, where everyone wins. Let's insure in these final stages that that is what we do, let's all walk away winners.

Thank you for your time.



Executive Director Jerilyn Perine

CHAIRMAN Marvin Markus

PRESIDENT
Mark Ginsberg

Secretary
Sander Lehrer

TREASURER
Mark Alexander

Testimony before the NYC City Council
Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions
By Jerilyn Perine, Executive Director Citizens Housing & Planning Council
on the Seward Park Mixed-Use Development Project
September 19, 2012

My name is Jerilyn Perine and I am the Executive Director of the Citizens Housing & Planning Council (CHPC). Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

CHPC supports the proposed development of the Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal Area. We appreciate the efforts of the agencies and the area's elected officials to actively engage the community, communicate effectively with stakeholders, and incorporate the concerns and needs of the many overlapping and conflicting interests are commendable.

We are pleased that the sites will accommodate a higher density of residential and commercial uses to fill the overwhelming need for increased housing and services. And we were glad to see the maintenance and remapping of the existing street grid, the narrowing of Delancey Street for purposes of safety and character, and the consistency of the proposed plan with the recent rezoning of the area north of Delancey Street for increased density in 2009. These updates to the land use plan reflect the future growth and potential of the area rather than the lost opportunity of the past few decades. CHPC does, however, believe that the sites can accommodate even greater density of residential development than that which is proposed.

CHPC's Zoning Committee looks at development proposals and changes to the Zoning Resolution through the lens of PlaNYC's predicted long-term growth in population and CHPC's Zoning Principles which guide our reviews and analysis. With the need to accommodate a growing population in mind our testimony notes that the plan could have accommodated even greater density of residential development than that which is proposed.

The site is served by two major subway stops that connect three boroughs. It appears to us to be an ideal location for high-density residential development. Thus, we find it a missed opportunity that the proposal limits residential density in the following ways:

Executive Committee
Frank J. Anelante
Robert Berne
Matthew Blesso
Robert S. Cook Jr.
Robert Ezrapour
Andrea Kretchmer
Henry Lanier
Mark A. Levine
Frances Magee
John McCarthy
Richard T. Roberts
Richard C. Singer
William Stein

**Board Members** 

Sandra Acosta Debra C. Allee Alex Arker Carmi Bee Alan R. Bell Steven Bluestone Shirley Bresler Howard Chin James S. Davidson Nina DeMartini-Day Andy Ditton Martin Dunn Douglas D. Durst Erica Forman Paul Freitag William Frey Alexander Garvin James Gillespie Elliott M. Glass Alicia Glen Kirk Goodrich Jerry Gottesman Amie Gross David E. Gross Rosanne Haggerty Larry Hirschfield Kent Hiteshew William N. Hubbard Marcie Kesner Carol Lamberg Deborah Lamm Charles S. Laven Robert O. Lehrman Jeffrev E. Levine Kenneth Lowenstein Samantha Magistro Lucille L. McEwen David McGregor Felice L. Michetti Ron Mnelis Jeff Needham Perry Notias David L. Picket **Edward Poteat** Vincent L. Riso Robert C. Rosenberg Carol Rosenthal Peter D. Salins Marian Sameth Denise Notice Scott Avery Seavey Paul Selver Ethel Sheffer Abby Sigal Jane Silverman Carole S. Slater Ann M. Soja Mark E. Strauss David J. Sweet William Travlor Daron Tubian Gerard Vasisko Adam Weinstein Alan H. Wiener Mark A. Willis David I. Wine Howard Alan Zipser

- 1) 60/40 Ratio of Residential to Commercial Development The percentage of commercial development seems to us unnecessarily high. In a neighborhood that has lacked adequate housing to meet demand for many decades, we believe there is a higher need for development of housing at both affordable and market rates, and we would welcome a ratio that is more in favor of residential development.
- 2) **Limit on Number of Residential Units** We believe that limiting the number of residential units (to 900) is unnecessary.
- 3) Effective Restriction on Number of Smaller Units By limiting the number of residential units overall the land use plan as it stands effectively restricts the development of a large number of smaller units and studios. We believe that there is a greater need for housing that accommodates more one and two person households.

Despite these concerns CHPC supports the proposed development of the Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal Area. We look forward to its successful completion.

### Anthony Feliciano, Good Old Lower East Side member Testimony on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012

My name is Anthony Feliciano; I am the Male District Leader for the 74<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. I am also a long-time member or Goals, citywide organizer, and most importantly a Lower East Side Activist and resident of the Lower East Side for over 30 years.

Many Lower East Side and Chinatown families and individuals can testify the struggles for providing food and shelter, including me. I was raised in public housing and know how crucial is to have truly affordable housing. Lower East Side like many low-and moderate income neighborhoods have been adversely impacted and priced out by gentrification. I am recently been given the gift of being a parent/father. My 20 month old does not know what is happening to our community, but I do want to be able for him to have the opportunity to remain in his own neighborhood if he chooses to. I want him to be able to have access to truly affordable housing, and good job. Heck! My son and anyone else's child deserve a descent and living wage.

The Seward Park Urban Renewal sites are of great importance to me and this is why there are several points that I believe needs to be still addressed if we are to do it right. Many in the community want these changes in ULURP or a "restrictive declaration"). Don't pass the buck to the RFP!

Here are my points:

### The plan should include more housing for low- and moderate-income people

The Lower East Side has a history of welcoming and fostering the betterment of low-income and moderate income people. Some may say that the plan already does more for low-and middle income communities than anywhere else in the city. However, this is what we at GOLES came up as solutions to support more housing for low-and moderate income people. Let's require that if developers apply for subsidies that they use them towards making the middle-income or market rate units affordable. Increasing the low-, moderate-, or low-income senior portions of the housing at the site is another step towards what is right to do.

Without affordable housing, our communities become more uniform. We lose the opportunity to interact with people who may be in different economic and cultural circumstances there is something gained by living in a community which not only supports diversity -- and accordingly, affordable housing -- but also acts to ensure it. The lack of affordable housing leads to a variety of negative social outcomes. Substandard housing contributes to childhood health problems, such as asthma, anemia, viral infections, stunted growth, and other health problems, sometimes leading to expensive hospitalizations. Poorly-housed children in these situations are significantly more likely to have behavioral problems and to fall behind housing-stable students in school. Studies also show that when children are forced to move from school to school because their families can't find affordable housing, academic and future success are compromised.

### The plan should include 50% local hiring for all jobs

At least 50% of all short-term and permanent jobs created at SPURA should go to residents of the Lower East Side. Employers need to advertise all job openings widely throughout the neighborhood, and all jobs should pay a living wage. HireNYC sets good guidelines, but that's meaningless without enforcement. Enforceable local hiring must be a part of SPURA!

### The plan should not include big box stores

Delancey Street needs revitalization. A big box store would take away that chance. The plan for SPURA plan calls for a "zoning text amendment" -- a special exception to allow big box stores that are out of character with our neighborhood. We're calling on the City Council to deny the request for a zoning text amendment that would allow big destination retail ("Use Group 10") by special permit.

### The plan should include a school for our children

The DOE's algorithms do not add up right. Despite evidence that the city's school-age population had swelled in certain districts, we still have overcrowding in the Lower East Side schools. 900 new units of housing will bring more families with children into the neighborhood. Although I have no data to back it up, the UFT and parents and students themselves say there is a school overcrowding problem. However, take a look at an article publishes that talked about the issue on the Lower East Side. See <a href="http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20120222/lower-east-side-east-village/east-village-could-lose-pre-k-seats-because-of-overcrowding">http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20120222/lower-east-side-east-village/east-village-could-lose-pre-k-seats-because-of-overcrowding</a>

The plan should include all provisions to make it fair for the Essex Street Market businesses. If they have to moved, it could cost a vendor their livelihood, so we must cover the moving costs for the vendors



61 E. 4th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003 tel: (212) 228-8210; fax: (646) 602-2260 email: csc@coopersquare.org website: www.coopersquare.org

September 19, 2012

I'm Steve Herrick, the Executive Director of the Cooper Square Committee, an affordable housing preservation organization. We are gratified that a compromise plan for the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) was adopted, almost unanimously, by our community board, and that we have moved past the 45 year long political impasse. All sides made concessions, and it was not easy, but we now have a plan that is politically and economically viable.

We support the ULURP application for Seward Park because it will result in over 900 mixed income housing units, of which 30% will be low income housing units (including 10% low income senior housing), and another 20% will be moderate and middle income units. The plan will also result in roughly 600,000 sq. ft. of much needed commercial development, creating hundreds of temporary jobs and hundreds more permanent jobs. It will also result in a ½ acre park in a neighborhood that is under-served by open space.

We urge the City Council to approve the ULURP application, which includes a zoning map amendment, a zoning text amendment and several special permits. Among these, I will note a couple of the ULURP actions that we believe will result in a better site plan.

- 1) A zoning map amendment (C 120226 ZMM) that will establish a commercial overlay with a C2-6 zoning district within an existing R-8 zoning district on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor levels of Delancey St., Broome St., Norfolk, Suffolk and Clinton St. The creation of a new mixed use community, with lots of ground floor retail will create jobs, and will result in a pedestrian friendly urban environment.
- 2) In addition, a special permit (C 120228 ZSM) pursuant to ZR § 74-743 (Large Scale General Development) will allow greater total floor area on Sites 2, 3 and 4; greater residential floor area on Sites 1, 2, 3 and 4; greater number of dwelling units on Sites 1, 2, 3 and 4; and greater lot coverage on Sites 3, 4 and 6 than what are permitted on those sites without exceeding the maximum allowable amounts within the proposed large scale general development (LSGD); the applicants also seek to modify district regulations to allow more flexibility regarding the location of buildings without regard for the yard, distance between buildings, height and setbacks:

While we strongly recommend that the Council approve this ULURP, we believe the Council should require the applicant agencies to do the following things to improve on it:

Cooper Square Community Development Committee and Businessmen's Association "Here Today...Here to Stay!"

- 1) Continue to work with the community on the amount of housing constructed, and explore the feasibility of increasing the affordable housing units;
- 2) Continue to work with community groups, the community board, elected officials and city agencies to identify former site tenants and notify them of their right to apply for the below market housing;
- 3) Include a public school (ideally on Site 5), or reserve space in the final development phase for a public school;
- 4) Prohibit big box retailers from locating in Seward Park. According to the NYC Dept. of City Planning, 94% of the more than 720 retailers within a ¼ mile radius of Seward Park are less than 5,000 sq. ft. Preserving the small business character of our community is essential. A large retailer greater then 30,000 SF would destroy the character of this community.
- 5) Require EDC to to create enforcement mechanisms that require employers to work with local employment training agencies to ensure local residents benefit from the new jobs, and require that these jobs pay a living wage;
- 6) Finally, ensure that the Essex Street Market vendors are fairly compensated for the costs they incur in relocating to the new and improved, larger public market that we have been promised on the south side of Delancey Street.

Thank you for listening to our recommendations regarding Seward Park.

Hello, my name is Teresa Pedroza. I am a GOLES member. I also have lived in the Lower East Side over 52 years.

What happens in SPURA directly affects my family, being that just over 8 months ago, my 12 year old granddaughter Dashane Santana was struck and killed by a mini-van on Delancey Street. According to the EIS, with the addition of even 4 cars to the existing traffic, traffic would be at a stand still. This plan calls for a special permit to allow Use Group 10, which is a big box store that generates considerable traffic. Please do not put Use Group 10 in your plans. Deny the special permit.

We also would like to see more senior housing in the plan especially being that the people displaced from SPURA are senior citizens by now, since they've been waiting over 45 years for the redevelopment of the area.

Also, the addition of so many children would further overburden our existing schools, so we would like to see a school put in the plans. Another concern is jobs — we need a commitment of at least 50% hiring for local residents. Last but not least, the Essex Street Market vendors need to be compensated for the loss of revenue and relocating and moving costs and their rents to stay the same.

Jerese Pedroza

Thank you for your consideration.

## For the Record

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Address: 157 Brownia Stept 47 18007
I represent: St Marin
Address: 440 May 0 Shirt 10002
Please complete this card and return to the Sorgant at Arms

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# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK $\mathcal{S}_{\mathcal{P}}$

Appearance Card
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Name: 150 DAVIS
Address: 35 Montgomery
I represent: (FRIESV)
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THE COUNCIL
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Appearance Card
I intend to appear and speak on Int. No Res. No
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Date:
Name: Dominic Piscio Ha Berg
Address: 268 E. Broadway 4/604
(D)
Address:
THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No Res. No in favor in opposition ) ) )
Date: 9//9//2
Name: Mand Mallacy
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I represent: CB3
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Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Appearance Card
I intend to appear and speak on Int. No Res. No
Name: DEMANIRA DEL RIO  Address: ST AVR B, MM 10009  I represent: Lowln East Side floph's federal (redit Union Address:  Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms
THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Appearance Card  Page No.
I intend to appear and speak on Int. No Res. No  in favor in opposition  Date:
Name: Michael Forcest  Address: 54 crchard
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