



Frederick Douglass Boulevard Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!**

REZONING OBJECTIVES

The Department of City Planning is proposing a zoning map amendment that would affect 44 blocks in south-central Harlem. It is the first comprehensive revision of south-central Harlem zoning since the last major revision of the Zoning Resolution in 1961.

The area to be rezoned is generally bounded by Central Park North, West 124th Street, Morningside Avenue and a point 100 feet west of Adam Clayton Powell Jr Boulevard in Manhattan's Community Districts 9 and 10. Most of the area is now zoned R7-2 and R8, medium-density residential districts, and is characterized by five- to eight-story residential buildings along the avenues and three- to five-story rowhouses on the mid-blocks.

The Department's proposed zoning strategy, which balances growth and preservation in south-central Harlem's residential core, would:

- **Foster new opportunities for residential development.** To help address Harlem's growing need for new housing, the rezoning proposal calls for modest increases in residential density on Frederick Douglass Boulevard and on most mid-blocks.
- **Promote building forms that are more compatible with the existing urban fabric.** South-central Harlem's R7-2 and R8 districts are governed by 'height factor' regulations which encourage development of tall towers set back from the street, a building form inconsistent with the prevailing low- to mid-rise character of the area. Residential avenues and mid-blocks in the area are typified by rowhouses with consistent streetwalls and cornice lines. To preserve these blockfronts, the proposal calls for *contextual zoning* districts that would mandate new buildings of comparable scale and height.
- **Expand opportunities for new ground floor commercial uses.** New small businesses and stores are opening throughout south-central Harlem to support a growing community. In support of this trend, the proposal would map new commercial overlays along West 116th Street, to provide new opportunities for ground floor retail development.



Brownstone Lane (the brown buildings in the photo that abut NoHa at West 119th Street) completely redeveloped the mid-block and was also facilitated by the FDB rezoning.



Vacant site, at West 118th Street and Frederick Douglass Blvd, would be rezoned from R7-2 to R8A to enhance its development potential



The Triangle Building, Frederick Douglass Blvd. and St. Nicholas Ave. (photo courtesy of HPD)



Vacant site, at West 118th Street and Frederick Douglass Blvd, would be rezoned from R7-2 to R8A to enhance its development potential



The rezoning proposal would preserve areas with strong built contexts like this block on Morningside Ave between West 122nd and West 123rd streets

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EXISTING ZONING

Most of the rezoning area is within an R7-2 district, which allows a maximum floor area ratio (*FAR*) of 3.44 for residential uses and 6.5 for community facility uses such as schools, hospitals and houses of worship. On wide streets (75 feet or greater in width), residential buildings developed under the [Quality Housing program](#) are allowed up to 4.0 FAR. R8 districts are mapped opposite Morningside and Central parks and allow residential uses up to 6.02 FAR and community facility uses up to 6.5 FAR. Under the Quality Housing option, on wide streets residential development is permitted up to 7.2 FAR.

Within the rezoning area, a C4-4 general commercial district is mapped on Frederick Douglass Boulevard and St. Nicholas Avenue, between West 122nd and West 124th streets. This district fosters regional shopping activity with a wide range of commercial uses. C4-4, an R7-2 residential equivalent, allows 3.44 FAR for residential uses, 6.5 FAR for community facility uses and 3.4 FAR for commercial uses. One off-street parking space per 1,000 square feet of floor area for most retail uses is required in C4-4 districts, however parking requirements are waived if less than 40 parking spaces are required.

The rezoning area also contains a single block zoned C1-9. The block, bounded by Frederick Douglass Boulevard, Manhattan Avenue, West 110th and West 111th streets is a non-contextual commercial district that allows local retail uses and high-density residential development. In C1-9 districts, commercial development is allowed up to 2.0 FAR and residential and community facility development is allowed up to 10.0 FAR (12 FAR with the inclusionary housing bonus). Residential buildings may be constructed as a tower-on-a-base, which provides street wall continuity along the street line at the building's base. Parking is required for 40 percent of the residential units. The C1-9 district was mapped to facilitate Towers on the Park, a residential development with buildings ranging from 10 to 20 stories.

Neighborhood commercial uses are facilitated by C1-4 and C2-4 commercial overlays. These overlays are on major avenues and wide cross streets. As local service districts, C2-4 overlays allow a wider range of commercial uses than those allowed in C1-4 districts. Both C1-4 and C2-4 districts require one parking space per 1,000 square feet of commercial use, which can be waived if less than 40 parking spaces are required.

Existing Zoning



View a [full size graphic](#)

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Existing Zoning Map



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PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES AFFECTING BULK

Proposed Zoning



View a [full size graphic](#)

To provide a comprehensive and balanced zoning strategy, the Department proposes the following zoning changes to better regulate the bulk FAR, height and street walls of new buildings in south-central Harlem and to encourage additional retail stores along West 116th Street.

- **R8A** is proposed along Frederick Douglass Boulevard, Morningside Avenue, West 111th Street and along Central Park North. The proposed rezoning action would increase the permitted residential density along Frederick Douglass Boulevard, from 3.44 to 6.02 FAR. Recognizing that Frederick Douglass Boulevard forms a major north-south spine in Central Harlem, with IND subway stations at 110th, 116th and 125th streets, and that it has several potential development sites, the Department believes that a modest increase in density with a required contextual envelope would be appropriate on the boulevard.

On Morningside Avenue, West 111th Street and Central Park North, the 6.0 FAR allowed under R8A is the same as that allowed under the existing R8 zoning (without using the Quality Housing option, which allows residential development up to 7.2 FAR). Along these streets, the built form is generally typified by high lot coverage residential buildings that range up to 6.0 FAR. For Morningside Avenue, West 111th Street and Central Park North, the proposed R8A district would provide a better match between the existing land use and underlying zoning, and ensure that future development would be more compatible with the built context.

- **C4-4D**, a new zoning district, is proposed to replace the existing C4-4 district along Frederick Douglass Boulevard, St. Nicholas Avenue, and West 122nd and West 124th streets. The proposed C4-4D district would increase permitted residential densities on Frederick Douglass Boulevard and St. Nicholas Avenue, while retaining the same range of commercial uses currently allowed. C4-4D districts allow residential uses up to 6.02 FAR, community facilities up to 6.5 FAR and commercial uses up to 3.4 FAR. Further, as an R8A-equivalent zone, C4-4D would limit building heights to 120 feet and street wall heights to 60 to 85 feet.

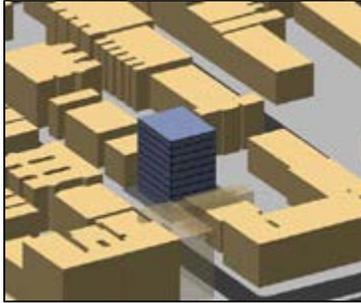
- **R7A** is proposed to replace existing R7-2 zoning along Manhattan Avenue, St. Nicholas Avenue between West 116th and West 120th streets and for most mid-blocks. The 4.0 FAR allowed under R7A is the same as is currently allowed on Manhattan Avenue under the Quality Housing option (i.e., 4.0 FAR).

The mid-blocks proposed for R7A are characterized by four- and five-story residential buildings interspersed with vacant or underdeveloped sites that are appropriate locations for future residential construction. R7A regulations encourage residential buildings consistent with the scale of neighboring buildings. Along the mid-blocks, existing zoning allows residential uses at 3.4 FAR and community facility uses at 6.5 FAR. The proposed R7A district would limit both residential and community facility uses to 4.0 FAR

- **R7B** is proposed for an area generally bounded by Manhattan Avenue, West 120th and West 123rd streets, and a point 100 feet east of Morningside Avenue. The area R7B is characterized by three-story rowhouses and brownstones. The Department recommends R7B districts in these areas to preserve the existing context. The typical building form produced in R7B districts is consistent with the low-rise nature of these areas and ensures that any future developments will maintain heights, street wall and densities that typify neighboring rowhouses.

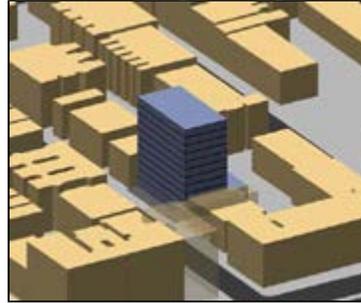
Prototypical Bulk Envelopes for Midblocks under Existing (R7-2) and Proposed (R7A) Zoning

**Existing
R7-2 Height Factor Building**



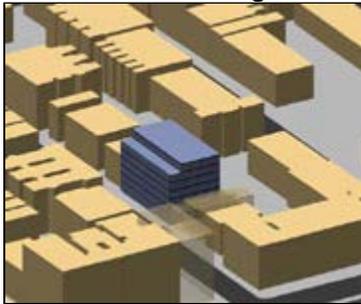
Max FAR: 3.44 (3.22 as built)
Streetwall Height: no limit
Max Building Height: no limit

**Existing
R7-2 Community Facility Building**



Max FAR: 6.5
Streetwall Height: no limit
Max Building Height: no limit

**Proposed
R7A Building**



Max FAR: 4.0
Streetwall Height: 40-65 ft.
Max Building Height: 80 ft.

Prototypical Bulk Envelopes for Avenues under Existing (R7-2) and Proposed (R8A) Zoning*

**Existing
R7-2 Height Factor Building**



Max FAR: 3.44
Streetwall Height: no limit
Max Building Height: no limit

**Existing
R7-2 Community Facility Building**



Max FAR: 6.5
Streetwall Height: no limit
Max Building Height: no limit

**Proposed
R8A Building**



Max FAR: 6.02

Streetwall Height: 60-85 ft.

Max Building Height: 120 ft.

***The proposed C4-4D district has the same bulk envelope as the R8A district.**

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PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES AFFECTING USE

C1-4 Commercial Overlay

A new C1-4 commercial overlay is proposed to be mapped on both sides of the West 116th Street mid-block between Manhattan and Morningside avenues within the proposed R7A district. The proposed C1-4 commercial overlay would bring existing ground floor commercial uses into conformance with zoning and would foster new ground floor commercial uses to serve the neighborhood. The Department estimates that the proposed commercial overlays could result in a net gain of 13,447 square feet of ground floor commercial space on West 116th Street.

Ground floor retail uses would be allowed up to 1.0 FAR in mixed residential/commercial buildings. Buildings without residential uses would be allowed 2.0 FAR of commercial uses. New developments would be subject to the density and bulk requirements of the proposed underlying R7A district.



West 116th Street between Frederick Douglass Boulevard and Manhattan Avenue would be rezoned to allow neighborhood commercial uses.

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SUMMARY of PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

Residential Districts

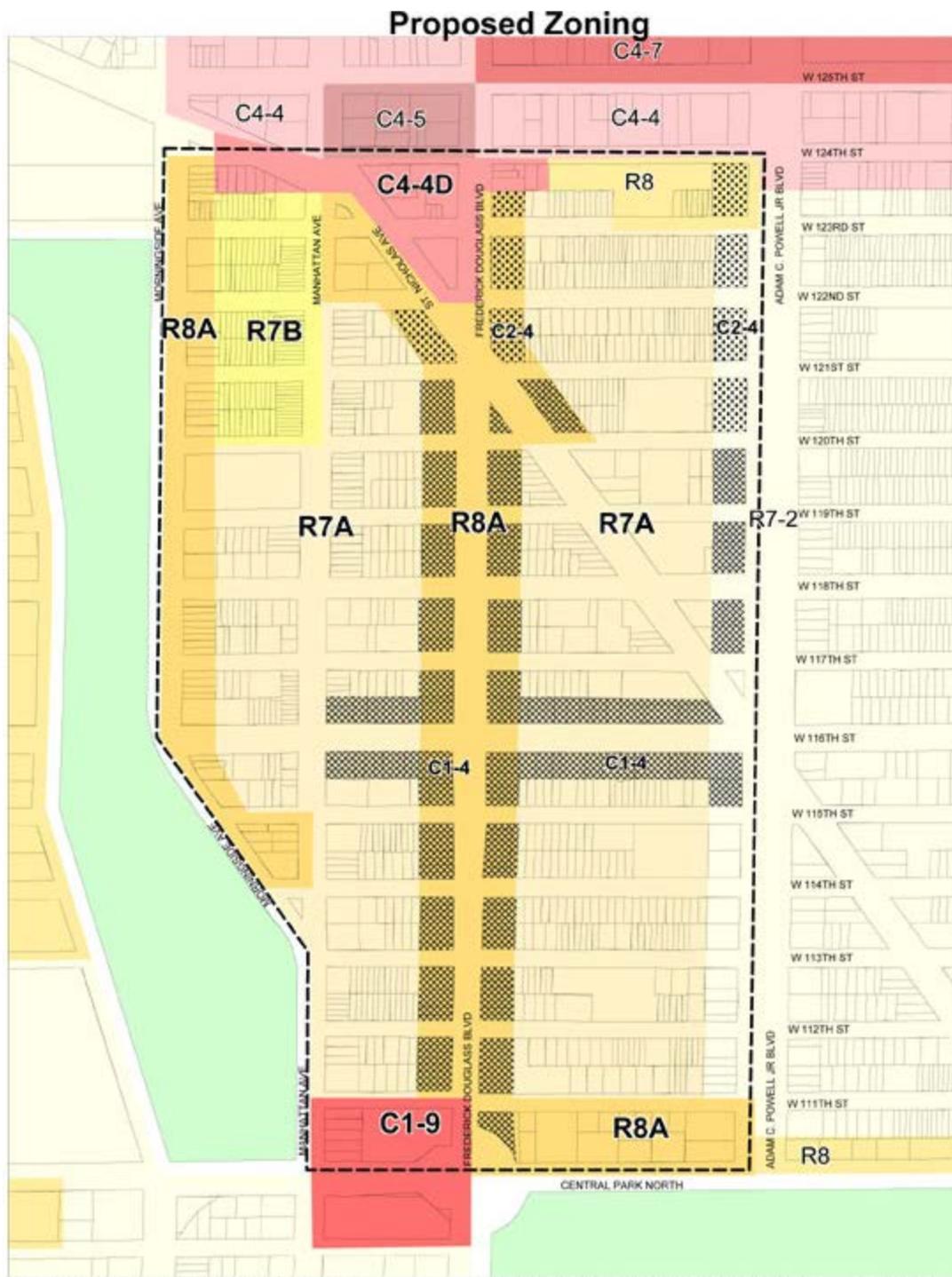
	Existing District		Proposed Districts		
	R7-2	R8	R8A	R7A	R7B
Permitted uses	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility
Maximum FAR	3.44 for residential uses, 6.5 for community facility uses Optional Quality Housing Program: allows 3.44 on narrow streets or 4.0 on wide streets	6.02 for residential uses, 6.5 for community facility uses Optional Quality Housing allows 6.02 on narrow streets or 7.2 on wide streets	6.02 for residential and 6.5 for community facility	4.0 for all uses	3.0 for all uses
Minimum street wall	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 40 feet on both narrow and wide streets	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 60 feet on both narrow and wide streets	60 feet	40 feet	40 feet
Maximum street wall	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 60 feet on narrow streets or 65 feet on wide streets	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 85 feet on both narrow streets and wide streets	85 feet	65 feet	60 feet
Maximum building height	No height limit Optional Quality Housing allows 75 feet on narrow streets or 80 feet on wide streets	No height limit Optional Quality Housing allows 120 feet on both narrow streets and wide streets	120 feet	80 feet	75 feet

Commercial Districts

Existing Districts					Proposed District
	C1-4 Overlay	C2-4 Overlay	C4-4	C1-9	C4-4D
Zoning Resolution description	Local retail	Local service	General commercial	Local service	General commercial
Use groups	1-4; 6	1-9	1-6; 8-10; 12	1-6	1-6; 8-10; 12
Maximum FAR	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	3.44 for residential, 6.5 for community facility, and 3.4 for commercial uses	10 FAR for Residential and Comm. Fac. Use 2 .0 FAR for Comm Use	6.02 for residential, 6.5 for community facility and 3.4 for commercial
Minimum street wall	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 40 feet on wide streets	No street wall required	60 feet
Maximum street wall	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 65 feet on wide streets	None required	85 feet
Maximum building height	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	No height limit Optional Quality Housing allows 80 feet on wide streets	None required	120 feet
Off-street retail and office parking requirement	1 per 1,000 sq. ft. of floor area	1 per 1,000 sq. ft. of floor area	1 per 1,000 sq. ft. of floor area	40 percent of dwelling units None required for retail uses	40 percent of dwelling units None required for retail uses

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Proposed Zoning Map



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PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

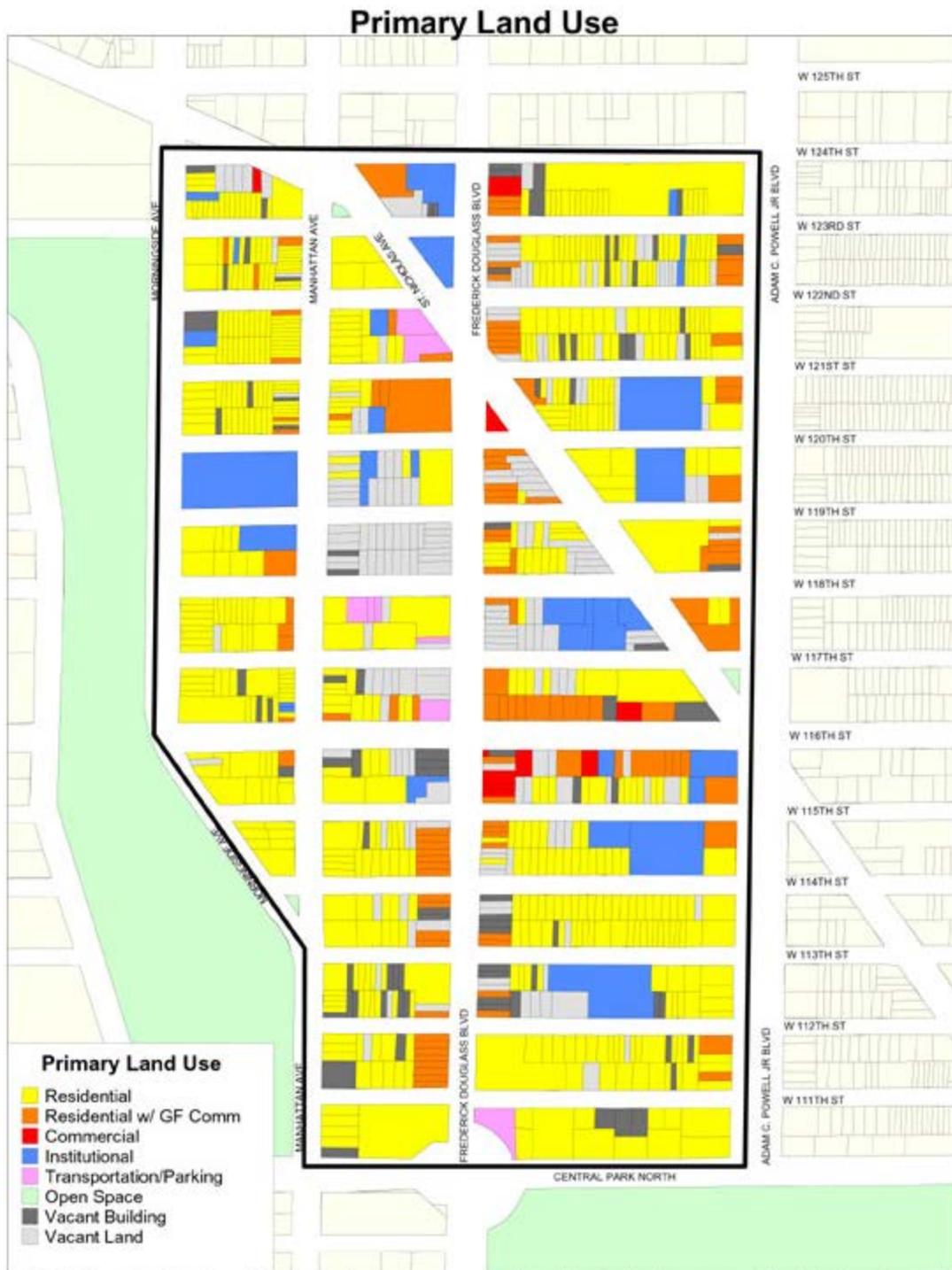
On April 21, 2003, the Department of City Planning certified the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application (C 030436 ZMM) for the proposed zoning map amendment.

On June 4, 2003, Community Board 10, by a vote of 35 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions, adopted a resolution to approve the application. On June 19, 2003, Community Board 9, by a vote of 34 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions also adopted a resolution to approve the application. On July 17, 2003, the Manhattan Borough President and Manhattan Borough Board recommended unconditional approval of the proposal. The City Planning Commission held a public hearing on August 13, 2003 and on September 10, 2003, unanimously approved the rezoning proposal ([read the CPC Report](#)). The City Council adopted the proposal on November 6, 2003, which is now in effect.

For more information on the Frederick Douglass Boulevard rezoning, contact the Manhattan Office of the Department of City Planning at (212) 720-3480.

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LAND USE MAP



Related Notes

-  Items accompanied by this symbol require the [free Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).
- Brief explanations of terms in *green italics* can be viewed by [visiting glossary page](#). Words and phrases followed by an asterisk (*) are defined terms in the Zoning Resolution, primarily in Section 12-10. Consult the Zoning Resolution for the official and legally binding definitions of these words and phrases.