Alida Camp Chair

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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Zoning and Development Committee Meeting
November 14, 2019
New York Blood Center Auditorium
310 East 67 Street

Minutes:

Committee members present: Michele Birnbaum, Barbara Chocky, Anthony Cohn, Jane Parshall, Rita Popper, Marco Tamayo, Adam Wald, Shari Weiner, Co-Chair Elizabeth Ashby, Co-Chair Elaine M. Walsh

The following issues were addressed:

1 - Update on the CB8 Application for First Second, Third, and York Avenues for a 210' height limit and for the preservation of tenements and small businesses

It was reported that the Pre-Application is still before the Department of City Planning (DCP); discussions between Charles Edelstein, Community Board 8's planner, and a DCP staff member, are expected to take place shortly. Members of the public and CB8 board members expressed that there is great urgency to enact these zoning changes because of the enormous threat to the community from super-tall buildings.

Two renderings of 210-foot buildings were displayed. Because there is an outside proposal for 300 and 350-foot height limits on the unprotected avenues, an illustrated report on the difference between 210-foot, 300-foot, and 350-foot buildings was shared. The 210-foot height limit remains the virtually unanimous preference and the report strengthened that position.

2 - Northwell/Lenox Hill Hospital - Update and presentation by community of their study

Andrew Soussloff, President of the Committee to Protect Our Lenox Hill Neighborhood, introduced the organization's report on the hospital's proposal and on the damaging effects that it would have on the community. He thanked the committee and CB8 for their vote to reject the application by Northwell. Their planner, George Janes, then made a slide presentation that showed the monumental size of the proposal, the extraordinary amount by which it exceeds the current legal zoning limits, and how extensive the damage to the built environment would be.

There was continued and extensive discussion of the Northwell proposal and their need to be transparent, present an alternative plan, and conform to the current zoning regulations. The community is asking for City Council Member Keith Powers' support in denying the Northwell application.

Questions continue to be raised regarding the Third Avenue site and the subsequent timeline.

3 - The Future

Community Board 8 is the Applicant for the First, Second, Third and York Avenue zoning proposal and has voted, nearly unanimously, to oppose Northwell/Lenox Hill Hospital's plan. There was a consensus at the meeting that the Upper East Side, Community District 8, is in serious danger of being overwhelmed by over development and super-tall buildings. There was also a consensus that the active and engaged help and involvement from our elected officials is badly and immediately needed – to enact the zoning proposal and to prevent the hospital's current plans.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Ashby, Co-Chair Dr. Elaine Walsh, Co-Chair