FLUSHING WEST

1st Public Open House Meeting
Thursday, May 21st 2015
Introduction Remarks

Presentation on Neighborhood Planning Study
  - Goals & Opportunities
  - Flushing West Site Context
  - Public Participation & Capital Planning
  - Planning Process Outline

Questions and Answers

Walk through and discussion of area needs and opportunities
WHO WE ARE

The Dept. of City Planning (DCP) is a branch of the City government that serves communities by regulating the types of uses and size of new buildings allowed in residential, commercial, industrial & mixed-use areas through the City’s Zoning Resolution.

Over the past 10 years, the DCP’s Queens Office has completed 40 rezoning initiatives in every part of Queens including Northern Queens CD7 to protect the existing character and encourage balanced new development by working closely with the community board, local civic groups, residents and elected officials. Our current neighborhood planning initiative, Flushing West, is focused on the portion of the downtown near the Flushing Creek waterfront.
• Flushing was settled in the 17th century as a town surrounded by farmland and wetlands

• In the 18th-19th century it developed a vibrant working waterfront

• In 1998, the waterfront area was largely rezoned to allow a mix of residential, commercial and community facility uses.

• In 2003, the NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and DCP worked with Flushing community members to craft the Development Framework for Downtown Flushing with recommendations for improving the waterfront area and guiding future growth.
• Builds upon a long history of planning work in the downtown Flushing area
• Supports the Mayor’s *Housing New York* Ten Year Plan for affordable housing
• Seeks to integrate zoning changes within a neighborhood context in a process that has robust public engagement and strategic capital planning
• Facilitate a community-based planning process to support policy changes that will shape a more livable neighborhood

• Leverage strong real estate market forces to create opportunities for requiring affordable housing

• Encourage walkability by extending the vibrant downtown area to the waterfront, and create opportunities for new open space

• Support the existing and growing immigrant and small business culture by providing economic opportunities

• Align investments in infrastructure and services to support current demands and future growth
Parc Hotel - 2014 (12-story hotel; 15 parking spaces)

One Fulton Square - 2014 (9-story, 168 room Hyatt Hotel; 3-stories with retail, office, medical offices; 12-story condo complex; 300 parking spaces)

Parc Hotel - 2014 (12-story hotel; 15 parking spaces)
Queens Crossing Mall (136-17 39th Ave.): 12 stories retail, food court & office space; 400 valet parking spaces

Ameri East Mini Mall (40-10 Main Street): caters to a variety of Chinese, Korean, Indian & Hispanic customers

New World Mall (136-20 Roosevelt Ave.): 4 stories with 167,000 s.f. of retail space; replaced former Caldor’s; 350 valet parking spaces

Sky View Parc (136-20 Roosevelt Ave.): Opened Nov 2010; market-rate rentals & condos above 3 levels of retail; 9,250 parking spaces
• Most of the new housing is market rate condos.

• Median rent in Flushing: $1,650 (lower than city-wide median of $2,400)

• A high number of households pay more than 30% of monthly income to rent and are considered rent burdened

Data source: Streeteasy, Zillow, 2009-2013 American Community Survey
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES**

**Bland Houses**
- NYCHA, 1952
- 5-building campus
- 400 units
- ~900 residents.

**Muni Lot 3**
Monadnock Development, Asian-Americans for Equality & HANAC, selected by HPD to develop 208 mixed-income units which will include 60 units for seniors & 147 units for families

**Macedonia Plaza**, 2014 (~40,000 applicants)
- BRP Development Corp. 14-story
- 142-unit (studio, 1-,2-,3-bedrooms)
- 7,200 sf ground floor retail

*Image: NYC DCP*
• A Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program will require affordable housing as a condition of new housing development produced by future rezonings.

• In Flushing West, any zoning map changes will be accompanied by a zoning text amendment to apply the MIH program to this area.

• MIH seeks to reach a broader range of income levels than previous programs, taking into consideration neighborhood conditions and affordability needs.

• DCP working with other agencies to complete a study that analyzes financial feasibility issues in order to guide the requirements of the proposed MIH program.

• We expect this study will be completed next month.
DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

Flushing’s population continues to grow, outpacing population growth in Queens overall.

A significant portion of Flushing’s population – 71% – is Asian.

Data source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey, New York City Census FactFinder
Employment rates for the four Flushing census tracts are comparable to those found in Queens overall; unemployment rates are low for both areas: 5-6 percent.

Flushing’s largest percent of employed workers have service sector jobs (36%), which is higher than this sector has in Queens overall (24%).

The median household income in the four Flushing census tracts is lower than the median income for Queens overall. Census tract-level area median household income:

- Queens median household income: $57,001
- Flushing West Census Tract-Level: $34,428

Data source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey
**DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT**

**Vehicles Available by Household**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Vehicles</th>
<th>1 or more Vehicles Available*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flushing West Census Tract-Level</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens County</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
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</table>

*Relatively small estimate of households with two or more vehicles available on Census-tract level

**Commute Mode to Work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Drove/Carpooled</th>
<th>Public Transit</th>
<th>Walked</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flushing West Census Tract-Level</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens County</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey

*Image: NYC DCP*
• Flushing is a major intermodal hub for riders transferring between buses and the LIRR or #7 stations

• 24 bus routes pass through Downtown

• Select Bus Service to Jamaica is being planned

• Improving access to #7 train to be studied

• Bus terminal ideas will be explored
There are approximately 6 public elementary & middle schools in the downtown Flushing area.

1 public High School-- Flushing High School, the oldest public high school in the City of New York.

Increasing number of pre-K and daycare facilities.
There are approximately 4 notable senior centers in the downtown Flushing area.

Existing senior centers are located east of Main St. or north of Northern Blvd.
OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

FLUSHING WEST - EXISTING OPEN SPACE & ACCESS

- Within a 5-10 min walk of the Study Area there are limited open space resources, parks and playgrounds
- Within a 15-30 min walk of the Study Area there are additional regional open space resources such as Flushing Meadows Corona Park
- The Study Area has the potential for generating new public open spaces along Flushing Creek
- Additional programs/improvements to existing facilities & enhanced access to be studied
STUDY AREA

Flushing West Study Area
Subway Station - Flushing Main St.
Long Island Railroad Station - Flushing Main St.

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Flushing West - NYC Department of City Planning/Queens Office
• In 2011, Flushing Willets Point Corona LDC received $1.5 M NYS grant to build consensus on a redevelopment strategy and Master Plan for ~32 acres along Flushing Creek

• AKRF selected as lead consultant with SHoP & Mathews Nielsen as sub-consultants

• Outlined site challenges and prepared preliminary site plan and shorefront esplanade design

• In late 2014, DCP agreed to work with the LDC to complete Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Nomination Report and revise the study to foster affordable housing and economic opportunities
Initial research has indicated some potential for ground soil contamination on nearly all lots within the BOA.

Potential contaminants include:
- Fuel oil
- Coal dust
- Industrial solvents, lubricants, paints, stains, and dyes
- Chemicals used in photo processing, electroplating, and printing.

Further investigations, including the collection of soil and groundwater samples are needed for any redevelopment site within the BOA.
The section of the Flushing Creek just to the north of the Study Area is lined on both sides by industrial uses, including concrete plants and asphalt manufacturers.

Along the eastern side of the creek within the Study Area, the shoreline is not accessible to the public. Wetlands lie along the western side of the creek.
Most of the Flushing waterfront has site elevations that are largely below the FEMA 100 year flood plain.

In any given year, there is a 1% chance that these sites might be flooded to the extent shown in the light purple color.
• DEC regulates wetlands adjacent areas along Flushing Creek and requires a high percentage of pervious surfaces to help absorb rainwater and reduce initial runoff into the creek

• Property-owners within the DEC regulated areas are required to factor permeability & building setback requirements into any future redevelopment plans

• Along with setting buildings further back from the water’s edge, green infrastructure projects such as permeable pavers, rain gardens and green roofs could also be considered to better manage stormwater runoff
SELECTED WATERFRONT SITES AFFECTED BY DEC WETLAND REQUIREMENTS

*Map for illustrative purposes only

Legend
- Flushing West Study Area
- Tax Lots
- 80% Minimum Permeability Required
- DEC Wetland Boundary

NYC Department of City Planning - Queens Office
Airport zoning limits the heights of buildings in the Study Area based upon guidance by the FAA.

Across the Study Area the limits range from 150’-170’ above mean sea level.

These zoning height limits, combined with the area’s varied topography (15’-45’), means that buildings can’t go higher than ~13 stories within the Study Area without seeking a special permit from the BSA.

*Map for illustrative purposes only*
**C4-2 Commercial (1998)**
- R6 Residential Equivalent
- Residential FAR (max) 2.43
- Community Facility FAR (max) 4.8
- Commercial FAR (max) 3.4

**M1-1 Manufacturing (1961)**
- No residential uses allowed
- Commercial/manufacturing FAR (max): 1.0

**M3-1 Manufacturing (1961)**
- No residential uses allowed
- Commercial/manufacturing FAR (max): 2.0
ZONING ISSUES

- C4-2 zoning regulations cover most of the Study Area and may produce towers set back from the street on low base portions.

- Variable maximum FAR’s for different uses currently favors select commercial development—such as hotels—over housing.

- Current parking regulations also favors certain types of commercial development.

- Strict building bulk, height, and street wall length rules on waterfront lots make new development here very complicated.

- In the M1-1 and M3-1 districts, no residential uses are permitted.
EXISTING WATERFRONT ACCESS PLAN
EXISTING STREETS & WAP REQUIREMENTS

Visual corridors & upland connections do not effectively support public circulation throughout the waterfront area.

Shore public walkway may only be 20' wide.

Very narrow sidewalk.

*Graphic for illustrative purposes only*
Maximizing development potential under the existing zoning results in the creation of super-blocks where narrow towers are built above bulky bases.

The potential development is not conducive to the circulation of pedestrians, vehicles, light, or air.

*Graphic for illustrative purposes only*
SITE PLANNING PRINCIPLES

- Ensure all uses have similar development potential
- Improve waterfront public access & increase the amount of open space
- Extend the street network into the waterfront blocks
- Provide new opportunities to create affordable housing
- Recognize and support the unique character of the waterfront, upland & industrial areas
Neighborhood-based planning will ensure integration of the administration’s policy priorities of growth, equity, resiliency, and sustainability into the 10-year Capital Strategy.
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING

- Builds upon the Flushing-Willets Point-Corona LDC’s community outreach for the BOA process, which included engaging with local residents, businesses owners, advocacy groups and community leaders in a town hall meeting, targeted discussions, surveys, and site visits.

- In our process, public participation will help us identify and prioritize zoning goals and infrastructure needs and projects to make Flushing a more livable neighborhood.

- We welcome feedback at each stage of the project’s development from Elected Officials, City Agencies, Stakeholders, and community members.
## FLUSHING WEST STUDY PLANNING PROCESS

### Step 01  FLUSHING WATERFRONT BOA STUDY
- LDC initiated redevelopment strategy and master plan
- Working with AKRF, SHoP + Mathews Nielsen – outlined site challenges and prepared preliminary site plan and shorefront esplanade design

### Step 02  DCP STUDY INITIATION & INFORMATION GATHERING
- Flushing West Neighborhood Planning Study announced
- Assess prior work done by LDC
- Identify, begin to engage stakeholders and form Advisory Group
- Identify additional planning needs, considerations and constraints
- Expand community engagement

### Step 03  VISION
- Hold series of public & stakeholder meetings
- Public Town Hall meeting planned for May 21st
- Generate community vision and development strategies
- Identify capital and infrastructure needs and priorities in area

### Step 04  PREPARE INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS & FINALIZE PLAN
- Assess community and agency feedback
- Conduct further analysis
- Prepare preliminary recommendations
- Solicit additional feedback
- Further refine plan

### Step 05  ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
- Prepare Environmental Assessment Statement
- Determine significance of impacts
- Prepare scope of work for Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/public scoping meeting
- Prepare draft EIS

### Step 06  IMPLEMENTATION/ULURP
- Prepare Land Use Application
- Certify application and Draft EIS
- Hold series of public meetings
THANK YOU

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