

SOUTH BROOKLYN

BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA

COMMUNITY MEETING 2

The South Brooklyn Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) study aims to build consensus on priorities for the future of communities living in a large area within Community Board 7, which includes Sunset Park, Greenwood, and Windsor Terrace in Brooklyn, NY. In order to receive input and bring the study into the public eye, the project is working with a Steering Committee of community leaders and hosting a round of public meetings, this event being the second. The first meeting, held in September 2023, focused on the study areas and community goals of the BOA, while this meeting zoomed into conceptual site analysis.



PROJECT TEAM

The project is being led by Fifth Avenue Committee (FAC), and supported by a consultant team including HR&A Advisors, WXY Studio, Langan Engineering, and Grain Collective.



6:00 pm - 7:30pm
Tuesday
January 16, 2024



Sunset Park Library
Community Room

AGENDA

- 6:00pm Sign-in +
- 6:10pm Refreshments
- 6:10pm Presentation to
- 6:30pm Introduce BOA
Project Objectives +
Sites
- 6:30pm Q&A
- 6:45pm
- 6:45pm Open House Setup
- 7:20pm with Three Stations
- 7:20pm Next Steps, Q&A and
- 8:30pm Wrap-Up



45+ Participants

The meeting was well-attended at the brand-new Sunset Park library. Interpretation was offered in four languages - Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, and Cantonese.

MEETING GOALS

- Share project goals and details to build public awareness on the project.
- Gather input on the strategic sites and conceptual programming.
- Strengthen relationships among FAC, consultant team, steering committee, and public.

Presentation

The starting presentation to this meeting covered the general project structure, principles, and work completed so far. The Steering Committee structure was explained and there was a recap of themes identified in the September 2023 meeting. Urban design consultant WXY covered how the site analysis responded to community input, while also explaining the regulatory structures that any future development must adhere to. Finally, WXY presented the conceptual massings for each of the strategic sites, explaining how the project team reached those concepts.

Open House Stations

After the Q&A session, meeting attendees were invited to circulate between three stations with different focuses - Site 1 (37th Street and 5th Avenue), Site 2 (35th/36th Street and 3rd Avenue), and Site 3 (61st Street and 7th Avenue). These stations had maps and specific information on their respective sites, including view corridor renderings and concept diagrams. Project team members at each station were able to give details and answer any questions, with visitors leaving feedback in the form of post-its affixed to the boards. Survey cards were also available to fill out in four languages - English, Spanish, Arabic, and Simplified Chinese.

Q&A

The presentation was followed by a lively Q&A session that deepened the project team's understanding of community priorities. Folks wanted to be sure that any development will take into account unique neighborhood characteristics. This project's interaction with existing planning efforts and policies was also of particular interest to the group. Attendees also asked about protection from potential site contamination, as well as creating winter-appropriate public spaces.



Overall Themes

The comments received largely fit into three categories, covered below.



Built Character

Some people were concerned about wanting to maintain the existing scale of the neighborhood. Many people were nervous about large buildings feeling out of context, while a couple others supported large buildings. Additional comments focused on things such as lighting and pedestrian safety.

“Make sure this is in line with the character and scale of the street.”

“Develop the streetscape for pedestrians!”

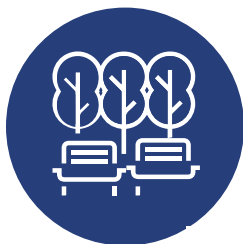


Programming

There was a wide array of programmatic suggestions for the sites, with some regular themes being affordable housing, recreation space, green areas, and grocery stores.

“Affordable housing for Sunset Park residents first!”

“A hybrid indoor/ outdoor open space could go here.”



Open Spaces

People saw opportunities in the strategic sites to reinvigorate open areas to meet community needs. This included things like green infrastructure and amenities like playgrounds, public restrooms, and plantings.

“Community space - safe spaces from extreme weather + more recreational uses.”

“More green space if possible.”

Site Standout Themes

Each site had one theme in particular that stood out as a top concern, as listed below:

Site 1 - Scale

The scale of conceptual development here was a focus of the discussion by some. Some people were concerned about the built character of the area being disrupted, and a few folks suggested developing a large building on a different site or series of smaller sites. There were also comments speaking in support of a large building here.

"We could build affordable homes for hundreds if not thousands of families."

"The community needs a guarantee that the sites will be safe, and free of environmental toxins."



The 37th Block Association joined the BOA process at the Second Public Meeting and contributed concerns about the scale of the development concept for Site No. 1. Since the Public Meeting, the project team has been corresponding regularly with them.

Site 2 - Public Space

Open space use was the top concern at this site. While several people specifically mentioned green spaces, other topics such as recreation and site amenities were also recorded. Improvements in the pedestrian/bicyclist experience as well as a buffer from the Gowanus Expressway were also requested here.

"A YMCA or recreation use would be good here because it is close to the school."

"Greenery or green architecture to combat air pollution from the BQE."



Site 3 - Affordable Housing

Because this site received significantly fewer comments than the other two sites, it is harder to identify strong themes. However, most commenters to this site were advocating for more affordable housing and wanted to see development that would benefit residents and workers from Sunset Park.

"Park for children, cleaner public spaces, more affordable housing for the people of Sunset Park."

"Affordable housing for the people of Sunset Park!"





Next Steps

- The project team will publicly post information about community engagement and project progress on FAC's website here - <https://fifthave.org/southbrooklynboa/>
- The next community meeting will be held in March 2024.
- We want to hear from you! Please email sapna@graincollective.com with questions or comments about this project.
- Please reference the below project schedule for long-term scheduling.

