

Willets Point | Task Force Meeting 04

SUBJECT: Summary of the Fourth Meeting of the Willets Point Task Force
DATE: September 17, 2018
TIME: 3 - 5pm
LOCATION: Queens Borough Hall

Purpose

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

Outline

The fourth Task Force meeting was focused on:

- 1) Recap of Third Task Force Meeting
- 2) Presentation on the Two (2) Revised Development Scenarios for the 17 acres:
 - a. Mixed-use District
 - b. Soccer Stadium
- 3) Discussion of the Components & Development Programs of the Revised Scenarios
- 4) Discussion of the Draft Recommendations Letter and Next Steps

Summary of Discussion

During the discussion, the Task Force members reviewed and provided individual feedback on the two (2) revised illustrative development scenarios that incorporated components requested by the Task Force at the third meeting. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Task Force had discussed 1) final revisions to the two scenarios and 2) that the draft recommendations letter needed to include the two final revised scenarios as an appendix. Notes from this meeting have been provided below.

Task Force Member Discussion Points

- The Task Force would like to see additional community space for general community facilities (i.e., senior community center) and future coordination with MTA regarding bus routes and connections
- The Task Force stated that if a soccer stadium is incorporated in Phase 1B, it 1) needs to be a multi-use facility and include programming for the community, and 2) if it is to share parking with Citi Field, the USTA also needs to be involved in future conversations about parking needs and requirements
- The City confirmed that the 450-seat school in Phase 1A will be K-8
- The City explained that the financial considerations chart was a high-level overview of what costs and potential revenue each use would produce – a more detailed financial analysis would be run by the developer when they diligence the scenarios
- The City estimated that the time frame to release a new RFP for either of the scenarios could take up to an additional ~ eighteen (18) months from a draft, to its release, and developer(s) negotiations and selection
- The City explained that the current developer has the full 23-acre site (Phase 1A & 1B) under a Brownfield Cleanup Agreement with NYSDEC and has received approval from NYSDEC to move forward with a phased remediation approach, starting with Phase 1A, to align with the phased development strategy
- As a follow-up, the City contacted the FDNY and was provided with the FY18 response times for the following: Engine 273/Ladder 129 (Flushing) at 5 minutes and 5 seconds (5:05), and 5:53, respectively; Engine 289/Ladder 138 (Corona) at 4:58, and 6:22, respectively; for comparison, the response times for Queens and NYC overall are 5:27, and 5:17, respectively
- As part of additional follow-up, the City has confirmed that parking for residential, retail, and other uses in the soccer scenario (with the exception of the stadium) would be parked in future phases

- The City confirmed that deadline to reach a deal on Phase 1B with the existing developer is currently set for December 31, 2018
- The Task Force stated that the draft letter of recommendations was broadly defined, and so it was requested that the two scenarios be incorporated in the appendix of the draft letter to ensure specificity

Next Steps for the City:

- Refine the two (2) illustrative development scenarios for the 17 acres as follows:
 - Remove the hotel component in both scenarios and replace with 1) a freestanding high school and fire station in the stadium scenario and 2) additional affordable housing in the mixed-use scenario
- The City will incorporate the final revised scenarios as an appendix to the recommendations letter and send amended draft to the Task Force Chairs for review
- Once approved by the Task Force Chairs, the City will bring the two (2) development scenarios to the existing developer to create and submit proposals to the City to be shared with the Task Force Chairs