



Carroll Gardens/Columbia Street Rezoning - Approved!

Overview

Update October 28, 2009:

On October 28, 2009 the City Council adopted the Carroll Gardens/Columbia Street Rezoning. The zoning map amendments are now in effect.

At the request of Community Board 6, community and neighborhood groups, and local elected officials, the Department of City Planning proposes zoning map amendments for an approximately 86 block area of the Carroll Gardens and Columbia Street neighborhoods within Community District 6 in Brooklyn.



Corner of 2nd Place and Court Street

The rezoning area includes the neighborhoods of Carroll Gardens and Columbia Street. The Carroll Gardens portion of the rezoning area is generally bounded by Degraw Street, Warren Street and Douglass Street to the north; Hoyt Street, Bond Street and Smith Street to the east; 3rd Street, 4th Street, 5th Street, Centre Street and Hamilton Avenue to the south; and Hicks Street to the west. The Columbia Street portion of the rezoning area consists of approximately 14 blocks bounded by Warren Street to the north, a line between Columbia Street and Van Brunt Street to the west, Hicks Street to the east and Woodhull Street to the south. The areas proposed to be rezoned are zoned entirely R6.

The rezoning proposal has been developed after extensive discussion with the Community Board, elected officials, and neighborhood residents. The rezoning responds to community concerns about recent out-of-scale development permitted under the current zoning by mapping contextual districts with height limits throughout the study area which would preserve the existing built character while allowing for new development and modest expansions where appropriate at a height and scale that is in keeping with the existing context. The rezoning would support and promote the local, vibrant retail corridors while protecting the residential character of nearby side streets.

The proposed rezoning builds upon the Department's Carroll Gardens Narrow Streets Text Amendment which was undertaken at the community's request and approved in 2008. That text amendment aimed to limit the size and configuration of new buildings and enlargements on certain streets with deep front courtyards which had been defined as wide streets under existing zoning and therefore permitted a higher density that was out of scale with the existing built context. The proposed rezoning of the Carroll Gardens and Columbia Street neighborhoods fulfills the Department's commitment to return to the community with a more comprehensive set of zoning recommendations for the larger area.

Carroll Gardens/Columbia Street Rezoning - **Approved!**

Existing Context and Zoning

The proposed rezoning area is part of the neighborhood formerly known as South Brooklyn, located south of Cobble Hill and Boerum Hill and east of Red Hook.

The Carroll Gardens neighborhood is served by the F and G subway lines on Smith Street which stop at the Carroll Street station. Bus service is provided by the B75 bus on Court Street, the B77 bus on 9th Street and the B71 bus on Sackett and Union streets. The Columbia Street neighborhood is also served by the B71 bus as well as the B61 bus on Columbia Street.

[View the Zoning Comparison Table.](#)

Neighborhood Character

Carroll Gardens is a predominantly residential neighborhood characterized by 3 to 4-story row houses and some 4- and 5-story multi-family apartment buildings. Smith Street and Court Street are the local retail corridors, characterized by 3- and 4-story mixed use buildings with ground floor commercial and community facilities with residential above. Carroll Gardens is notable for its predominantly intact brownstone context and its unconventional street grid on many blocks, mapped in such a way that the row houses on the east-west streets have 30-foot deep front yards (the "Gardens" for which the neighborhood is named). The Carroll Gardens Historic District, located along President Street and Carroll Street between Smith Street and Hoyt Street, was established in 1973 in recognition of the area's special architectural and historic character.

The Columbia Street area has a mixed character as a result of its proximity to the industrial waterfront. During the second half of the twentieth century, the area suffered from its isolation from the rest of the borough from the construction of Brooklyn Queens Expressway, lack of transportation options and declining manufacturing activity. Recently, the neighborhood has been revitalized and seen an increase in residential and commercial development interest. The neighborhood is predominantly characterized by 3- and 4-story row houses and 3-story New York City Partnership homes that were built under the Columbia Street Urban Renewal Plan. In addition, seven story former manufacturing buildings on Tiffany Place have been converted into apartments. Columbia Street and Union Street are the local retail corridors, characterized by 3- and 4-story mixed use buildings with ground floor retail and residential above.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European immigrants settled south of Downtown Brooklyn, close to jobs on the industrial waterfront. In the 1950s, the construction of limited-access highways cut off waterfront blocks from the rest of the neighborhood and divided South Brooklyn into distinct communities. Today, the areas east of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway are known as Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill and Gowanus; the neighborhoods of Columbia Street and Red Hook are located west of the highway along the industrial waterfront.

Existing Context

Residential Row House Context



Third Place between Henry Street and Clinton Street



Carroll Street between Columbia Street and Henry Street

Commercial Corridors

Out of scale development



Smith Street and Union Street



Tiffany Place between Kane and Degraw

The area is zoned entirely R6. C1 and C2 [commercial overlays](#) occur primarily on blocks along retail corridors. R6 is a [height factor](#) district with no height limits and which permits [tower](#) construction on large lots. Building envelopes are regulated by the [sky exposure plane](#). The maximum [floor area ratio](#) (FAR) in R6 is 2.43 for [residential buildings](#) and 4.8 for [community facilities](#). The optional [Quality Housing program](#) permits an FAR of 2.2 on [narrow streets](#) and 3.0 on [wide streets](#) and limits building heights to 55 feet and 70 feet, respectively. Off-street parking is required for 70 percent of the [dwelling units](#), or for 50 percent of the dwelling units when the Quality Housing program is utilized.

C1-3 and C2-3 commercial overlays, which allow for local retail and service uses, are mapped within the R6 district along most of Smith Street, Court Street and Columbia Street, as well as portions of Hoyt Street, Henry Street, Union Street and Hamilton Avenue. C1 overlays permit basic small-scale retail shops, grocery stores and offices. C2 overlays permit a slightly broader range of service uses, such as local repair services. C1 and C2 overlays have a maximum commercial FAR of 2.0 when mapped in R6 districts, though commercial uses are limited to the first floor when residences are located above. These overlays require parking for general retail space at rates of between one space per 300 square feet and one space per 1,000 square feet.

In 2008, the City Council approved the Department's [Carroll Gardens Narrow Streets Text Amendment](#) to establish the following streets as narrow streets for zoning purposes: First Place, Second Place, Third Place and Fourth Place between Henry and Smith streets; and President Street, Carroll Street and Second Street between Smith Street and Hoyt Street. Prior to this zoning text amendment, those streets were considered wide streets because the City Map includes their characteristic deep front yards as part of the measurement of the mapped street.



Existing Zoning & Land Use Map

[View a larger image](#)

Carroll Gardens/Columbia Street Rezoning - Approved!

Proposed Zoning

Recent residential construction developed as-of-right under the existing R6 zoning has produced apartment buildings and building enlargements that are inconsistent with the low-rise row house context found within the majority of the rezoning area. The proposal would:

- Preserve neighborhood character and scale by replacing the R6 district with [contextual zoning districts](#) having height limits that better reflect the existing, predominantly row house character;
- Prevent out of scale development while still allowing for building upgrades, improvements and modest expansions;
- Reduce the depths of commercial districts to reflect existing development patterns and preclude commercial intrusions into residential side streets;
- Promote vibrant, mixed-use corridors on certain local commercial thoroughfares.

[View the Zoning Comparison Table.](#)



Proposed Zoning

[View a larger image](#)

Proposed Zoning Map Changes

R6B

R6B is proposed for the majority of the study area (78%, or 76 full or partial blocks) to reflect the prevailing row house character of these areas. R6B would be mapped on predominantly residential east-west side streets as well as the north-south streets of Smith Street, Hoyt Street, Bond Street, Hicks Street and portions of Henry Street, Clinton Street, Columbia Street.

R6B is a typical row house district that includes height limits and street wall lineup provisions to ensure that new buildings are consistent with the scale of the existing built context. R6B permits residential and community facility uses to a maximum FAR of 2.0. Building base heights must be between 30 and 40 feet, with a 50 foot maximum building height after a setback (10 feet on a wide street, 15 feet on a narrow street). New development in the proposed R6B district would be required to line up with adjacent structures to maintain the continuous street wall character. New multifamily residences must provide one off-street parking space for 50% of dwelling units, which may be waived if 5 or fewer spaces would be required.



4th Place between Court Street and Clinton Street

R6A

R6A is proposed for approximately 21% of the study area (42 full or partial blocks). R6A would be mapped on wide mixed-use corridors of Court Street and Columbia Street, as well as selected portions of narrow streets characterized by tall, bulkier buildings that more closely match the R6A building envelope. Several of the blocks on which R6A is proposed are characterized by buildings with high lot coverage, larger floor-to-floor heights leading to taller buildings which are more appropriate to the R6A envelope. C2-4 commercial overlays would be mapped in appropriate areas within the proposed R6A district to promote ground-floor retail.

R6A permits residential and community facility uses to an FAR of 3.0. A building's base height must be between 40 and 60 feet with an overall maximum building height 70 feet after a 10 foot setback on a wide street and a 15-foot setback on a narrow street). New structures in R6A districts are required to line up with adjacent structures to maintain a continuous street wall. Off-street parking is required for 50% of new residential units.



President Street between Clinton Street and Court Street

R7A

R7A is proposed for the eastern side of Tiffany Place between Kane Street and Degraw Street (1 full block, or approximately 1% of the study area.) The

block consists of existing 7-story manufacturing buildings that have been converted to residential use. The proposed R7A district more closely reflects the built character of these buildings.

R7A permits residential and community facility uses with a maximum FAR of 4.0. Base heights must be between 40 and 65 feet and maximum building height is 80 feet. One parking space is required for 50% of new residential units.



Tiffany Place between Kane Street and Degraw Street

Commercial Overlays – C2-4

Existing C1-3 and C2-3 commercial overlays on portions of Hoyt Street, Smith Street, Court Street, Columbia Street, Union Street, Henry Street and Hicks Street would be changed to C2-4 overlays with varying depths depending on the land use and lot configuration. This would allow a slightly wider range of local commercial uses than are currently permitted and would prevent commercial uses from encroaching on residential side streets. In addition, new C2-4 overlays would be mapped at specific locations along Smith Street, Henry Street and Hicks Street where commercial uses already exist, but where no commercial zoning is present to permit new or expanding businesses. Similarly, some C1-3 overlays would be removed at specific locations on Union Street where no commercial uses exist.

C2-4 overlays permits local retail and services uses to a maximum 2.0 FAR or one commercial floor in mixed buildings.

Carroll Gardens/Columbia Street Rezoning - **Approved!**

Public Review

On June 1, 2009 the Department of City Planning certified the [Uniform Land Use Review \(ULURP\)](#) application (C 090462 ZMK) for the Carroll Gardens and Columbia Street rezoning.

| Milestone | Date |
|---|--------------------|
| Department of City Planning Certification | June 1, 2009 |
| Community Board 6 Conditional Approval | June 29, 2009 |
| Brooklyn Borough President Hearing | July 14, 2009 |
| City Planning Commission Hearing | August 19, 2009 |
| City Planning Commission Approval ( Read the CPC Report) | September 23, 2009 |
| City Council Approval | October 28, 2009 |

For more information about this proposal please contact the Brooklyn Office of the Department of City Planning at (718) 780-8280.

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.