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New Forest Hills Development

BY JON CRONIN
 Editor

Affordable housing developers Phipps Houses have applied for permits to build three new buildings at a former NYCHA development in Forest Hills.

On April 23, Manhattan's Curtis and Ginsberg Architects filed four permits with the city's Department of Buildings (DOB) to construct two 13-story buildings, one 17-story building and a four-story parking garage at 62-27 108th St. in Forest Hills.

Last year, the co-op board at the location moved to privatize since NYCHA could no longer fund the renovations needed for the buildings. After the renovations, the

three buildings will have commercial spaces on the first floor, and the rent from the commercial spaces will continue to offset the rent and pay for repairs in the units above.

Between the 17- and 13-story buildings, there will be 40,590 square feet of commercial space, while residential space will encompass 785,792 square feet, according to the DOB's database. As of Wednesday, the permits had yet to be approved.

According to a 2017 presentation on the project, the buildings are in need of a roof upgrade, window replacement, façade work, landscaping and site work, flooring in common areas, door replacement, elevator, plumbing and heating system upgrades, and maintenance and repairs of interior units.

Under the Making Home Affordable federal housing program, the sale of the co-op to Phipps Houses will pay for the first phase of the renovation. NYC Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) will be the regulating agency to ensure that the development remains affordable. HPD will also help the property to obtain a tax exemption that will replace one previously offered by NYCHA.

The total number of units at the site is approximately 400. There will also be 17,600 square feet of community space on 62nd Avenue that will

be shared with the Queens Community House. The current community center will remain, while a new garage will have 535 parking spaces.

Elsewhere in the proposal, it is stated that 50 percent of the apartment buildings will be affordable for a family of four earning up to \$112,000 annually, while 30 percent of the apartments will be affordable for a family of four earning up to \$86,000, and 20 percent of the apartments will be affordable for a family of four earning up to \$43,000.

Phipps Houses declined to comment on the project and stated that it would release additional information on the project in the coming months.

Phipps Houses describes itself as "the oldest and largest not-for-profit developer, owner, and manager of affordable housing in New York City." The nonprofit also has a social services affiliate—Phipps Neighborhoods—that provides families and their children in low-income neighborhoods with education, career programs and access to community services.

Curtis and Ginsberg is also working on the new NYCHA facility on Coney Island.

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