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## L.I.C. Holds First Hearing On Hunters Point South

by Annmarie Fertoli , Assistant Editor



*(images courtesy New York City Economic Development Corp.)* The mixed-use development proposal for Hunters Point South seeks to vary building scale.

The first in a series of public hearings on Hunters Point South began last Thursday, with representatives from Community Board 2 and the city on hand to field residents' questions and concerns. The seven-month process is part of the city's land use review procedure.

Current plans for the 30-acre Long Island City site, currently owned by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and Queens West Development Corp., will be acquired by the city's Economic Development Corp.

EDC is considering two proposals to develop the site — creating a 501c3 (non-profit) entity, or issuing a traditional request for development proposals. The first option would allow the entity to receive tax exemptions, which would lower construction costs.

Current plans, which officials made clear are still under consideration and need refinement, include developing the area into a mixed-use community with 60 percent of the residential units (up to 5,000 total) set aside for affordable housing.

C.B. 2 Chairman Joe Conley said affordable housing remains a major concern.

Several community groups — including Queens Community House and Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens — called for a tiered system of affordable housing that would make it more accessible to a wider population.

"This project will keep half of Queens out," said Elena Conte, with the Pratt Center for Community Development. She noted that according to recent statistics, the median income for families of four living in Queens is \$45,000.

Hannah Weinstock, with Queens Community House, said nothing has changed since her group first brought its message to officials.

"This is a clear demand from the community ... and I haven't seen any steps forward since the last meeting," Weinstock said, referring to a recent scoping hearing on the matter.

More than 50 families showed up at Thursday's meeting at 2 Court Square in L.I.C., wielding signs calling for affordable housing.

Conley reiterated the commitment to providing affordable housing and suggested a meeting between the board and the community groups in attendance. He added that he too would like to see different tiers of affordability, as well as proposals to create housing for seniors and city workers.

Density, transportation and school concerns also remain significant development issues, Conley said. The proposal includes plans for open space, a waterfront park, retail amenities, a 2,000-space parking facility and a school.

Tracey Sayegh, with EDC, said extending the area's current street grid and adding a separate bicycle lane are two plans under consideration. The site's major exit route would be Borden Avenue. Sayegh indicated talks to extend bus service are ongoing with the MTA.

The development site also includes a privately-owned parcel of land further south from Hunters Point South, which would also need to be rezoned to accommodate the proposed development. More than 1,650 residential units, 20 percent of which will be reserved for affordable housing, are proposed for the adjoining site.

Sayegh noted that the entire project includes “varied topography to preserve and capture views.” Existing site renderings illustrate buildings of mixed height and width, meant to fit in with the surrounding L.I.C. neighborhood.

Ongoing public hearings are part of the community board’s 60-day review of the plan. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for the end of May. Following the board’s review, the plan will head to the Borough President’s Office, then to the City Planning Commission, next to the City Council, and finally to the mayor.

To find out more about the Hunters Point South development plan, including when the next public hearings will be held, visit [www.nycedc.com/hunterspointsouth](http://www.nycedc.com/hunterspointsouth).