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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

JUNE 25, 2018

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TWO BRIDGES COMMUNITY FIGHTS FOR FULL PUBLIC INPUT ON PROPOSED LUXURY MEGA- DEVELOPMENTS

***Leaders rally behind effort to subject
applications to ULURP, urge for extended time
to review 700+ page Environmental Impact
Statement***



TWO BRIDGES –
Today, elected officials, residents and advocates stood together to urge the Administration to extend the time allotted for Community Board 3 to

provide input on three controversial proposed mega-developments that would threaten affordability in the historically diverse and working class neighborhood of Two Bridges.

"To refer out these applications at a time that would severely limit public input is just a sordid attempt by greedy developers to pull a fast one on the Two Bridges community and cheat them out of the transparency and input they deserve. We refuse to let them get away with green-lighting applications that would endanger the legacy of affordability that this community has fought so hard to protect," said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin**. "I am proud to join Borough President Brewer in our push to subject these mega-towers to ULURP, so that this community can secure a real opportunity to determine the future of their own neighborhood."

"This 'just-in-time-for-summer' referral while our text amendment to protect this community is still waiting is not how land use or government is supposed to work," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "I will continue to stand with Two Bridges residents, demand fair consideration of our text amendment closing the 'Minor Modification Loophole,' and oppose out-of-scale developments without a real community review."

"To date, the development process has not allowed for sufficient community input and I have grave concerns that these mega-towers will harm our neighbors. At minimum, there should be an extended time period to allow the Community Board and residents sufficient time to provide their feedback," said **Representative Nydia M. Velázquez**.

"Our message today is the same as it has always been: these luxury towers do not belong in the Two Bridges Neighborhood. Our community has long opposed them, and we will keep fighting until the City does the right thing and rejects plans to develop them," said **Assembly Member Yuh-Line Niou**. "This community has had to fight so hard just to be heard, and the 60 days – that is really roughly 17 days factoring in the start of the local Community Board's summer break – is not enough time for anybody to review the long-awaited study. This environmental impact statement is a community-driven process that cannot and should not be rushed. I will continue working with my colleagues against these towers until the City follows the community's lead and puts a stop to their construction for good."



“Last week DCP released 3 Two Bridges minor modification applications plus the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) of over 700 pages. Community comments to the DEIS and the applications are critical to the future of the Two Bridges community,” said **Community Board 3 Chair Alysha**

Lewis-Coleman. “Why is DCP releasing these documents after a year of preparation without any notice at the one time in the year when it creates the greatest burden. All agencies are aware the Community Boards do not meet in August. Why would DCP do this at a time when it cuts in half the actual time for the community to comment. Two Bridges is a low income, immigrant community of color. Thirty one percent of the residents live in poverty. It is being changed forever by being given away to developers of 2775 market rate units. Community Board 3 asks DCP to do the right thing. The agency has been working on this application for over a year: give the community the proper time to review and respond. It is unconscionable to release the documents in the summer so that half the comment period is in the community board break.”

Last week, the Department of City Planning announced the release and referral of a lengthy Draft Environmental Impact Statement and land use applications for three proposed mega-developments in Two Bridges, right as Community Board 3 approaches summer break. The timing of this release would severely limit the amount of time needed for the Community Board to adequately review and provide input.

In response, Council Member Chin and Borough President Brewer sent a demand to City Planning Commission Chairperson Marisa Lago that the Administration grant the community the full period of review that was promised.

Earlier this year, Council Member Chin and Borough President Brewer filed a zoning text amendment that would subject the three proposals to a full public review under the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The first land use application to be submitted by elected officials in over a decade, the text amendment would close the "minor modification" loophole that clears the way for luxury overdevelopment within the Two Bridges Large Scale Residential Development Area.

"We are extremely disappointed in the timing of DCP's decision to release the DEIS for the four proposed massive towers in Two Bridges," said **Trever Holland, President of the Two Bridges Towers Tenant Association**. "Once again, our community will face the burden of trying to digest thousands of pages of technical documents within an abbreviated time frame. How can the city expect for the community to properly respond and engage if they release these critical documents at the beginning of the summer? The community board only meets once and many families are away. At minimum, we would hope that DCP would extend the review period to allow for proper engagement especially considering the massive impact these proposals would have on our neighborhood. What we also find particularly disturbing is the blatant attempt by the developers to divide our neighborhood with proposed and targeted offerings. Do they really think that BBQ pits will soften the impact of these 4 mega-towers? What the developers are trying to do is distract us from the actual impacts by offering these so-called 'open space mitigations' in front the actual DEIS. Oddly enough, there was no mention of improving Cherry Clinton Playground, Pier 42 or Pier 35 and the surrounding waterfront esplanade-the exact area that will face the most impact."

"We think the timing of this release of the Draft EIS is deliberately designed to deprive the Two Bridges community a fulsome review and prepared responses," said **Marc Richardson, Lands End One Tenant Leader and member of TUFF-LES**. "The schedule needs to be moved to accommodate Community Board 3's August summer break as the board is booked up for July. This is a very important issue to Two Bridges and these 3 mega developments will have a major

impact on our neighborhood and we must be afforded adequate time to consider the substance of the 800 page DEIS that was just released.”

“It’s obscene for the Department of City Planning (DCP) to come out with this massive almost 800-page document, that’s profoundly inaccessible to the community, at a moment that leaves the Community Board hard-pressed to review it and to respond adequately,” said **Julian Morales, Lead Organizer at GOLES**. “If DCP didn’t intend this as a sign of disrespect, it sure looks that way. It’s almost as if this release was timed on purpose to prevent the community from reviewing it thoroughly and making the kind of real response that’s necessary, given the magnitude of what’s at stake. DCP needs to extend the timeline to give the Community Board a fair chance.”

"The Department must give the public and the community board at least until the last week in September-the next opportunity for the full board to meet and vote - to submit its recommendations," said **Paula Segal, Senior Staff Attorney at the Urban Justice Center**. "Anything less would be simply unfair and would clearly stifle the opportunity for public participation in the review of a project which is already obfuscated by being subject to a process not enshrined in the NYC City Charter or properly promulgated under New York law."

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