

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CITY PLANNING CERTIFIES BALANCED REZONING PLAN TO PRESERVE CHARACTER OF KEW GARDENS AND RICHMOND HILL COMMUNITIES,
Enable New Housing Development on Avenues and Near Transportation**

November 1, 2004 – City Planning Director Amanda M. Burden announced the start of the formal public review of the Department's rezoning proposal for Richmond Hill and Kew Gardens, Queens that would protect the firmly established character of these neighborhoods and provide for needed housing opportunities along appropriate growth corridors. The fine-grained rezoning proposal would ensure that new development on many residential blocks will more closely match the scale of existing houses and pre-war apartment buildings, while permitting moderately higher density mixed-use development along Jamaica Avenue and wide streets near the Jamaica-Van Wyck subway station.

"In order to ensure that out-of-scale development does not jeopardize the character of these historic neighborhoods, we are proposing new zoning that will protect the essential character of their residential cores, while providing for key corridors of mixed-use development and new housing opportunity in areas where the existing infrastructure can support it," said Ms. Burden. "City Planning is privileged to have worked with local community organizations and Council Member Melinda Katz to fulfill the promise Mayor Bloomberg made to residents of Queens last June to provide for orderly growth and development that will protect the appealing qualities of the borough's neighborhoods."

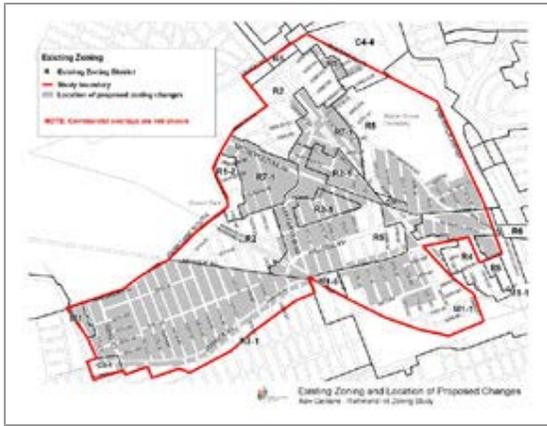
Council Member Katz said, "This rezoning is a great step in assuring that our neighborhoods remain pristine, residential communities. I was proud to work with Community Board 9, the Kew Gardens Civic Association and Commissioner Burden in making this a reality."

The area proposed to be rezoned is 140 blocks within Queens Community District 9. It is bounded by Union Turnpike, Queens Boulevard, Van Wyck Expressway, Jamaica Avenue, 101st Street, and Park Lane South. Much of the development in Kew Gardens and Richmond Hill was spurred by the completion of commuter railway stations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and today the neighborhoods are still renowned for their quiet tree-lined streets, mix of large homes and 1930s apartment buildings, and their convenient transit connections to Manhattan. They continue to attract an increasingly diverse range of households seeking to set down roots in these communities, with more than 44,000 residents in the rezoning area as of the 2000 Census. Community concern that the current zoning encourages development that is not in character with the existing neighborhood prompted the Kew Gardens Civic Association, Richmond Hill Historical Society, and local elected officials to request that the Department of City Planning study the area. The rezoning proposal that has resulted from that study will:

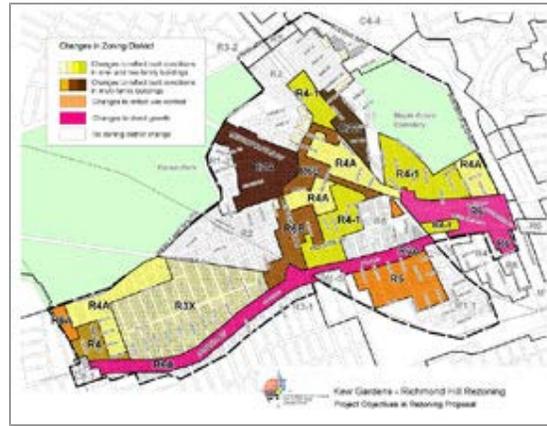
- Reinforce established building patterns and prevent out-of-character development.
- Recognize existing residential development in locations where such development is currently prohibited.
- Foster higher density residential and mixed-use development in appropriate locations near transit.

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.

Reference Maps:



[View Existing Zoning Map \[0.5 mb\]](#)



[View Proposed Zoning Map \[0.8 mb\]](#)

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.