

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROSPECT HEIGHTS ORGANIZATION – BUILD – FINDS “SEVERE FLAWS” IN RECENT PRATT INSTITUTE POLL ON COMMUNITY OPINIONS OF THE PROPOSED BROOKLYN ATLANTIC YARDS PROJECT

Organization Dedicated to Creating Jobs and Business Development in Prospect Heights Finds the Poll Does Not Adequately Reflect the Demographics, Income, and Length of Residency or Educational Profile of a Majority of the Community.

2% of the Community was Polled, 55% of which have Lived In Prospect Heights for 5 Years or Less.

Brooklyn, NY – (November 3, 2004) – A comprehensive analysis of a recent poll about community opinions of development in the Prospect Heights area – and particularly the proposed Atlantic Yards Project – found “**severe flaws**” in both the sample of residents polled as well as proposed set of principles to guide future development that were proposed as a result of the poll. Those involved with this poll are irresponsible for attempting to present these poll results as a balanced and legitimate reflection of community wide attitudes and opinions.

Brooklyn United for Innovative Local Development (BUILD), an organization that promotes job growth, business development and economic stabilization for people who have been denied opportunities for generations in the Prospect Heights community analyzed the methodology of an October 2004 poll that had been conducted by the Pratt Institute for Community & Environmental Development for the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council (PHNDC). BUILD analyzed the found data after PHNDC asked that BUILD accept the guiding principles in their minority business and job promotion activities.

BUILD found severe flaws in the sample of residents polled by Pratt. The sample is far from representative of the community and the attitudes, and opinions gathered from the respondents cannot be ascribed to the community as a whole. The survey did not reach out to all of Prospect Heights but rather a newly-arrived minority that does not reflect the community makeup in race, income or educational attainment background. Highlights of the analysis found the following:

- The Poll represents only 2% of the community – 412 residents out of 19,426 – were surveyed in the poll.
- Although 69% percent of the community is African-American, Latino or Asian, they only represent 39% of the respondents to the survey;

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- A majority (66%) of the community makes less than \$74,000 – with 36% making \$34,000 and less – the majority of the respondents (56%) earn more than \$75,000 with 38% making \$100,000 and above;
- Half of the community (50%) have only a high school diploma or less, 91% of the respondents have a bachelor’s or graduate degree; and,
- 55% of the respondents have lived in the neighborhood five years or less.

BUILD found that the survey was biased against the Brooklyn Atlantic Yards Project, which PHNDNC sited as the impetus for their study. BUILD found that the survey questions do not account for all the critical aspects of the Atlantic Yards Project such as business opportunities, affordable housing, job creation, the construction of parks and a health center as outlined in the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) affiliated with the project.

In fact, nowhere among the poll questions was there any mention of the CBA, an unprecedented legal document that the FCRC has developed with community partners, including BUILD, The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), local community boards in the community, Borough President Marty Markowitz and Reverend Herbert Daughtry among others.

Moreover, BUILD refutes the Eight Principles that the organization proposed to guide future proposed development in the community (see attached), citing misinformation regarding the public review process, the environmental impact, the creation of affordable housing.

“When BUILD examined the Principles and the data PHNDNC used to develop them, we were mystified not only by the unbalanced sample of respondents, but more importantly, by the misleading questions that don’t properly reflect the entire scope of the project, including job creation, affordable housing and health programs for the community,” said James Caldwell, President, BUILD. “We found a distortion of facts and an ignorance of the community benefits agreement that doesn’t reflect the true nature of great strides that our organization and many others have done to create a one of a kind project that will not only boost the community, but the entire city as well.”

Attachments

- Overview of Analysis [1 Page]
- Statistical Overview of Survey Disparities [1 Page]
- Critique of Principles [4 Pages]
- Preliminary Outline of Community Benefits Agreement as of 10/7/2004 [2 Pages]
- Negotiated Affordable Housing Proposal Overview [1 Page]