

## **POSITIVE DECLARATION**

### **Project Identification**

Lambert Houses Redevelopment Project  
CEQR No. 16HPD001X  
ULURP Nos. Pending

SEQRA Classification: Type I

### **Lead Agency**

Department of Housing Preservation &  
Development  
100 Gold Street New York, NY 10038  
Contact: Patrick Blanchfield  
(212) 863-5056

### **Name, Description and Location of Proposal:**

#### **Lambert Houses Redevelopment Project**

The proposal involves an application by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), on behalf of the project sponsor, Phipps Houses, for several discretionary actions (collectively, the "Proposed Actions") including the disposition of City-owned property, zoning map and text amendments, special permits, and establishment of a new Large Scale Residential Development (LSRD).

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the redevelopment of Lambert Houses, an existing residential and commercial development occupying approximately 12 acres in the East Tremont neighborhood of the Bronx, New York (the "Proposed Project"). The Project Area includes parcels 1, 3, 5, and 10 in the northern section of the Bronx Park South LSRD. In total, the approximately 12-acre Project Area currently contains five groupings of six-story buildings containing 731 residential units, and one two-story building containing approximately 39,490 square feet (sf) of retail use and 375 parking spaces.

Parcel 1 (Block 3138, Lot 1) is an approximately 2.9-acre parcel located along the west side of Boston Road between East 180th Street and Bronx Park South and is comprised of a group of four interconnected six-story buildings containing 237 residential units. Parcel 3 (Block 3132, Lot 1) is an approximately 4.5-acre parcel located along the west side of Boston Road between East 179th and East 180th Streets which currently contains 325 residential units in seven interconnected six-story buildings. Parcel 5 (Block 3140, Lot 7) is an approximately 1.8-acre parcel located at the southeast corner of Boston Road and East 180th Street which currently contains 169 residential units in a group of three interconnected six-story buildings. Parcel 10 (Block 3139, Lots 1 and 19) is an approximately 2.5-acre parcel bounded to the west by Boston Road, to the south by East Tremont Avenue, to the east by the Bronx River and proposed Bronx River Greenway, and to the north by East 179th Street. Parcel 10 currently contains one two-story building containing approximately 39,490 sf of retail uses and a 375-space parking garage. An approximately 3,720-sf City-owned lot (Block 3139, Lot 50) just south of Parcel 10 would be conveyed to Phipps Houses and become part of Parcel 10. This lot currently contains seating, trees and plantings.



***Lambert Houses Redevelopment  
Positive Declaration  
CEQR No. 16HPD001X***

The Proposed Project involves the demolition of the existing Lambert Houses buildings and the redevelopment of the Project Area with approximately 1,665 new affordable residential units, approximately 61,100 sf of retail space, and a new elementary school of up to approximately 86,608 sf. Construction of the Proposed Project has a Build Year of 2029, as construction would occur over a period of approximately 15 years. During construction of the Proposed Project, current tenants would be relocated from buildings to be demolished to other locations within the Lambert Houses development. Once relocated, the unoccupied buildings would be demolished and construction of new buildings would proceed. Tenants of the next buildings to be demolished would be relocated within the Lambert Houses Project Area to the newly constructed buildings, and the demolition and construction process would begin again. This process would be repeated through completion of the Proposed Project. Overall, the Proposed Project would redevelop the Project Area with the following:

- A total of approximately 1,665 residential units at the completion of the project, for an incremental increase of approximately 934 units over the No Action condition. The proposed residential units would all be affordable.
- Approximately 61,100 sf of retail space, for an increment of 21,610 sf over the No-Action condition.
- A new public school of approximately 86,608 sf on a portion of Parcel 10. It is expected that this school would be a 500-seat elementary school.
- A reduction in the amount of on-street parking required in the Project Area, for a total of 110 spaces.

In order to address a projected shortfall of seats in the project area's public schools, the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) will be given an option to acquire the site of the proposed school (portion of Parcel 10) for a nominal fee. If SCA were to decline to exercise this option and construct the school, a residential building with approximately 55 units would be constructed in its place. The environmental impacts of the scenario in which a residential building would replace the school will be analyzed in the Alternatives chapter of the EIS.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would require the following discretionary actions:

- Disposition of City-owned property (Block 3139, Lot 50) and designation as an Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP). There may also be a change to the City Map in order to remove this lot from a mapped street.
- Zoning Map Amendment to rezone Parcels 1, 3 and 5 from R7-1 and Parcel 10 from R7-1/C1-4 as follows:
  - Parcel 1: R7-1 to a mix of R7-1, R8, and R8/C1-4
  - Parcel 3: R7-1 to a mix of R7-1, R8, and R8/C1-4
  - Parcel 5: R7-1 to a mix of R7-1 and R8
  - Parcel 10: R71/C1-4 to R8/C1-4
- Authorizations under ZR Section 78-311 and Special Permits under ZR Section 78-312:



***Lambert Houses Redevelopment***  
***Positive Declaration***  
***CEQR No. 16HPD001X***

- To permit distribution of the total floor area, lot coverage and number of dwelling units permitted by the applicable district regulations to be distributed without regard for zoning lot lines or zoning district boundaries.
- To permit the total open space required by the applicable district regulations to be distributed without regard for zoning lot lines or zoning district boundaries.
- To permit variations in the front height and setback regulations including variation in the maximum height and number of stories of the front wall within the initial setback distance, modification of the initial setback distance, and to permit penetration of the sky exposure plane.
- To modify the required rear yard setback for tall buildings per Section 23-663.
- To permit an interim condition in which the minimum distance between buildings is waived between the new Building 3A and the existing building to the south.
- Special Permit pursuant to ZR 74-53 to permit the provision of off-street accessory parking spaces to be located in a parking lot on the roof of a building.
- Zoning text amendment consistent with the City's proposed Mandatory Inclusionary Housing text amendment.
- Zoning text amendment to modify ZR Section 78-42 to permit a reduction of parking requirements for affordable housing units in LSRDs in Community District 6 in the Borough of the Bronx.
- Potential zoning action related to Parcel 10 to provide legal windows along the lot line.
- Site plan approval by the Mayor and City Council pursuant to SCA requirements for the proposed school on Parcel 10.

The Proposed Project may also seek funding from HPD, the New York City Housing Development Corporation (HDC), New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), and other State agencies for affordable housing construction. In addition, the Proposed Project would require approval by HUD of the reassignment of project-based rental assistance contracts, and may also seek HOME funds or other federal funding originating from HUD.

The Proposed Project is intended to improve the quality of life for current Lambert Houses residents while increasing the number of affordable housing units in the Project Area. The Project Area is underdeveloped, with less floor area than even the current zoning districts allow, and less density than much of the surrounding neighborhood. The existing buildings were constructed between 1970 and 1973 and have outdated building systems. Furthermore, the configuration and circulation plan of the buildings, with multiple entrances and egresses, compromise building security by making control of access difficult. The retail space currently on the site is inefficient, with storefronts set back far from the street wall, poor frontage, and inadequate storage space for merchants.

The proposed new LSRD and associated special permits and authorizations, including waivers of height and setback requirements, are being requested in order to allow for the redistribution of



## ***Lambert Houses Redevelopment***

### ***Positive Declaration***

***CEQR No. 16HPD001X***

floor area across the entire project area, creating a site plan, building layout and design superior to what would be allowed as-of-right under the current LSRD.

The analysis year for the Proposed Actions is 2029. Absent the Proposed Actions, the Project Area would remain as it is under existing conditions with underutilized affordable housing space and outdated and inefficient buildings on the Lambert Houses campus.

#### **Statement of Significant Effect:**

HPD has determined, pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.7, that the Proposed Actions may have a significant effect on the quality of the environment as detailed in the following environmental impacts, and that an environmental impact statement will be required:

1. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning, and public policy in the vicinity of the affected area.
2. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related to socioeconomic conditions in the vicinity of the affected area.
3. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related to community facilities and services in the vicinity of the affected area.
4. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on publicly accessible open space in the vicinity of the affected area.
5. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse shadow impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.
6. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on historic and cultural resources in the affected area.
7. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources in the vicinity of the affected area.
8. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on natural resources in the vicinity of the affected area.
9. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials in the vicinity of the affected area.
10. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on water and sewer infrastructure in the vicinity of the affected area.
11. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on solid waste and sanitation services.
12. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on energy.
13. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts to transportation in the vicinity of the affected area.
14. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts to air quality in the vicinity of the affected area.
15. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related to greenhouse gases in the vicinity of the affected area.
16. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse noise impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.
17. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in the vicinity of the affected area.



***Lambert Houses Redevelopment***  
***Positive Declaration***  
***CEQR No. 16HPD001X***

18. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse construction-related impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.
19. The Proposed Actions may result in significant adverse impacts related public health.
20. The Proposed Actions may result in a disproportionately high and adverse environmental or human health effects on low-income or minority populations (environmental justice).

**Supporting Statement:**

The above determination is based on an Environmental Assessment Statement prepared for the action which finds that:

1. Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy - The Proposed Actions would alter existing land uses and zoning by allowing higher density development than what the current zoning and LSRD permits. In addition, the effects of the Proposed Actions may not be compatible with one or more of the public policies that are applicable to portions of the affected area.
2. Socioeconomic Conditions –The Proposed Actions would not result in direct displacement of residents or businesses. However, the Proposed Project would introduce dwelling units in excess of the 200-unit threshold requiring analysis of the potential for indirect residential displacement.
3. Community Facilities – The Proposed Actions would not result in the direct displacement of any existing community facility. However, analyses would be warranted for public schools, libraries, and child care facilities as the Proposed Actions would introduce a new residential population to the area.
4. Open Space – The Proposed Actions have the potential to result in direct effects on Project Area open spaces, such as through the introduction of new shadow on the nearby Bronx Park and Bronx River. The Proposed Actions may also have an indirect effect due to increased demand for use of publicly accessible spaces by the new residential population that would be introduced to the area.
5. Shadows – The Proposed Actions would allow greater building heights in the affected area within close proximity to Bronx Park and the Bronx River. Shadows cast by the taller buildings proposed could affect publicly accessible open spaces and sunlight-sensitive architectural and/or natural resources in the area.
6. Historic and Cultural Resources –The Project Area is located in proximity to a number of historic resources, including the Old West Farms Soldiers Cemetery. Demolition of existing building and the new construction of the Proposed Project may affect nearby architectural and/or archaeological resources.
7. Urban Design and Visual Resources – The Proposed actions would result in the construction of buildings taller than what currently exists in the Project Area; therefore, these changes could affect a pedestrian's experience of public space and may alter the urban design character and visual resources of the surrounding area.
8. Natural Resources – The Project Area is adjacent to Bronx Park and the Bronx River; therefore, the Proposed Actions may potentially impact natural resources due to construction activities and/or changes in the discharge of stormwater runoff.



***Lambert Houses Redevelopment***

***Positive Declaration***

***CEQR No. 16HPD001X***

9. Hazardous Materials – The Proposed Actions would result in additional in-ground disturbance; therefore, an Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), which will include a vapor encroachment screening, would be conducted in accordance with ASTM 2600-10 to assess current and historical on- and off-site uses for the potential presence of hazardous materials, petroleum products and/or other environmental conditions at the Project Area. Due to the land use history of this area of the Bronx, subsurface investigations and remediation at one or more parcels may be warranted.
10. Water and Sewer Infrastructure – The Proposed Actions would result in a sizable net increase of residential units within the affected area which could place additional demands on water and sewer infrastructure.
11. Solid Waste and Sanitation – Due to the increase in density within the Project Area, the Proposed Actions would increase the demands on solid waste and sanitation transport and disposal services.
12. Energy – Although significant adverse energy impacts are not anticipated for the Proposed Actions as it would not affect the transmission or generation of energy, the projected amount of energy consumption during long-term operation resulting from the Proposed Actions should be assessed.
13. Transportation – The Proposed Actions would generate additional vehicular traffic (while reducing on-street parking) and increased demand for pedestrian traffic as well as transit ridership. These new trips have the potential to affect the area's transportation systems.
14. Air Quality – Increased demand for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and additional vehicular traffic introduced by the Proposed Actions may affect air quality. In addition, the Proposed Project is located within 400 feet of areas that are currently zoned for manufacturing uses.
15. Greenhouse Gas Emissions – CEQR recommends a greenhouse gas (GHG) analysis for projects resulting in the development of 350,000 square feet or more, which the Proposed Project would exceed, and, as the result, to determine if the Proposed Project would be consistent with the City's GHG reduction goal.
16. Noise – Construction of the Proposed Project may result in increases in noise levels over an extended period, particularly at sensitive land uses such as residences. In addition, future residents of the Proposed Project would be subject to noise from mobile sources due to increased traffic and the presence of the elevated rail through a portion of the Project Area.
17. Neighborhood Character – The Proposed Actions have the potential to alter certain constituent elements of the affected area's neighborhood character, including land use patterns, socioeconomic conditions, open space, shadows, traffic, and noise levels.
18. Construction – The Proposed Actions would result in the construction of a number of new buildings with overlapping construction schedules over an extended period that can have a disruptive and noticeable effect on the adjacent community, as well as people passing through the area.
19. Public Health – A public health assessment may be warranted at the discretion of the lead agency if an unmitigated significant adverse impact is identified in CEQR analysis areas, such as air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, or noise.



***Lambert Houses Redevelopment***

***Positive Declaration***

***CEQR No. 16HPD001X***

20. Environmental Justice – As construction of the Proposed Project may utilize federal sources of funding in an area categorized as low-income and minority, an assessment of the Proposed Project's potential for disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low-income and minority populations is warranted.
21. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to be prepared for the Proposed Actions will identify and describe any other potential effects on the environment not addressed herein.

**Public Scoping:**

HPD, as CEQR lead agency, hereby requests that the project sponsor prepare or have prepared, at their option, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in accordance with 6 NYCRR 617.9(b) and Sections 6-08 and 6-12 of Executive Order No. 91 of 1977 as amended (City Environmental Quality Review) and pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 24 CFR Part 58 and 40 CFR Part 150.

A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, 2015 at 4:00pm in the Daly Community Room located at 921 E. 180th Street, Bronx, New York. Written comments will be accepted by the lead agency until the close of business on November 2, 2015.

This determination has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law. Should you have any questions pertaining to this Positive Declaration, you may contact me at (212)863-5056.



Patrick Blanchfield, Executive Director  
HPD Environmental Planning

9/18/15  
Date

c:

Eric Wilson (HPD)  
Ted Weinstein (HPD)  
Winifred Campbell (HPD)  
Susan Kensky (HPD)  
Aaron Werner (HPD)  
Callista Nazaire (HPD)  
Nilda Mesa (MOS)  
Carol Samol (DCP)  
Oscar Oliver Didier (DCP)  
Vineeta Mathur (DCP)  
Robert Dobruskin (DCP)  
Sarah Whitham (DCP)  
Michael Marella (DCP)  
Naim Rasheed (DOT)  
Henry Colon (DOT)  
Kenrick Ou (SCA)



***Lambert Houses Redevelopment  
Positive Declaration  
CEQR No. 16HPD001X***

Owen Wells (DPR)  
Gina Santucci (LPC)  
Amanda Sutphin (LPC)  
Terrell Estes (DEP)  
Jeremy Parnes (NYCT)  
Patrick Dougherty (NYCT)  
Judith McClain (NYCT)  
Susan Amron (NYC Law)  
Jacob Levine (HUD)  
Therese Fretwell (HUD)  
Beth Cumming (NYS OPRHP)  
Venetia Lannon (NYSDEC)  
John Cryan (NYSDEC)  
Heather Spitzberg (NYS HCR)  
Len Sedney (NYS HFA)  
Jeffrey Zappieri (NYS DOS)  
Raju Mann (City Council Land Use Review)  
Ritchie Torres (City Councilman)  
Chairperson, Bronx CB 6  
District Manager, Bronx CB 6  
Wilhem Ronda, Office of the Bronx BP  
Cara McAteer, Phipps Houses  
Allison Ruddock (AKRF)

