



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW DIVISION

Carl Weisbrod, *Director*
Department of City Planning

October 16, 2015

**PUBLIC NOTICE OF A SCOPING MEETING
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(CEQR No. 16DCP045Q)**

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 5-07 of the Rules of Procedure for Environmental Review (CEQR) and 6 NYCRR 617.8 (State Environmental Quality Review) that the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), acting on behalf of the City Planning Commission (CPC) as CEQR lead agency, has determined that a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is to be prepared for the Flushing West Rezoning Proposal (CEQR No. 16DCP045K).

The CEQR lead agency hereby requests that the applicant prepare or have prepared, at their option, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in accordance with 6 NYCRR 617.9(b) and Sections 6-08 and 6-12 of Executive Order No. 91 of 1977 as amended (City Environmental Quality Review).

A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, November 17th, 2015, at 4:00pm and will be held at Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard, Queens, New York 11354. Written comments will be accepted by the lead agency until the close of business on Wednesday, December 2, 2015.

The New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) is proposing a zoning map amendment and zoning text amendments (collectively, the "Proposed Actions") affecting an approximately 11-block area in the western portion of Downtown Flushing in Queens, Community District 7. The affected area covers approximately 47 acres and is generally bounded by Northern Boulevard, Prince Street, Roosevelt Avenue, College Point Boulevard, 40th Road, and Flushing Creek.

The Proposed Actions includes:

- A zoning map amendment to rezone portions of existing C4-2, M1-1, and M3-1 districts with C4-4A, MX M1-2/R7A, and M1-2 districts.
- Zoning text amendments to:
 - Establish a new special district known as the Special Flushing West District (SFWD) covering the entirety of the rezoning area, as well as adjacent areas not being rezoned, where additional zoning requirements specific to the proposed

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special district would be applicable. The proposed special district includes a subdistrict (Subdistrict A) covering the waterfront blocks within a proposed C4-4A district;

- Replace the existing Flushing Waterfront Access Plan with requirements set by the special district;
- Establish an MX district within a portion of the SFWD combining an M1-2 district and an R7A district;
- Map the proposed C4-4A and MX M1-2/R7A districts as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Area (“MIHA”) setting mandatory affordable housing requirements pursuant to the proposed mandatory inclusionary housing program; and
- Create new City Planning review and oversight actions by the City Planning Commission (CPC) and Commission Chairperson to allow for greater flexibility in future development within the SFWD.

The proposed SFWD would modify underlying zoning regulations by establishing additional requirements that would further guide the type and shape of future developments. The Proposed Actions would allow for increased density for those portions of the affected area that would be rezoned within the SFWD by increasing the allowable floor area ratio (FAR) for residential use from 2.43 to 4.6 FAR and, in select areas, allowing residential uses at a maximum 4.6 FAR, where none are currently allowed, and increasing the maximum FAR for community facilities use from 2.4 to 4.8 FAR. In substantial portions of the rezoning area current maximum FARs for commercial and community facility uses would be retained.

The Proposed Actions are anticipated to facilitate new residential, community facility, and commercial retail development by 2025, the analysis year for environmental review purposes. The reasonable worst case development scenario (RWCDS) for the Proposed Actions identifies 13 projected development sites. On these sites, the Proposed Actions are expected to result in a net increase of 938 dwelling units, 91,356 sf of community facility space, 77,812 sf of commercial retail, and 10,247 sf of hotel space; and net decreases of 28,970 sf of industrial space and 114,944 sf of commercial office space. The proposed mandatory inclusionary housing program, currently under public review, includes two primary options for set-aside percentages with different affordability levels. Applied to the RWCDS for Proposed Actions, these two options would result in either 516 or 619 affordable dwelling units. At the current time, DCP has not selected which of the options would be applicable within the proposed special district. The RWCDS also identifies 13 potential development sites which are considered possible but less likely to be developed by 2025.

The Proposed Actions have been crafted as part of a comprehensive neighborhood planning process that seeks to support Mayor de Blasio’s housing plan – Housing New York. They also build upon a draft land use, zoning and master planning effort initiated by the Flushing Willets Point Corona Local Development Corporation (FWCLDC) – a community-based non-profit organization working closely with State and City agencies and the community to support economic growth in the area. This organization received a Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) grant in 2010 and, with a consultant team, studied the area between Downtown Flushing and the

Flushing Creek. In the fall of 2014, the FWCLDC transferred the remainder of the work for the BOA report and master plan to DCP in order to implement the plan and bring it through the City's Uniform Land Use Review Process.

The land use objectives of the Proposed Actions are to: a) facilitate a community-based planning process to support policy changes that will shape a more livable neighborhood; b) create opportunities for requiring permanently affordable housing and preserve existing affordability to ensure that the neighborhood continues to serve diverse housing needs; c) encourage walkability by extending the vibrant downtown area to the waterfront, and create opportunities for new open space; d) support the existing and growing immigrant and small business culture by providing economic opportunities; and, e) align investments in infrastructure and services to support current demands and future growth.

Copies of the Draft Scope of Work and the Environmental Assessment Statement may be obtained from the Environmental Assessment and Review Division, New York City Department of City Planning, 22 Reade Street, 4E, New York, New York 10007, Robert Dobruskin, AICP, Director (212) 720-3423; or from the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, 253 Broadway, 7th Floor, New York, New York 10007, Nilda Mesa, Director (212) 676-3290. The Draft Scope of Work and scoping protocol will also be made available for download at www.nyc.gov/planning. Public comments are requested with respect to issues to be addressed in the draft environmental impact statement.