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City Planning Initiates Rezoning of Bedford-Stuyvesant to Save Brownstones and Create New Affordable Housing

May 7, 2007 – City Planning Director Amanda M. Burden announced the beginning of public review for the Department's proposed rezoning of over 200 blocks of Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn Community District 3. The rezoning proposal was developed at the request of Community Board 3 to preserve the character of the neighborhood's noted brownstone areas while expanding opportunities and incentives for permanently affordable housing and medium density growth along Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue. The rezoning features two new zoning districts created specifically to produce modest-sized apartment buildings at a scale that would complement the character of these corridors. The City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) will provide financing in conjunction with the proposed inclusionary zoning to facilitate the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

"Bedford-Stuyvesant is experiencing a renaissance of reinvestment but many new developments are out-of-scale with the neighborhood's character," said Director Burden. "Responding to the community's request, our proposal balances between the need to preserve and protect the neighborhood's scale and character on historic side streets while catalyzing modest residential and commercial growth along Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue. Working closely with HPD, the community and elected officials, we have crafted a proposal that will maximize the potential for permanently affordable housing at a scale that fits the neighborhood."

The rezoning area is generally bounded by Lafayette Avenue and Quincy Street to the north, Classon Avenue to the west, Saratoga Avenue and Broadway to the east, and Atlantic Avenue to the south.

The current zoning in the area has generally remained unchanged since 1961, and has resulted in the construction of new buildings that are inconsistent with the established brownstone character that predominates on many of the blocks. Most of the area is zoned R6 and R5, which permit a range of residential buildings types. The R6 zoning allows apartment towers that can be set back from the street with front yard parking. R5 zoning, although lower in density, also allows front yard parking, curb cuts and deep front yards that are out of character with the street line brownstone buildings. Five blocks along Fulton Street and one block along Atlantic Avenue are zoned C4-3, which permits commercial and residential buildings as well as community facilities. Seventeen blocks along Fulton Street, Nostrand and Atlantic Avenues are zoned M1-1. Several of these blocks are mixed-use, containing residential, commercial and auto-related uses, and vacant land. M1-1 allows light manufacturing industrial uses, but prohibits new residential and some commercial development.

The proposed rezoning would:

- Preserve the established neighborhood scale and character by rezoning approximately 160 blocks with contextual zoning districts (R5B, R6B, R6A, R7D and C4-5D) with height limits and street wall line up requirements throughout the rezoning area
- Facilitate appropriately-scaled and affordable redevelopment of vacant land parcels along Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue by mapping two new zoning designations, R7D and C4-5D
- Promote modest residential growth and provide opportunities and incentives for over 400 affordable housing units in buildings of up to ten stories along Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue through inclusionary zoning in these new zoning districts
- Reinforce Malcolm X Boulevard and Franklin, Bedford, Nostrand, Tompkins and Ralph Avenues as corridors for mid-rise mixed retail and residential buildings and apartment buildings by mapping R6A districts and
- Along Fulton Street, and along Nostrand Avenue between Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue, require active ground floor uses
- Along three blocks of Atlantic Avenue, establish a special mixed use district, M1-1/R7D to preserve and allow for light manufacturing uses and residential development with inclusionary zoning.

The rezoning proposal would apply the Inclusionary Housing zoning to proposed R7D and C4-5D zoning districts, establishing incentives for the creation and preservation of affordable housing in conjunction with new development. Inclusionary Housing zoning enables construction of additional housing in exchange for providing affordable housing. In the R7D and C4-5D districts, the base FAR of 4.2 could be increased to 5.6 FAR in exchange for allocating 20 percent of the floor area in the building to affordable housing units. Contextual height limits for the R7D district, including a maximum street wall height of 60 to 85 feet and a maximum building height of 100 feet after a setback would continue to apply. Affordable units can be provided within the new development or off-site, in new or preserved units, within the same community district or within a half-mile of the bonused development. Available city, state, and federal housing finance programs may be used to finance affordable units. The combination of a zoning bonus with housing programs would establish a powerful incentive for the development and preservation of affordable housing in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

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.

Department of City Planning

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