

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACTS:**

Rachaele Raynoff (City Planning) -- (212) 720-3471

**CITY PLANNING KICKS OFF THIRD AVENUE CORRIDOR REZONING**

*Would Protect Scale and Character of East Village Residential Neighborhood  
And Foster New and Affordable Housing*

May 24, 2010 – City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden today announced the beginning of public review for a rezoning of the Third Avenue Corridor in the East Village which is an outgrowth of the City's 2008 Lower East Side rezoning. The proposal is the result of a collaborative effort with the Department of City Planning, Manhattan Community Board 3, local elected officials, and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, in response to community concerns about recently constructed out-of-scale development. The proposed rezoning, which covers roughly eight blocks from East 9th to East 13th Streets between Third and Fourth Avenues, would establish height limits consistent with the area's neighborhood character, provide incentives for permanently affordable housing along these corridors and reduce the disparity in the current zoning which permits much larger buildings for commercial office buildings, dormitories, and other community facilities in what is mainly a residential district.

Commissioner Burden said, "I am pleased to advance this proposal and continue our constructive relationship with this community and its elected officials. This plan ensures that future development will respect the existing scale and character of this residential community, balancing neighborhood preservation with modest residential growth as well as encouraging the creation or preservation of permanently affordable housing through the Inclusionary Housing Program."

The rezoning area is generally characterized by low- to mid-rise, residential or mixed-use buildings that generally line up at the sidewalk with a strong street wall. There is also a significant institutional presence due to a number of large dormitory buildings, particularly along the east side of Third Avenue. Preservation of the residential character of the neighborhood and establishment of maximum allowable building heights and required street walls were issues of particular concern to the community.

Council Member Rosie Mendez said, "I am thrilled that the Third and Fourth Avenue Corridor is on the verge of being rezoned to cap building heights, encourage affordable housing and eliminate the incentive to build oversized dormitories. The residents of this area, Community Board 3 and I have been advocating for changes like this for the last five years, and we are extremely pleased that City Planning has cooperated with us to preserve the community's character and scale."

The proposed rezoning would replace the existing non-contextual C6-1 zoning district established in 1961 that has no height limits, encourages "tower-in-the-park" buildings set back from the street line and allows for community facility or commercial development at a density that is nearly double than what is allowed for residential development. C6-1 zoning permits residential uses up to a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 3.44, commercial uses up to a maximum 6.0 FAR and community facility uses up to a maximum 6.5 FAR.

The proposed contextual C6-2A zoning designation would cap the height of new residential developments at 120 feet and require continuous street walls with base heights between 60 and 85 feet, after which the building could rise to 120 feet, with a setback. These controls would help ensure that new development throughout the rezoning area would relate to the existing scale and character found in the surrounding neighborhood. The street wall requirement for buildings to line up at the street line provides for "eyes on the street" in keeping with the neighborhood's traditional built character.

As part of the City's ongoing effort to provide new and affordable housing opportunities, the proposed Third Avenue Corridor Rezoning would utilize the City's [Inclusionary Housing Program](#). The program combines a zoning floor area bonus with a variety of housing subsidy programs to create powerful incentives for the development and preservation of affordable housing. Under this program buildings can only achieve the maximum allowable density if they provide 20 percent of their floor area for permanently affordable housing, subject to the 120 foot overall height limit and the height and setback provisions of the underlying zoning district.

The C6-2A zoning specifies that sites not providing any affordable housing would be permitted a maximum 5.4 FAR for residential uses. The Inclusionary Housing Program would allow a maximum 7.2 FAR for residential uses, as long as 20 percent of residential floor area is provided for housing units affordable to households at or below 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI). Community facility uses would be permitted a maximum of 6.5 FAR, and commercial uses would be permitted a maximum of 6.0 FAR.

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](#).

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### **Department of City Planning**

The Department of City Planning (DCP) promotes strategic growth and development in the City, in part, by initiating comprehensive, consensus-based planning and zoning changes for individual neighborhoods and business districts. It supports the City Planning Commission and each year reviews more than 500 land use applications for actions such as zoning changes and disposition of City property. The Department assists both government agencies and the public by providing policy analysis and technical assistance relating to housing, transportation, community facilities, demography and public space.