

Willets Point | Task Force Meeting 03

SUBJECT: Summary of the Third Meeting of the Willets Point Task Force
DATE: August 22, 2018
TIME: 3 - 5pm
LOCATION: Queens Borough Hall

Purpose

This Task Force will work to identify community priorities and produce recommendations for the 61-acre Special Willets Point District (SWPD), which will be used to frame strategy and negotiations for future phases of development of the SWPD.

Outline

The third Task Force meeting was focused on:

- 1) Recap of Second Task Force Meeting
- 2) Requests for Additional Information:
 - a. Locations of Existing Municipal Services
 - b. Surrounding Neighborhood AMIs
 - c. Soccer Stadium Overview
 - d. Hotel Demand Analysis
- 3) Presentation on Three (3) Development Scenarios for the 17 acres and the overall District:
 - a. Soccer Stadium
 - b. Mixed-use District
 - c. Destination Retail Center
- 4) Discussion of the Pros & Cons of Each Scenario
- 5) Development of Preliminary Recommendations

Summary of Discussion

During the discussion, the Task Force members reviewed and provided feedback on the three (3) development scenarios. At the conclusion of the meeting, individual Task Force had begun to develop preliminary recommendations for the 17 acres using both components from the development scenarios and other ideas shared during the discussion. Notes from this meeting have been provided below.

Task Force Member Discussion Points

- Cited concerns with existing shared parking situation between Citi Field and the National Tennis Center, and parking overflow into adjacent neighborhoods.
- Task Force prioritized the Phase 1B area consisting of city-owned property to expedite any program or development, and inquired about timing of future acquisitions
- Made note that several hotels in East Elmhurst have closed and become homeless shelters.
- When making necessary infrastructure upgrades, it's important to take into account the impacts on existing wastewater treatment facilities and infrastructure, and noted the priority to improve the conditions of Flushing Bay.
- If there is any potential for a larger healthcare facility, its jobs impacts should be taken into consideration.
- The Task Force expressed interest in a community center for seniors, supportive resident services, the creation of an educational campus, additional bus lines, ferry service, and affordable homeownership opportunities in addition to rentals.
- The Task Force was in agreement that the 17 acres should include space for a new police station, fire station, an Article 28 health facility, a freestanding high school to serve the greater

area, open-space, neighborhood-serving retail (i.e., banks, grocer, pharmacies), and a mix of additional mixed income, affordable, and market-rate housing options.

- In addition to the above programming, the Task Force agreed that upgrades to area infrastructure were necessary to accommodate for future growth, and that any future development should include environmental remediation of the site.
- Task Force members had various perspectives about whether or not a soccer stadium should be included in the Phase 1 area; Task Force members also had various perspectives about a convention center, noting that a convention center would not be built within the 17 acres, but in a future phase.
- The Task Force inquired about multi-year leases for affordable housing, and what rents EDC is assuming for the office and retail components.
- Task Force wants to ensure that they arrive at a plan that is both financially and economically viable
- The Task Force suggested that the City consider submitting the Task Force's recommendations to the developer for review given their knowledge of current market conditions. The Task Force also inquired about whether the time for reaching a deal with the developer would be extended

Next Steps for the City:

- Refine site plans for the 17 acres (one with soccer stadium and one without) to incorporate:
 - A fire station, police station, and Article 28 health center
 - A freestanding high school
 - Neighborhood-serving retail (i.e., banks, grocer, pharmacies)
 - Remainder of the site as mixed-income and affordable housing

Next Meeting: Monday, September 17, 3-5pm