



Community supports Blondell Commons in the Bronx

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Bronx, NY Strong community support was voiced by neighborhood residents, small business owners and union members at a packed City Planning Commission hearing on rezoning to enable development of new affordable housing on Blondell Ave.

Blondell Commons, a 228-unit all affordable building to be developed at 1340 Blondell Ave., was praised as a welcomed addition to an underutilized site in the Westchester Square section by most of those attending today's Planning Commission meeting.

"Over 100 local small business owners and residents in the neighborhood have signed a petition supporting the project," said John Bonizio, chairman of the Westchester Square Business Improvement District.

The community petition in support of Blondell Commons reads:

"As a constituent of the Bronx community I firmly believe that the Blondell Commons redevelopment will be a positive for the Westchester Square area. I'm in favor of and fully support the proposed development at 1340 Blondell Ave. It will bring meaningful improvements that will benefit both residents and small businesses in the community. I respectfully ask that you support this project."

"The new nine-story building with 228 affordable residential units, has many appealing features and amenities," said Ariel Aufgang, AIA, principal of Aufgang Architects, which designed the building. These include a children's playroom, a fitness room, a large multipurpose room, a laundry room and 225 parking spaces that will also be available to the public.

The site has convenient access to retail shopping and services along Williamsbridge Road and Westchester Avenue, as well to the East Tremont Avenue subway station of the #6 Express train, and bus routes. The property is located near several public schools, including Herbert Lehman High School.

"The site today is an abandoned auto repair yard and the Blondell Commons development will bring much needed affordable housing, new retail space, street activity and vitality to what is now an unattractive street that is dark and empty at night," said neighborhood resident Alex Garoni, who spoke in support of rezoning at today's hearing.