DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW DIVISION

Marisa Lago, *Director*
Department of City Planning

July 19, 2017

Hilary Semel, Director
Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
253 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10007

NOTICE OF LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION AND REVIEW

Re: **Blondell Commons**
CEQR No. 17DCP194X
ULURP Nos. 170438ZMX, 170439ZRX, 170353MMX
Bronx, Community District 11
SEQRA Classification: Unlisted

The above-referenced application involves a discretionary action subject to City Planning Commission approval. This action is subject to review under the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR), Executive Order No. 91, and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), 6 NYCRR 617.

Pursuant to Sections 5.03 and 5.05 of the Rules of Procedure for City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) as adopted June 26, 1991, the Department of City Planning, acting on behalf of the City Planning Commission, is assuming lead agency status for this application and is initiating the CEQR review.

The Applicant, HP MJM Housing Development Fund Company, Inc. as legal owner and Blondell Equities LLC, is proposing a Zoning Map Amendment to rezone Block 4134, Lot 1 and Block 4133, Lots 1, 2, 8 (partial), 10, 61, 62, 63 (partial), and Block 4134, Lot 14 (the "Affected Area") from an M1-1 Zoning District to an R7A/C2-4 District; a Zoning Text Amendment to modify Zoning Resolution (ZR) Section 23-933, Appendix F, to designate the Affected Area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Area; and a Demapping of Fink Avenue between Blondell and Waters Avenues. Collectively, the Proposed Actions would facilitate a proposal by the Applicant to develop a new nine-story plus cellar, 95' tall mixed-use building (the "Proposed Development") at 1340 Blondell Avenue (Block 4134, Lot 1, the "Development Site") located in the Westchester Square neighborhood of the Bronx, Community District 11. The Proposed Development would comprise a combined 261,660 gross square feet (gsf) of floor area,

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including approximately 228 dwelling units (100% affordable per Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) financing), 19,968 gsf of retail space, 2,024 gsf of community facility space, and 225 attended accessory parking spaces. The Development Site is bounded by Blondell Avenue to the west, Ponton Avenue to the north, Westchester Avenue to the south, and a NYC Transit Yard to the east.

The Applicant proposes mapping MIH Options 1 and 2. Option 1 requires that at least 25% of future residential floor area be set aside for families with incomes averaging 60% Area Median Income (AMI) (including 10% of residential units intended for families with incomes averaging 40% AMI). Option 2 requires that 30% of residential floor area be set aside for families with incomes averaging 80% AMI. Additionally, in coordination with HPD, it is assumed that all of the 228 dwelling units proposed on the Applicant-owned site would be affordable at the following rates: 30% or 68 units at 80% of AMI or less and 70% or 160 units at 100% AMI or less. For the remainder of the Affected Area, for analysis purposes, it is assumed that 20% of the units on the non-Applicant owned sites would be affordable at 80% AMI or less.

The Applicant-controlled Development Site (Block 4134, Lot 1, "Projected Development Site 1"), which was recently merged into one tax lot, contains approximately 46,380 sf of lot area and is currently improved as follows: Block 4133, Lot 12 and Block 4134, Lots 62 and 63 are used for vehicle parking and vehicle storage in connection with a towing facility. Block 4134, Lot 70 is vacant land used as a street (Cooper Avenue between Ponton and Fink Avenues). Block 4134, Lot 2 contains a one-story 4,500 gsf auto body repair facility, occupying the entire lot. Block 4134, Lot 4 contains a two-story 944 gsf building used for offices, vehicle parking, and vehicle storage in connection with the towing facility. Block 4134, Lot 1 contains a one story 766 gsf residential structure which is currently abandoned.

The remaining lots within the Affected Area are developed as follows: Block 4133, Lot 1 contains 2,874 sf of lot area and is developed with two 1-story buildings totaling 1,075 gsf in size and used for automobile repair and storage. Block 4133, Lot 2 contains 11,250 sf of lot area and is developed with a 1-story building totaling 24,900 gsf in size and used for office space and a garage. Block 4133, Lot 8 is a cross-shaped lot and contains 18,022 sf of lot area and is used as a driveway to adjacent parcels (a portion of Fink Avenue between Blondell Avenue and the MTA train yard [aka Grant Street] and a portion of Cooper Avenue between Westchester Avenue and Lot 70 described above). Block 4133, Lot 10 contains 4,950 sf of lot area and is developed with a 2-story building totaling 13,230 gsf with 4 swelling units and 8,820 gsf of retail space. Block 4133, Lot 61 contains 1,642 sf of lot area and is developed with a 2-story building totaling 3,040 gsf in size and used for office and retail space. Block 4133, Lot 62 contains 2,500 sf of lot area is developed with a 1-story building totaling 2,000 gsf in size and used for retail space. Block 4133, Lot 63 contains 11,663 sf of lot area and is developed with a 1-story building totaling 1,200 gsf in size and used for storage. Block 4134, Lot 14 contains 7,687 sf of lot area is contains 50% of the demapped portion of Ponton Avenue.

The Development Site is currently zoned M1-1. M1 Districts, which typically contain light industrial uses such as auto storage and repair shops, do not permit residential uses. A maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0 is permitted for manufacturing and commercial uses and an FAR of 2.4 is permitted for community facility uses. Buildings can reach a height of 30 feet. Permitted Use Groups include 4-14, 16, and 17. The proposed R7A zoning district is a contextual district

which requires development in accordance with Quality Housing Standards. The maximum residential and community facility FAR in the R7A zone is 4.0, which can be increased to 4.6 with an MIH Bonus. Buildings can rise to a maximum height of 95' with a qualifying ground floor. Parking is required for 50 percent of the dwelling units but may be waived if 15 or fewer spaces are required. The proposed C2-4 commercial overlay would permit a maximum commercial FAR of 2.0 for local retail services. One parking space is required for each 1,000 square feet of general retail space. Permitted Use Groups in an R7A/C2-4 District include 1-4, 6, 7B, 8, 9, and 14.

For the purposes of presenting a conservative environmental analysis, the Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) will analyze the Applicant's Proposed Development (Block 4133, Lot 1, Projected Development Site 1), which is a nine-story, 95' tall mixed-use commercial and residential property with 52,720 gsf of floor area (4.6 FAR). Projected Development Site 1 would comprise a combined 261,660 gross square feet (gsf) of floor area, including approximately 228 dwelling units (100% affordable per Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) financing) within 198,683 gsf, 19,968 gsf of retail space, 2,024 gsf of community facility space, and 225 attended accessory parking spaces.

The EAS considers future development on soft sites included within the rezoning area that are not under the Applicant's control. For analysis purposes, Projected Development Site 2 (Block 4133, Lot 1) is assumed to be developed with a nine-story, 95' tall, 13,616 gsf mixed-use building with 11,686 gsf of residential floor area, 13 dwelling units (three affordable), and 1,930 gsf of ground floor commercial space. Projected Development Site 3 (Block 4133, Lot 2) is assumed to be developed with a nine-story, 95' tall, 64,552 gsf mixed-use building with 42,745 gsf of residential floor area, 49 dwelling units (10 affordable), and 10,557 gsf of ground floor commercial space, and 11,250 gsf of cellar level parking (19 spaces). Projected Development Site 4 (Block 4133, p/o Lot 63) is assumed to be developed with a nine-story, 95' tall, 66,922 gsf mixed-use building containing 45,989 gsf of residential floor area, 53 dwelling units (11 affordable), 9,270 gsf of ground floor commercial space, and 11,663 gsf of cellar level parking (21 parking spaces). Projected Development Site 5 (Block 4133, Lot 10) is assumed to be developed with a nine-story, 95' tall, 23,453 gsf mixed-use building containing 19,385 gsf of residential floor area, 22 dwelling units (4 affordable), and 4,068 gsf of ground floor commercial space. Projected Development Site 6 (Block 4133, Lot 61 and 62) is assumed to be developed with a nine-story, 95' tall, 19,625 gsf mixed-use building containing 16,389 gsf of residential floor area, 19 dwelling units (4 affordable), and 3,236 gsf of ground floor commercial space.

Within the Affected Area two lots (Block 4133, Lot 8 and Block 4134, Lot 14) would not be considered for future development under the Reasonable Worst Case Development Scenario (RWCDS). The Fink Avenue portion of Block 4133, Lot 8 would be demapped but would not be developed. The Grant and Cooper Avenue portions of this lot would continue to be used as a driveway access route to the adjoining parcels. Regarding Block 4134, Lot 13, this site consists of 50 percent of the demapped portion of Ponton Avenue and would be improved with parking. Therefore, the Affected Area for the purposes of environmental assessment consists of Block 4134, Lot 1; Block 4133, Lot 1; Block 4133, Lot 2; Block 4133, Lot 63 (partial); Block 4133, Lot 10; and Block 4133, Lot 61 and 62.

Absent the Proposed Actions, it is assumed that existing conditions would continue on the Applicant-owned Project Site and non-Applicant owned sites.

The analysis year for the Proposed Actions is 2027.

Sincerely,

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cc:

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