



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

August 24, 2015

Dear Fellow New Yorker,

City Planning has been preparing a targeted set of citywide zoning text amendments, referred to as Zoning for Quality and Affordability, or ZQA, and the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing program, or MIH. I would like to update you on the status of the proposals.

Both zoning text amendments are nearly ready to enter the formal public review process in late September, along with a rezoning proposed in East New York, Brooklyn as an outgrowth of the first of our neighborhood planning studies.

If you have not seen it already, we released on our [website](#) an outline of the MIH proposal. Communities have asked us to upload the draft ZQA zoning text for public review and comment before the formal process starts. The draft chapters are also now available on our [site](#). To make the proposed changes under ZQA easier to understand, we have included an overview of the modifications to each zoning chapter, as well as specific annotations, to further clarify each change's intention.

As you may recall, we shared with the public back in February our proposed zoning text changes under ZQA to allow for more time for review and discussion before the environmental review process and the upcoming formal public review process. We also presented the ZQA proposal at the 50 Community Boards that accepted our offer to do so. We have heard your concerns and questions.

So, as you will note in the ZQA draft chapters, we made a change in response to the concerns specifically voiced on proposed height changes. In the original draft, one of our proposed "Zoning for Quality" solutions for residential buildings was to increase the maximum heights allowed by 5 feet in a number of medium-and high-density zoning districts. We believe this additional height is necessary in order to build ground floors that are better for communities – whether it be for facilitating better retail spaces in Commercial Districts, or allowing for more space between ground-floor apartment units and the sidewalk in residential districts. While many understood and agreed on the merits, concerns were expressed that the additional height could instead be used for taller residential floors in upper-story apartments, rather than for improving the ground floors.

As our intent has always been to ensure this additional height predominantly go towards building better ground floors, we have modified this provision to ensure this and prevent any loopholes. We have amended the proposal so that in districts where the permitted maximum height would be 5

feet greater the ground floor must be at least 13 feet high or else the extra 5 feet would no longer be allowed.

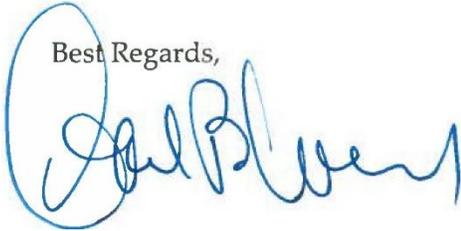
The same goes for high-density districts where our ZQA proposal permits increases to the maximum building height by even more than 5 feet or where buildings provide specific forms of affordable housing.

We believe that this will help us avoid unintended or undesired consequences concerning our goal of tying slightly increased building height to better ground floors and consequently lead to residential buildings that contribute better to neighborhoods.

The Department will continue to provide updated information about the proposal on our [website](#).

If you have any questions or comments about this proposal, please feel free to contact the project team at AHOUSING @planning.nyc.gov.

Best Regards,



Carl Weisbrod

Carl Weisbrod, Director
Department of City Planning
22 Reade Street – 2N, New York, N.Y. 10007-1216
(212) 720-3200 FAX (212) 720-3219
www.nyc.gov/planning