

# Brooklyn Daily Eagle

## New York ACORN, Pratt Center Say Coney Island Plan Lacks Affordable Housing

by Linda Collins (), published online 07-01-2008

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Members of NY ACORN are calling on the Bloomberg administration to revise its plans for Coney Island to include more affordable housing.

The residents also called on Taconic Investment Partners, the largest owner of land slated for residential development in Coney Island, to commit to building affordable housing.

"For years people have been fighting about the future of the Wonder Wheel, the Mermaid Parade and the Boardwalk, said Carmen Gonzalez, a Coney Island resident and member of ACORN. "Lost in the debate is the fact that the Bloomberg administration and Taconic Investment's plan will price out thousands of existing residents of Coney Island."

Added Bertha Lewis, executive director of NY ACORN, "Here we go again. Just a few weeks after a majority of City Council members rejected the mayor's plan to redevelop Willets Point, the administration is proposing yet another mega-project that will displace residents and small business. We hope and assume the City Council will take the same hard line for affordable housing and good jobs at Coney Island as they did at Willets Point.

"Before this rezoning moves forward and before New York City sells one more inch of public land to Taconic, residents need a guarantee that they will keep their buildings affordable for working families."

The rezoning proposal will result in an estimated 4,500 new units of housing. Under the city's inclusionary zoning program, developers will be allowed to build more units of housing in exchange for making 20 percent of any new housing affordable to households making up to 80 percent of area median income (about \$56,000 for a family of four).

According to an analysis by the Pratt Center for Community Development, inclusionary zoning in Coney Island would, at most, result in 900 affordable units.

"The rezoning of Coney Island will cause the area to lose thousands of units of existing affordable housing. At the same time new development of the kind envisioned by Thor Equities and Taconic Investment Partners will create gentrification pressure that will increase the cost of the housing that's left," said Brad Lander, director of the Pratt Center.

"Given that we're talking about creating nearly 5,000 new units and an entirely new community, inclusionary zoning won't do enough to keep Coney Island affordable for working class families." NY ACORN and the Pratt Center, therefore, are calling for the following:

- More affordable housing on the 12 percent of publicly-owned land in the EIS area slated for housing;
- A commitment to prohibit additional sale or swapping of land to a private developer without a commitment to deeper affordability;
- A plan to use some of the profits generated from new development to preserve existing Section 8 and Mitchell-Lama buildings, including Sea Rise I and II, 3325 and 3415 Neptune Ave. and Northbay Estates at 2730 W. 33rd St.