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Speakers support, fear \$1.6B Yonkers project

Unions say jobs are needed; others don't want to be displaced

Len Maniace
The Journal News

YONKERS — The City Council heard words of support but also fear at last night's hearing on the mammoth Struever Fidelco Cappelli downtown redevelopment project.

Supporters, led by construction

union officials, said the \$1.6 billion redevelopment would bring badly needed jobs and prosperity to the city, which has not outgrown its financial troubles despite a series of construction projects.

"The only way to solve this problem is development," said Edward Doyle Sr., president of the Westchester-Putnam Building Trades, noting that the SFC redevelopment is far bigger than the other projects.

An overflow crowd filled the City Council chamber where the

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Speakers fear, support redevelopment plan

YONKERS, from 1A

hearing was held, but also City Hall's Ceremonial Courtroom, where visitors watched the proceedings on television.

Before the hearing, several dozen low-income residents held a rally outside City Hall. It was sponsored by Community Voices Heard, a nonprofit group with offices in Yonkers, New York City and Newburgh in Orange County. Participants said they hoped the development would include affordable housing, construction jobs and permanent employment. They also said they feared that they would be priced out of downtown.

"We don't want to be run out of here. We were born here," said Valerie Pearson, a School Street resident and Community Voices Heard member.

SFC executive project manager Joseph Apicella said that 6 percent of the planned 1,836 residen-

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tial units are envisioned as affordable housing, though he was not certain yesterday about the income qualifications.

The affordable housing would be aimed at government employees such as teachers, police, firefighters and Civil Service workers.

"I don't think the southwest section of Yonkers needs more low-income housing," Apicella said in an interview, citing the 1985 ruling by U.S. District Judge Leonard Sand in his Yonkers desegregation ruling, which found that city officials had concentrat-

ed low-income housing in that quadrant of the city for decades.

The development would be an economic lifeline to many of the poor in Yonkers, Apicella said. It would create 6,000 permanent and 12,000 construction jobs. He said SFC was committed to a job-training program that would enable participants to qualify for union construction jobs.

But the City Council also heard a call for a delay from American Sugar Refining Inc., a major employer on the waterfront that operates a plant that produces sugar sold under the Domino brand.

Plant manager Lael Paulson worried that if two 25-story residential towers are built near the factory, they could trigger noise and air-quality complaints from residents that could jeopardize the century-old plant.

The company's attorney, Joseph DiSalvo, wanted a 30-day extension of the comment period, which ends May 13, so it could

conduct additional studies on its operations.

"We want to make sure that in the excitement for the new, you don't forget about the tried and true," DiSalvo told the council.

The officials made a point of saying they did not oppose the redevelopment plan. Apicella, however, said the redevelopment plan was proposed several years ago and questioned why American Sugar Refining was only recently raising this issue.

The SFC plan is actually several projects in one, the biggest of which is Hudson Park Center. It consists of two 50-story residential buildings and a 6,500-seat minor-league baseball stadium, sitting atop an 11-story parking, entertainment and retail complex that would rise on the city's Chicken Island parking lot.

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