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## Fort Lee Planning Board OKs two 47-story towers

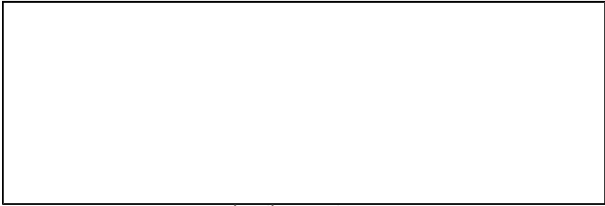
BY LINH TAT

Tuesday March 27, 2012, 12:15 AM

The Fort Lee Planning Board voted unanimously Monday to give final approval to the first phase of a massive \$1 billion downtown redevelopment project, clearing the way for the construction of the tallest buildings in Bergen County.

The redevelopment area — 16 acres south of the George Washington Bridge — is bounded by Bruce Reynolds Boulevard, Central Road, Main Street and Lemoine Avenue. Fort Lee Redevelopment Associates LLC will build the eastern half, known as Phase 1, which the Planning Board gave final approval Monday. The western half would be developed later by Illinois-based Tucker Development Corp.

Phase 1 will feature two 47-story luxury residential towers with a total of 902 units, as well as a restaurant, snack kiosk, museum, three-screen movie theater and a public park.



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The vote came despite the continued objections of residents who take issue with the size of the towers, which are projected to rise 498 feet.

“Has anybody considered that we are a suburb and not a suburb of Manhattan?” asked resident Ruth Adler. “The fact that they’re going to be the tallest buildings in Bergen County is not a plus. ... Maybe Manhattan needs those buildings. I don’t think Fort Lee does.”

Another resident, Nina Levinson, said she worried that building such tall structures would make Fort Lee a “target,” alluding to terrorist attacks.

Because the Borough Council previously negotiated a redevelopment agreement with the developer that set the height for the buildings, the Planning Board had no say on that matter.

James Demetrakis, an attorney for Fort Lee Redevelopment Associates, said he initially presented a plan that called for three

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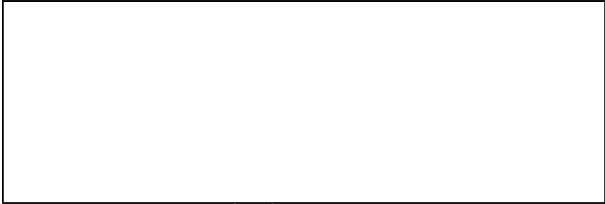
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buildings of 42 to 44 stories each, and that the Borough Council had rejected that plan. The developer then returned with plans for two taller, slimmer structures.

Planning Board Chairman Herbert Greenberg acknowledged that the project may not appeal to everyone but said that the town needs the tax revenue the project will bring.

“Is it exactly what we all wanted? I don’t think so,” he said. “But is it something we could live with? ... No one wants 47 stories. But at least if we got 47 stories but [the buildings are] not as wide, we come out ahead.”



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