



Waldheim Rezoning - **Approved!**

Overview

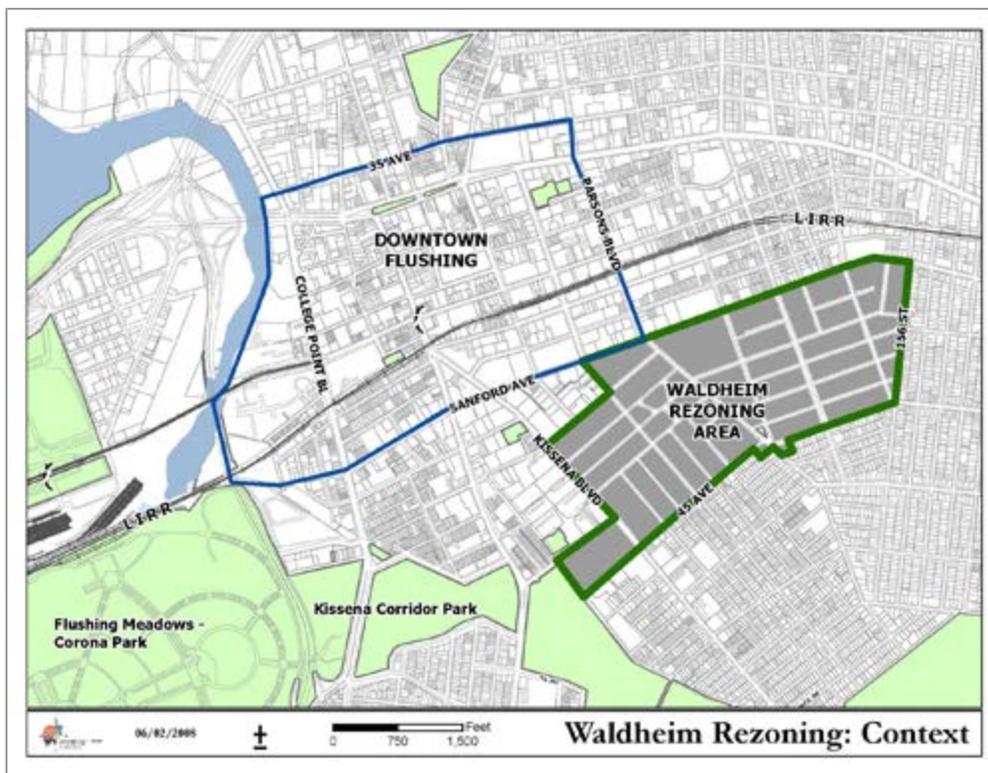
Update September 24, 2008:

On September 24, 2008 the City Council adopted the Department's Waldheim zoning map changes (see [CPC report C 080457 ZMQ](#)). The zoning changes are now in effect.

Introduction

The Department of City Planning has proposed amendments to the Zoning Map for 44 blocks in the north-central Queens neighborhood of Waldheim, in Community District 7. The rezoning area is generally bounded to the north by Sanford and Franklin Avenues; to the east by 156th Street; to the south by 45th Avenue; and to the west by Colden Street and Kissena Boulevard. The area is immediately southeast of the downtown Flushing commercial core, and adjacent to the Kissena Park and East Flushing neighborhoods rezoned in 2005.

The proposed rezoning is the result of close consultation with Community Board 7, elected officials, the Waldheim Neighborhood Association, and other concerned stakeholders. The rezoning study was initiated by the Department of City Planning in response to community concerns that recent development is inconsistent with the established scale and character of the neighborhood. The proposed rezoning and changes to commercial overlays aim to better reflect existing development patterns and ensure that future residential development is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood, which consists primarily of one- and two-family detached homes and six- to seven-story apartment buildings.



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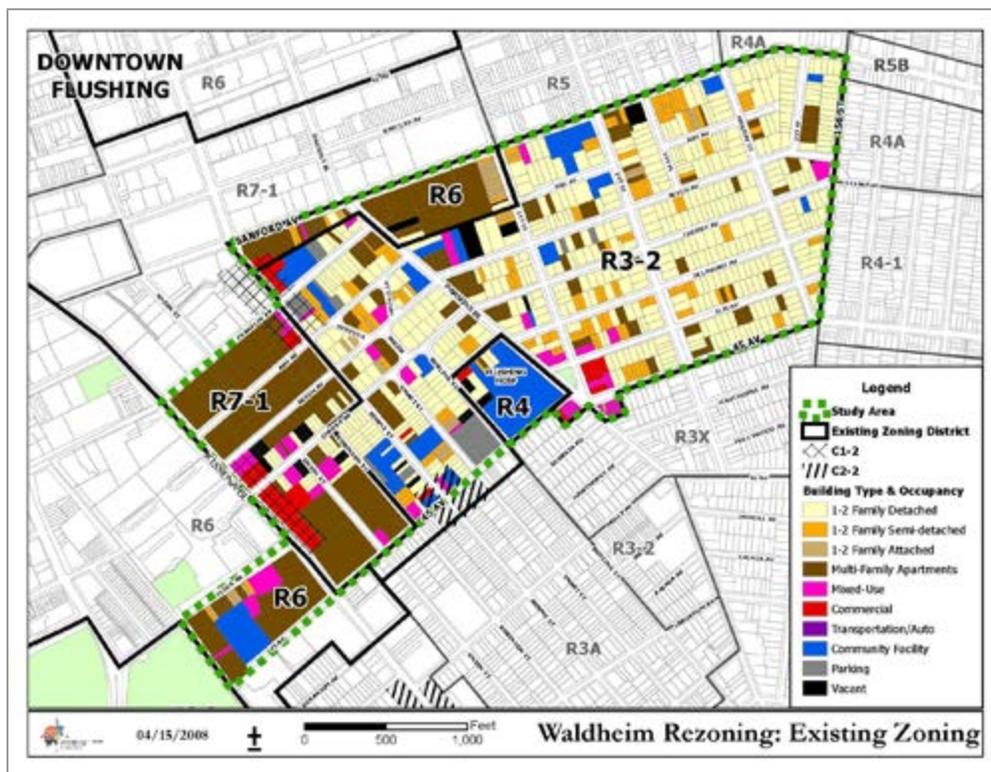
Waldheim Rezoning - **Approved!** Existing Zoning and Context

Background and Existing Zoning

The Waldheim neighborhood originated as an early 20th century residential subdivision with horticultural street names, located southeast of downtown Flushing. The name Waldheim is a German word meaning "house in the woods."

The rezoning area is predominantly developed with residential uses, along with several community facilities, including Flushing Hospital, the Flushing YWCA and a number of religious facilities. The central and eastern portions of the rezoning area are primarily developed with one- and two-family detached homes, though concentrations of one- and two-family semi-detached homes can also be found. The northern and western portions of the rezoning area, closer to downtown Flushing, are mostly occupied by six- and seven-story apartment buildings. There are also nodes of commercial and retail uses along Kissena Boulevard at Cherry Avenue; the intersection of Franklin Avenue and Bowne Street; the intersection of 45th Avenue and Bowne Street; and the intersection of 45th Avenue and Parsons Boulevard.

The existing zoning, in place since 1961, is a poor match for this development pattern as it allows rowhouses and small-scale apartment buildings in areas occupied by one- and two-family detached homes, and high-rise apartment buildings in areas generally developed with six- and seven-story buildings.



Waldheim Rezoning: Existing Zoning

[View a larger image.](#)

R3-2

The R3-2 district is the lowest-density general residence district in which multi-family structures are permitted. A variety of housing types are permitted, including garden apartments, row houses, semi-detached homes and detached houses. The maximum FAR is 0.6 (includes a 20% attic allowance);

community facilities are permitted an FAR of 1.0. Minimum lot width and lot area depend upon the housing configuration: one- and two-family detached structures require a 40-foot lot frontage and 3,800 square feet of lot area; other housing types require a lot width of at least 18 feet and lot area of at least 1,700 square feet. One parking space is required for each dwelling unit.



New multifamily rowhouses at Beech Avenue and Syringa Place, in an existing R3-2 district

R4

R4 districts allow the same variety of housing types as the R3-2 district but at a moderately higher density. The maximum FAR is a 0.9 (includes a 20% attic allowance); community facilities are permitted an FAR of 2.0. One- and two-family detached residences are required to have a minimum lot area of 3,800 square feet and a minimum lot width of 40 feet. All other structures must have a minimum lot area of 1,700 square feet and a minimum lot width of 18 feet. One parking space is required for each dwelling unit. In predominantly built-up areas, optional infill provisions allow a residential FAR of 1.35 and parking for 66% of dwelling units.

R6

The R6 district is a medium-density general residence district. The maximum residential FAR is 2.43 or 3.0 (on wide streets) if Quality Housing provisions are used. Community facilities are permitted an FAR of 4.8. R6 is a height factor district with no fixed height limits. Building envelopes are regulated by the sky exposure plane. The minimum required lot area is 1,700 square feet and the minimum lot width is 18 feet. Parking spaces are required for 70% of the dwelling units, or 50% if Quality Housing provisions are used.



Height factor factor apartment building at Kissena Boulevard & Elder Avenue, in an existing R6 district

R7-1

The R7-1 district is a medium-density district with a slightly higher residential FAR than R6. The maximum residential FAR is 3.44 or 4.0 (on wide streets) if Quality Housing provisions are used. Community facilities are permitted an FAR of 4.8. R7-1 is a height factor district with no fixed height limits. Building envelopes are regulated by the sky exposure plane. The minimum required lot area is 1,700 square feet and the minimum lot width is 18 feet. Parking spaces are required for 60% of the dwelling units, or 50% if Quality Housing provisions are used.



Height factor apartment building at Cherry Avenue & Union Street, in an existing R7-1 district

C1-2 Commercial Overlay

There are existing C1-2 commercial overlays along block fronts at the intersections of Kissena Boulevard and Cherry Avenue and Franklin Avenue at Bowne Street. C1 districts are mapped within residential districts and permit Use Groups 1 through 6, which allow the types of local retail and service establishments that serve residential neighborhoods. Maximum commercial floor area can reach 1.0 FAR in R1 – R5 residence districts and 2.0 in R6 and R7 Districts, with commercial uses limited to the

first floor in mixed-use buildings. Most retail uses require one accessory parking space per 300 square feet of commercial floor space, though the requirements may range from one space per 200 square feet to one space per 800 square feet of commercial floor area.



2-story mixed-use buildings at the intersection of 45th Avenue and Parsons Boulevard

C2-2 Commercial Overlay

There is one existing C2-2 commercial overlay at the intersection of 45th Avenue and Bowne Street. C2 districts are mapped within residential districts and permit Use Groups 1 through 9 and 14, which include a wider range of commercial uses. Maximum commercial floor area can reach 1.0 FAR in R1 – R5 residence districts and 2.0 in R6 and R7 Districts, with commercial uses limited to the first floor in mixed-use buildings. Most retail uses require one accessory parking space per 300 square feet of commercial floor space, though the requirements may range from one space per 200 square feet to one space per 800 square feet of commercial floor area.

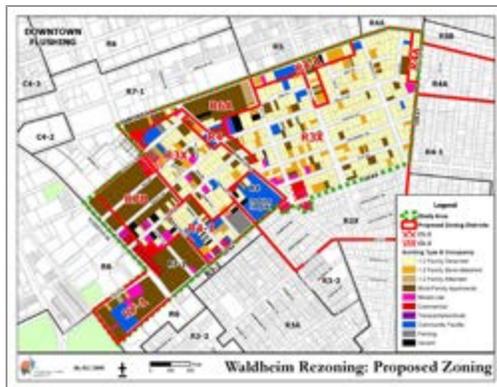
Waldheim Rezoning - **Approved!** Proposed Zoning

Proposed Zoning

The Department's proposal, encompassing all or part of 44 blocks throughout the Waldheim neighborhood, has three components:

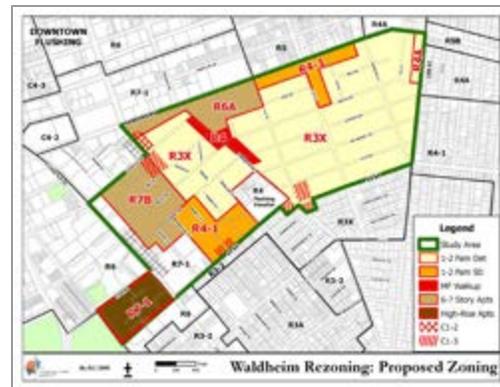
- **Lower-density Contextual Rezoning:** Rezoning all or portions of 36 blocks from R3-2 to lower-density and contextual zoning zoning districts (R3X, R4A, R4-1, and R4);
- **Medium-density Contextual Rezoning:** Rezoning of 7 partial blocks from R6 and R7-1 to contextual zoning districts (R6A and R7B). Also rezoning 1 block from R6 to R7-1 and 2 lots from R3-2 to R6A in order to permit moderate growth in housing opportunities in areas best able to support it; and
- **Commercial Overlays:** Changing existing C1-2 commercial overlays to C1-3 and reducing the overlay depth from 150' to 100' on two block fronts to preclude extension of commercial use into the residential midblocks and better reflect existing commercial development patterns; changing existing C2-2 commercial overlays to C1-3 and reducing the overlay depth on two block fronts to restrict permitted uses to local retail and services; and establishing new C1-3 commercial overlays on three block fronts near the intersection of Parsons Boulevard and 45th Avenue to bring existing commercial uses into conformance.

Together these actions would preserve the predominantly lower-density character of the Waldheim neighborhood; ensure that future development be consistent with existing development patterns; reformulate commercial zoning to be more reflective of existing development patterns; and provide limited opportunities for new housing development in areas most able to support it.



Proposed Zoning and Building Type

[View a larger image.](#)



Proposed Zoning

[View a larger image.](#)

R3X

R3-2 to R3X

35 full or partial blocks currently zoned R3-2 and generally bounded by Franklin and Ash Avenues to the north; 156th Street to the east; 45th Avenue to the south; and Bowne Street to the west are proposed to be rezoned to an R3X district.

The proposed R3X district would restrict residential development to one- and two-family detached homes. The minimum required lot size would be 3,325 square feet with a minimum lot width of 35 feet. The maximum FAR would be 0.6 (including a 20% attic allowance). The minimum required front yard would be 10 feet, with a required front-yard line-up with one adjacent residence to a maximum depth of 20 feet. Two side yards with a total width of at least 10 feet and a minimum width of 2 feet per yard are required. The R3X district has a maximum building height of 35 feet and a maximum perimeter wall height of 21 feet. One parking



space per dwelling unit would be required.

The proposed change from R3-2 to R3X would more closely reflect the predominant character and development pattern of one- and two-family detached homes.

One- and two- family detached homes on Beech Avenue between Parsons Boulevard and Phlox Place, in a proposed R3X district

R4A

R3-2 to R4A

One partial block currently zoned R3-2 and generally bounded by Sanford Avenue to the north, 156th Street to the east, Beech Avenue to the south and 155th Street to the west is proposed to be rezoned to an R4A district, which would be extended from an existing R4A district on the east side of 156th Street.

The proposed R4A district would restrict residential development to one- and two-family detached homes. The minimum required lot size would be 2,850 square feet with a minimum lot width of 30 feet. The maximum FAR would be 0.9 (including a 20% attic allowance). The minimum required front yard would be 10 feet, with a required front-yard line-up with one adjacent residence to a maximum depth of 20 feet. Two side yards with a total width of at least 10 feet and a minimum width of 2 feet per yard are required. The R4A district has a maximum building height of 35 feet and a maximum perimeter wall height of 21 feet. One parking space per dwelling unit would be required.



One- and two- family detached homes on narrow lots along 156th Street between Sanford Avenue and Beech Avenue, in the proposed R4A district

The proposed change from R3-2 to R4A would more closely reflect the prevailing context of one- and two-family detached homes on relatively narrow lots.

R4-1

R3-2 to R4-1

Portions of 3 blocks in a "T" configuration centered around the intersection of Sanford Avenue and 149th Street, and portions of 3 blocks generally bounded by Cherry Avenue, Burling Street, 45th Avenue and Robinson Street are proposed to be rezoned from R3-2 to R4-1.

The proposed R4-1 district would limit development to one- and two-family detached and semi-detached structures. The minimum lot size and lot width requirements would depend upon the housing configuration: detached structures would require a 25-foot lot width and 2,375 square feet of lot area, and semi-detached buildings would require a lot width of at least 18 feet and a lot area of at least 1,700 square feet. The maximum FAR would be 0.9 (including a 20% attic allowance). The R4-1 district has a maximum perimeter wall height of 25 feet and a maximum building height of 35 feet. Community facilities are permitted an FAR of 2.0, but mixed-use buildings would be limited to the residential building envelope. One parking space would be required for each dwelling unit.



One- and two- family semi-detached homes along Sanford Avenue between 149th Place and Murray Street, in a proposed R4-1 district

The proposed R4-1 district would more closely match the existing prevailing context of one- and two-family detached and semi-detached homes.

R4

R3-2 to R4

Portions of 5 block fronts along Parsons Boulevard, developed with small-scale apartment buildings or community facilities, are proposed to be rezoned from R3-2 to R4.

R4 allows a wide variety of housing configurations, including detached, attached and small-scale multifamily apartment buildings. One- and two-family detached residences are required to have a minimum lot area of 3,800 square feet and a minimum lot width of 40 feet. All other structures must have a minimum lot area of 1,700 square feet and a minimum lot width of 18 feet. The maximum FAR is 0.9 (including a 20% attic allowance). R4 districts have a maximum perimeter wall height of 25 feet and a maximum building height of 35 feet. Community facilities are permitted an FAR of 2.0. One parking space is required for each dwelling unit.



The buildings on these block fronts exceed R3-2 bulk regulations. The Department's proposed rezoning of these block fronts to R4 would more closely reflect the higher FARs on these block fronts.

Three-story apartment buildings at Beech Avenue and Parsons Boulevard, in a proposed R4 district

R6A

R6 and R3-2 to R6A

The proposed R6A district would include portions of 2 blocks currently zoned R6, generally bounded by Sanford Avenue, 147th Street, Franklin Avenue and Bowne Street, as well as 2 lots currently zoned R3-2 on the northeast corner of Parsons Boulevard and Ash Avenue. The lots currently zoned R6 are developed with a mix of six- and seven-story apartment buildings and multi-family rowhouses, and the two lots currently zoned R3-2 are occupied by a large community facility (the Flushing YWCA) and an abandoned detached structure owned by the YWCA.

The proposed R6A district is a *contextual district* that permits all residential building types. The maximum allowable FAR would be 3.0 for all uses, including community facilities. The proposed R6A district has a maximum building height of 70 feet, with a base height of 40 to 60 feet, and requires street walls of new buildings to line up with abutting buildings. Off-street parking is required for 50% of the total dwelling units.

The proposed R6A district more closely reflects the prevailing character of four- to seven-story apartment buildings. The proposed R6A district would also permit limited new housing opportunities on the two lots currently zoned R3-2.



Six- and seven- story apartment buildings along Sanford Avenue between Parsons Boulevard and 147th Street, in a proposed R6A district

R7B

R7-1 to R7B

The proposed R7B district would include large portions of 5 blocks currently zoned R7-1, generally bounded by Franklin Avenue, Bowne Street, Cherry Avenue and Kissena Boulevard. These lots are primarily developed with six- and seven-story apartment buildings.

The proposed R7B district is a *contextual district* that permits all residential building types. The maximum allowable FAR would be 3.0 for all uses, including community facilities. The proposed R7B district has a maximum building height of 75 feet, with a base height of 40 to 60 feet, and requires street walls of new buildings to line up with abutting buildings. Off-street parking is required for 50% of the total dwelling units

The proposed R7B district more closely reflects this prevailing character of six- and seven-story apartment buildings.



Seven-story apartment buildings along Beech Avenue between Kissena Boulevard and Bowne Street, in a proposed R7B district

R7-1

R6 to R7-1

One block bounded to the north by Elder Avenue; to the east by Kissena Boulevard; to the south by 45th Avenue; and to the west by Colden Street is proposed to be rezoned from R6 to R7-1. This zoning change would extend an existing R7-1 district across Kissena Boulevard.

The R7-1 district is a medium-density *height factor* district with no fixed height limits. Building envelopes are regulated by the *sky exposure plane*. The maximum residential FAR is 3.44 or 4.0 (on wide streets) if Quality Housing provisions are used. Community facilities are permitted an FAR of 4.8, the same as in R6 districts. Parking spaces are required for 60% of the dwelling units, or 50% if Quality Housing provisions are used.

This proposed extension of the existing R7-1 district reflects the existing character of the block, which is primarily developed with residential buildings ranging from 7 – 19 stories and 2.5 – 3.75 FAR. It would allow a moderate increase in housing units near a primary corridor that is close to downtown Flushing.

Commercial Overlays

The application proposes the following zoning changes relating to commercial overlays:

- Changing the existing C1-2 commercial overlays on both sides of Bowne Street between Franklin Avenue and Ash Avenue, and the existing C2-2 commercial overlays along the north side of 45th Avenue between Robinson Street and Smart Street, to C1-3 commercial overlays. The proposal also includes

reducing the depth of the overlays from 150 feet to 100 feet to prevent the intrusion of commercial uses onto residential side streets. The changes to C1-3 would restrict permitted uses to local retail and services and reduce the parking requirement for commercial uses, generally from one parking space per 300 square feet of commercial floor area to one space per 400 square feet of commercial floor area, to better reflect the narrower depth of the overlays.

- Mapping new C1-3 commercial overlays on three partial block fronts at the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners at the intersection of Parsons Boulevard and 45th Avenue to reflect existing commercial development.

Waldheim Rezoning - **Approved!**

Public Review

Public Review

On June 2, 2008 the Department of City Planning certified the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure ([ULURP](#)) application (C 080457 ZMQ) for the Waldheim Rezoning to begin the formal review process.

Milestone	Date
Department of City Planning Certification	June 2, 2008
Community Board 7 Approval (with conditions)	June 16, 2008
Queens Borough President Hearing	July 10, 2008
City Planning Commission Public Hearing	July 23, 2008
City Planning Commission Approval (Read the  CPC Report)	August 27, 2008
City Council Approval	September 24, 2008

For more information about this proposal please contact the Queens Office of the Department of City Planning at (718) 520-2100

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.