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**PUBLIC REVIEW BEGINS ON CITY PLANNING PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE ZONING PROTECTIONS FOR NEARLY 200 BLOCKS OF FLATBUSH BROOKLYN**

*Proposal Would Protect Neighborhood's Renowned Victorian Homes,  
Establish Height Limits and Incentivize Affordable Housing*

March 2, 2009 – City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden announced the beginning of public review today for a rezoning of 180 blocks of Flatbush, Brooklyn. The proposal, developed over a three year period in close consultation with Community Board 14, community members, local elected officials and neighborhood civic associations, would protect the diversity of scale and character of the area's Victorian homes, row houses and apartment buildings by updating zoning to reflect the existing built character. The comprehensive community-based proposal furthers the Bloomberg Administration's sustainable planning goals by rezoning to protect one of the city's special lower-density neighborhoods while also providing opportunities for modest growth and permanently affordable housing along wide corridors well served by mass transit.

"Flatbush is one of the city's most architecturally diverse and breathtakingly beautiful residential neighborhoods. Working closely with the community we have developed a comprehensive plan that respects and reinforces the distinctive qualities of this varied neighborhood. The historic 20th century Victorian architecture, generous lawns and mature trees as well as the diversity of its apartment building and active retail character are what make this area so special," said Commissioner Amanda M. Burden. "Mayor Bloomberg's strategy to protect the city's lower-density neighborhoods while providing opportunities for new and affordable housing is exemplified by this comprehensive proposal."

The proposed rezoning area is generally bounded by Caton Avenue, Parkside Avenue and Clarkson Avenue on the north, Bedford Avenue and the Community District 14 boundary to the east, Avenue H, Campus Road and the Long Island Railroad's Bay Ridge rail line on the south, and Coney Island Avenue on the west. The existing built conditions in the neighborhood range from freestanding one- and two- family Victorian homes on large lots to apartment buildings from 4 to 8 stories along Ocean Avenue, Flatbush Avenue and Coney Island Avenue.

Under the current zoning, construction of apartment buildings or row houses are permitted in these low-rise one- and two-family detached residential neighborhoods. Out-of-scale apartment buildings constructed within these districts are inconsistent with the typical built character in Flatbush.

Initiated in response to community request and developed over three years and numerous community meetings, City Planning's proposal seeks to:

- Match new zoning to preserve the established built character of the neighborhood's lower-density freestanding one- and two-family homes, including 80 blocks of the celebrated early-twentieth century Victorian homes. Lower density contextual zoning districts (R1-2, R3X and R4A) would replace the existing zoning that permits row houses and apartment buildings with zoning designations that would limit future development to detached housing.
- Protect the neighborhood's unique row houses that are dispersed throughout the rezoning area. Medium-density districts would be mapped (R5B, R5D and R6B) generally east of Flatbush Avenue and along Avenue H. Heights would be capped at 33 feet, 40 feet and 50 feet respectively.
- Reinforce the mid-rise apartment building corridors along Ocean, Church, Coney Island and Flatbush Avenues while providing opportunities for appropriately scaled new developments on vacant and underutilized properties. New zoning (R6A, R7A) would allow for apartment buildings with heights ranging from 7 to 8 stories.
- Provide opportunities for residential growth and incentives for affordable housing along areas well served by mass transit. These include: Flatbush, Church, Nostrand, Newkirk, and Coney Island Avenues. The proposal would map C4-4A and R7A districts spurring affordable housing units through the City's [inclusionary housing program](#). Contextual height limits (80 feet) would apply to all new developments. Under the Inclusionary housing program, developers are only able to build the maximum allowable residential floor area if they provide permanently affordable housing. Approximately 1,800 permanently affordable units are either in construction or recently completed under the inclusionary housing program since its establishment in 2005. Tax abatements and public financing provide an added incentive for use of the inclusionary program. In addition, a city-wide zoning text recently entered public review that introduces a brand new affordable home ownership option for

inclusionary zoning. Previously, only affordable rentals were created through this program.

- Strengthen the established commercial corridors of Church and Flatbush Avenues and at “The Junction” of Flatbush and Nostrand Avenues by rezoning to a medium density commercial district (C4-4A). Mixed use buildings with stores on the ground floor and apartments above would be allowed with heights capped at eight stories.

The community board now has 60 days to review the proposal, after which it will go to the Borough President, the City Planning Commission and the City Council as part of the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). For specifics of the [zoning proposal](#) or more details on the [ULURP timeline](#), please visit the DCP website.

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### **Department of City Planning**

The Department of City Planning is responsible for the City's physical and socioeconomic planning, including land use and environmental review; preparation of plans and policies; and provision of technical assistance and planning information to government agencies, public officials, and community boards.