



*THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF MARGARET S. CHIN*

250 Broadway, Suite 1882
New York, NY 10007

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

SEPT. 14, 2016

Contact: Paul Leonard, (212) 788-7259, pleonard@council.nyc.gov

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT FOR LOW-
INCOME SENIORS MOVES FORWARD ON
ELIZABETH & MOTT STREETS**
*City issues Request for Proposals for the creation of badly-
needed units of affordable housing in the heart of Little Italy*

CHINATOWN – The City moved forward today with plans to transform the remainder of a demolished school site in Little Italy into a building for local seniors who are in desperate need for housing that is safe, age-appropriate, and above all, affordable.

“With the issuance of this Request for Proposals, we are taking an important step as a community to create affordable housing for our seniors, as well as establishing a permanent garden space at this location,” **Council Member Chin** said. “With thousands of seniors on waitlists for affordable, safe, and age-appropriate housing, the need for these senior housing units in the heart of Little Italy is overwhelming. I thank Mayor de Blasio and HPD for partnering with me to help address this crisis of affordability that threatens the health and well-being of too many elderly New Yorkers. As this process continues, I look forward to working with the Community Board and the gardeners to recreate an open space that everyone can be assured will be available and open to the public for decades to come.”

The former home of a school demolished in the 1970s, the site is located mid-block between Elizabeth and Mott streets near Spring Street. Another portion of the former school site, at 21 Spring St., is the location of federally-subsidized Section 8 housing. The site was set aside for affordable housing as a result of an agreement in 2012 to develop the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area in the Lower East Side.

“With the years of significant loss of affordable housing in Chinatown, CAAAV's Chinatown Tenants Union has been advocating for greater protections for existing affordable housing and development of new affordable housing. We are pleased to hear about the opportunity for new affordable housing and public open space on Elizabeth Street. It has been a long needed asset in the community,” said **Cathy Dang, Executive Director, CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities**.

Bobbie Sackman, Director of Public Policy, LiveOn NY, states, “LiveOn NY supports the de Blasio administration and Councilwoman Margaret Chin in working to fulfill the vision to turn the Elizabeth Street lot into affordable senior housing. LiveOn NY’s recent study uncovered an astounding 200,000 older New Yorkers on waiting lists for an average of seven years for affordable housing. This situation is a compelling reason the city needs to move ahead with this project. Research shows that aging in place in one’s community has been tied to better health outcomes and social connectedness including increased life expectancy. These are serious issues calling out for a city response. And the city is responding with this new affordable housing building. This is a win-win situation for the local community to allow its older residents to remain in housing that is affordable.”

The Request for Proposals issued today calls for applicants to provide development plans that will expand affordable housing, while at the same time, incorporating at least 5,000 square feet of permanent open space. Preference will be given to proposals that provide even more open space without sacrificing housing for seniors in need.

According to the city Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development, the senior population of the neighborhood is 17 percent – slightly above the average of 16 percent in the borough of Manhattan, and well above the City-wide average of 14 percent. Seniors residing in Manhattan Community Board 2, where the project is located, will receive preference for units built at the site.

In March, LiveOn NY released the result of a survey showing more than 100,000 low-income seniors languishing on waitlists for an average of 7 years.

###