

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S RECOMMENDATION  
ULURP APPLICATION NOS: C 240174 HAX & C 240175 PQX  
MELROSE CONCOURSE NCP**

**DOCKET DESCRIPTION**

**C 240174 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 404 Claremont Parkway (Block 2896, Lot 96), 1169 Washington Avenue (Block 2389, Lot 47), and 12 Gouverneur Place (Block 2388, Lot 55) 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 three buildings containing an approximate total of 71 affordable housing units, Borough of The Bronx, Community District #3.

**C 240175 PQX:**

**IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION** submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the acquisition of property located at 1169 Washington Avenue (Block 2389, p/o Lot 47) to facilitate development of a building containing approximately 34 affordable housing units, Borough of The Bronx, Community District #3.

**BACKGROUND**

Approval of these applications will facilitate the construction of three residential buildings on three separate sites:

- Acquisition of Property by the City:
  - ❖ Block 2389, Lot 47
- Designating an Urban Development Action Area Project
- Disposition of City Owned land:
  - ❖ Block 2896, Lot 96
  - ❖ Block 2389, p/o Lot 4
  - ❖ Block 2388, Lot 55

These sites are all located within Bronx Community District #3 and comprise the Project Area. Taken together, 71 affordable residential units, plus one superintendent unit will be constructed. Included within the proposed total number of units are, Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors (AIRS).

The total development cost for the three proposed projects will approximate \$58.4 million. They are being financed through HPD's Neighborhood Construction Program (NCP) which is specifically established to provide funding for infill sites which because of their limited size are difficult to finance. Affordability will range from 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) to 80% of AMI. Overall, eight units (10%) will be set aside for the formally homeless, while 23 will be allocated to seniors through the Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors (AIRS).

- **Development Site 1: 404 Claremont Parkway (Block 2896, Lot 96).** Zoned R7-1. Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 4.0. The lot area consists of 2,817 square feet of vacant property. It is situated on the south side of Claremont Parkway, between Brook Avenue on the east, Webster Avenue on the west, offering approximately 54 feet of frontage on Claremont Parkway. This site is owned by the City of New York. The scope of development for the Claremont Parkway site calls for:
  - A new four-story building, 44 feet in height, composed of 6,432 zoning square feet of residential floor area, 2.2 FAR.
  - Eight residential units made up of one and two bedroom units
    - ❖ 2 One-Bedroom Units approximating 584 square feet
    - ❖ 6 Two-Bedroom Units approximating 651 square feet
  - A landscaped rear garden area composed of 771 square feet
  - A roof terrace composed of 605 square feet
  - On site laundry room
  - Complies with 2020 Enterprise Green Communities

Existing development adjacent to 404 Claremont Parkway is composed of low and mid rise residential buildings, numerous public and industrial buildings. A retirement home is situated on the south side of Claremont Parkway directly across the street from the development site. A C1-4 commercial overlay is mapped on Claremont Parkway, two blocks east of Development Site 1. This site is also situated between two prominent parks. Claremont Park is composed of 37 acres. It is situated approximately two blocks west of the site. Crotona Park is composed of 125 acres and located approximately four blocks east of Development Site 1. Little Claremont Playground is also located within approximately two blocks to the east of the site. Commercial development is found on Claremont Parkway and on Webster Avenue. This development includes a wide range of venues, including bodegas, parking lots, auto repair sites and plumbing supply outlets. Mass transit is provided by BX41 Select Bus Service operating on Webster Avenue. The BX11 operates on Claremont Parkway. This site is in a FRESH Zone.

- **Development Site 2: 1169 Washington Avenue (Block 2389, Lot 47).** Zoned R7-1. Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) 5.1 for a residential building with AIRS. It is bounded by an M1-1 district to the west and south. The Morrisania Special Mixed Use District is

located to the south and east. The lot area of Site 2 consists of approximately 5,778 square feet of vacant property. It is situated midblock, on the west side of Washington Avenue, between East 168<sup>th</sup> Street on the north and East 167<sup>th</sup> Street on the south. It offers 45 feet of frontage on Washington Avenue. This site is owned by Neighborhood Restore Housing Development Fund Corporation, a third party affiliate. This Washington Avenue site is within 500 feet of Site 3 on Gouverneur Place. This site is in a FRESH Zone.

The scope of development for the Washington Avenue site calls for:

- A new nine-story building, approximately 94.8 feet in height, composed of 28,273 zoning square feet of residential floor area, 4.90 FAR.
  - 34-residential units made up of studios, one, and two bedroom units. Eight units will be reserved for the formally homeless and 12-AIRS units for senior citizens. Three units will feature private terraces.
    - ❖ 12 Studio Units (6 units for seniors) approximating 442 square feet
    - ❖ 14 One-bedroom Units (6 units for seniors) approximating 553 square feet
    - ❖ 8 Two-bedroom Units approximating 719 square feet
  - A landscaped rear garden area composed of 1,417 square feet.
  - Bicycle storage space, laundry room
  - Office for tenant services approximating 389 square feet
  - Complies with 2020 Enterprise Green Communities
- **Development Site 3: 12 Gouverneur Place (Block 2388, Lot 55).** Zoned 7-2/M1-1 and within the MX-7 Morrisania Special Mixed-Use District. Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 5.01 with AIRS. The lot area of Site 3 consists of approximately 4,929 square feet of vacant property. The site is situated mid-block, located on the south side of Gouverneur Place, between Park Avenue on the west and Washington Avenue on the east. East 166<sup>th</sup> Street to the south and East 167<sup>th</sup> Street to the north. It offers approximately 60.5 feet of frontage on Gouverneur Place. This site in in a FRESH Zone.

The scope of development for this Gouverneur Place calls for:

- A new nine-story building, approximately 94.8 feet in height, composed of 24,691 zoning square feet of residential floor area, 5.01 FAR.
- 30-residential units made up of studios, one, and two bedroom units. Approximately 11 units will be reserved for AIRS seniors.
  - ❖ 7 Studio Units (3 units for seniors) approximating 386 square feet
  - ❖ 16 One-bedroom Units (8 units for seniors) approximating 507 square feet
  - ❖ 6 Two-bedroom Units approximating 658 square feet
  - ❖ 1 Superintendent Unit includes 2 bedrooms
- A rear yard accessible to residents approximating 1,648 square feet
- A laundry room located on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor connecting to a terrace composed of 455 square feet.
- Gym approximating 191 square feet
- Bicycle storage
- Community Room approximating 393 square feet.
- Complies with 2020 Enterprise Green Communities

Given the proximity of 1169 Washington Avenue to 12 Gouverneur Place, (500 feet) the development adjacent both these locations is the essentially the same. Residential development is typified by one and two family homes, as well as low and mid rise multi unit buildings. Commercial development is located on Washington Avenue, Third Avenue and on East 167<sup>th</sup> Street. Mass transit is provided by the BX 35 which operates on East 168<sup>th</sup> Street and the BX 15 operating on Third Avenue. Modest size parks found in this area include Estella Diggs Park and the Rev. Lena Irons Unity Park.

Local hiring will be prioritized by the applicant. This includes:

- Using Bid Connect that relies on zip code information to identify local contractors
- Employing a workforce development liaison to solicit bids from local contractors
- Offer on-the-job training sponsored by New Settlement YouthBuild
- At risk youth will be trained and employed to work on the development approval of these applications will facilitate.

Taken as one project these applications will facilitate, affordability includes:

- 30% of AMI: 12 units Income range: \$29,670 to \$38,130
- 40% of AMI: 9 units Income range: \$39,560 to \$50,840
- 50% of AMI: 11 units Income range: \$49,450 to \$63,550
- 60% of AMI: 21 units Income range: \$59,340 to \$76,260
- 80% of AMI: 10 units Income range \$69,230 to \$101,680
- Formerly Homeless 8 units
- Superintendent's Unit 1

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION**

These applications were reviewed pursuant to SEQR and CEQR and received a Negative Declaration. These applications were certified as complete by the City Planning Commission on November 27, 2023.

## **COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING**

A public hearing was held by Bronx Community Board #3 on January 23, 2024. A vote recommending approval of these applications was 14 in favor, 5 opposed, 7 abstaining.

## **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING**

A virtual public hearing was convened by the Bronx Borough President on February 6, 2024. Representatives of the applicants were present and spoke in favor of these applications. There being no other parties present, the hearing was closed.

## **BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

The three sites being proposed for redevelopment are currently small, vacant properties that are modest in size and not currently productive for the local community. They are oftentimes used for household waste dumping and are seen as a liability.

The proposal would transform these sites into modest-sized buildings that fit the existing character of the neighborhood and are projects that were supported at the Community Board. They will provide 100% affordable housing with a 30%-80% AMI range while providing housing for lower-income seniors.

My one concern with the proposal is the size of the units is still far smaller than they should be. Specifically, 12 Gouverneur Place which has a total of 7 studios at an average of 386 square feet. While I recognize the tradeoff of the size of the units for unit count, I will continue to advocate for the larger unit sizes that support families to continue living in their homes as they grow.

I believe that HPD should change how it looks at housing metrics when working with applicants. While recognizing the goal is to provide affordable housing for as many people as possible, the unit count should reflect the total number of people that will live there. Therefore, I would recommend HPD count units based on the number of bedrooms provided. This will increase the value of 2-bedroom units because they will be counted as providing housing for 2-4 people, whereas studios and 1-bedrooms will be counted as housing for 1-2 people. This is not manipulating the outcome but is rather more reflective of the total number of people that will live in a building and shows how larger units should be given more value when compared to studios and 1-bedrooms.

I would ask the applicant team to look closer at the studios proposed in the 12 Gouverneur Place and 1169 Washington Avenue buildings and see if the studios can be reconfigured and combined so three studios can be combined to create a 1-bedroom and a 2-bedroom unit. This would result in the same number of bedrooms while providing a better housing option.

For the 404 Claremont site, I ask that the applicant team coordinate construction activities with the neighboring Carl C. Icahn charter school to ensure that development does not create any hardships for the school.

During the public hearing, the applicant team stated that local hiring based on local zip codes and on-job training would be provided, with an emphasis for local at-risk youth. I want to emphasize the importance of providing jobs to a neighborhood that has a significant amount of NYCHA housing. Providing opportunities for NYCHA residents and support for youth to gain valuable job training is needed and has my full support.

For the three buildings that are part of this application, I appreciate the overall array of amenities and design features that are proposed within these three buildings. It is clear to me that the proposed buildings will be an asset to the surrounding neighborhoods.

With my modifications noted, I recommend approval of this application.