

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDTION
ULURP APPLICATIONS: C 210398 ZSX & C 210399 HAX
WIN POWERS**

DOCKET DESCRIPTIONS

Application No: C 210398 ZSX-

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION submitted by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the grant of a special permit pursuant to Section 74-903 of the Zoning Resolution to modify the requirements of ZR 24-111 (Maximum Floor Area Ratio for Community Facility Uses) to permit the allowable community facility floor area of Section 24-11 (Maximum Floor Area Ratio and Percentage of Lot Coverage) to apply to a non-profit institution with sleeping accommodations, in connection with the development of two facility buildings, on property located at 346 Powers Avenue (Block 2572, Lot 6) in an R6 District, Borough of The Bronx, Community District 1.

Plans for this proposal are on file with the City Planning Commission and may be seen at 120 Broadway, 31st Floor, New York, N.Y. 10271.

Application No: C 210399 HAX-

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD):

- 1) Pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:
 - a. The designation of property located at 346 Powers Avenue (Block 2572, Lot 6), as an Urban Development Action Area; and
 - b. An Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
- 2) Pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the disposition of such property to a developer to be selected by HPD;

To facilitate the development of two new buildings containing approximately 221 supportive housing units, 95 shelter units, and community facility space, Borough of The Bronx, Community District 1

BACKGROUND

Approval of these applications will facilitate:

- Per Zoning Resolution (ZR) 74-903, the City Planning Commission (CPC) may permit in R6 District the allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR) per ZR 24-11 for Use Group 3 not-for-profit with sleeping accommodations to be increased from 2.43 FAR to 4.8 FAR.
- Designate 346 Powers Avenue (Block 2572, Lot 6) as an Urban Development Action Area.
- Conveyance of this site by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to a developer. The developer selected is Women In Need (WIN).
- Demolition and Construction on Block 2572, Lot 6. Overall, the proposed development will include 281,790 square feet of floor area (4.71 FAR).
 - Building One: Construction of the transitional family shelter building
 - The demolition of the exiting transitional family shelter building
 - Building Two: Construction of the supportive housing building on the site now occupied by the existing transitional family shelter building.
- Bicycle parking will be provided:
 - 8 Spaces in Building 1
 - 20 Spaces in Building 2
 - No vehicular parking spaces are to be included

The development site is an “L” shaped lot, composed of 59,808 square feet of property. It is located on east side of Powers Avenue, between East 142nd Street to the north, East 141st Street to the south, Jackson Avenue to the east and Cypress Avenue to the west. .The development site offers frontage onto a substantial portion of east side of Powers Avenue, to the north, all of south side of East 142nd Street, to the east, all of the west side Jackson Avenue, and to the south, a substantial portion of the north side of East 141st Street. This site is zoned R6 and is within a “transit zone.”

Currently located on the development site (Block 2572, Lot 6) is a three story building which Women In Need (WIN) utilizes for a family transitional shelter. This facility composed of 60,185 square feet, offers transitional shelter accommodations approximating 64 units. Currently, this site also provides off-street parking in an exterior parking lot composed of sixteen spaces. Access to this lot is via East 141st Street. Pending approvals of these applications, the existing building and parking lot will be demolished.

WIN proposes to construct two buildings, the first of which will serve as a family transitional shelter. The second building will offer permanent affordable housing which also includes supportive housing for families. The total development costs associated with this entire project will approximate \$170 million.

Known as Building 1, it will occupy the southeast corner of the Development Site, along East 141st Street and Jackson Avenue. The main entrance will be on Jackson Avenue. It will approximate 1-story in height.

Highlights include:

- 80,071 square feet of Use Group 3 community facility floor area;
- Offer 95 family shelter units;
- Include 1,214 square feet of space set aside for childcare;
- Rooms set aside for programming, recreation, after school programs and counseling;
- Cellar space providing for social service staff offices, storage room facilities and mechanical equipment. A laundry room, mail room and computer room

Known as Building 2, will be occupy the northern section of Block 2572, Lot 6. Entry will be possible at either Jackson Avenue or Powers Avenue. It will approximate 8-stories in height.

Highlights include:

- 201,719 square feet of community facility floor area;
- Offer 223 units of permanent affordable housing units of which
 - 133 units will be set aside as family supportive units;
 - 88 units will be offered through a lottery system;
 - 2 units will accommodate two superintendents
- Include 4,186 square feet of Use Group 3A as a day care center on the ground floor
- Community room and computer lab on the ground floor
- 2-laundry rooms on the 7th floor
- A terrace area accessible from the 7th floor will approximate 1,740 square feet.
- Residents of Bronx Community District #1 will be given preference.

Unit distribution in Building 2 includes:

Studios	12	Net Square Feet:	465
1 BR Units:	82	Net Square Feet:	500
2 BR Units:	104	Net Square Feet	700
3 BR Units:	23	Net Square Feet:	850
2 BR Superintendent Units:	2	Net Square Feet:	700

Applicable monthly rents based on Area Median Income (AMI) include:

Studios:	30% of AMI: \$419, 40% of AMI: \$598, 50% of AMI: \$777, 60% of AMI: \$956 70% of AMI: \$1,135, 80% of AMI: \$1,314
1 Bedroom	30% of AMI: \$532, 40% of AMI: \$756, 50% of AMI: \$980, 60% of AMI: \$1,204 70% of AMI: \$1,427, 80% of AMI: \$1,651
2 Bedrooms:	30% of AMI: \$631, 40% of AMI: \$900, 50% of AMI: \$1,168, 60% of AMI: \$1,437, 70% of AMI: \$1,705, 80% of AMI: \$1,974
3 Bedrooms:	30% of AMI: \$722, 40% of AMI: \$1,000, 50% of AMI: \$1,343 60% of AMI: \$1,653, 70% of AMI: \$1,963, 80% of AMI: \$2,273

Within Building 2 a comprehensive array of supportive services will be available to tenants. These services will be provided by Women in Need (WIN). They include:

- Case management services
- Clinical mental and behavioral health services
- Child-family liaison providing therapeutic interventions and family counselling
- Job development counselling

An exterior recreation area approximating 20,000 square feet will be situated between the two buildings. The space will include passive recreational areas, including benches, picnic tables and related amenities. Active recreational areas for toddlers and elementary school age youngsters will also be provided. These facilities will be separated, meaning that each building will have access to its own exterior space.

This complex will employ 110 people on a full time basis. This includes:

- 48 security detail
- 30 social service personnel
- 32 maintenance and operational personnel

The entire complex will receive security services on a 24/7 basis. No off-street parking facilities will be provided for employee use.

Development of the surrounding community is typified by low-rise, two family homes which are located on East 142nd Street and mid-rise, multi-unit buildings located on East 141st Street and adjacent avenues. Mother Hale Academy fronts onto East 141st Street, between Powers Avenue on the east and Cypress Avenue on the west. Saint Mary's Park which offers 35 acres also includes an indoor swimming pool facility recreational center, playgrounds and a running track. The Bronx car tow-pound is one block east of the development site. Pursuant to the closing of Rikers Island Detention Center, a new detention center will be constructed on the tow pound site. Commercial activity is found on East 138th Street. The development site is well served by public

transportation. This includes access to the #6 train at either East 143rd Street or the Cypress Avenue stations. Both are within a ¼ mile of the development site. Bus transportation via the Bx33 or Bx17 operates on East 138th Street. Access to the Bruckner Expressway is found on Bruckner Boulevard at East 138th Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

These applications were reviewed pursuant to SEQR and CEQR and received a Type II Designation. The City Planning Commission certified these applications as complete on May 17, 2021.

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

A virtual public hearing was held by Bronx Community Board #1 on July 25, 2021. A vote recommending these applications be denied was 2 in favor of approving these applications, 14 against approval of these applications and 2 abstaining.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

The Bronx Borough President convened a virtual public hearing on these applications on August 10, 2021. Those representing the applicant were present and spoke in favor of these applications. There be no other members of the public participating and the hearing was closed.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

Women In Need (WIN) has a long and distinguished record for providing women and their children with exceptional care and shelter. Beyond The Bronx this organization serves communities in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Across these boroughs WIN employs a staff of approximately 350 people (fulltime and par-time) in addition to volunteers. At the Bronx location 110 people will be employed, many of whom reside in the borough.

I would be entirely remiss if I did not acknowledge that Community Board #1 voted to deny approving these applications. Reasons for their decision must be noted and warrant consideration that goes beyond simply acknowledging these issues. Specifically:

- A significant increase in violent crime in the area where WIN intends to construct their facility. Police presence in this area has virtually vanished;
- The apparent rush-to-approve these applications with virtually no ongoing dialogue with Community Board members;
- A clear disregard for community development plans as advanced by Diego Beekman, in favor of placing homeless facilities and a jail in this area;
- The concern that while security will be provided within the WIN complex, additional security beyond their facility will be entirely lacking;

- The proposed permanent housing building exceeds the height of all adjacent buildings in this area resulting in a diminished amount of sun on many of the low-rise properties located nearby.
- The overall impact of this project on the numerous one and two-family homes nearby will reduce their real value. The city benefits, community residents do not.

Some of these points do raise concerns that should be looked at. Most notably is the disregard for a community organization such as Diego Beekman by the City of New York. For decades, this has been a model organization that has taken the once posterchild of fear and decay and turned a collection of 38 buildings in a six-block area into a true community. This is not the first site that the City has shown indifference to the will of Diego Beekman and the surrounding community. There are a number of City/MTA-owned sites that the organization has identified for true community-led development, most notably at East 141st Street and Concord Avenue, where the City is trying to force an out-of-character monolith to house detainees onto the neighborhood. Diego Beekman should be heard and an active participant in what affects their community. I urge WIN to work with Diego Beekman to assure that their needs are heard. A community-based plan to address safety in and around WIN's proposed development is a good place to start. Everyone has an incentive to see this objective is realized.

Another key issue raised by Diego Beekman is the need for a community center. I believe that the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development is obligated to address this issue and with WIN's assistance such a center can be sited and built. Too often we address our housing needs without providing the necessary services and resources to build long-term stable communities. Diego Beekman has fought to create opportunities for our youth. We cannot abandon them, and must proactively foster paths for their future.

That being said, considering the specifics of the proposed development these applications will facilitate, coupled with the fact that WIN currently operates a shelter for women and children at this location, suggests to me that what is being proposed for this site is both practical and cost effective. The fact that this plan does not displace anyone, while at the same time would offer permanent housing for 221 families, including units for Community Board #1 preference, makes this project a value add for the community.

Homelessness in our city, especially for women and children poses unimaginable hardship. Frankly, the fact that it exists at all is unforgivable. Simply giving people a bed and a roof does nothing to alter the next day's crises. Training for employment, addressing mental illness perhaps prompted by drug addiction or physical abuse are only some of the ways WIN works with adult women. Just as vital is giving children an environment that reduces their stress. Attending school without ongoing disruption is one critical way by which these youngsters can realize a brighter future.

I recommend approval of these applications.