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Contact:

James Yolles

james@risaheller.com

[646-676-4488](tel:646-676-4488)

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(credit: WXY architecture + urban design)

Plaxall Announces Comprehensive Anable Basin Plan to Create Mixed-Use District Along Western Queens Waterfront

Proposed rezoning of Anable Basin would build on LIC's manufacturing heritage and help accommodate neighborhood's future growth

15-Year build-out of new district would help address NYC's housing crisis and create hundreds of light industrial jobs, a multi-level public esplanade and a new public school

Long Island City (November 14, 2017)—Plaxall, a pioneering plastics company and long-term active community member based in Long Island City, today announced its vision for a special mixed-use district surrounding the Anable Basin inlet that includes thousands of jobs, much-needed housing, a new and dynamic waterfront open space and a site for a new public school.

The proposal, which would be achieved through a rezoning of the area owned by Plaxall and others, would continue Plaxall's longstanding commitment to, and investment in, Long Island City and the borough of Queens.

"Ever since our grandparents arrived in Long Island City over seven decades ago, our family has believed in the promise of the neighborhood and invested in its future," **said Paula Kirby**, Managing Director at Plaxall. "Our Anable Basin proposal is intended to provide opportunities to live, work, create, and raise a family – all while honoring an industrial heritage we've long been a part of. We are prepared to continue working with our neighbors, elected officials and other local stakeholders to refine and improve the proposal through the rezoning process."

Plaxall's Anable Basin proposal comes 70 years after Louis Pfohl, the originator of the process known as thermoforming, relocated his business to AnableBasin and the LIC waterfront. Recognizing the area's potential, Louis and his wife Pauline began to purchase and rehabilitate nearby properties. Their children – James Pfohl, Ann Kirby and Lynn Quigley – continued to invest in properties near the company's factory in LIC.

Today, the family manages nearly one million square feet of space, in addition to running the Plaxall thermoforming business.

“Our roots are in manufacturing, but our family has also believed for generations that LIC had great potential as a mixed-use community,” **said Tony Pfohl, Managing Director of Plaxall.** “It’s very exciting to see how far the neighborhood has come and we also want to be sure our plan creates opportunities to retain some of the area’s industrial character.”

The Plaxall family has worked for decades to foster a community of strong local institutions. The family has provided longtime support to the Jacob A. Riis Settlement House, the LIC Cultural Alliance, Hour Children, the Queens Museum, the Queens Community House, the Queens Library and Queens Council on the Arts, among many others. The family also provides space on its property for local organizations like LIC Community Boathouse, Recycle-a-Bicycle, and LIC Flea & Food, which Plaxall co-founded.

Jonathan Drescher, who until recently served as Senior Vice President of Project Development at the Durst Organization, has joined Plaxall to serve as President of Plaxall Realty and work alongside the family to oversee the rezoning effort.

“We are fully engaged in detailed planning and driven to maintain what is special about the community through the careful crafting of a prescriptive, mixed-use zoning framework,” **said Jonathan Drescher, President of Plaxall Realty.** “Through our plan, the new Anable Basin would be a place where people live and work in the same place – enhancing quality of life, productivity and easing the demands on transit and energy infrastructure by placing workplaces close to home.”

The new special zoning district proposed by Plaxall would establish a series of development sites to be built out over a 15-year period, along with a nearby site for a new, 700+ seat public school, which would be gifted to the City of New York. The project may include approximately 30,000 square feet for community facility uses, which could include daycare space.

At the heart of the Anable Basin plan is the Basin itself, a manmade inlet that has been largely inaccessible to the public since its creation in 1868. Under the proposal, the Basin would be activated for public use, with a bi-level public esplanade and improved connections to Gantry Plaza State Park. A new NYC Ferry stop on the Astoria Line is located at the southern edge of the basin, offering convenient access to Midtown and Lower Manhattan and Cornell Tech’s Roosevelt Island campus. The new public open space proposed as part of the rezoning would link the parks along the Queens West waterfront to the south and Queensbridge Park to the north. Finally, under the proposal, the new esplanade around the Basin would be elevated, an important step in promoting flood resiliency for both the new district and the neighborhood beyond.

The new waterfront esplanade is just one way the rezoning prioritizes pedestrian use. The plan would also provide new access to the Basin through a series of pedestrian lanes that would support production uses, community facilities, cultural spaces, and retail space – a key need in LIC. Taken together, the public esplanade and pedestrian lanes proposed in the rezoning would add an additional 3.1 acres of open space to the LIC waterfront.

At full build-out, the rezoning will permit approximately 4,995 units of mixed-use housing – up to 25 percent of which (approximately 1,250 units) will be affordable through the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing program. The rezoning would also introduce approximately 335,000 gross square feet of dedicated space for creative production and light industrial uses, a precedent-setting commitment that would continue and enhance the legacy of production at the LIC waterfront. That requirement was inspired by Plaxall’s extensive experience leasing and managing properties that house a community of light industrial tenants near the Anable Basin. Maintaining and fostering the growth of that environment is a chief goal of the rezoning proposal. The arts are also a focal point of the project, and the framework has been formulated to encourage developers to provide approximately 40,000 square feet for arts and cultural/placemaking uses across the district.

The Anable Basin proposal would support at least 2,200 to 2,600 permanent jobs at full build-out – over five times the number of existing onsite jobs at AnableBasin – and generate \$450 million in annual economic output. The build-out of the district would also support more than 10,000 construction-related jobs.

“We’ve discussed our potential redevelopment of Anable Basin with many community members over the years,” **said Matthew Quigley, Managing Director of Plaxall.** “Although many are understandably concerned about change and development, we believe we have a very persuasive case that the benefits of our project – affordable housing, great public open space, school seats, retail, light industrial and artist workspace – make this a plan that really meets some important local needs.”

The Anable Basin rezoning would cover approximately 14.7 acres – 12.6 acres of which are owned by Plaxall. The rezoning will establish a new mixed-use district bordered by 44th Drive and 45th Avenue to the north, Vernon Boulevard to the east, 46th Road to the south, and 5th Street and the East River to the west, which would be adjacent to the existing Special Long Island City Mixed-Use District. The school site would be located on 11th Street, several blocks from the Anable Basin rezoning area and outside the 100-year floodplain.

In addition to numerous opportunities for the public to weigh in on the Anable Basin plan during the upcoming official public review process, Plaxall will hold a number of informal drop-in sessions to talk to neighbors about the project over

the next few months. Details on those sessions will be posted on the Anable Basin project website in the coming weeks.

For more information, go to, www.AnableBasinLIC.com

HEAR FROM OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

"Over the years, the Plaxall family has never waived in their steadfast devotion to supporting those in need across western Queens," said **Sister Tesa (Sisters of St. Joseph), Executive Director of Hour Children**. "It would be hard to count how many young, formerly incarcerated mothers have turned their lives around through the unwavering support of the Kirbys, Pfohls and Quigleys. This same devotion is evident in their beautiful Anable Basin vision, which promises so much opportunity for a range of borough residents beyond anyone's expectations. Their grandfather must be bursting with pride and awe today. His spirit blesses all the good that has been done in his exceptional family's name."

"Through its support of Queens Library over the years, Plaxall has made clear it believes strongly in opportunity and education for all in the borough of Queens and beyond," said **Queens Library President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott**. "We look forward to serving the residents of the proposed project at our new library a few blocks to the south and are excited to develop programs and other means to help them succeed as they pursue their dreams."

"The Kirby, Pfohl and Quigley families and Plaxall have been invaluable supporters of Riis Settlement and the residents of public housing in Western Queens for well over 40 years," said **Christopher Hanway, Executive Director of Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement**. "We are proud to support their sustainable and equitable development project at Anable Basin, which aligns closely with our mission to offer opportunity and access to all residents of Long Island City."

"Waterfront rezonings must prioritize resilience, open space, and active recreation," said **Marcia Bystryn, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**. "In addition, mixed-use developments have the potential for reducing people's carbon footprint by allowing them to live and work nearby, with less strain on the transportation system and demand for energy. We are pleased that the proposed Plaxall development aims to include all of these features including 3.1 acres of public space, pedestrian lanes for safe access to the waterfront, flood barriers, a dual-level elevated esplanade that raises the project out of the flood zone, and docks for kayakers."

"Plaxall's plan will significantly enhance LIC's network of waterfront green space, and continue to improve accessibility to those parks and our incredible waterfront," said **LIC**

resident and park advocate Rob Basch. “The new Basin would not only open up a long-inaccessible portion of our shoreline, but would also provide one of the most unique public-space experiences in the city. At the same time, it would mark an important step in connecting the parkland along the western Queens waterfront, including to Hunters Point South Park and Gantry Plaza State Park to the south, and Queensbridge Park to the north. As a longtime supporter of LIC’s parks, the Plaxall family is just the team to take on such a visionary open space project. Greenspace is vital to the health of any community, and on that count, this project delivers.”

“We applaud Plaxall’s donation of a 700+ seat school site in the heart of LIC, which will help address a critical need for the neighborhood,” said **Kadie Black, Chair of Gantry Parent Association.** “With land for new school seats outside the 100-year floodplain so scarce, Plaxall’s decision to include a new school as part of its plan is especially meaningful. We are thrilled Plaxall is setting the bar so high by including essential infrastructure for our community.”

“We couldn’t ask for better landlords than Paula, Matt and Tony,” said **Ethan Long, Co-Founder of Rockaway Brewery, a Plaxall tenant.** “Plaxall has always understood what tenants need to succeed and how to bring together the right mix of tenants to create a collaborative, innovative community. And based on their track record here, we’re excited about their plans to allow for a similar environment to flourish at the new Anable Basin for years to come. We can’t wait to be a part of it!”

“This proposal for a Special Anable Basin Mixed-Use District really builds on the unique and important mix of uses that make LIC so great as a place to work, live, design, make, study, play, be inspired and grow,” said **Elizabeth Lusskin, President of the Long Island City Partnership.** “We applaud the thoughtful, holistic approach she has gone into its preparation, so that this extremely important piece of NYC’s waterfront can be developed in a way that advances the community and the city it serves.”

“It’s hard to think of anyone more committed to LIC’s cultural community – or to the neighborhood generally – than Paula, Matt and Tony,” said **Mary Ceruti, Executive Director and Chief Curator of the SculptureCenter.** “The family has long prioritized the needs of the community, and I especially appreciate that they always go out of their way to find space for artists on their property. Their proposal for Anable Basin once again puts community needs front and center.”

“The continued growth of New York’s tech sector relies on the development of live-work communities with a range of residential and commercial office spaces that appeal to the talent and companies driving the innovation economy,” said **Meghan French, Senior Director of External Relations at Cornell Tech.** “With the Cornell Tech campus up and running on Roosevelt Island, we expect tech sector growth to be especially strong in western Queens and are happy to support Plaxall’s proposal to re-activate Anable Basin and create a thriving new mixed-use community.”

“Plaxall has been a committed community and business leader in Long Island City for generations and their dynamic proposal will help advance the innovation economy,” **said Jukay Hsu, Founder and CEO of C4Q.** “I am thrilled to support Paula, Matt, and Tony’s proposal, which I believe will be critical to the growth of the creative sector in Long Island City and the economy of New York City.”

"Plaxall has been an important part of Long Island City for 70 years," **said Seth Bornstein, Executive Director of the Queens Economic Development Corporation.** “The family’s vision for Anable Basin is clearly based on thoughtful research and design that will enhance the community with new housing – a good portion of it affordable – waterfront access, and space for small businesses to expand. These components are essential in furthering the balanced growth of the borough."

"Long Island City is fast becoming one of the city’s most attractive places to live, work and start or grow a business, and thanks to Plaxall and their innovative Anable Basin plan, this trend will only continue," **said Thomas J. Grech, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Queens Chamber of Commerce.** "Anable Basin isn’t just a bold proposal for the western Queens waterfront, it’s one undertaken with the sort of sensitivity to community needs that only a family with such deep neighborhood roots could deliver. The Anable Basin plan will enhance the Queens experience for residents, workers, and visitors for years to come."

“Plaxall have always been supportive of artists and community groups and sensitive to the difficulty in finding space,” **said LIC artist and Plaxall tenant Ian Burns.** “When they probably could have taken more profitable options they have emphasized affordable workspaces for artists and community groups. The mixed tenancy in their buildings have set up environments where artists, community groups and small businesses can interact and develop together. Plaxall also has a long history of supporting local arts organizations.”

“We have rented workshop/art studio space from Plaxall since 2010 and have found them to be exceptionally supportive and caring landlords,” **said Plaxall tenants Lorna Lee and John Muller.** “It is particularly impressive to us how the Plaxall family is so involved in the community and supportive of the Arts. They are constantly introducing neighbor to neighbor, sponsoring shows and building community spirit. Through these introductions, we have collaborated with colleagues and have hired many local artists to work for us and enjoy many close relationships with our neighbors. We feel very fortunate to be a part of the community which the Plaxall family has been integral in creating.”

“Paula, Matt and Tony care deeply about western Queens and have provided invaluable support over the years to help local residents break the cycle of poverty,” **said Bishop Mitchell G. Taylor, Co-Founder and CEO of Urban Upbound.** “We hear a lot about new development, but what’s different here is that this plan was put together by people who

have lived and breathed this community for years. They understand what makes LIC work, what can help it grow responsibly, and what elements must remain to maintain its character. This plan accomplishes all three. The Plaxall family has been committed to upward mobility and positive social change in the community for years, and I applaud their plans for a new Anable Basin.”