

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Rachaele Raynoff, Press Secretary -- (212) 720-3471

EDITH HSU-CHEN NAMED NEW CITY PLANNING MANHATTAN OFFICE DIRECTOR

September 12, 2008 – City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden announced today that Edith Hsu-Chen has been appointed as Director of City Planning's Manhattan Office, effective immediately. Hsu-Chen, Deputy Director of the Manhattan office since 2003, has advanced a vast array of public and private land use, zoning, urban design, and development projects throughout the borough. These include major office developments such as the Bear Stearns/JP Morgan and the Bank of America headquarters, both in midtown, cultural projects, including the MoMA expansion and the recent Whitney Museum proposal for the West Village, and significant residential developments, including the Portzamparc-designed project on Park Avenue South. Hsu-Chen is currently overseeing a number of Department initiatives in Manhattan, including the 111-block rezoning for the East Village-Lower East Side, and the implementation of the Hudson Yards project.

Commissioner Burden said, "Edith Hsu-Chen is uniquely qualified to ensure the success of the Bloomberg administration's goals for economic development, new and affordable housing, and neighborhood preservation in Manhattan. Ms. Hsu-Chen's record of accomplishment, knowledge of the borough, sensitivity to the attributes of its unique neighborhoods, mastery of planning and zoning tools and enthusiasm for great architecture and urban design will be valuable assets as she shepherds City Planning's review of numerous major projects on the horizon. She inspires confidence and trust as she engages the public, elected officials as well as the development community in building consensus for the future of our neighborhoods."

As Director of the Manhattan office, Hsu-Chen will be responsible for guiding housing and economic development and fostering the orderly growth of the borough's neighborhoods, business districts and major institutions. She will also advise the Chair and members of the City Planning Commission on planning, land use, and urban design issues, manage the borough office staff and act as primary liaison to a wide range of stakeholders including elected officials, community organizations and private sector entities on matters of land use, zoning and economic development in the borough.

She will lead the agency's zoning studies of West Harlem, Northern Tribeca and West Clinton, oversee implementation of major initiatives, including the West Chelsea and the East River Waterfront and guide the review of numerous private applications anticipated in the coming months, including the development of the Eastern and Western Railyards, the Riverside South project, and the St. Vincents Hospital replacement.

Ms. Hsu-Chen emigrated from Taiwan at an early age and has lived in numerous large cities around the world which contributed to her interest in planning the physical form of cities. She received her master's degree in urban planning from Harvard University Graduate School of Design and bachelor's degree in Design of the Environment from the University of Pennsylvania. She joined City Planning in 1997. She has taught courses in urban planning at Harvard, Columbia and lectured at Queens College. More information on some of the projects Hsu-Chen will oversee is available at www.nyc.gov/planning.

Hsu-Chen succeeds Ray Gastil, who returned to his native Seattle, Washington to lead its planning department.

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.