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CITY PLANNING BEGINS PUBLIC REVIEW OF PLAN TO PRESERVE CHARACTER OF 350 BLOCKS OF BAYSIDE, QUEENS

New zoning tool to curb oversized houses

November 1, 2004 – The Department of City Planning (DCP) today initiated public review of a proposal to preserve the suburban neighborhood character of a 350-block area of Bayside, Queens, DCP Director Amanda M. Burden announced. This is the largest such initiative to date in Queens and is designed to reinforce Bayside's primarily detached and semi-detached housing patterns, and prevent unusually large single family homes referred to as "McMansions" and other out-of-character development. A new zoning designation - R2A - will be created and mapped for the first time in a portion of Bayside. This new single-family zone will establish new floor area definitions, require lower building wall heights and provide sloping roof guidelines to ensure that new homes will more closely complement the scale of existing homes on typical single-family lots.

"We are proud to have worked with this remarkably involved community and its elected officials to create new zoning tools that address the challenges of out-of-character development in Bayside," said Ms. Burden. "Not only are we proposing lower density contextual zoning to prevent multi-family homes from replacing the area's primarily one and two family character, we are also ensuring that future single family homes complement the character of their neighbors. This is entirely in keeping with the Bloomberg administration's commitment to preserve the special qualities that have made the City's lower density suburban style neighborhoods so attractive."

Council Member Tony Avella said, "The Bayside rezoning package is a huge step forward in addressing overdevelopment in Bayside. I am pleased to have jump started this process. The Bloomberg administration and the Department of City Planning are to be commended for working expeditiously to develop this initiative. It is our combined hope that much of what we do in Bayside can be applied to other residential neighborhoods."

The area to be rezoned is in Queens Community Board 11 bordering Little Neck Bay and is bounded by 26th, 24th and 34th Avenues to the north, the Cross Island Parkway to the east, Francis Lewis Boulevard and the Clearview Expressway and 207th Street to the west, and 48th Avenue and the Long Island Expressway to the south. Recent development trends in the area have produced new attached and semi-detached buildings replacing single-family detached houses as well as over-scaled new single-family houses that do not match the character of surrounding buildings. These changes in the area's character prompted requests from the local community board and elected officials, including Councilmember Tony Avella and State Senator Padavan, for DCP to study the area. The resulting rezoning proposal will:

- Preserve neighborhood character by reducing the permitted density on 118 neighborhood blocks through the designation of contextual (R1-2, R3A, R3X, R3-1, and R4B) zones that require new construction to more closely match the existing building stock. These contextual districts would replace the general residence districts that permitted a variety of building types; and
- Create a new contextual zoning designation - R2A - that will limit floor area exemptions for garage use to 300 or 500 sq. ft., rather than the entire ground floor. This 220 block zone will provide height limits and guidelines for roofs to slope inward from the sides and ends of every house in order to ensure that new single-family houses will be more in keeping with their surrounding contexts.  [View a descriptive graphic that illustrates the R2A zoning.](#)

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). More details on the [ULURP timeline](#) is available on the DCP website.

More information on the [proposal](#) is available at the Department of City Planning's website.

Reference Maps:



[View Existing Zoning Map](#) [1 mb]



[View Proposed Zoning Map](#) [1.5 mb]

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.