

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

-----X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING & FRANCHISES

-----X

February 9, 2009

Start: 10:03 am

Recess: 10:12 am

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
TONY AVELLA
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Simcha Felder
Eric N. Gioia
Melinda R. Katz
Larry B. Seabrook
Albert Vann

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Karen Hu
Phipps Houses

Michael Wadman
Phipps Houses

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AVELLA: Good morning,
3 everyone, I'd like to call this meeting of the
4 Subcommittee of Zoning and Franchises to order.

5 Joining me are Committee members
6 Melinda Katz, Simcha Felder, Eric Gioia, and Al
7 Vann.

8 We just have one item on the agenda
9 today, Preconsidered Land Use numbers 070137 and
10 090105, applications by Phipps Houses for an
11 amendment of the zoning map, and also creating a
12 new section modification of court and side yard
13 regulations in the form of Bellevue South urban
14 renewal area.

15 And the applicant is here and we'll
16 ask them to give the presentation.

17 [Pause]

18 MS. KAREN HU: Good morning members
19 of the Subcommittee, my name is Karen Hu, I'm a
20 project manager at Phipps Houses. I am joined by
21 my colleague Michael Wadman.

22 Would you like me to go through the
23 presentation? Okay. Great. Do you all have
24 copies of the presentation in front of you? Okay.

25 So we're here to present before you

1
2 two related items on the agenda. One is for
3 rezoning of the Phipps Plaza South property, as
4 well as another one-and-a-half blocks of area
5 along 2nd Avenue between 26th Street and midway
6 between 23rd and 24th Street. We are asking to
7 rezone it from a C1-8 to a depth of 100 feet from
8 2nd Avenue to a depth of 125 to a C1-9. This
9 rezoning will allow us to accomplish three things
10 for the Plaza South property: it will allow us to
11 develop two new infill residential buildings on
12 the property for approximately 80 units of
13 affordable housing; it will allow us to facilitate
14 the conversion of garage space that exists
15 alongside 2nd Avenue and 25th Street to retail use
16 so we can improve the streetscape along 2nd
17 Avenue; and also for us to consolidate the
18 residential entrances of the Phipps Plaza South
19 property so we can increase the security and
20 attractiveness for our tenants.

21 As you can see on page seven, that
22 site plan outlines the existing property, it
23 includes a 33-story high-rise building and a 14-
24 story mid-rise along 26th Street. The two infill
25 properties are marked as proposed infill buildings

1
2 along 25th Street, and we are actually planning on
3 also improving the common green space in between
4 the buildings.

5 On the following pages, you can
6 actually see the schematics for the proposed
7 infill buildings and the build-out of the 2nd
8 Avenue and 25th Street retail areas.

9 And we also have renderings of what
10 the proposed streetscape along 2nd Avenue will
11 look like on page 11, and what the proposed
12 buildings will look like on 25th Street.

13 The current conditions along parcel
14 one and parcel two for the proposed buildings are
15 underutilized. Parcel one, which is the parcel to
16 the east along 25th Street, is an unused
17 deteriorating basketball court and we will build
18 approximately 55 units of affordable housing
19 there. Parcel two is currently 1970s vintage
20 seating area and we will propose to build
21 approximately 30 units of affordable housing
22 there.

23 And on page 15, you can see a
24 proposed ground floor plan for our affordable
25 project.

1
2 Should I take questions now on the
3 rezoning or should I go on and give you--

4 [Off mic]

5 MS. HU: okay.

6 We are also proposing a tax
7 amendment to the side yard text to allow us to
8 develop the parcel two building. Parcel two is
9 actually a vacant--is an underutilized lot between
10 two existing tenement buildings that have windows
11 for living areas and we are trying to preserve the
12 light and air for those existing tenement
13 buildings while allowing us to also develop more
14 affordable housing.

15 This amendment will allow us to
16 build a side court in our project that does not
17 extend the full length of the lot, so, therefore,
18 we can actually have eight feet between our
19 proposed building and the existing property lines
20 so we can preserve the light and air for these
21 windows in the existing tenement buildings, while
22 also building out the property line along the
23 street front on 25th Street. So that way we can
24 actually preserve more of a urbanistic character
25 to the street.

1

That's it.

2

3

CHAIRPERSON AVELLA: This

4

application lies within Council Member Rosie

5

Mendez's district and she has joined us. Council

6

Member?

7

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you,

8

Chair. I'm here today to put on the record my

9

support for this project and the support of

10

Community Board 6. This is a developer who's a

11

not-for-profit developer, has created a lot of

12

affordable housing in my district and I am proud

13

that we'll be getting more units of affordable

14

housing. Thank you very much.

15

CHAIRPERSON AVELLA: Any questions

16

from Committee members? Seeing none, thank you.

17

I don't see anybody signed up on

18

the public hearing of this item, is that correct?

19

Seeing none, I'll close the public hearing and I

20

will ask Counsel to call the vote. Chair

21

recommends approval.

22

COUNSEL: Chairman Avella.

23

CHAIRPERSON AVELLA: Aye.

24

COUNSEL: Council Member Felder.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Yes [off

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

mic]

COUNSEL: Council Member Seabrook.

Sorry.

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Aye.

COUNSEL: Council Member Katz.

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Aye.

MALE VOICE: Sorry.

COUNSEL: Council Member Vann.

COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.

[Pause]

COUNSEL: Council Member Gioia.

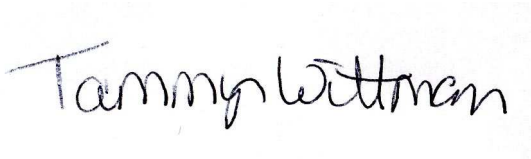
COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Thank you, I
vote yes.

COUNSEL: By a vote of six in the
affirmative, none in the negative, no abstentions,
all items are approved and referred to the full
Land Use Committee.

CHAIRPERSON AVELLA: Thank you,
everyone. This closes this meeting of the
Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Tammy Wittman, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.



Signature_____

Date February 19, 2009