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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Zoning and Development Committee
Joint meeting with the Housing Committee
Tuesday, October 22, 2024 - 6:30 PM
Conducted remotely on Zoom

Minutes

Board Members Present: Michael Anderson, Elizabeth Ashby (co-chair), Gayle Baron, Michele Birnbaum, Anthony Cohn (co-chair), Edward Hartzog (chair), Valerie Mason, John McClement, Jane Parshall, Peggy Price, Elizabeth Rose, Barbara Rudder, Sacha Sellam, Marco Tamayo, and Adam Wald.

Excused Absence: Saundrea Coleman.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

1. Presentation by Douglaston Development of a new Voluntary Inclusionary Housing preservation development in Community District 8 located at 170 East 83rd Street.

Daniel Russo and Steven Charno appeared at the meeting on behalf of Douglaston Development. They noted that the company has been around for 35+ years and that they are owner/builders – as well as managers of some of their buildings. Over the years they have built multi-family homes throughout New York City, including Manhattan, Brooklyn (Williamsburg), and the Bronx. Most of the self-described “thousands” of units they have built have been rentals – both affordable and market rate apartments. They recently developed 1,000,000 sq. ft. at Hudson Yards – approximately 900 units of housing.

Regarding the site at 170 East 83rd Street, it is the first project in this community district for Douglaston Development. They are utilizing the Voluntary Inclusionary Housing Program (VIHP) administered through the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and maintaining 50 units of affordable housing at or below 80% of AMI (roughly \$111K for a family of 3). They are also utilizing an Article XI tax benefit.

At 80% AMI: a studio would rent for \$1,864; a 1 bedroom \$2,331; a 2 bedroom \$2,796; and a 3 bedroom \$3,231.

The building uses a gas boiler for heat. As to upgrades to the building and the units – they have upgraded the lobby, including new doors, and will be adding a new bike room and laundry room. Each unit will receive new electrical panels, and gas stoves will be replaced with electric ones. These improvements will not be added to the rent.

The tenants pay for their electricity; however, they will get a set-off on their rent because the new stoves are electric – whereas the old gas stoves were “free.” Regarding current and future tenants’ income review – it is only done on intake. The “target tenants” are mid-life, not necessarily twenty-somethings.

With respect to making this project more affordable, the developers created the tax abatement – not 485X.

The building was originally constructed in the 1960s and is six stories tall. Of the 50 units in the building, 47 are currently occupied – and approximately ½ of those are market rate (“they guess”).

They do not plan on any evictions and noted that all leases will be converted to rent-stabilized at the current rent. This is how they will deal with those tenants who do not qualify for “rent-stabilized” units. After the tenants vacate these apartments, the units will be subject to a lottery for new tenants.

Even though the tenants know that there are new owners, they are not necessarily aware of all the future plans.

There were no further questions or comments, and the Committee moved on to old business at this point.

2. Old Business

No items of Old Business were discussed.

3. New Business

No items of New Business were discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

*Elizabeth Ashby and Anthony Cohn, Co-Chairs
Edward Hartzog, Chair*