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**CITY PLANNING LAUNCHES PUBLIC REVIEW OF EAST ELMHURST REZONING**

June 3, 2013 – City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden today announced the beginning of the official public review process for a 127-block rezoning of East Elmhurst, Queens, as well as 14 block fronts along Roosevelt Avenue in the nearby neighborhood of Corona. The proposal will protect the existing character of East Elmhurst's residential blocks, which are predominantly developed with one- and two-family detached, semi-detached, and attached homes. It will also update commercial overlays to strengthen the area's main commercial corridors, better reflect current land use trends and inhibit commercial encroachment onto residential side streets. The proposed rezoning was undertaken in response to concerns raised by Community Boards 3 and 4, local civic organizations and local elected officials that existing zoning lacks parity with established residential building patterns and does not guide development to appropriate locations.

Commissioner Burden said, "This rezoning, which was developed in close consultation with the community and local elected officials, will protect the cherished one- and two-family composition of this neighborhood. It will also allow moderate growth along the area's main commercial strips, Astoria Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue, to strengthen their vibrant character by providing new opportunities for mixed-use and commercial development."

"The public review of East Elmhurst rezoning could not come at a better time. For several years, I have been diligently working with City Planning and community stakeholders to right zone East Elmhurst," Council Member Julissa Ferreras said. "Not only will the latest version of the proposed rezoning go a long way in preserving the neighborhood character, but it will also help to reinforce the work I have been doing to better the commercial corridors in my district, such as Roosevelt Avenue and Astoria Boulevard. I applaud City Planning for launching this public review and look forward to our continued collaboration with Community Boards 3 and 4 to fulfill the community vision my constituents and I have shared since I took office in 2009."

The rezoning area is generally bounded by the Grand Central Parkway on the north and east, 32nd Avenue on the south and on the west by a stepped northward line beginning at 91st Street and 32nd Avenue to where it intersects with the Grand Central Parkway at 80th Street. The commercial overlay changes along the south side of Roosevelt Avenue extend from Elmhurst Avenue on the west to 114th Street on the east. These rezoning areas adjoin the more than 120 blocks of North Corona that City Planning worked with area stakeholders to rezone in 2003 and again in 2009.

Most of the area's existing residential zoning (R3-2, R4) has remained largely unchanged since 1961 and allows an unpredictably wide range of building types that may not be compatible with the traditional built fabric of East Elmhurst. Although most of East Elmhurst's housing stock is less than one hundred years old, recent building trends in the area have resulted in the demolition of single-family detached wooden or masonry residential buildings and their replacement by substantially denser and out-of-character attached or multi-family development.

Additionally, the existing zoning for East Elmhurst's primary commercial corridor, Astoria Boulevard, does not support development opportunities along this 130-foot wide thoroughfare for new mixed-use residential and commercial buildings that could strengthen its character. Existing commercial overlay zoning districts (CI-2, C2-2) do not closely reflect current land use patterns, and most existing commercial overlays are mapped to a depth of 150 feet allowing commercial intrusion onto residential streets.

The proposed zoning districts will replace outdated residential zoning with lower-density contextual districts (R2A, R3-1, R3A, R3X, R4-1 and R4B) that will more strongly correlate with existing one- and two-family housing patterns and ensure that future development will be consistent with the established lower-density residential composition. An R6B district is proposed for Astoria Boulevard, the area's main east-west thoroughfare, along with new CI-3 and C2-3 commercial overlay zones, that will allow moderate density, mixed-use development that will reinforce its street-wall continuity and strengthen its neighborhood 'shopping street' character. New C1-4 and C2-4 overlays proposed on the south side of Roosevelt Avenue between Elmhurst Avenue and 114th Street will more closely reflect current land uses and provide additional locations for retail and service uses along this well-established shopping street. By in large, these updates to commercial overlays will bolster the area's shopping streets, ensure that future commercial uses more closely match existing land use patterns, and prevent encroachment of commercial uses onto residential side streets.

The proposed rezoning will now be reviewed by Queens Community Boards 3 and 4 and the borough board, 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, transit-oriented development, and sustainable communities in the City, in part by initiating comprehensive, consensus-based planning and zoning changes for individual neighborhoods and business districts, as well as establishing policies and zoning regulations applicable citywide. 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, waterfront and public space.