

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 1, 2003

**CONTACT:** Rachaele Raynoff, Press Secretary -- (212) 720-3471

**CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT'S ZONING PROTECTION AGAINST OVER-DEVELOPMENT ON CITY ISLAND IS APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL**

October 1, 2003, New York, NY – The Department of City Planning's rezoning plan for City Island, designed to preserve City Island's neighborhood character and enhance access to the waterfront, has been approved unanimously by the City Council, Department of City Planning (DCP) Director Amanda M. Burden announced. The eagerly awaited plan, approved last month by the City Planning Commission, would preserve City Island's low-rise/low-density character, maintain the "village" quality of City Island Avenue's shopping district, and enhance community access to the waterfront. Together with the Mayor's commitment to replace the overburdened bridge to City Island, the rezoning exemplifies the Bloomberg administration's record of coordinated action on issues of neighborhood preservation.

"City Island is one of New York's treasures. The rezoning the Planning Commission has approved today polishes this gem, preserving its unique village character for future generations to live in, to visit and to enjoy," said Ms. Burden. "As part of the mayor's overall strategy to protect distinctive neighborhoods, this plan will ensure that future development will be in keeping with the character that distinguishes City Island, and that access to its precious waterfront will be enhanced."

The narrow, mile-and-a-half long island, connected by bridge to the eastern shore of The Bronx in Community Board 10, is a residential haven of mostly one- and two-family detached homes, dotted with marinas and boat yards and popular seafood restaurants. A building boom on the Island has resulted in construction of new attached multifamily housing in place of its traditional detached houses.

To ensure that new development is in keeping with the existing built context, the Department's plan would rezone most of the existing R3-2 area on City Island to R3A, a district permitting only one- and two-family detached houses. A two-block area that is characterized by single-family suburban-style homes on large lots would be downzoned to R2.

Ms. Burden noted that contextual zoning is a powerful planning tool requiring that new development relate to the height, density and form of existing structures. This type of zoning is being employed to preserve the look and feel of City Island, and it has been effective in ensuring appropriate development in other neighborhoods with unique character throughout the city.

Additional requirements under the rezoning would require creation of publicly accessible waterfront sitting area in future large residential developments, a particular benefit for the many Island residents who do not live on the waterfront.

The City plan also calls for prohibiting commercial uses in areas which are primarily residential and strengthening the village core shopping district by facilitating mixed-use buildings with ground-floor commercial uses and one or two floors of residences above. Urban design regulations governing landscaping and screening of parking lots are also a part of the plan to enhance the look and feel of the Island.

The Bronx Borough President, after unanimous approval by Bronx Community Board 10, had previously approved the Department's rezoning plan for City Island.

The department's web site has [details and diagrams of the rezoning plan](#), [pictures of existing City Island](#) and a summary of City Planning's 2001 City Island Maritime Heritage Preservation Report.

---

**About 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.