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WEST SIDE DEVELOPERS FIGHT FOR 7 LINE EXTENSION

By: Jill Urban

Although plans were dropped to build the 7 subway extension line to the 10th Avenue station, many in Manhattan's West Side are trying to bring back the plan to save the future of their neighborhood. NY1's Real Estate reporter Jill Urban filed the following report.

Construction is booming on Manhattan's West Side, such as a building rapidly rising at 42nd Street and 10th Avenue. Yet without the planned subway station underneath, many residents fear future development in neighborhood could go down.

"The residents feel like they moved here with the expectation that we would have a subway stop at 41st Street and 10th Avenue, and without it, it's hard to see how this can ever feel like a neighborhood," says Jay Marcus, the co-chair of the transportation committee for Manhattan's Community Board 4.

After plans for the station were dropped, that left only one stop along the 7 subway extension, at 34th Street and 11th Avenue, but the train will still pass through the 41st Street and 10th Avenue site.

Now that the boring machines are in the ground and approaching the area, the Real Estate Board of New York and the community are coming together in a last-minute effort to reinstate the original plan. They are asking that at least the shell of the station be cut out now while the machines are in place, or they fear the opportunity will be lost forever.

REBNY Chairman Mary Ann Tighe, who is working to help secure funding for the project, says future development in the neighborhood depends on it.

"We are isolating this section. You will see development move now to the area where the other stop is," says Tighe.

Marcus fears a slowdown in development could cost taxpayers. The city issued bonds to help pay for the infrastructure for the initial development in the area and those bonds were to be paid off with the revenue from new construction. He worries if development slows down, there could be a shortfall on those bonds.

As to the issue of property value, many residents moved to the area under the assumption that there would eventually be a subway stop nearby. Now many fear they won't get the same return in their investment.

Some local developers may be able to kick in some private funds to the subway extension, but estimates for the shell alone are around \$500 million.

A City Hall spokesperson says the city is already paying for the 7 extension and is in no position to pay for the shell.

Tighe says they know the funds for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and state are tight, so the community is calling on elected officials in Washington, D.C. to find federal dollars. They are also signing a petition at buildthestation.com.