

CB9 MANHATTAN 197-a PLAN

An Integrative Vision for the Future

August 6, 2007

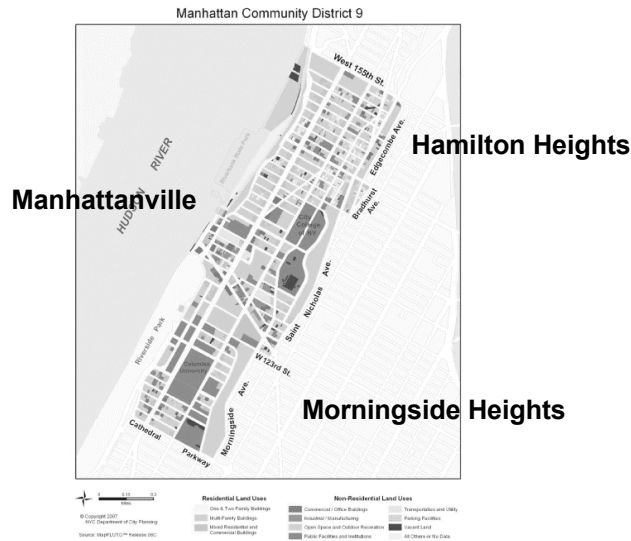


My name is Jordi Reyes Montblanc, I am the Chair of Community Board 9. I would like to thank the chair- Amanda Burden and the commissioners for the opportunity to present our 197a Plan. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard efforts and support of the staff of the Department of City Planning , in particular Betty Mackintosh and Edwin Marshall.

I will take a few seconds to introduce my colleagues Patricia Jones, Chair, of the Board's 197a Plan Committee, and co-chair of the Manhattanville Rezoning Task Force; Ron Shiffman, consultant to the Board and to the Pratt Center, which assisted the community in preparing CB9s 197a Plan.

At this point, I would like to hand over the mike to Pat Jones, who will give an overview of the district and describe the 197a process in which we engaged.

CB9 in Brief



Good Afternoon,

CB 9 Manhattan is bounded on the north by 155th Street, on the south by 110th street and on the west by Morningside Avenue, St. Nicholas, Bradhurst and Edgecomb Avenues.

It is comprised of three distinct but interrelated neighborhoods- *Hamilton Heights to the north, Manhattanville in the center portion of the district and Morningside Heights in the southernmost part of the district.*

CB9 in Brief

- High unemployment
- High levels of poverty
- Limited job opportunities
- Limited educational opportunities
- High rent burden
- Environmental burdens
- Limited new development space



While the Community District 9 has many assets upon which to build, we have a number of significant problems which need to be addressed. These include:

- High unemployment
- High levels of poverty
- Limited job opportunities
- Limited educational opportunities
- High rent burdens
- Environmental burdens
- Limited new development space

CB9 in Brief

- Historic and architecturally significant buildings and streetscapes
- Desirable neighborhood scale with pedestrian friendly environment
- Diverse cultural, ethnic and racial community
- Multiplicity of small and emerging enterprises



The community's assets are comprised of :

- Historic, culturally and architecturally significant buildings
- Great neighborhood scale that encourages pedestrian use of its streets
- Diverse and dynamic cultural, ethnic and racial community -- a model for the 21st century
- Multiplicity of small and emerging enterprises throughout the area -although many are now endangered.

CB9 197-a Plan

This 197-a plan was developed in consultation with residents and business owners in CB9, and expresses their vision for development within their community.



The 197-a Plan was developed to build upon the community's assets and to address its problems. It was prepared in consultation with Community Board 9 residents, business owners and reflects their vision for future development.

Included were residents from every part of the district, local business owners, workers, as well as students faculty and staff of the various institutions that are located in the area.

The 197-a Plan is a framework to guide near and long term land-use decisions that will affect and alter the community's physical and demographic profile, along with its sense of place.

Planning Process

- 1991 - the process begins, with early drafts, public meetings and community forums
- 2003 - the current plan draft begun by a task force of CB9 members and the Pratt Center for Community Development
- Spring 2003- Columbia University announces plans to expand into Manhattanville.
- October 2005- the City Planning Commission voted unanimously that the plan met "Threshold Review" for sound planning policy
- The plan has been widely distributed to the public, government agencies and elected officials, and is available on the Pratt Center and CB9 web sites.
- July 2007 -CB9 conducted a Public Hearing attended by over 350 people



Since 1991, several drafts of the plan have been prepared.

The current plan was created over the past 4 years by a task force comprised of CB9 residents and committees of CB9M, assisted by planners from the Pratt Center for Community Development and their consultants.

Three months into the development of the current plan, in 2003, Columbia University announced its intention to expand into Manhattanville. The 197-a Plan recommendations were then revised to accommodate such an expansion while maintaining the existing neighborhood character and diversity and minimizing the adverse effects of that expansion

Numerous public meetings and forums were held throughout the planning and review periods, which guided the plan's recommendations. The Department of City Planning (DCP) provided assistance and the City Planning Commission voted unanimously that the plan met "Threshold Review" for sound planning policy on October 17, 2005.

The plan has been widely circulated to the public with the dissemination of 44,562 newsletters. It was shared with government agencies and elected officials, and is available on the CB9 and Pratt Center web sites.

The plan was unanimously approved by the UIURP Committee of the Board in July 2007, after a public hearing attended by over 350 area residents representing every corner of the district, and after 52 people spoke -- all in favor of the plan.



intro

Planning Goals

- Build on the strong social, economic, and cultural base of the district
- Allow for future growth without destruction of existing and historic community character
- Create living wage jobs for CB9 residents
- Provide affordable housing and protect existing housing resources
- Prevent displacement
- Support growing art and cultural community
- Protect and improve natural and environmental resources

The plan builds on the strong social, economic, and cultural base of the district. The plan recognizes, reinforces and reinvigorates this ethnically and culturally diverse community.

The plan allows for future growth that is compatible with the existing and historic urban fabric and is sensitive to community character.

The plan tries to establish a context that will generate well-paying and sustainable living wage jobs for community residents. In essence the 197a plan:

- Promotes the interests of long time residents
- Protects, improves and substantially enhances the natural environment and architecture of the area
- Preserves the existing supply of public and affordable housing
- Provides for new housing targeted to the median income of area residents
- Creates the conditions to generate and protect good jobs and ensure that a diverse set of opportunities for employment continue to grow and flourish in the area
- Assures that primary and secondary displacement will not occur as a result of any public or private action.
- Recognizes, protects and enhances the indigenous and growing art and cultural community throughout the area



intro

Planning Goals

New development should:

- protect the health and safety of area residents
- minimize demolition
- reuse and retain existing buildings
- minimize traffic congestion
- make area a leader sustainable development

Any development should also:

- Respect the rights of the existing community by proscribing the use of eminent domain

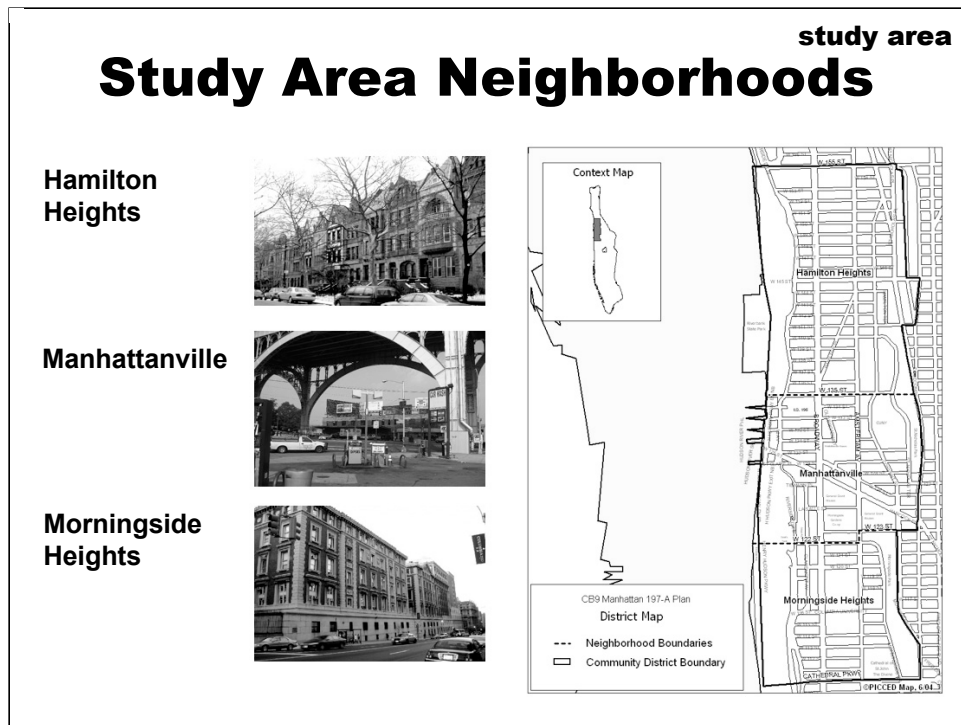
We sought to develop a plan that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable that

- protects the health and safety of residents by utilizing state of the art LEED rated gold standard and better construction,
- minimizes demolition
- encourages the reuse and retention of existing buildings, thereby preserving embodied energy
- reduces traffic congestion during and after build out
- creates the city's first zero waste community

In essence CB9 proposed many of the elements of PlaNYC 2030 years before the mayor announced his ground breaking plan.

Finally, because the negative history of eminent domain abuse is a vivid memory in low and moderate income communities and communities of color throughout the region we propose:

- Restricting the use of eminent domain in the district to the acquisition of private property only for a demonstrated public purpose, thereby prohibiting the use of eminent domain to transfer private property from one private entity to another private entity.



In sum, the plan seeks to build on the asset base of the community:

- the quality of its neighborhoods
- it's rich architectural heritage
- it's social and cultural diversity and the institutions that are located in the area.

At the same time, the plan seeks to address the range of social and economic problems that confront many of its residents.

I now will turn to Ron Shiffman, who will take you through some of the elements of the plan and discuss the factors that led to those recommendations.

Key Factors

The small manufacturing businesses and artist and artisan communities have the potential to become major job generators.

Environmental issues, ranging from environmental justice to global warming, must be addressed

Area Institutions are an integral part of the community and their needs should be addressed, however, no one institution should dominate or displace the community



Good Afternoon,

I'd like to echo my colleagues and personally thank you for affording us the opportunity to appear before you today. I will touch on three key factors that influenced how the 197a Plan approached the issues and opportunities outlined by Pat Jones. I will then briefly summarize some of the recommendations impacting the district as a whole, The key factors that I will discuss are:

Manufacturing

The Environment

Institutional Expansion Within the District

In discussing them, I will touch on the inter-relationships between these factors, the needs of the community and the value system which helped us arrive at a plan for the district. I will focus on Manhattanville since that is the area of CB9 facing the greatest pressures for development. The kind of development that takes place there will impact the entire district.

study area

Close-up on Manhattanville



terrain vague from above?

Manhattanville which is the largest of the neighborhoods in CB9, offers us some opportunities for intervention and development. The nature of that development is dependent on how one views and assess the potential of the area.

One definition of an area like Manhattanville is that it is ripe for development. Similar to Robert Moses' perspective, the area is viewed from above and seen as a blank slate. Some economists, architects and sociologists refer to areas such as Manhattanville as a "terrain vague."