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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan**

April 10, 2025

Daniel R. Garodnick, Chair
City Planning Commission
120 Broadway, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10271

Re: Lenox Hill Hospital (N250152ZRM, C250153ZSM, N250155ZCM, N250154ZAM, and C250151ZMM)

Dear Chair Garodnick,

At the Land Use Meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, the board approved the following resolution by a vote of 23 in favor, 14 opposed, 1 abstention, and 0 not voting for cause:

WHEREAS the Applicant, Lenox Hill/Northwell Health proposes a major expansion to its hospital on the block bordered by 76th and 77th Streets and Lexington and Park Avenues; and

WHEREAS the Applicant first proposed alterations to the campus in March of 2019 and few changes have been made to reflect community input following several meetings since that date; and

WHEREAS it is acknowledged that the Applicant needs to modernize certain aspects of the Lenox Hill Hospital campus; and

WHEREAS the proposed development will consist of a new tower on the Lexington Avenue portion of the site, a renovation to the Park Avenue portion of the site, and a mix of new and renovated construction in the midblock; and

WHEREAS the hospital plans to remain open throughout the projected nine year construction period; and

WHEREAS the Applicant proposes the following changes to the Zoning Resolution to accomplish the proposed development:

1. Zoning Map Amendments to rezone:
 - a. Only a 75% portion of the property's tax lot and zoning lot as follows:
 - i. The Lexington Avenue frontage of the Development Site from C1-8X to a C1-9 district; and
 - ii. The midblock of the Development Site from an R8B to a C1-8 district;
2. Zoning Text Amendment to:
 - a. Create a new special permit under ZR Section 74-904 (Non-profit or voluntary hospitals in R9 or R10 districts and certain Commercial Districts) pursuant to which the City Planning Commission may, for a development or enlargement predominantly for Use Group III(B) hospital use on a full-block zoning lot improved with an existing hospital use and located in R9 or R10 districts, or equivalent commercial districts, and partially within the Special Park Improvement District:

- i. permit a floor area increase of up to 20% for community facility use;
 - ii. allow such floor area bonus to be used in combination with a floor area bonus permitted by authorization in connection with mass transit station improvements pursuant to ZR Section 66-51; and
 - iii. permit modifications of applicable bulk regulations, provided that the amount of floor area located within the Special Park Improvement District not exceed 10.0 FAR;
 - b. amend ZR Section 66-513(a)(2) to allow a floor area bonus pursuant to Section 66-511 or 66-512 in combination with other floor area bonuses, to exceed 20 percent of the maximum floor area otherwise permitted on the zoning lot where explicitly allowed by a special permit of the Commission;
 - c. amend ZR Section 92-21 to allow the permitted floor area ratio on a zoning lot partially within the Special Park Improvement District for which a special permit is granted under ZR Section 74-904 to exceed 10.0 FAR; and
 - d. establish the portions of the Development Site within the new C1-9 and C1-8 districts as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (“MIH”) area;
3. Zoning special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-904 to permit a redevelopment of the Development Site predominantly for Use Group 4 non-profit hospital use with up to 1,034,471 square feet of floor area (12.5 FAR);
 4. To permit up to 75% of the zoning lot to be programmed with hospital uses;
 5. Zoning Authorization pursuant to ZR Section 66-511 to permit, as part of the total proposed 12.5 FAR, a floor area increase of up to 0.5 FAR in connection with improvements to the southbound platform of the 77th Street station of the Lexington Avenue subway line;
 6. Zoning Certification pursuant to ZR Section 66-21 for a transit volume easement;
 7. Zoning special permit modifying street wall, height, and setback and other bulk regulations; and

WHEREAS the existing development on the block comprises approximately 781,500 gross square feet and approximately 620,500 zoning square feet (FAR 7.5), which is in excess of the allowable zoning floor area under the current zoning (approximately 600,000 zoning square feet); and

WHEREAS the applicant proposes a development (both renovated and new construction) comprising approximately 1,390,000 gross square feet and 1,034,471 zoning square feet (FAR 12.5); and

WHEREAS the applicant claims a desperate need for an expansion of the improvements, but is not seeking to rezone the entirety of the zoning lot, omitting a 20,833 square foot portion of the zoning lot fronting along Park Avenue; and

WHEREAS the applicant’s proposed effective FAR of 12.5 is unprecedented for a hospital campus in Manhattan as it exceeds the effective FAR of, at least, the following:

- a. St. Luke’s Roosevelt / Mt. Sinai West at 424 10th Avenue
- b. Mt. Sinai Hospital and 1440 Madison Avenue
- c. New York Presbyterian 1176 York Avenue
- d. The proposed MSK development and existing campus on Blocks 1461 and 1462
- e. The David Koch hospital at 530 West 74th Street (MSK)
- f. NYU Langone
- g. Bellevue Hospital
- h. The VA hospital at 423 East 23rd Street
- i. CU Medical Center and Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital; and

WHEREAS the proposed development will feature one of two tower configurations on the Lexington Avenue portion of the site:

- A. A tower approximately 200 feet by 180 feet in ground plan and a height of 436 feet with an attached midblock portion on the 76th street side approximately 80 feet by 90 feet and a height of 210 feet; or
- B. A tower approximately 200 feet by 180 feet in ground plan and a height of 395 feet with an attached midblock portion on the 76th street side approximately 80 feet by 90 feet and a height of 360 feet; and

WHEREAS the existing hospital has 172 beds in single-bedded rooms and 278 beds in double-occupancy rooms (139 rooms) for a total of 450 beds, and the proposed hospital will have 475 single-bedded rooms (234 square feet each, exclusive of ADA bathroom and nurse's station); and

WHEREAS the proposed development will include an increased number (and size) of Operating Rooms, additional loading bays, interior ambulance bays, and an increase in the size of the Emergency Department which will be located on the Second Floor; and

WHEREAS the hospital will have its main entrance at the corner of 76th Street and Lexington Avenue, and a "Mother and Baby" entrance on Park Avenue; and

WHEREAS the proposal will provide an accessible entry to the Uptown platform of the Lexington Avenue Subway at 77th Street; and

WHEREAS the proposed zoning and proposed bulk for the Lexington Avenue portion of the site creates an imbalance of the floor area distribution across the site although spreading the proposed floor area equally across the site could produce a building about 250 feet tall; and

WHEREAS the proposed tower would be over twice the height of the tallest building permitted under the current zoning on Lexington Avenue, and its footprint, occupying the entire Lexington Avenue blockfront at its full height, is too massive and out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood; and

WHEREAS in order to build the proposed development, the applicant requires not only a change of zoning designation on three quarters of the entire site, but then must obtain permission for modification of height, setback and other bulk controls, selecting the most generous bulk and area regulations while seeking relief from those rules; and

WHEREAS the massive tower will create a "canyon" shadow effect along Lexington Avenue and both side streets; and

WHEREAS the requested floor area bonus for Transit Improvement does not take into account the absence of accessible access to the Northbound IRT at 77th Street, which is an urgent need at this location; and

WHEREAS no real consideration has been given to the way that many patients arrive at the hospital – via public transportation or by car; and

WHEREAS no drop-off area is proposed, further obstructing traffic on Lexington Avenue, as the entrance to the hospital is located on the corner of Lexington and 76th Street, adjacent to a bus lane; and

WHEREAS the proposed entrance to the "Mother and Baby" hospital with no drop-off area on Park Avenue will also disrupt traffic on Park Avenue; and

WHEREAS the proposal requires ambulances and trucks to enter the hospital but are then forced to back out, twice crossing sidewalks on 77th and 76th Streets and disrupting both pedestrian and vehicular traffic; and

WHEREAS the small increase in hospital beds increases the height of the Lexington Avenue tower by at least one floor; and

WHEREAS the DEIS (Draft Environmental Impact Statement) failed to identify potential impact of this project (transportation, open space, water and sewer infrastructure, and neighborhood character) while identifying impacts that can, under the proposal have no real mitigation; and

WHEREAS despite comments to the contrary made by the applicant, common sense would indicate that a much larger hospital will need more staff to run it, increasing traffic in the immediate area; and

WHEREAS no parking is proposed for this development, despite a current lack of parking on the Upper East Side which may be exacerbated by congestion pricing; and

WHEREAS the proposed construction schedule, a result of maintaining operations at the hospital while it is substantially reconstructed, is too long; and

WHEREAS Saturday and late work permits will be requested throughout the construction period, disrupting normal activities for a generation of East Siders; and

WHEREAS no provisions have been identified for traffic disruption mitigation during construction; and

WHEREAS no provisions for unloading of building materials or possible additional lane closures for construction vehicles have been presented; and

WHEREAS the applicant assumes that construction workers will all arrive by subway or bus which is unrealistic; and

WHEREAS noise and dust and debris are unavoidable with any construction, but the length of construction time anticipated in this development proposal amplifies these issues beyond what is reasonable; and

WHEREAS construction activities on 77th Street will interfere with the arrival of ambulances and the functioning of the Emergency Department throughout the construction period; and

WHEREAS the working conditions within the hospital during construction will likely degrade patient care and at the very least inconvenience staff; and

WHEREAS the proposed decade of construction will upend our dense residential neighborhood: a thriving community filled with schools, houses of worship, small businesses, hotels and institutions cannot survive the noise, pollutants/dust, danger, traffic and overall chaos that will accompany construction of this magnitude; and

WHEREAS the delicate balance of the architecture on the narrowest avenue on the Upper East Side will be upset forever; and

WHEREAS the portion of the development site within the Park Improvement District will not be subject to Mandatory Inclusionary Housing, and could, at a later date, be split off from the proposed development and developed as of right as housing; and

WHEREAS the proposed 12.5 FAR for the Development Site represents the application of every available floor area bonus after a rezoning of the entire site to 10 FAR, increasing the overall size of the project by 250,000 zoning square feet; and

WHEREAS the Community Board acknowledges and agrees with Lenox Hill Hospital that it is in need of modernization and we have no objection to a temporary closing of the hospital during any construction period, to speed up the modernization of the hospital; and

WHEREAS the community has opposed the project through petitions (over 6000 signatures), written testimony for the Community Board Land Use Meeting in March (522 opposed with 164 in favor), and in-person testimony at the March Land Use Meeting (over 100 speakers); and

WHEREAS healthcare equity would indicate that the applicant's resources could be put to better use in other parts of the city which have been described as "Health Care Deserts"; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this application is **DISAPPROVED** as presented **unless all of the following conditions are met:**

- A. Applicant commits to a maximum height of 215' uniformly across the entire zoning lot. No bonus mechanisms will allow any increase in height; and
- B. Applicant commits to either, but not both, of the Transit Improvement and Hospital Floor Area Bonuses requested by special permit (pursuant to ZR Section 74-904 and ZR Section 66-51); and
- C. Applicant commits to mapping the entirety of the zoning lot within an MIH district; and
- D. Applicant commits to an accessible entrance to BOTH Southbound and Northbound platforms of the IRT subway at the 77th Street Station; and
- E. Applicant commits to permanent hospital use on the entire zoning lot; and
- F. If Applicant sells the Park Avenue frontage for residential development, Applicant will notify the public and commit to allocating 5% of the sales price for transit improvements and other community benefits to be determined; and
- G. Applicant commits to provide parking (on-site or new off-site parking locations) to accommodate staff and patients/visitors; and
- H. Applicant commits to request NO After Hours Variance Permits in connection with this project without the prior approval of the Community Board.

Please advise our office of any action taken on this matter, and, of course, we remain available to discuss any of the conditions set forth in our resolution and continue a dialogue with the applicant.

Sincerely,

Valerie S. Mason

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Chair

cc: Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York
Honorable Eric Adams, Mayor of the City of New York
Honorable Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate of the City of New York
Honorable Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Honorable Jerry Nadler, 12th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28th Senatorial District
Honorable José M. Serrano, NYS Senator, 29th Senatorial District
Honorable Edward Gibbs, NYS Assembly Member 68th Assembly District

Honorable Alex Bores, NYS Assembly Member, 73rd Assembly District
Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76th Assembly District
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4th Council District
Honorable Julie Menin, NYC Council Member, 5th Council District
Honorable Diana Ayala, NYC Council Member, 8th Council District
Dr. Daniel J. Baker, President, Lenox Hill Hospital