

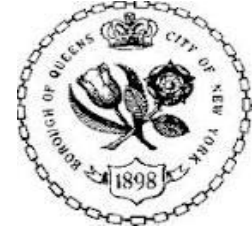


Chairperson, Martha Taylor

*The City of New York  
Borough of Queens*

**Community Board 8**

197-15 Hillside Avenue  
Hollis, NY 11423-2126  
Telephone: (718) 264-7895  
Fax: (718) 264-7910  
Qn08@cb.nyc.gov  
www.nyc.gov/queenscb8



District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

**Area 6 Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Tuesday, November 19, 2019  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Re:** Federal Realty – Proposal to the Fresh Meadow Plaza  
**Place:** Community Board 8 Office  
197-15 Hillside Avenue  
Hollis, NY 11423

**Board Members:** **Maria DeInnocentiis, Area 6 Committee Chair**  
James Gallagher, Jr. – Committee Member  
Robert Harris – Committee Member  
Tamara Osherov – Committee Member

**Also in attendance:** Mark Brennan – Federal Realty  
Chris Carrol – Yoswein New York  
John Clifford – Founding Principal, S9 Architecture  
Yolanda Gallagher, Resident  
Jesse Masyr – Land Use Counsel  
Joni Yoswein – President, Yoswein New York  
Marie Adam-Ovide, Community Board 8 District Manager.  
Jatna Reyes, Community Board 8 Staff

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Area 6 Chair, Maria DeInnocentiis called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. This meeting is regarding a proposal for the Fresh Meadow Plaza being made by Federal Realty.

*Area 6 Chair, Maria DeInnocentiis asked that a representative from Federal Realty begin the presentation to the Committee.*

**Mark Brennan, Vice President – Regional Development for Federal Realty:** Mr. Brennan stated that the main goal is to introduce Federal Realty and talk about their vision for a re-development of the shopping center in Fresh Meadows.

These are some of the main highlights of the presentation on the proposal to the Fresh Meadow Plaza:

- Federal Realty is a recognized leader in the ownership, operation and re-development of high-quality retail-based properties located in major coastal markets. They were founded in 1962. Their mission is to own high-quality retail, deliver long term and sustainable growth.

- They strive for what they call, placemaking. It is the intersection of architecture, amenities and landscaping. They spend a lot of time focused on what it feels like to be at the site, interact between the retailers, the community and the shoppers to create a destination in an environment that will last a long time.
- They have realized how important it is to have sustainability as a foundation for successful development, whether it is a suburban center with solar panels, lease certification or roof top farm.
- They own a 15-acre site from Horace Harding Expressway and 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue split by 188<sup>th</sup> Street (*5 acres west side and 10 acres on the east side*). The west side is anchored by Michael's, Applebee's and CVS. The existing hotel that is there, they do not own it, as well as the existing three-story offices. The east side is anchored by Kohl's and AMC Theater, the Post Office and the Library. They don't own the three-story residential building between these properties.
- They get calls regularly from retailers whether it is for community use, barbershops, dry cleaners or grocers. They cannot accommodate any retail there anymore. When they think about changing the center, they think of the pedestrian and vehicular circulation primarily east/west around 188<sup>th</sup> Street. There are two pedestrian main cut throughs near CVS and Chase Bank.
- They want to activate 188<sup>th</sup> Street where most of the stores have emptied out. There is nothing until you get to Boston Market. They want to make it more pedestrian friendly. They want to create lively public spaces where the retailers and shoppers can all interreact.

**Mr. Brennan asked Mr. John Clifford from S9 Architecture to continue with the presentation.**

**John Clifford – Founding Principal, S9 Architecture:** Mr. Clifford explained that what they want to do is to integrate the future of this shopping center more into the neighborhood to make it part of the community and not just a stand-alone project. They are looking to take a large surface parking lot that opens onto the street and have some shops on the street so that the surface parking is still there surrounded by retail and a more human scale feel (*photographs were shown on a Power Point (PP) presentation*).

These are some of the main highlights of the presentation:

- They are trying to make 188<sup>th</sup> Street on the east side more of a pedestrian street. They want to improve the landscaping around the street trees and give it more of a human scale.
- Images of other projects were shown: community centers in Washington, D.C., Boston, Maryland, etc. They are assets that they currently own which were shown to be examples of what they are looking to do in Fresh Meadows.
- They want to re-design the west side where Michael's is located. They want to have two levels of retail (*a gallery in Westbury was shown as an example*). They are proposing outdoor sitting for public use, so that it doesn't feel just like a shopping center but more of a place where people can be every day or on the weekend.
- **Paseos:** It is what they call little breaks within the buildings for pedestrian circulations (*images were shown*). Having seating, lighting, similar to a court yard or square. Two of them exist on the west side which they are trying to also improve. This will allow people to traverse across 188<sup>th</sup> Street to the east side and to the court yard where other shops are.
- **The AMC Theater:** They are trying to make use of the big plaza there. Have some changes in landscaping, having a square in front of the movie theater surrounding it. This

area needs to be programmed and designed to make it a pleasant place to hang out before a movie.

- They want to remove the retaining wall that currently exists. It will make it easier for people to go to shops and not have the inconvenience to go around the retaining wall as it currently is now. They want to create a set of stairs that can have landscaping or seating (*images shown*).
- The Fresh Meadows Park has a particular shape. It is mostly asphalt and it is in the back of the shopping center. They have different schemes into reducing the size of the park and creating two more parks. They want to have one on the east side; increase the actual amount of park land and make it more enjoyable.
- One of the new park areas, they want to name it “the grove”. It will be on the west side where the existing two-stories apartments are, near the library. They are looking into how that can be a transition for those apartments that are on the west side which are right now right up against the parking lot.
- The third park that they are talking about is right on the west corner (*image shown*). It is more of a pocket park. It might be best to have it as a family park for kids to play in, small enough but controlled and safe, adjacent immediately to the residential neighborhood.
- The overall site plan was shown of the proposal for re-development. It will include:
  - A new toddler park on the corner of 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 186<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - Re-developing where Michael’s is located. They want to have a two-story retail facing 188<sup>th</sup> Street with a parking deck.
  - Behind the existing retail on 188<sup>th</sup> Street that comes around the oval, they are looking to put in retail with offices; to have a continued street walls and the parking will be invisible.
  - Two residential buildings on the west side. One of them will be 65-foot-tall with parking underneath. The other one they are not sure yet as they were just showing their ideas on this proposal which are not final.
  - [Kohl’s area] Smaller parking field with a court yard with retail facing it. The existing parking lot is about 12 ft. below 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue. They will have shops facing 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a mid-rise residential facing that to create a street wall to relate to the residential. Shops on the base, residential, parking garage for the residential, the new park, new and improved plaza (*slides of the changes were shown to the committee on the PP presentation*).

**Mark Brennan** - Mr. Brennan mentioned that since they are really interested in retail, for them to demolish anything and/or add a new building, they must do so by obtaining a special permit which also includes a presentation to the Community Board. Everyone is aware that retail is changing, and a new and improved look is needed.

**Joni Yoswein** - Ms. Yoswein stated that they’ve met with the local Elected Officials to present this project to them and they advised them to set up a meeting with the CB and present the project to the Area Committee as well. This is the reason why they are here today.

***During the presentation, several concerns were raised by the Board Members. The following is a re-cap of the questions and the responses received:***

**Maria DeInnocentiis – How many existing parking spaces are there in your development?**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – We have nine-hundred and twenty-three (923) parking spaces.**

**Once the re-development occurs, how many retail parking spaces will it be reduced to?**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – The parking doesn't get reduced. Once the project is complete, it will have about 2,000 parking spaces.**

**You are including all the residential parking. I am talking about retail.**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – There are roughly 900 residential units, where we believe parking is slightly less since it is one per unit. Essentially, we will have the same amount of retail parking as we have today. We will have around 1,000.**

**So, you are saying that you will have around 1,800 parking spaces in that development?**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – The current program calls for about 2,000 less, 900 which are earmarked for residential. So that will be about 1,000 for retail which is about what I say that we have now 923.**

**Robert Harris – How many more apartments and people will you add to the area?**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – The proposal today is to have about 950 residential units.**

**Maria DeInnocentiis – The residential units are, one/two bedrooms? What are the configurations?**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – We don't have an exact mix, but my guess is primarily one and two bedrooms. I don't want to be evasive, but we just haven't gotten that far.**

**Robert Harris – How much deficit will we have in parking? If you go to the area, this week, next week, you are going to see that there is no parking at all. If you go there at 10:00 a.m. you find parking but if you go there around 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., there is not parking. Especially now that we are in the holiday season.**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – The proposal today is to have about 950 residential units. Our goal is to provide, roughly, the same amount of parking for the existing retail.**

**Jesse Masyr – To [Mr. Brennan] other than the Holiday season, are we okay with parking?**

**Tamara Oshero – I understand that the parking lot is well used now. It is not like there are empty parking spots.**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – Creating a better connectivity in the east and west side to not have to walk around, to be able to park to cross 188<sup>th</sup> Street comfortably with new retail. I think it will definitely be a better thing.**

**Maria DeInnocentiis – How many retail units currently exist on that property?**

**Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – That is a good question. We have about 20 to 25 retailers and 20 to 25 professional offices (i.e. medical, therapist, etc.).**

**Looking at the layout and all these numbers, it looks like you are adding about 100,000 sq. ft. of commercial space and almost one-million sq. ft. of residential space. I see that the push of this project is to develop residentially not commercially. How many residents are we looking to add to this community? One parking spot per unit, the people from your development come into our neighborhood because they don't want to pay for your parking, and they have multiple cars. They overflow into West Cunningham Park, Utopia and Fresh Meadows.**

Answer: [Mr. Masyr] – I think we owe you an analysis. We have to look into that. We don't have the exact numbers.

**Tamara Osherov** – Where the Oak Grove is, it is owned by the Fresh Meadows Development? Are you are going to do something to it?

Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – We are not doing anything there.

**I got confused because you mentioned that the Park is going to be named the Grove.**

**James Gallagher Jr.** – The Park is owned by the NYC Parks Department. Have you met with the Department of Transportation?

Answer: [Mr. Masyr] – We will seek approval to rationalize the park. Right now, it doesn't seem to be serving much of a purpose.

**Jesse Masyr** – We owe you an analysis on the parking and residential utilization.

**James Gallagher Jr.** – The schools are now overcrowded and now you are going to add more residential units. There is no room in here for that. The zoning there is C4-2.

Answer: [Mr. Masyr] – We have to do an analysis. If the School Authority determines that we will have an impact, we will have to mitigate that and find ways of increasing school capacity.

**Robert Harris** – The parking lot area. Where you have the “courtyard” (*referring to the image shown*). Are you putting a court yard there? Are parking spots going to be lost?

Answer: [Mr. Clifford] – No. The parking is going to remain. We just want to activate it with storefronts.

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – I think what Bob is saying is, that the courtyard is a rectangular retail (*referring to one of the slides of the presentation*).

Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – No. It will be mostly surface parking.

**The residential buildings, will they all have parking underneath?**

Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – No. Most of them will have one parking spot assigned, per unit.

**How are you going to prevent the residents from taking up parking spots in the commercial areas? When they have two or three cars and only one spot is assigned to them?**

Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – The residents will park in their designated levels. If for example, it is 2 a.m. and there are cars parked on the retail, we are going to manage it.

**James Gallagher Jr.** – For the commercial parking, do you have to pay for it?

Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – No. It is free.

**Robert Harris** – How high is that residential building by the library? Just curious.

Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – Ten-stories (10).

**James Gallagher Jr.** – Will the Post Office go? Are you expanding the Library?

Answer: [Mr. Brennan] – No. There won't be any changes to the post office or the library.

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – Committee Chair DeInnocentiis called the committee back to order. The reason for them to be here tonight is to hear the proposal on the re-development, not about which stores they want to keep and what changes are desired. Only specific questions regarding the re-

development will be accepted. There are concerns on the height of the buildings and the amount of people that will come to the neighborhood. She asked Federal Realty to provide the committee with the following:

1. How many families will be living in the residential area?
2. Number of bedrooms/unit distribution.
3. How many parking spots will be in the public area vs. the residential area? How is overflow going to be managed?
4. Current square footage of the park land that exists on the property and the estimated square footage that they are planning to have as parkland.
5. If the residential units will be rentals or condos. If so, provide the percentage.

*Area Chair DeInnocentiis thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. She is looking forward to receiving this information as this discussion tonight was not final. She asked that this information be sent to the District Manager to be shared with the Committee.*

Adjournment 8:27 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Jatnna Reyes, CB8 staff  
December 6, 2019*