

Atlantic Yards alternative unveiled

Plan promotes small businesses, excludes arena for Nets.

BROOKLYN An alternative "unity plan" to Bruce Ratner's \$2.5 billion proposal to build a basketball arena over the Atlantic Yards, to attract the New Jersey Nets, was unveiled yesterday.

Four young Brooklyn architects and urban planners presented their vision of lower-density development to foster small-busi-

ness ownership, without an arena, at a Community Board 2 meeting at MetroTech — another Ratner development project. The plan grew out of a series of workshops with residents, urban designers and local developers.

"It is about bringing Fort Greene and Prospect Heights together by creating new streets and public spaces that connect these neighborhoods," said Marshall Brown, 31, one of the plan's designers. "It is also

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Marshall Brown, co-designer of the Atlantic Yards alternative plan

about transforming the development process."

"Right now, the rail yard creates a physical rift," Brown said, "and ever since the Ratner plan became public, we've seen social and physical rifts emerge. There's been a lot of talk from people who claim to

represent lower-income or communities of color, saying that it's only wealthier, mostly white people who are against the Ratner project, but most of us share the same goals no matter what income, or whether we've lived here two or 20 years."

While Ratner's plan is dot-

ted with 17 skyscrapers, some reaching 50 stories, the "unity plan" would scale down the buildings. Instead of an arena over the rail yard it includes residences no higher than 10 stories. The 11 acres of the rail yard would be divided into one-acre parcels to encourage ownership by minority and female-owned development firms.

Forest City Ratner had no statement on the plan.

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