

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Public Affairs Officer: (212) 720-3471

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING CERTIFIES
PROPOSAL TO REZONE MORRISANIA IN THE BRONX

March 11, 2003, New York, NY - Department of City Planning Director Amanda M. Burden announced that the Department of City Planning certified its Morrisania Area Rezoning proposal, which encompasses 13 blocks located in the southern portion of Community District #3 in the Bronx. The proposal is a positive step towards advancing the administration's efforts to increase housing supply in New York City by rezoning underutilized manufacturing land for new housing development. The area is currently zoned primarily for light manufacturing uses and the proposed mixed-use district would encourage new residential development and economic development opportunities in this area which has experienced disinvestment in past decades.

Amanda M. Burden, Director of the Department of City Planning said, "In December, the Mayor announced his plan for New York City's 21st Century Neighborhoods, in which Morrisania was named as one of many communities where a targeted rezoning could catalyze increased housing development and economic vitality. I am pleased to announce the start of the land use review process for one of the rezonings which will help bring to fruition this important policy initiative. Removing barriers to appropriate development will lead to a vibrant future for this promising community."

The rezoning area, which is currently zoned primarily for light manufacturing uses, is bounded generally by East 168th Street to the north, East 163rd Street to the south, Washington Avenue to the west and Third Avenue to the east. The rezoning will allow for the potential development of new housing units and compliments other efforts in revitalizing the Third Avenue Corridor in the South Bronx. The Morrisania neighborhood is located immediately north of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area. The Melrose Urban Renewal Plan calls for the development of over 1,500 low and moderate-income units of housing, commercial/office and community facility space, and new parks and open spaces. Further south along Third Avenue at The HUB, City Planning is working with EDC to realize commercial and residential development on several City owned parcels and propose streetscape and plaza improvements.

Over the past year, the Department has worked with Community Board #3's Land Use committee, local development groups, and the Bronx Borough President on this proposal. All have expressed enthusiastic support for the effort, which complements Community Board #3's 197-a (community based) plan in their primary goals to increase housing production.

In addition to allowing new housing to be built, the rezoning proposal will bring existing residential uses into conformance, stabilize and preserve the existing mixed-use character of the community while continuing to permit a wide variety of commercial and light manufacturing uses. This area contains a large concentration of vacant and underutilized land, including some city-owned parcels, that have remained undeveloped for decades. Recently there has been interest in new residential and commercial development; however the existing M1-1 zoning has been an impediment to new residential development.

The proposal has been referred to Community Board #3 for their review, to be followed by examination by the Bronx Borough President.

About 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.