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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Ahead of Public Hearing, Legal Aid and Community Service Society Raise Serious Concerns About NYCHA's Plan to Demolish all Apartments at FEC and Potential for Permanent Displacement of Families

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society and the Community Service Society, ahead of the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) Annual Plan [public hearing](#) later tonight, today raised concerns about NYCHA's Draft Significant Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Plan that seeks to demolish a total of 2,055 units — home to more than 5,000 residents — across four developments known as Fulton, Elliott, Chelsea, and Chelsea Addition. Demolition and the proposed plan to build 3,500 units of market rate and "affordable" housing at the designated sites will cause significant harm to current tenants and could lead to the permanent displacement of residents, including over one hundred senior residents.

The plan, driven by the designated PACT partner The Related Companies and Essence Development, is in violation of nearly every principle established by the [Chelsea Working Group](#), a body formed in 2019 with the intention of making recommendations to effectively address the needs and concerns of the FEC community.

Because the demolition of existing units will commence before the construction of all needed new units is completed, including a building occupied entirely by seniors, many households are facing displacement for an undoubtedly lengthy period of time. Historically, when people are relocated in this way it is highly likely that they will not return to their homes, resulting in permanent displacement.

Claims that the proposal is "resident-led" are also misleading. The plans shared with FEC residents omitted critical information about temporary relocation and the development of thousands of market-rate units on NYCHA land. Numerous reports from residents about the survey process stated that the information provided to them was opaque and inaccessible, obscuring the fact that two of the survey options required complete demolition

and were totally silent on the development of 2,500 market-rate apartments. Distribution of the survey has also been called into question, as it is unclear how many households participated, in which developments the participants resided and what oversight measures, if any, were in place.

“This plan is unequivocally not resident-led, and is guaranteed to uproot the lives of thousands of vulnerable New Yorkers, many of whom have resided in the FEC community for generations,” said **Lucy Newman, staff attorney with the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “The displacement of current residents will only further exacerbate the gentrification of Chelsea, and that tenants were offered little-to-no transparency regarding critical factors of this plan is abhorrent. We strongly reject the current proposal, and demand that NYCHA withdraw its Draft Significant Amendment until they can guarantee that no residents will be permanently displaced as a result of their plans.”

“During the Chelsea Working Group, residents spent month after month scrutinizing the technical issues facing their developments and the priorities they agreed on when it came to addressing them. The plan proposed by NYCHA in the Draft Significant Amendment reflects none of this work,” said **David R. Jones, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Community Service Society of New York**. “By ignoring what was a monumental effort, in favor of what amounts to a the most meager affordability plan our current zoning allows when increasing density, is appalling. It flies in the face of what residents painstakingly made clear and the broader goals our city must embrace to address our current affordability crisis. Furthermore, the plan skirts an opportunity to take real steps to further fair housing in the Chelsea neighborhood, which sits in one of the least economically and racially diverse districts in the city. Without clear protections against displacement, a transparent process, and taking affordability seriously, we reject the Draft Significant Amendment.”

Read Legal Aid and Community Service Society’s full comments here: <https://tinyurl.com/3u3rfcsf>.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org

The Community Service Society of New York (CSS) has worked with and for New Yorkers since 1843 to promote economic opportunity and champion an equitable city and state. Through a strategic combination of data-driven research, direct services, and people-driven advocacy, we ensure New Yorkers have the power to create change in their lives and the life of our city and state—making a tangible difference in the lives of millions. <https://www.cssny.org>