

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION
ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 170392 ZMX
1965 LAFAYETTE AVENUE REZONING**

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Park Lane Residence Co. pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 7a:

- 1) Changing from an R6 District to an R8 District property bounded by Turnbull Avenue, a line 250 feet westerly of Pugsley Avenue, and White Plains Road; and
- 2) Establishing within the proposed R8 District a C2-4 District bounded by Turnbull Avenue, a line 200 feet easterly of White Plains Road, Lafayette Avenue and White Plains Road;

Borough of The Bronx, Community District #9, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated June 5, 2017, and subject to conditions of CEQR Declaration E-434.

BACKGROUND

Existing development on the overall site to which this application pertains is divided into three sections, all of which are located on Block 3672, Lot 1:

- The western portion: Block 3672, Lot 1-includes an off-street parking lot, accommodating 107 vehicles and private basketball court;
- The middle portion: Block 3672, Lot 1-includes a 21-story residential building and includes 352 residential units, plus one for the superintendent. This building was provided with a permanent Certificate of Occupancy on November 30, 1972. This building was constructed pursuant to the Private Housing Finance Law of the State of New York, the Mitchell Lama Program. Located to the north of this building, along Turnbull Avenue are two swimming pools and a private play area.
- The eastern portion: Block 3672, Lot 1-includes an off-street parking lot accommodating 141 vehicles.

The Project Area consists of 157,896 square feet. It is bounded by Turnbull Avenue to the north, White Plains Road to the west, Lafayette Avenue to the south, and Pugsley Avenue to the east. The project area is currently zoned R6 and the existing residential building does conform to the R6 designation.

Approving this application will amend the Zoning Map by:

- 1) Rezoning 107,888 square feet of the Project Area to R8. The remaining 50,008 square feet of the Project Area will remain R6. The portion of Block 3672, Lot 1 which will remain R6, runs along Pugsley Avenue, between Turnbull Avenue on the north and Lafayette Avenue on the south, 250 feet west towards White Plains Road.
- 2) Establishing a R8/C2-4 overlay on White Plains Road, between Turnbull Avenue on the north and Lafayette Avenue on the south, 200 feet east from White Plains Road towards Pugsley Avenue.

Approving the proposed Zoning Map amendments will facilitate construction of two residential buildings:

- The Affordable Family Building fronting on Lafayette Avenue, includes:
 - 14-stories
 - 297 residential units
 - 230,681 square feet residential floor area
 - 19,938 square feet of commercial floor area fronting on White Plains Road.
- The Affordable Senior Building fronting on Turnbull Avenue, includes
 - 14-stories
 - 133 senior residential units
 - 93,502 square feet residential floor area

Totals, including the two new buildings, plus the existing residential building, yields:

- 430 newly constructed residential units
- 344,121 square feet of newly constructed residential development
- 352 residential units in the existing building
- 372,620 square feet in the existing building
- Combined Totals:
 - 783 residential units
 - 716,741 square feet of floor area (includes commercial floor area)
 - 113,911 square feet of open space
- **Highlights of what the “Family Building” will offer include:**
 - 64 studio units, approximating 428 square feet, 22% of the total
 - 134, 1- bedroom units, approximating 500-550 square feet, 45% of the total
 - 84, 2- bedroom units, approximating 675-750 square feet, 28% of the total
 - 15, 3- bedroom units, approximating 850-950 square feet, 5% of the total
 - **Total number of units in “Family Building: 297**

The affordability of the “Family Building” includes:

- Our Space (30% AMI) 32 units 10% of total
- 47% AMI 32 units 10% of total
- 57% AMI 83 units 30% of total
- 80% AMI 87 units 30% of total
- 90% AMI 62 units 20% of total
- Superintendent 1 unit

• **Highlights of what the “Senior Building” will offer include**

- 39, studio units, approximating 450 square feet, 29% of the total
- 94, 1-bedroom units, approximating 595 square feet, 71% of the total
- **Total number of units in “Senior Building: 133**

The affordability of the “Senior Building” includes:

- Our Space (30% AMI) 41 units 31% of total
- 50% AMI 92 units 69% of total

• **Highlights of what the existing Mitchell Lama building offers include:**

The applicant is also committed to improving the existing residential building (The Mitchell Lama Building) located on Block 3672, Lot 1. A breakout of what this building offers includes:

- 40, studio units, 11% of the total
- 103, 1-bedroom units 29% of the total
- 168, 2-bedroom units 48% of the total
- 42, 3-bedroom units 12% of the total
- **Total Number of Units in Mitchell Lama Building: 353**

Based on input provided to the applicant by those residing in this existing building the following objectives are set:

- 1) The Mitchell Lama program for this building expires in 2021. The long-term affordability of this building will be extended
- 2) Enhance the existing building by:
 - Repair façade and terraces
 - Replace entrance ramp
 - Replace floor tiles in common areas
 - Replace damaged fencing

- Upgrade community room facilities including the kitchen and restroom
- Upgrade ventilation system
- Upgrade active recreational facility equipment
- Retain swimming pools for resident use only
- Upgrade locker rooms
- Install fitness center
- Upgrade and redecorate the lobby

Additional commitments made to those residing in this area include:

- Minimize disruptions prompted by construction
- Provide employment opportunity through local hiring (Building Skills NY)

Two off-street parking lots currently serve the residents of the Mitchell Lama building, providing a combined total of 248 parking spaces. Upon completion of the proposed development, a total of 249 spaces will be available. A minimum of 235 spaces are required. Of these spaces, 159 will be reconstructed on what is now the eastern parking lot. A new surface parking lot will be constructed, offering 42 spaces. As part of the “Family Building,” an underground parking facility offering 48 spaces will be constructed.

A comprehensive array of amenities which both the “Family Building” and “Senior Building” will offer, include:

- A complete on-site total of 113,911 square feet of open space
- A reconstructed full-court facility for basketball
- Two reconstructed swimming pools
- A fitness center approximating 4,094 square feet.
- Locker rooms
- An interior recreation room/community room

The “Family Building” and “Senior Building” will each have a formal lobby and function independently. Interior access between buildings will only be available on the basement level through the subterranean garage shared by both buildings.

Residential development in the surrounding community is typified by high-rise residences surrounded by surface parking lots and garden areas. Low-rise, one and two family homes situated on small landscaped lots are also present. Adlai Stevenson High School is located on the southwest corner of Lafayette Avenue and Pugsley Avenue. Numerous bus services are located within a one block radius of the site. Retail activity is found on White Plains Road. There is no access of subway services within a four block radius of the proposed development. The nearest subway station is Parkchester/East 177th Street, on the #6 Train, approximately ¼ mile from the development site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

This application was reviewed pursuant to CEQR and SEQRA and received a Negative Declaration. The City Planning Commission certified this application as complete on June 5, 2017.

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Bronx Community District #9 held a public hearing on this application on August 7, 2017. A vote recommending approval of this application with modifications was eight in favor, zero against and zero abstaining. A copy of the Community Board's modifications are attached to this submission.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

The Bronx Borough President convened a public hearing on August 24, 2017. Representatives of the applicant were present and spoke in favor of this application. No other members of the public sought to comment and the hearing was closed.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

Overall the development that this Zoning Map change will facilitate is a satisfactory proposal. I am especially pleased that the applicant will commit to maintaining the affordability of the existing high-rise residential building when the current Mitchell Lama status on this residence expires in 2021. It is my understanding that this project will seek an Article 11, which will place a forty year tax exemption on the existing Park Lane building, assuring long term affordability. I also commend this plan for including new development which will offer accommodations to a wide ranging demographic; from families to senior citizens.

My support for this project however, is tempered by what I believe to be short-sighted planning. First, it is my contention that what is sorely needed throughout our city are multi-bedroom units that families can consider their home for decades. Therefore I vigorously object to the inclusion of 64 studio units which represents 22 percent of the total number to be provided in the "Family Building." At the same time, only 15 units, or five percent of the total number offered will provide three bedrooms, which I believe is essential for families with more than two children. Then of course, the unit size being proposed all but guarantees that as children become teenagers, multi-bedroom units averaging 700 square feet, means that their "time-at-home" with friends will not be easily realized. Hence, these young people will seek alternative locations for gatherings, a very ill-advised option indeed.

I understand that our city is confronting a housing challenge that requires bold action. Nonetheless, as the housing stock we are now creating ages and the shine these buildings offer is compromised by wear, what will result will be residences that are too confining to be considered appropriate for a family, and therefore not a place such a family would want to call "home." It is therefore not appropriate for developers to be given an incentive that results in a high unit count,

even though many of these units will not be capable of accommodating any family with children. This observation is substantiated when I note that 67 percent the units of the "Family Building" will be studios and one-bedroom flats. As such, I would like to see at least forty percent two and three bedroom units, with a minimum of ten percent three bedrooms and a significant reduction in the number of studios as proposed. I also request larger unit sizes, particularly for the two and three bedroom units.

I do recommend a conditional approval of this application, with the modifications as mentioned in the previous paragraph. In future developments, I will continue to speak out when presented with housing proposals that fail to sufficiently provide accommodations for growing families.