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**PUBLIC REVIEW BEGINS TO BRING ZONING PROTECTIONS TO 128-BLOCKS  
OF SUNSET PARK, BROOKLYN**

April 20, 2009 – City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden today announced the beginning of public review for a rezoning of 128-blocks in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. The proposal developed in response to concerns expressed by Community Board 7 and local elected officials fulfills a commitment made by Mayor Bloomberg when he met with the community in the spring of 2007. Crafted in collaboration with the local community and Council Member Gonzalez, the proposal would protect neighborhood character and help achieve the Bloomberg Administration's Five Borough Economic Opportunity Plan by expanding commercial opportunities and creating incentives for new and affordable housing, where appropriate.

"Mayor Bloomberg and I promised the Sunset Park community that City Planning would work closely with the neighborhood and Council Member Gonzalez to develop a proposal that would protect Sunset Park's established row house character," said Commissioner Burden. "We have met extensively with the community and today's proposal will establish height limits for new development and meet a need for affordable housing."

"I am pleased to have partnered with Community Board 7 in listening to the community's expressed desire for a comprehensive rezoning of Sunset Park. Since we launched this effort a few years ago, I've sponsored workshops to give the community an opportunity to be participants in this process. We are all grateful for the necessary participation provided by organizations like Neighbors Helping Neighbors and the strong involvement of the Asian and Latino community," said Councilwoman Sara M. González. "We are jointly committed to creating and preserving affordable housing and welcoming sensible development while maintaining the unique character of a neighborhood we love so much. I look forward to continued community participation throughout the ULURP process and I will continue my efforts to ensure the community's voice is heard."

The 128 block rezoning area entails three residential areas within the Sunset Park neighborhood. The largest portion, one hundred and fifteen blocks, is generally bounded by Third Avenue to the west, Eighth Avenue on the east, a line between 39th Street and 40th Street to the north, and the Gowanus Expressway to the south. A smaller four-block area in the western portion is generally bounded by 59th Street on the north and 63rd Street on the south. To the north, portions of nine-blocks would be rezoned between 4th and 5th Avenues generally bounded by 29th Street on the north and 38th Street on the south.

The existing built character is characterized by two-to-four story row houses on side streets and larger apartment buildings, some rising five to six stories, along the avenues. Many buildings along Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth avenues, the neighborhood's commercial corridors, also include retail at the ground floor. The area is well served by the N, R, D and M subway lines as well as numerous bus lines.

The current mostly R6 zoning has been in place for over 45-years, with a six-block C4-3 district along Fifth Avenue. R6 is a residential zoning designation with no height limits, resulting in buildings that can reach 12 to 13 stories, a stark contrast to the neighborhood's row house character.

The rezoning proposal would:

- Preserve the row house character of Sunset Park's side streets by introducing a contextual zoning district (R6B) with height limits of 50 feet for over 120 mid-blocks within the rezoning area
- Address and fine-tune some lower density areas with lower-density zoning districts for detached and semi-detached housing
- Maintain the existing streetwall by requiring buildings to line up with adjacent structures
- Establish height limits for all new development. Sixth Avenue and portions of Fifth Avenue would be mapped R6A, resulting in buildings ranging from four to seven stories. Permitted FAR would remain the same (3.0) and residential and community facility uses would continue to be permitted.
- Create opportunities and incentives for the development and preservation of affordable housing through the Bloomberg Administration's successful Inclusionary Housing Program. Well served by transit and appropriate for growth, new development along Fourth and Seventh Avenues would be subject to inclusionary housing regulations and mapped R7A. Heights would be capped at 80 feet. Under the inclusionary housing program, developers are only able to build the maximum allowable floor area if they provide permanently affordable rental housing and will be subject to the same height limits for the respective zoning district. A city-wide zoning text under public review would add a new affordable home ownership option for inclusionary zoning, expanding the options for developers and households seeking affordable housing opportunities. The inclusionary zoning bonus, together with tax abatements and public financing, provides a strong incentive to include affordable housing in new buildings that might otherwise have been built as entirely market rate housing. Since the program's establishment in 2005, approximately 1,800 units of permanently affordable housing are in construction or have been completed, of which more than 850 are in Brooklyn.
- Expand and encourage commercial opportunities. Along Fifth Avenue between 47th and 57th Streets, the proposal would rezone the existing commercial center on Fifth Avenue to a contextual commercial zone, C4-3A and extend the commercial district an additional four blocks. The new zone would allow for more flexibility in the commercial mix of the street as well as commercial uses not only limited to the ground floor, but on the second floor as well. To maintain commercial character, residential uses would only be allowed above these commercial uses. Heights would be capped at 70 feet.
- New commercial overlays are also proposed at specific locations along Seventh Avenue where stores already exist, but where no commercial zoning is present to permit new businesses. In addition, new commercial overlays would be mapped along Fourth Avenue to

create a more cohesive commercial corridor along the entire length of the avenue.

- Adjust the boundaries of commercial overlays on avenues to reflect existing development patterns and preclude commercial intrusions into residential mid-blocks.

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 time line, 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.

#### **About Mayor Bloomberg's Five Borough Economic Opportunity Plan**

The Five Borough Economic Opportunity Plan is a comprehensive strategy to bring New York City through the current economic downturn as fast as possible. It focuses on three major areas: creating jobs for New Yorkers today, implementing a long-term vision for growing the city's economy, and building affordable, attractive neighborhoods in every borough. Taken together, the initiatives that the City has launched to achieve these goals will generate thousands of jobs and put New York City on a path to economic recovery and growth.