

Cambria Heights Rezoning - **Approved!**



The Department of City Planning (DCP) has proposed zoning map changes for almost 200 blocks in the Cambria Heights neighborhood in eastern Queens, Community District 13. One of the Department's lower-density rezoning initiatives in Queens, the rezoning proposal aims to maintain the prevailing one- and two-family character of the neighborhood and ensure that new residential development reflects the context and scale of the area's existing housing mix.



Typical one-family development in proposed R2A district



One-family rowhouse development in proposed R4B district

Existing Land Use and Zoning

Located 14 miles from Manhattan and just west of Nassau County, the Cambria Heights rezoning area is generally bounded on the north by Murdock Avenue, on the east by the Cross Island Parkway and Nassau County, on the south by 121st Avenue and the Montefiore Cemetery and on the west by Springfield and Francis Lewis boulevards. One- and two-family detached homes account for 78.5% of the housing stock in this low-density residential community. Row house developments and semi-detached homes are scattered throughout the northern and western sections of the neighborhood. Linden Boulevard is the community's commercial corridor, providing typical local service and convenience retail uses.

The existing R4, R3-2 and R2 zoning has been in place since 1961. Most of the community, generally east of 219th Street to the City Line, is zoned R2. Approximately 35 blocks in the western portion of the neighborhood near Springfield Boulevard and Francis Lewis Boulevard are zoned R4 and R3-2. C1-2 and C2-2 commercial overlay districts are mapped to a depth of 150 feet on the block fronts along Linden Boulevard. A C8-1 district, permitting automotive and other heavy commercial services, is located on Linden Boulevard at the intersection of Springfield and Francis Lewis boulevards.



Existing Zoning and Land Use

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R2 zoning districts permit only single-family, detached homes while a range of housing types– from single-family houses

to two- and three-story multifamily apartment buildings – are permitted in the R4 and R3-2 zoning districts.

The proposed zoning changes stem from a study initiated by DCP at the request of the Cambria Heights Civic Association, Community Board 13 and the area’s elected representatives because of concerns that the existing zoning would permit new development that would be out-of-scale with the surrounding context.

Proposed Zoning

As a result of its zoning study, the Department of City Planning recommends that the R4 and R3-2 districts be rezoned to R4B, R3A and R3-1. These *contextual* and lower-density zoning districts would limit new residential development to one- and two-family homes. In the R3A district, housing structures must be detached; the R3-1 district would limit housing to detached or semi-detached structures. The R4B district is typically a row house district. The entire existing R2 district as well as three small areas now zoned R3-2 and R4 would be rezoned to R2A, a newly created zoning designation. Like the R2 district, R2A would permit only one-family detached housing; however, any new development would be governed by floor area, front yard, and height and setback regulations that would more closely reflect the scale of surrounding homes.



Proposed R2A district illustrating front yard line-up



Proposed R3A district

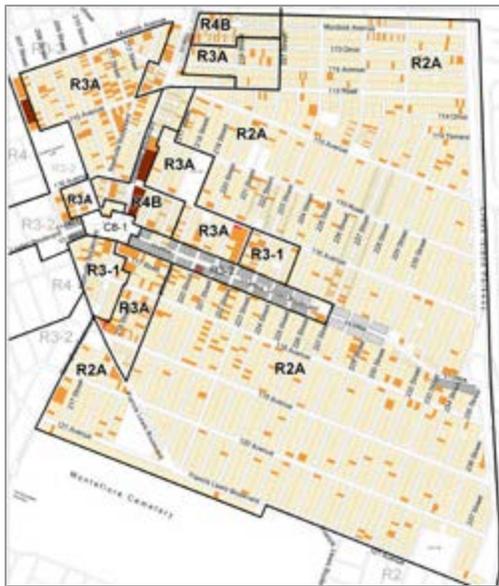
The Department also proposes to rezone the commercial overlay districts along Linden and Springfield boulevards from C1-2 and C2-2 to C1-3 and C2-3, which would reflect built conditions and reduce parking requirements for most local commercial uses. The depths of the overlays would be reduced to 100 feet to remove commercial zoning from existing residential uses and prevent the intrusion of commercial uses onto neighboring side streets. The overlay districts would be removed from two block fronts that are residentially developed.

Overall, the proposed zoning change would more accurately reflect the existing housing patterns, preserve the predominant housing types and retain the low-density character of the Cambria Heights neighborhood.

Cambria Heights Rezoning Zoning Comparison Chart

| Zoning District | Existing Districts | | | | Proposed Districts | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------|--|
| | R2 | R3-2 | R4 | R4B | R3A | R3-1 | R4B | |
| Minimum Lot Area | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | |
| Minimum Building Footprint | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | |
| Maximum Building Height | 35' | 35' | 35' | 35' | 35' | 35' | 35' | |
| Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | |
| Maximum Number of Units | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| Maximum Number of Stories | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| Maximum Front Yard Setback | 10' | 10' | 10' | 10' | 10' | 10' | 10' | |

[View the Cambria Heights Rezoning Comparison Chart](#)



Proposed Zoning and Residential Units

[View a larger image](#)



Proposed Zoning/Residential Building Type

[View a larger image](#)

Public Review Process

On April 11, 2005, the Department of City Planning certified the ULURP application for the proposed zoning map amendments (C050400 ZMQ). The application was sent to Community Board 13 for a 60-day review period. On that same day, the application to amend the R2A zoning regulations (N050401 ZRY) was referred concurrently to Community Board 11, Community Board 13, the Queens Borough President and the Queens Borough Board.

On May 9, 2005 Community Board 13 held a public hearing and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the rezoning application. The community board held a public hearing on the R2A zoning text amendments on May 23, 2005 and unanimously voted to recommend approval of the text changes. Community Board 11 stated in a letter dated May 11, 2005 that no position would be taken on the proposed text changes.

On May 12, 2005, the Borough President held a public hearing on both the rezoning application and the R2A zoning text amendments. She submitted favorable recommendations for both applications on May 23, 2005. The Queens Borough Board did not issue a recommendation regarding the text amendments.

The Commission held its public hearings on June 8, 2005 for both applications, and on June 22, 2005, favorable reports were adopted for the Cambria Heights rezoning application (C050400 ZMQ) and the R2A zoning text amendments (N050401 ZRY). [Read the CPC reports: C 050400 ZMQ and N 050401 ZRY](#). The City Council adopted the Cambria Heights zoning changes and the R2A text amendments on July 27, 2005. These changes are now in effect.

For more information contact the Queens Office of the Department of City Planning at (718) 286-3170.

Related Notes

-  Items accompanied by this symbol require the [free Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).
- Brief explanations of terms in *green italics* can be viewed by [visiting glossary page](#). Words and phrases followed by an asterisk (*) are defined terms in the Zoning Resolution, primarily in Section 12-10. Consult the Zoning Resolution for the official and legally binding definitions of these words and phrases.