

Tuesday, September 15, 2021
Housing, Landuse and Zoning Subcommittee Notes

Agenda Adopted ~ 6:38

Around the district there was a lot of rain and flooding with sinkholes that still remain. There is a pond underneath Liz's building. Still getting a foot of water in beneath.

Convent and 144th also has a sinkhole. That is a funded capital project according to Barry (?). Also RSD and 142nd (small, but growing).

Reso in Congress about changing uptown name to Quisqueya Heights.
TBD

Re. W 142nd Street rezoning:

Lot was downzoned in '12 to preserve historic context. The question is, if they do that, what was the point? Similar tactics by other developers would follow suit including the use of harassment to force out tenants. There are no net benefits to the community, but only net losses. Powerful testimonies given during Friday's City Council meeting.

RKO Taskforce

Hamilton Theater on 146 and Bdway. Has beautiful architecture. Outside landmarked. Everyone agrees that they want to save it. Two options offered by the developers:

- 1) 100% affordable housing
- 2) mixed income + theater

Historic restoration needed. Cost of each option ~ \$20Million. If we want a restoration, we'll need outside funding to make it profitable for the developers. Trying to slow down process to get developer to pay a bit more. Trying to get more creative for funding. Possibly use both.

The true beauty is inside the theater. We need to come up w/other solutions to try to maintain it in its current form.

Marilu – joined HLUZ b/c of RKO

She's been a resident since 1961. The theater offered everything from films to wrestling. Strongly opposed to letting it go. Wants to see it used as a museum.

The exterior was landmarked, not interior. Barry's Grandmother and Katsamedis grew up attending that theater.

Budget for _____ is _____

Landuse division of city council will be conducting this process.

Morningside Heights rezoning proposal

RAD Program

They were actually selling air rights to a developer (small section btwn blding) where there used to be a supermarket and laundromat that burned down. Must keep an eye on that. Lot of folks from Manhattanville attending that to know what to expect. One of the concerns that came to the limelight was that Manhattanville has lead issues. A development that had gone thru RAD (receives funding through section 9. Refund it through section 8. Can borrow money to make repairs. Developer argued that they are not bound by lead paint regulations. Many claimed that moving to RAD wouldn't affect tenants. We're finding that that's not the case, at least not w/respect to lead.

Open Restaurants Text Amendments

- 153rd btwn Bdway and RSD. This was the old Verizon garage site.
- 125th/CU site - Developer promised not to take a lane away
- 487 W 129th – the Btw, convent and Amsterdam. Site was previously industrial, but this development might be residential. Good next step would be to invite the developer to talk to us.

- 609 W 141st. Liz wants to know what kind of communication does HPD provide. Maybe we can put up signs
- 1661 Amsterdam (NE corner of 142) Lower level was slated to be commercial (grocery store?). As they started working on it, they uncovered the cast iron columns on the 1st floor. More Historic fabric to incorporate. Was supposed to be. A doctor's office. Big problems w/owner and they eventually gave up. Money owner should have put up.
- 504 W 141. Btwn Hamilton and Amsterdam. Stop work order b/c of violations. Find developer

Restaurants can apply for sidewalk cafes. This text amendment would remove prohibition based on landuse. Would take it out of zoning and landuse process and put it in DOT's rights.... Dot would not permit this in places where it would block subway entrances etc., but everywhere else. Website has a map of where it would affect us. Very few areas that are grandfathered in non-conforming use. It would mostly affect those restaurants. Doesn't affect us much. Moves responsibility to DOT What kind of compliance will DOT be placing to ensure that all are following guidelines. We should see what we can extract from DOT.

DOT will inspect all structures. Definitely seen some bad actors. Board members can always reach out to DOT commissioner

Scaffolding that's up for 30 years is something to pay attention to.

Ended ~ 9:15 pm