

## **Borough Board Atlantic Yards Committee**

Summary of the October 24, 2005 Meeting

### **Borough Board Atlantic Yards Committee Members in Attendance:**

Borough President Marty Markowitz  
Council Member Letitia James  
Community Board 2 Chair Shirley McRae  
Community Board 6 Chair Jerry Armer  
Community Board 8 Chair Robert Matthews

### **Supporting Staff**

Greg Atkins, Office of Borough President Marty Markowitz  
Jon Benguiat, Office of Borough President Marty Markowitz  
Ellen Oettinger, Office of Borough President Marty Markowitz  
Mary Lou Bradley, Office of Council Member David Yassky  
Sam Cooper, Office of Assembly Member Joan Millman  
Khari Prescod, Office of Assembly Member Roger Green  
Kate Suisman, Office of Council Member Letitia James  
Darryl White, Office of Council Member Al Vann  
Josh Wallack, Office of Council Member Bill de Blasio  
Craig Hammerman, District Manager Community Board 6  
Doris Alexander, District Manager Community Board 8

### **Guests & Panelists**

State Senator Velmanette Montgomery  
State Assembly Member Joan Millman  
State Assembly Member Roger Green  
Jane Marshall, Forest City Ratner Companies  
Rebecca DeMarinis, Forest City Ratner Companies  
Rachel Shatz, Empire State Development Corporation  
Joseph Chan, ESDC  
Ann Hulka, ESDC  
Steve Matlin, ESDC  
Linda Do, AKRF  
David Paget, Sive, Paget & Riesel  
Philip Habib, Philip Habib & Associates  
Stuart Gewirtzman, Philip Habib & Associates

### **I. Business**

- a) The committee approved a motion to add four ex-officio seats to the Borough Board Committee
  - i) The motion includes adding State Senators from Districts 18 and 20 and State Assembly Members from Districts 52 and 57 to the Committee as ex-officio members, approval pending full Borough Board.
- b) A tentative timeline and topic list was approved for the workshop series

## **II. Discussion with the Empire State Development Corporation**

See below questions and topics covered during the conversation with the Empire State Development Corporation, ESDC consultants and the Borough Board Atlantic Yards Committee about the Draft Scope and Public Hearing for the Atlantic Yards project.

### **Does ESDC look at alternatives? Can ESDC look at alternatives without an arena? What is the relationship between the EIS and the final project plan?**

ESDC will consider NO BUILD as the baseline, evaluating conditions in the area as it currently exists, if no project were built. ESDC reviews all proposed alternatives to determine if they are worthy of a full analysis. Questions asked when considering the alternatives include, "How can we achieve the goals of the proposed project while avoiding or diminishing the impacts?" Factors include: Feasibility, achieving the goals of the project (i.e. housing, arena, and commercial space), to avoid or diminish impacts.

### **How will the project impact the MTA/LIRR service when tracks are moved?**

ESDC will look at ways for the project to impact the MTA/LIRR service minimally.

### **The MOU implies state funding for clean-up and density. Can the EIS recommend clean up or density recommendations without state allocations? How does the EIS impact the MOU?**

The EIS is not responsible for state legislation authorizations reducing density, but the EIS is the most comprehensive analysis on the public record and can be used as a reference for any entity taking action on the project.

### **Can ESDC expand the study area?**

ESDC heard this concern in the public scoping hearing, and is reviewing each issue area. Each issue area has a separate concern and the boundaries set can change accordingly.

### **Can the General Project Plan (GPP) change? Will Eminent Domain be used to acquire properties not currently listed as part of the footprint in the GPP?**

If the footprint of the project or other drastic changes to the plan occurs, a project that is completely different would have to go through the EIS process again.

### **What are the consequences if EIS mitigation is not followed?**

A super majority takes the proposal to the City Planning Commission where they will have a "Review Session". This presentation to the City planning commission is open to the public. There are no guarantees. The EIS process commonly over-assesses the impacts of a particular site. They assume market forces and other errors.

### **How will increased development impact the sewage system?**

ESDC through the EIS will consider all impacts on infrastructure, including mitigations possible with alternative technology.

### **How will the EIS address issues of gentrification, displacement, and voting rights by gender, race, etc?**

No EIS in the state has addressed the voting rights issue in their studies. There are limits to what the ESDC can do in the time frame we are given.

**Will you look at extending the 10yr horizon due to the two phased project extending construction past ten years?**

The 10 year horizon recommended by the ESDC stands. They end at ten years because it will take 10 years for the project to become fully operational.

**There is a lack of resources our organizations have in conducting their own independent research. Can we ask the developer?**

ESDC is not prepared to speak to the Developer's position on this matter. The ESDC wishes not to set a new precedent for other projects in the State.

**We recommend that ESDC publish all data sets and assumptions with the DEIS.**

The ESDC will take this into consideration.

**Will the EIS breakdown all public funds going to the project?**

The EIS has a socioeconomic section. The developer will apply to various funding streams in city and state funding. As the project is finalized, the ESDC can refer to the General Project Plan.

**How will the EIS analyze open space in the surrounding neighborhoods that currently have a dearth of parkland?**

The ratios for open space are specified in the City Environmental Quality Review manual.

**Why was there a separate, secret MOU?**

At the time, there were two investment groups. ESDC is now treating them as one project.

**With the increased population and stress on local service providers, how will the EIS mitigate this stress?**

The New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) representative responded by saying that as needs arise, the City will address these issues.

**Will terrorism be taken into consideration as part of the EIS?**

No. It is not in the scope of the EIS, but ESDC heard this recommendation at the public hearing.

**What will be the impact on schools? Can the EIS recommend mitigation for new schools in the area?**

The EDC representative responded by saying that as needs arise, the City will address these issues.