



## **Public Place plans**

By Mike McLaughlin

March 1, 2008

The city showed off the two finalists to redevelop a city-owned brownfield along the Gowanus Canal. The visions are fairly similar, with both developers proposing a canal-side esplanade and hundreds of units of housing.

The city unveiled on Monday night two remarkably similar visions for redevelopment of a Gowanus Canal zone brownfield, but Carroll Gardens residents' reactions to them differed dramatically depending, it seemed, on how long someone had lived in the neighborhood.

Both plans call for the creation of more than 700 units of housing — more than 60 percent of them “affordable” — plus public access to an esplanade along the canal and community and retail spaces. But therein lay the controversy.

“My clear favorite is what we were promised — a public park,” said Diane Buxbaum, a longtime Carroll Gardens resident, referring to a city recommendation in 1978 to turn most of the so-called “Public Place,” into playing fields.

But that's ancient history to the area's younger guard.

“Both plans are great” because of the high ratio of sub-market rate housing, said Brad Lander, a member of the task force that winnowed the six proposals for the 5.8-acre wasteland bounded by Smith and Fifth and the canal to the two finalists.

“Team A” would build 725 units of housing, of which 61 percent would be earmarked for sub-market rates. “Team B” would construct 774 units, including 64 percent affordable units. Each project features about 100 units of senior housing.

©2008 The Brooklyn Paper