



The Jamaica Plan - **Approved!**

Overview

On September 10, 2007 the City Council adopted a proposal by the Department of City Planning (DCP) to establish a Special Downtown Jamaica District and rezone 368 blocks in community boards 12 and 8. DCP, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), working with a wide range of stakeholders, including Community Boards 8 and 12, neighborhood residents and local elected officials, developed a comprehensive planning and rezoning strategy to replace outdated zoning that does not adequately address Jamaica's current and future housing and economic needs. The former zoning, which generally had not been updated since 1961, failed to take advantage of Jamaica's unique strength and role as a transportation hub. Once a major retail and business center, investment in Jamaica's downtown has waned due to, a great extent, inflexible and, in some locations, inappropriate zoning requirements. The outdated zoning also did not protect the character of the one- and two- family neighborhoods surrounding downtown and residential development occurred without respect to the area's existing scale and unique qualities.

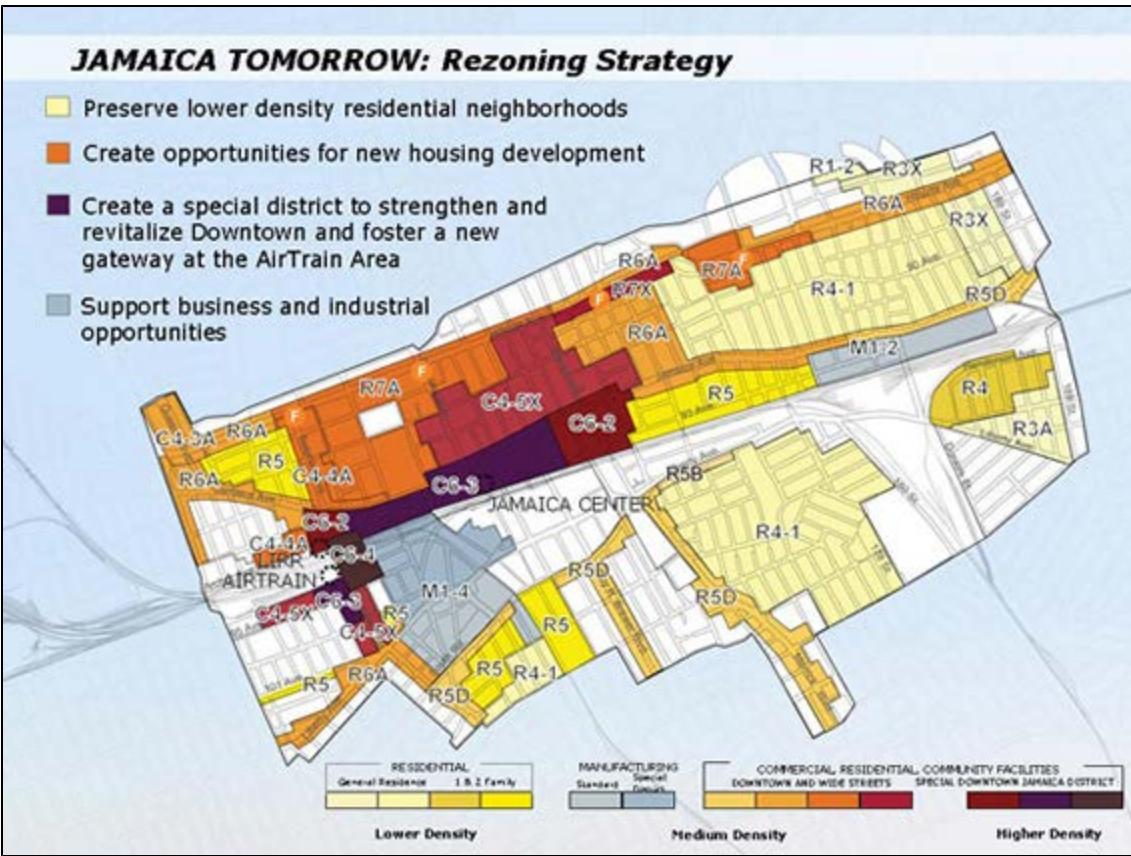


Through numerous community meetings to collect input on the appropriate elements to address in the Plan, there was a broad consensus on the following goals:

- Respect and enhance **Jamaica's unique character**
- Provide for a mix of **residential, business and community activities** in the heart of the downtown
- Protect the low-scale, **neighborhood feel** of residential areas outside of the downtown
- Encourage the provision of **affordable housing**
- Create a vibrant **new gateway** at the AirTrain station

 [View a presentation of the Jamaica Plan](#)

[View the Final Environmental Impact Statement](#)



Sutphin Boulevard at the Jamaica AirTrain Station

The Jamaica Plan - **Approved!**

Public Review


Public Review


Environmental Review (CEQR)

On June 23rd, 2005 and November 3, 2005, the Department of City Planning held public scoping meetings at York College in Jamaica to receive public comment on the scope of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposal.

"Scoping" is a requirement of CEQR, and it is the process that identifies the topics that should be covered by the EIS, including significant adverse environmental impacts of a proposed project and alternatives that could avoid or minimize these impacts. The final scope of work was issued on September 19, 2006. In accordance with the final scope of work, a notice of completion of the DEIS was issued on February 5, 2007. The [Final Environmental Impact Statement](#) was issued on June 29, 2007.

Subsequent to the issuance of the FEIS, a  [Technical Memorandum](#) (1.5 mb) was completed on July 11, 2007 regarding the modifications made by the City Planning Commission.

A  [Technical Memorandum](#) (40k) was completed on August 3, 2007 regarding the follow-up action (N 080022 ZRQ).

A  [Technical Memorandum](#) (575k) was completed on August 31, 2007 regarding the modifications made by the City Council.

Land Use Review (ULURP)

On February 5, 2007, the Department of City Planning certified the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) applications (C 70158 MMQ, C 070314 ZMQ, C 070316 HUQ, C 070318 PPQ, C 070322 HDQ) for the proposed actions to begin the formal public review process. The related zoning text amendment and urban renewal designation applications (N 070315 ZRQ and N 070317 HGQ) were referred on February 5, 2007 for concurrent review.

On April 17, 2007 in response to testimony from at the community board hearings, the Downtown Jamaica Special District "A" text and related zoning map (C070314 (A)ZMQ and 070315 (A)ZRQ) were referred for public review and comment.

Timeline	Date
Department of City Planning Certification	February 5, 2007
Community Board 8 Disapproval	March 14, 2007
Community Board 12 Vote*	April 11, 2007
Queens Borough President Approval (with conditions)	May 14, 2007
City Planning Commission approval (with modifications). Read the CPC Reports .	July 11, 2007
City Council Approval (with modifications)	September 10, 2007
<p>* Community Board 12 made the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning Map Amendment (C 070314 ZMQ) - Did not adopt a recommendation • Zoning Text Amendment (N 070315 ZRQ) - Approval with conditions • Approval of the Jamaica Gateway UR Plan (C 070316 HUQ) - Disapproval • Designation of the Jamaica Gateway UR Area (N 070317 HGQ) - Disapproval • Disposition of city-owned property within the Jamaica Gateway URA (C 070322 HDQ) - Disapproval • Disposition of one city-owned property - (C 070318 PPQ) - Recommendation not submitted • City Map Amendment (C 070158 MMQ) - Disapproval 	

On July 11, 2007, City Planning Commission adopted the modified zoning text and zoning map change applications (the "A" applications) and the related actions. The Commission made further modifications to the zoning text and zoning map change applications.

On September 10, 2007 the City Council adopted the actions with further modifications to the zoning text and zoning map change applications as described below.

 [See revised proposed Jamaica zoning map.](#)

 [View final adopted zoning map as modified by City Council - 9/10/2007](#)

Hillside Avenue

The City Council modifications included mapping R6A districts instead of R7A and R7X districts along both sides of Hillside Avenue between 139th and 146th Streets, along the north side of Hillside Avenue between 167th and 175th Streets and on the north side of the avenue between Edgerton Boulevard and Midland Parkway. The Council's modifications also included mapping R7A districts instead of R7X zoning on both sides of Hillside Avenue between 148th and 164th Streets, as well as along three sections on the north side of the avenue: between 146th and 148th Streets, between 164th and 167th Streets and between 175th Street and Edgerton Boulevard.

The R6A zone has a maximum 3 FAR and a maximum building height of 70 feet. The Inclusionary Housing Program (IHP) would not be available in this zone. The R7A zone has a maximum FAR of 4.6 when utilizing IHP and a maximum building height of 80 feet, whereas, the R7X zone approved by the CPC would have had a maximum FAR of 5 under IHP and a maximum building height of 125 feet.

Merrick Boulevard

City Council modifications mapped an R5D district instead of R6A zoning along Merrick Boulevard between 108 Drive/109th Avenue and Sayres Avenue. The R5D district has a maximum FAR of 2.0 and maximum building height of 40 feet.

Manufacturing Areas

City Council modifications eliminated the CPC approved M1-2 zoning and retained an existing M1-1 district located north of the LIRR right-of-way between 187th Street and Hollis Avenue, and an existing M1-1 district located south of the LIRR right-of-way between 168th and 183rd Streets and north of Liberty and Douglas Avenues. M1-1 districts allow a maximum FAR of 1.0. The originally proposed M1-2 district in these areas would have a maximum FAR of 2.0.

The Council modifications also retained M1-1 zoning on a block adjacent to proposed M1-4 zoning and the Special Downtown Jamaica District. This block, bounded by 95th Avenue, 148th Street, 97th Avenue and 147th Place, had been proposed to be rezoned to an R5 district. In its approval of the text amendment application, the City Planning Commission added a new Section 11-273 to allow an existing concrete business to expand within a ten year period following the rezoning. The City Council modifications eliminated this section as the underlying zoning remained M1-1 and provided new text to allow the use, bulk and parking regulations governing residential uses for an R5 district to apply to this block to allow the continuance of the existing residential uses.

Special District Boundaries

The boundaries of the Special Downtown Jamaica District (SDJD) were modified by the City Council to exclude locations on Merrick Boulevard between 108th Drive/109th Avenue and Sayres Avenue where the City Council modified the proposed zoning to R5D. The special provisions of the special district are not necessary to supplement the regulations of R5D districts .

Additional Modification to Zoning Text Amendment (N 070315 (A) ZRO)

The modifications by the City Council changed the zoning text amendment in the following ways:

- Eliminated proposed manufacturing use vesting text found in ZR Sections 11-27 and 11-273 and provided new

text in ZR Sections 42-03, 43-01, and 44-024.

- Deleted sections of the special district text relating to the inclusionary housing text amendments that were adopted by the City Council as part of the Ft. Greene/Clinton Hill Zoning Text amendment (N 070431 ZRY) on July 25, 2007.


 [See revised SDJD text.](#)


Follow-up Zoning Text Action

On August 6, 2007, the Department of City Planning referred the application (N 080022 ZRQ) for a follow-up zoning text amendment to the Jamaica Plan to Community Board 12 and the Borough President for a 30-day review.

Based on testimony from the Commission's May 23rd public hearing on the Jamaica Plan, this text amendment provides more flexible building regulations without increasing the maximum floor area for sites within the highest density district (C6-4) and on sites along the Long Island Railroad viaduct.


Specifically, the maximum building height in the C6-4 district would be increased from 250 feet to 290 feet, and 20-foot rear yards would not be required for non-residential uses in the C6-4 district and on properties adjacent to the LIRR viaduct within the special district.

The City Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the follow-up text amendments on September 19, 2007, and adopted the text amendment on October 3, 2007.  [Read the CPC report.](#)

On October 29, 2007 the City Council adopted the follow-up text amendments.  [Read the adopted follow-up text amendments.](#)

For more information on the Jamaica Plan, please contact 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](#).