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PUBLIC REVIEW BEGINS FOR BOERUM HILL REZONING

Proposal would protect neighborhood character and strengthen retail corridors

March 28, 2011 – City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden today announced the beginning of public review for a 31-block [rezoning in the Boerum Hill](#) neighborhood in Brooklyn. The proposed rezoning would protect neighborhood character by establishing height limits and contextual zoning districts, ensuring that all future development appropriately matches the existing scale of the neighborhood. The proposal also would support the thriving retail and commercial corridors in the area with updated commercial overlays, and prevent commercial uses from intruding on residential blocks. The rezoning proposal was developed at the request of the community and in close consultation with the Boerum Hill Association Community Board 2, and local elected officials.

Commissioner Burden said, "Boerum Hill has many beautiful blocks lined with historic rowhouses dating back to the 1800s. Our rezoning proposal would preserve these unique blocks and protect neighborhood character with new height limits and zoning that matches its built fabric. The proposal will also update commercial overlays on corridors such as Smith Street and Court Street, which have become major shopping and eating destinations not just for Brooklyn residents, but for all New Yorkers. This will give residents and business owners predictability about what can be built in their neighborhood."

Councilmember Stephen Levin said, "I am thrilled that the Boerum Hill rezoning will be certified on Monday. I want to thank City Planning and the Boerum Hill Association for their tireless work to protect Boerum Hill from over-development. Commissioner Burden, along with the Boerum Hill Association's President Howard Kolins and Land Use Expert Dwight Smith, has worked hard to advocate for this essential rezoning. The rezoning will preserve the character of Boerum Hill, a wonderful brownstone neighborhood in the heart of Downtown Brooklyn."

The rezoning area includes all or portions of the blocks bounded by Atlantic Avenue to the north; Fourth Avenue to the east; Warren and Wyckoff streets to the south; and Court Street to the west. Boerum Hill is a predominantly residential neighborhood characterized by three- and four-story rowhouses. Between Smith and Court streets and near Third Avenue are a number of larger four- and five-story multi-family apartment buildings and loft buildings. In addition, the local retail corridors along Smith and Court streets are characterized by three- and four-story mixed use buildings that contain ground floor commercial and community facility uses with apartments above. The proposed rezoning area includes the seven-block Boerum Hill Historic District, and is served by the F and G subway lines, which run underneath Smith Street and stop at the Bergen Street Station in the heart of the study area. The Atlantic Avenue-Pacific Street station, with entrances near the study area at Fourth Avenue and Pacific Street, provides service to nine subway lines and the Long Island Railroad.

Currently, area is predominately zoned R6, which permits construction of tower apartment buildings and has resulted in out-of-scale development. The area between Third and Fourth Avenues in the rezoning area is zoned R7B, which has resulted in buildings larger than the existing rowhouses. The proposal would rezone the area to R6B, R6A and R7A contextual zoning districts in order to protect the character and scale of the neighborhood and establish height limits for the first time:

- The rowhouse zoning district R6B is proposed for the majority of the rezoning area. This establishes a height limit of 40 feet at the street wall, and a maximum of 50 feet after a setback, and a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0. New development in the proposed R6B district would be required to line up with adjacent structures to maintain the existing street wall characteristics.
- Along mixed-use corridors with slightly larger buildings, R6A is proposed. The new zoning would permit an FAR of 3.0 and limit building heights to 60 feet at the streetwall, and 70 feet after a setback. New buildings would be required to line up with the street wall. C2-4 commercial overlays would be mapped in much of the proposed R6A district to promote ground-floor retail.
- R7A is proposed for Third Avenue to allow apartment houses with height limits of 65 feet at the street wall, and a maximum of 80 feet after a setback.

Current commercial overlays do not accurately reflect the commercial uses in the area, and permit commercial development on residential blocks. C1-3 and C2-3 commercial overlays are mapped along Smith Street, Court Street and parts of Pacific Street, Hoyt Street and Boerum Place. While the existing zoning districts are typically mapped to a depth of 150 feet, the proposed C2-4 districts would be mapped to a depth of 100 feet, and 50 feet along Hoyt Street, to protect against the intrusion of commercial uses onto residential streets. New C2-4 commercial overlay districts are proposed to be mapped on the north side of Bergen Street between Smith and Court streets and along 3rd Avenue, in order to reflect the existing commercial and mixed-use character of those streets, and to bring current businesses into conformance. The proposed C2-4 commercial overlay districts have the same 2.0 maximum FAR for commercial use as the existing commercial overlay districts, but allow a slightly broader range of commercial, retail and service uses than are permitted in the existing C1-3 districts.

Community Board 2 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 time line, please visit the [DCP website](#).

Department of City Planning

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