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June 18th, 2007

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**CITY PLANNING BEGINS PUBLIC REVIEW FOR REZONING OF
FOREST HILLS SOUTH, QUEENS**

June 18, 2007 - City Planning Director Amanda M. Burden officially launched the public review process today for a proposed rezoning to protect the character of over 40 blocks in the southern portion of the Queens neighborhood of Forest Hills. The rezoning was undertaken at the request of Council Member Melinda Katz and was crafted in close consultation with Council Member Katz, the Forest Hills Community and Civic Association and Community Board 6. The Forest Hills South rezoning will prevent out-of-character development and more closely reflect the established building types and occupancy by utilizing contextual zoning designations and preventing commercial uses from encroaching on residential block fronts near Metropolitan Avenue. The current rezoning proposal builds upon a contextual rezoning for more than 50 blocks of Forest Hills that was completed in September 2002.

"Since 2002, the Bloomberg Administration has worked throughout Queens to protect the character of our lower density neighborhoods and channel growth appropriately and sustainably" said Ms. Burden. "Council Member Katz has been a tireless advocate and partner in our endeavor and in Queens alone, this ongoing effort has resulted in the successful passage of 23 rezonings in the borough covering nearly 2500 blocks. The proposal to update the zoning for Forest Hills South will give predictability to future development in the neighborhood, and protect its built character from the anomalous construction the existing zoning permits."

"This rezoning goes a long way to preserve and protect the built character of the area" said Council Member Katz. "I would like to thank the Department of City Planning and the Forest Hills Community & Civic Association for their efforts."

The proposed rezoning area is bounded by Union Turnpike to the south and east, 69th Avenue to the west and Kessel Street to the north. The area is currently zoned R3-2 with C1-2 and C2-2 commercial overlays along Metropolitan Avenue. The zoning has generally remained unchanged since 1961 and does not closely reflect the current one- and two-family built environment. R3-2 zoning permits multi-family apartment houses, one- and two-family detached and semi-detached houses and low-rise row houses. The current commercial overlays are mapped at a depth of 150 feet and permit a wide range of commercial uses including grocery stores, restaurants and funeral homes.

The proposal would rezone R3-2 to R3A, R3X and R3-1 in order to prevent out-of-character development and more closely reflect established building types with one- and two-family occupancy, each of the recommended new zones would limit development to either detached structures in R3A and R3X districts, or detached and semi-detached structures in R3-1. Building occupancy in all of the new zones would be limited to no more than two families. Commercial overlays would be modified in depth from 150 to 100 feet to prevent commercial uses from encroaching on residential block fronts near Metropolitan Avenue and allowable commercial uses would remain the same.

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

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.