

For Immediate Release

Communities in the Bronx Take a Stand Against Gentrification, And Activists From Across New York Join the Campaign to Defend Jerome Avenue

Developers and the politicians who are in their pockets have their eyes on the Bronx. The northern borough is the next front-line battle in New York City's gentrification wars. The city's new re-zoning mechanism is being used to open up Jerome Avenue for high-income housing, and interested developers want a smooth approval process for the 4,000 new apartments and 12,000 new residents envisaged as part of the plan. A coalition that includes dozens of community groups has come up with an alternative plan that protects much needed jobs and safeguards the affordability of housing in the neighborhoods affected by the plan. In contrast with the city's plan, the Bronx Coalition for Community Vision calls for 100% affordable housing, good job retention, and anti-displacement policies.

Decolonize This Place joins with its community partner, *Take Back the Bronx*, in opposing the Department of City Planning's efforts to rush through a plan that will drastically alter the shape and the history of the Bronx. In other boroughs, re-zoning during the Bloomberg years led to mass displacement of low-income residents and small businesses, along with the loss of local jobs. Now that gentrification is threatening the Bronx in the same way, the de Blasio administration has the chance to reverse the recent history of gentry-oriented planning without neighborhood consent. Jerome Avenue is the first case in the queue, and will set a precedent for thirteen other neighborhoods across the city that are slated for re-zoning. *Decolonize This Place* supports the right of the community to come up with its own plan, with the interests of local residents at the core of any vision for the Jerome Avenue corridor.

Take Back the Bronx has called for mass attendance at the next "scoping" meeting on September 29th when the environmental impacts of the rezoning proposal will be publicly discussed. "Business as usual" developers are hoping for a low turnout, but will be thwarted by full-throated participation on the part of the working-class communities of color who live at the heart of the Bronx.



Decolonize This Place will participate in a protest demonstration outside the Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Planning Study Environmental Scoping Meeting, on September 29, 2016 at 5pm, at Bronx Community College (Gould Memorial Library Auditorium, 2155 University Avenue, Bronx).

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Decolonize This Place is a three-month project converting Artists Space Books & Talks at 55 Walker Street, New York into a movement space that is action-oriented around indigenous struggle, black liberation, Free Palestine, global wage workers and de-gentrification. Running from September 17 – December 17, 2016, it is organized by the artist-activist collective MTL+. www.decolonizethisplace.org.

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