

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVES COMPREHENSIVE  
GREENPOINT-WILLIAMSBURG PLAN**

*With Additional Affordable Housing, Protections for Industry, Measures to Ensure Maintenance  
of New Open Space and Adjustments to Heights of Buildings Near Historic Area*

March 14, 2005 – City Planning Commission (CPC) Chair Amanda M. Burden announced today that the CPC has voted to approve the Bloomberg Administration's comprehensive plan for Greenpoint and Williamsburg. This far-reaching plan to reclaim Brooklyn's East River waterfront will create 49 acres of new open space and provide opportunities for development of nearly 10,000 units of much-needed housing including approximately 2,300 units of affordable housing for a range of incomes. The plan breaks new ground by permitting an "inclusionary" zoning bonus in medium-density neighborhoods outside Manhattan in exchange for building affordable housing. The Inclusionary Housing Program approved by the CPC, coupled with use of City housing finance programs, and the administration's commitment to developing affordable housing on publicly controlled sites, constitute a powerful strategy for the development and preservation of affordable housing in Greenpoint-Williamsburg. In response to concerns raised by the community and elected officials during the public review process, the CPC modified the original proposal to exclude from the rezoning several blocks with predominantly industrial uses in the upland neighborhoods, reduce permissible building height adjacent to Greenpoint's historic district, and provide for a mechanism to create a body to oversee and maintain new open space created under the plan.

Carefully crafted to reflect the unique mixed-use character of these neighborhoods, the proposal encompasses approximately 175 blocks, including a two-mile stretch of Brooklyn's East River waterfront and adjoining neighborhoods. The proposed rezoning provides opportunities for the development of housing and neighborhood retail, the creation of public parks and waterfront open space, and reconnects what has for too long been a derelict and inaccessible waterfront to the adjacent inland communities. It would establish height limits in inland areas, ensuring that new buildings fit in with their surroundings.

"Today these communities are one step closer to achieving their long-standing desire for access to and along the East River waterfront in largely vacant areas abandoned by manufacturing uses. This comprehensive plan supports the Bloomberg administration's commitment to redeveloping the waterfront for housing, including affordable housing, as well as the Mayor's promise to support industrial firms," said Ms. Burden. "The unique character of the existing inland neighborhoods will be protected by the new zoning."

The rezoning approved by the CPC includes a voluntary Inclusionary Housing program that would allow a floor area bonus for waterfront developments that provide affordable housing in Greenpoint-Williamsburg. Combined with the financial programs included in the Mayor's \$3 billion New Housing Marketplace Plan, this plan would lead to 15-25 percent of new residential units being affordable to low and moderate income households. In upland areas, an Inclusionary Housing bonus encourages the provision of low-income units while maintaining the height limits within these low-scaled neighborhoods. The program also promotes the preservation of existing affordable housing throughout Greenpoint and Williamsburg by allowing developers a bonus in exchange for purchasing existing buildings and maintaining affordable rents. Current residents of the community would be given preference in the lottery to rent or buy at least half of the affordable homes and apartments facilitated by the affordable housing program. Affordability provisions for all units produced or preserved by inclusionary zoning would last in perpetuity. This Inclusionary Housing plan was developed in collaboration with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Housing Development Corporation, as well as housing professionals and advocates. HPD is also planning the development of affordable housing on publicly owned sites in Greenpoint and Williamsburg, where it will be possible to target special needs such as senior housing and reach higher percentages of affordability.

HPD Commissioner Shaun Donovan said, "In response to concerns raised by the City Planning Commission and members of the local community, we have significantly enhanced affordable housing on publicly-owned sites in order to increase the number of overall affordable units in the rezoning area. We are committed to addressing affordable housing needs and believe that these zoning changes, together with the use of public sites and the range of our affordable housing programs, will provide ample opportunities for affordable housing for current and future residents."

In addition to the aggressive Inclusionary Housing program, the CPC approved a measure paving the way for an administrative entity to oversee and coordinate maintenance of waterfront open spaces created through private development. An innovative Waterfront Access Plan (WAP), developed in consultation with the Brooklyn Community Board 1 Rezoning Task Force, would require new developments to provide a waterfront esplanade as well as sidewalks and streets connecting the waterfront to existing neighborhoods.

Under the plan, a new, 28-acre park between North 9th Street and the Bushwick Inlet would provide new recreational opportunities for the residents of Greenpoint and Williamsburg. The plan also embraces NYC2012's Olympic bid plans for beach volleyball and aquatics venues between North 7th and North 14th Streets on the Williamsburg waterfront. The park would encompass the Bayside Fuel site at the Bushwick Inlet, the location of a proposed TransGas power plant. The City continues to vigorously oppose the plant proposal, which is before the State Siting Board, in favor of the proposed waterfront park, which would complement adjacent residential development.

The proposed Greenpoint-Williamsburg rezoning calls for new housing in a variety of forms and heights along the waterfront to provide a compelling skyline, a sensitive transition to the adjoining neighborhoods and a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. The CPC added design controls to prevent waterfront towers from creating a visual barrier to the waterfront. Further inland, the proposal includes a careful mix of zoning districts, which would allow these neighborhoods to grow at a scale consistent with their established character. The rezoning would also enable some 100 illegally converted loft buildings to be brought into compliance with residential safety codes.

In areas currently characterized by a mix of uses, the proposed mixed-use zoning would permit a variety of residential, commercial, and light industrial activity, recognizing that Greenpoint-Williamsburg's vitality is grounded in these patterns. Areas containing concentrations of industrial facilities and jobs, including the Brooklyn Brewery, Acme Smoked Fish, and numerous other local businesses, would remain zoned for manufacturing, prohibiting new residences in these areas. In addition, the Commission approved modifications to the original proposal to retain manufacturing zoning on 13 blocks in Williamsburg, because of a significant concentration of industrial jobs in this area.

The project now goes to the City Council for review, the final step in the city's formal, seven-month public review process known as the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The Council is expected to hold hearings on the plan in April. Please see the DCP web site at [www.nyc.gov/planning](http://www.nyc.gov/planning) for more [details and images of the plan](#) or an explanation of the [ULURP process](#).

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### **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.