

Brooklyn Atlantic Yards
EIS Scoping Hearing / City Tech; Brooklyn, NY
October 18, 2005

Re: Alternative Plans
The Pacific Plan

Testimony of R. Douglas Hamilton, RA
Fort Greene Resident

I come here tonight as an advocate for intelligent design, as a defender of Brooklyn's quality-of-life, and as a proponent of common ground among the many different points-of-view expressed by my neighbors here tonight. Specifically, I am here to advocate for the inclusion of the "Pacific Plan", which I authored, as one of the alternatives that the ESDC is required to review by SEQRA. Under Task 19 of the EIS scoping document, ESDC proposes to study a "Lower Density Alternative" to the Forest City Ratner proposal. The Pacific Plan is just such an alternative. I developed this plan while consulting with a broad range of community leaders, and it accommodates most of the fundamental features of the FCRC program in a way that is much more sensitive to the community's concerns while avoiding most of the flaws that plague Forest City's plan. Those flaws include:

- The unnecessary displacement of current residents and the unnecessary destruction of *all* historic buildings on the project site,
- The creation of superblocks that perpetuate the physical division of Fort Greene and Prospect Heights,
- A scale of development that is completely inappropriate for these thriving brownstone neighborhoods,
- An arena design that discourages active streetlife,
- A failure to accommodate existing small businesses within the project footprint,
- Poorly planned & unsafe "public" open space,
- And a poorly-conceived vehicular circulation strategy that will guarantee gridlock on Flatbush Avenue.

The Pacific Plan, on the other hand:

- Incorporates the proposed Nets arena while providing replacement housing *on-site* for existing residents,
- Extends the Fort Greene street network through the site to promote better connections between Fort Greene and Prospect Heights,
- Trades public space for lower height and density
- While at the same time creating higher-*quality* public open space in the form of *real* parks and plazas,
- Wraps the arena with active entertainment and retail uses to promote urban vitality,
- Enhances a successful, *real* residential neighborhood *while* providing affordable housing,
- And provides internal access points for parking and service that will mitigate congestion.

Up until now, Forest City Ratner has been allowed to write its own ticket for the programming and design of this vital part of Brooklyn with almost *zero* oversight from our city's Planning Department and elected officials. The Empire State Development Corporation now has the opportunity to