



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
**COMMUNITY BOARD 9**  
MANHATTAN

Morningside Heights  
Manhattanville  
Hamilton Heights  
Sugar Hill

**November 21, 2025**

Hon. Dan Garodnick  
Chair of the City Planning Commission/  
Director of City Planning  
120 Broadway, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10271

**Reso re: 1727 Amsterdam Avenue Disposition and Designation as an Urban Development Action Area (ULURP items 2025M0424 and/or 260071HAM).**

Dear Chair Garodnick,

At its regularly scheduled General Board Meeting held on Thursday, November 20, 2025, Manhattan Community Board No. 9 denied the following resolution re: **1727 Amsterdam Avenue Disposition and Designation as an Urban Development Action Area (ULURP items 2025M0424 and/or 260071HAM), by a vote of 30 in favor, 2 opposed, and 4 abstentions:**

WHEREAS Manhattan Community Board 9 (MCB9) is charged with the duty of making recommendations with respect to Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) applications that come before it, and

WHEREAS the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) filed a Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application for Urban Development Action Area Program (UDAAP) designation, project approval, and the disposition of City-owned property to facilitate the demolition of the building located at 1727 Amsterdam Avenue (Block 2060, Lot 1) in Hamilton Heights, Manhattan Community District 9 (the "Site") and, in its place, erect a nine-story, 143,000-square-foot mixed-use building, to be called "Hill Top Apartments" (ULURP items 2025M0424 and/or 260071HAM); and

WHEREAS pursuant to said application, the City of New York (the "City"), the current owner of the Site, has determined to transfer fee ownership for the sum of \$1.00 to Bowery Residents

Committee (BRC), an entity chosen to be the developer of the Site in 2019 without community input; and

WHEREAS, the Site presently contains 59,209 square feet of space, currently occupied by: (a) the Emma L. Bowen Community Service Center (Emma Bowen), which provides mental health care for individuals with moderate to severe mental health issues, addiction treatment services, a food pantry, a daycare for children with special developmental and behavior needs; (b) Heritage Health and Housing (Heritage Health) , a federally-qualified health center providing primary care and specialty services; and (c) Jackson Ophthalmology Group (Jackson Ophthalmology); and

WHEREAS the proposed development will not include Heritage Health or Jackson Ophthalmology and will return Emma Bowen to a reduced space of approximately 21,000 square feet; and

WHEREAS the proposed development will include 200 residential units, consisting of 120 supportive housing units for formerly homeless individuals with serious mental illness and/or a substance use disorder, 56 units at a mix of 40-60% of Area Median Income (AMI), 23 Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors and a superintendent's apartment; and

WHEREAS the City, through the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (H+H), the agency informally managing the Site, has been working on the proposed redevelopment project since at least 2019 without filing, or intending to file, a ULURP application or otherwise seeking meaningful community input, a state of affairs that existed until August, 2022, when a member of the West Harlem Community, by chance, observed dumpsters being filled with debris and soil samples and brought the matter to the attention of MCB9; and

WHEREAS when MCB9 enquired of H+H what was happening at the Site, MCB9 was told "I don't think you're supposed to know about that yet;" and

WHEREAS at a meeting in September, 2022 demanded by MCB9, H+H informed the Community Board that it planned to lease the Site to BRC, but declined to share architectural or financial plans for the proposed development; and

WHEREAS in January, 2023, MCB9 forwarded a proposed alternative plan to the City for the redevelopment of the Site (the Alternative Plan) that included, amongst other things: (1) a suggestion that the Site be rezoned from its current R7A designation to an R8A designation, which would allow for approximately 297,792 square feet of developable space that could include (a) 20,000 square feet of ground floor retail, potentially for a much needed supermarket, (b) 40,000 square feet of healthcare facility space; and (c) 237,000 square feet of residential space, which would be an increase of approximately 50% to the proposed residential square footage under the current plan; (2) a call for BRC to be replaced or partnered with a local supportive housing provider with a longer track record of providing supportive housing in West Harlem; and (3) a request that the supportive housing component of the plan be scaled

back, since the type of proposed supportive housing would be a burden to a community that already has several hundred units of supportive housing within a two-block radius of the Site; and

WHEREAS MCB9 passed a resolution, dated June 20, 2023, demanding that the proposed redevelopment of the Site be submitted to review under ULURP, as required by law, and reiterating its proposed Alternative Plan for upzoning the Site in order to allow for more community health space, ground floor retail, and additional desperately-needed affordable housing; and

WHEREAS the City steadfastly continued to resist meaningful community input and withheld the proposed project from ULURP review until August, 2025, despite: (a) having been at work on redevelopment of the Site since at least 2019, (b) having been notified by MCB9 as early as September, 2022 of its legal obligation to submit the redevelopment project to ULURP review, and (c) having received the June 23, 2023 MCB9 resolution demanding ULURP review; and

WHEREAS despite its refusal to file a ULURP application for six or more years during which the redevelopment plan was in progress without meaningful community review or input, and despite the City having filed complete plans for the project with the New York City Department of Buildings in May, 2023, also without such review or input, the City nevertheless claimed in communications to CB9 in August, 2025 – soon after it finally filed its ULURP application – that it could not act on MCB9’s suggested upzoning of the Site because, to do so, “would add, at minimum, an additional two to three years to the project timeline;” and

WHEREAS MCB9 maintains that there is a large unmet need for additional affordable family-sized apartments of 2 bedrooms and up in West Harlem, and that a disproportionate influx of studio apartments is not as beneficial to the community as a project with a larger number of family units; and

WHEREAS neither the City nor BRC conducted a study to determine what impact the addition of 120 supportive housing units would have on an area that contains two schools and an overabundance of supportive housing; and

WHEREAS HPD and BRC were required by the ULURP rules to submit an Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) as part of the required filings with the Department of City Planning; and

WHEREAS the EAS submitted by HPD and BRC contained numerous erroneous statements or omissions, including but not limited to:

- a) that the application did not require action or approval from the City Planning Commission (EAS Full Form, p. 2);
- b) that the application did not require ULURP (EAS Full Form, p. 2);

c) that the project was not seeking an Urban Development Action Area designation (EAS Full Form, p. 2);

d) that Health and Hospitals Corporation has a 99-year ground lease for the City-owned property (EAS, p. A-1), when no such lease exists or has ever existed;

e) that the application would not result in the reduction of public open space, despite eliminating a plaza and playground (EAS Full Form, p. 8);

f) that the project would not “displace, or alter public or publicly funded community facilities such as...health care facilities”(EAS Full Form, p. 8) when, in fact, the project will result in direct effects to both the mental health services provided by Emma Bowen (through temporary displacement and permanent alteration of the physical space) and the healthcare services provided by Heritage Health (through permanent removal of the healthcare facilities from 1727 Amsterdam Avenue), a misstatement that improperly relieved HPD from the requirements of (a) assessing the impact provided by both Emma Bowen and Heritage Health and (b) consulting with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene regarding the impact of the project on public health; and

WHEREAS the misstatements pointed out in item (f) in the foregoing paragraph raise an obvious need for a targeted Environmental Impact Study (EIS) examining the impact of the direct effects of disruption to the mental health services provided by Emma Bowen and the guaranteed disruption to and potential ending of the healthcare services provided by Heritage Health; and

WHEREAS the misstatement pointed out in item (e) in the foregoing paragraph would likely trigger a need for the targeted EIS to include examination of the impacts of the project on open space; and

WHEREAS HPD has taken no such steps to initiate a targeted EIS to address the above; and

WHEREAS according to the New York State Urban Development Action Area Act, the UDAAP designation sought by HPD requires that the designation be consistent with finding that the area(s):

“...are slum or blighted, or...are becoming slum or blighted areas because of substandard, insanitary, deteriorated or deteriorating conditions, factors, and characteristics, with or without tangible physical blight... [and that] the existence of such areas constitutes a serious and growing menace, is injurious to the public safety, health, morals and welfare, contributes increasingly to the spread of crime, juvenile delinquency and disease, necessitates excessive and disproportionate expenditures of public funds for all forms of public service and maintenance and constitutes a negative influence on adjacent properties impairing their economic soundness and stability, thereby threatening the source of public revenues...

[and that] In order to protect and promote the safety, health, morals and welfare of the people of the state and to promote the sound growth and development of our municipalities, it is necessary to provide incentives for the correction of such substandard, insanitary, blighted, deteriorated or deteriorating conditions, factors, and characteristics by the clearance, replanning, reconstruction, redevelopment, rehabilitation, restoration or conservation of such areas, the undertaking of public and private improvement programs related thereto and the encouragement and participation in these programs by private enterprise” (Gen. Mun. L. §691); and

WHEREAS no such evidence has ever been presented regarding the project area because the area is not, in fact, a slum or blighted or facing “substandard, insanitary, and blighting conditions,” aside from H+H’s deliberate refusal to maintain the building so as to render it beyond its useful life; and

WHEREAS MCB9 strongly contests such a baseless finding that the area is a slum or blighted, as it is in fact home to a vibrant, racially- and socioeconomically-diverse community with high homeownership rates and a strong small business community; and further notes with disapproval the long history of the City and State in using “urban renewal” to designate areas as “slums” and, in so doing, render significant damage to communities that are majority Black and/or Latino; and

WHEREAS MCB9 finds the reduction of healthcare provider space in the Hill Top Apartments plan developed by the City and BRC to be unacceptable, ill-advised, and counter to the needs of the West Harlem community; and

WHEREAS BRC’s operations are approximately 75% homeless shelters and transitional housing, with less than a quarter of their operations comprising supportive housing projects; and

WHEREAS BRC has been the subject of investigations by the Comptroller of the City of New York relating to their contracts to provide homeless outreach services at Penn Station; and

WHEREAS BRC has no track record of projects in West Harlem or of operating supportive housing facilities at this scale; and

WHEREAS BRC was one of dozens of supportive housing providers on a list of qualified developers created by HPD as the result of a 2013 Request for Qualifications (RFQ); and

WHEREAS HPD has not explained how BRC was chosen from among the RFQ’s pre-qualified providers to develop this project at this Site; and

WHEREAS both the existing structure and public plaza at 1727 Amsterdam Avenue and the proposed Hill Top Apartments plan lack any ground floor retail space that could provide “eyes on the street” activity and connect the existing important retail corridor along West 145th Street; and

WHEREAS the West Harlem community values the preservation of landmarks and the importance of maintaining the character of our neighborhood; and

WHEREAS the redevelopment of the block at 1727 Amsterdam presents an opportunity to create a beacon of architectural excellence and cultural significance; and

WHEREAS the consideration of lighting, facade design, plaza design, and visible artwork at 1727 Amsterdam should be culturally and historically appropriate, adding to the overall aesthetic and appeal of the community; and

WHEREAS the local community has expressed a preference that the entrance for the residences be placed on West 145th Street, instead of Amsterdam Avenue or West 146th Street; and

WHEREAS both MCB9 and the general public in West Harlem have deep concerns about the lack of transparency and community involvement in the decision-making process for the redevelopment of 1727 Amsterdam Avenue, and there is a strong desire to reevaluate the current plan and engage in meaningful public discussion;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that MCB9, while reviewing the ULURP application, finds the current HPD/BRC proposal for the disposition of City owned property under the R7A bulk rules to be a suboptimal plan that fails to maximize the use and community benefit of this public asset; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 supports its own Alternative Plan as the minimum standard leveraging the superior use of this public asset and urges HPD to revise the redevelopment plans for 1727 Amsterdam Avenue to address the community's concerns and needs around affordable housing, healthcare and mental health services, and an active retail streetscape at the Site; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 urges HPD to ensure that a new blueprint for the redevelopment of 1727 Amsterdam Avenue is done with an R8A zoning designation (6.0 FAR base, potentially higher with COYHO UAP) with MIH Option 3 (income band targeting a weighted average of 40% AMI) that allows for the inclusion in the project of the same square footage required to accommodate and return the existing and necessary community services while creating 50% more affordable housing than what is planned under the Hill Top Apartments proposal put forth by HPD and BRC by an estimated 78,000 square feet; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 urges HPD to either select as a development partner, or as a replacement, for BRC, a different developer with extensive experience in developing supportive housing and/or affordable housing in West Harlem; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 demands that the appropriate corrections be made to the erroneous EAS submitted by BRC and HPD and that a targeted EIS be conducted to study the impacts of the direct effects on the mental health and healthcare services currently

operating at 1727 Amsterdam Avenue and any other relevant impacts, as is required by SEQR and the CEQR manual; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if HPD refuses to seek to upzone the redevelopment to an R8A zoning designation, that BRC limit the number of supportive housing units occupied by individuals with serious mental illness and/or substance use disorders to a maximum of 15 and that the balance of supportive housing units be targeted to a mix of (a) young adults (ages 18-25) leaving or having recently left foster care, or who had been in foster care for more than a year after their 16th birthday, and who are at risk of street homelessness or sheltered homelessness; (b) and/or frail or disabled seniors; (c) Young Adult Families and Adult Families with Children; and (d) families experiencing chronic homelessness as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 urges the termination of the NYC Health and Hospital Corporation's now-tangential involvement in the project and the removal of its unprecedented requirement that residents of the supportive housing units must be H+H clients, given not only that H+H has no ownership or leasehold interest in 1727 Amsterdam Avenue, but also that H+H's record of misrepresentations, deliberate evasion of transparency, and repeated false statements contradicted by their own sworn affidavits surrounding the project have rendered H+H an untenable partner and unreliable interlocutor and created an enormous deficit of trust with the community; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 demands that HPD's request for a UDAAP designation be rejected as improper because the statutory requirements of the UDAA Act are not met; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, given the City's application for a UDAAP designation is based on its unsupported claim that the Site is a "slum" and "underused," and the historical fact that the current health care center was built to broaden mental health care access primarily for people of color in the neighborhood, CB9 disapproves in the strongest possible terms any effort to limit access to healthcare or mental services or curb needed services for the Black and Hispanic/Latinx residents of its district; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, if this application is approved in any form, the current building not be demolished until all three community health providers, Emma Bowen, Heritage Health and Jackson Ophthalmology, are fully relocated within the community in order to ensure that members of the neighborhood do not lose access to these vital services; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 condemns in the strongest possible terms the lengthy and deliberate attempts by the City and its agencies: to conceal the 1727 Amsterdam redevelopment proposal from public scrutiny; to unlawfully evade submission of the project to ULURP review; and to otherwise resist community input into a unique development opportunity

that, but for the intransigence of the principals, could have and should have more closely reflected the actual needs of the community; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, by reason of all of the manifest deficiencies of the proposed redevelopment plan for 1727 Amsterdam Avenue enumerated in this resolution, MCB9 recommends the denial of ULURP items 2025M0424 and/or 260071HAM

If you have any questions and/or further information is needed, please do not hesitate contacting me or District Manager, Eutha Prince, at the board office (646) 355-3172.

Sincerely,



Victor Edwards  
Chair

cc: Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor  
Hon. Zohran Mamdani, Mayor-Elect  
Hon. Brad Lander, NYC Comptroller  
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Cordell Cleare, New York State Senate  
Hon. Micah Lasher, Assembly Member  
Hon. Jordan J.D. Wright, Assembly Member  
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member  
Hon. Shaun Abreu, City Council Member  
Hon. Yusef Salaam, City Council Member  
Hon. Ahmed Tigani., Acting Commissioner, HPD  
Joy Resor, Deputy Director, Manhattan Planning, HPD  
Audrey Wachs, Manhattan Borough Planner, DCP  
Mr. Zead Ramadan, Executive Director, West Harlem Development Corporation