



Whitestone Rezoning - **Approved!**

Introduction



New single-family detached homes
Powell's Cove Blvd. & 152nd
Street



Typical single-family detached homes
17th Road & 149th Street



New semi-detached homes
22nd Avenue & 144th Street

The Department of City Planning proposes zoning map changes for approximately 310 blocks in the whitestone neighborhood of Queens' Community District 7. The area proposed for rezoning is predominantly developed with one and two-family detached houses. The proposed rezoning to lower density and contextual zoning districts would preserve the existing neighborhood scale, preventing development that is inconsistent with the low-rise detached character of the whitestone community.

Background

The area proposed for rezoning is generally bounded by the East River to the north, Little Neck Bay and the Clearview Expressway to the east, 25th and 26th avenues to the south and the whitestone Expressway and 132nd Street to the west. The Cross Island Parkway bisects the rezoning area.

whitestone is one of the oldest European settlements on Long Island, dating to the 1640's. It was home to Francis Lewis, the famed patriot and signatory to the Declaration of Independence. whitestone incorporated as a village in 1869, the same year the railroad arrived, linking whitestone to New York City. This led to the development of homes and estates along the East River in whitestone, Beechhurst and neighboring Malba.



[Locator Map](#)
[\[click to enlarge\]](#)

North of the Cross Island Parkway and west of Clintonville Street, the rezoning area is characterized primarily by one-family detached homes developed at the end of World War II. East of Clintonville Street it is characterized by older homes and, in the neighborhood of Beechhurst, by relatively large single-family detached homes. The LeHavre Houses, a development of apartment buildings typically eight stories in height, are located in the northeast corner of the rezoning area.

The community's central shopping and business area, with local stores, restaurants and some light manufacturing, is centered around the intersection of Clintonville Street and 14th Avenue. A manufacturing district along the East River accommodates a stone crushing facility, a vehicle impound lot, and a small shopping center.

South of the Cross Island Parkway, the rezoning area consists primarily of one- and two-family detached homes on lots that are generally smaller than those in the north of the area. There are a series of semi-detached homes for one- and two-families, as well as the Clearview Gardens apartment complex, several blocks of two-story garden apartments, all of which were developed in the 1950's.

Recently, detached single-family houses have been replaced with housing that is not consistent with the character of the existing neighborhood. In areas zoned for single-family detached residences, large new homes have been constructed that are considerably out-of-scale with the surrounding context.

The proposed rezoning would preserve the existing neighborhood scale by mapping new lower density and contextual zoning districts, preventing further out-of-character development. The proposed action would update zoning that has not been changed since 1961 to better reflect existing built conditions.

Public Review:

On August 22, 2005, the Department of City Planning certified the [Uniform Land Use Review Procedure](#) (ULURP) application for the Whitestone Rezoning to begin the formal public review process.

Community Board 7 held a public hearing in response to the proposal on September 26 and recommended approval. The Queens Borough President recommended approval of the application on October 28, 2005 with the condition that the Department should review the boundaries of the proposed R1-2 districts to ensure that hardships are not created for property owners.

On November 2, 2005 the City Planning Commission held a public hearing and approved the rezoning with modifications on December 7, 2005. The Commission's modifications retained the existing R2 zoning district on a block bounded by Powell's Cove Boulevard, 154th Street, 9th Avenue and 157th Street, and the existing R3-1 on a property located at the intersection of Clintonville Street and 20th Road. (Read the  [CPC Report](#)).

On December 21, 2005, the City Council adopted the zoning changes, and they now are in effect.

 [View a color map illustrating the adopted zoning map change.](#)

For more information on the Whitestone Rezoning, please contact the Queens Office of the Department of City Planning at (718) 286-3170

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Existing Zoning



Existing Zoning: R3-2
New out-of-scale building
16th Avenue & Francis Lewis Blvd.



Existing Zoning: R2
New out-of-scale house
6th Avenue & 147th Street



Existing Zoning: R2
One house on large lot replaced by
two houses on subdivided lot
Powells Boulevard & 157th Street

Existing Context and Zoning:

In areas south of the Cross Island Parkway, the character is a blend of one- and two- family detached houses. In many places the current zoning districts, **R3-1** and **R3-2**, permit detached homes to be replaced with semi-detached or attached homes, increasing residential density and altering traditional neighborhood character. The R3-1 district permits one- and two-family detached and semi-detached buildings. Detached houses must have a lot area of at least 3,800 square feet and a lot width of at least 40 feet; semi-detached homes must have a lot area of at least 1,700 square feet and a lot width of at least 18 feet. The R3-2 zoning allows all housing types, (detached, semi-detached, and attached) and all types of occupancy, (one-, two- and multifamily residences).

Areas currently zoned **R2** are developed primarily with single-family detached homes. The R2 district permits single-family detached homes on lots with an area of at least 3,800 square feet, and a minimum width of 40 feet. The R2 zoning does not set absolute limits on building height, and exempts the first floor of a house from floor area calculations under certain conditions, including the presence of a garage. The flexibility and floor area exemptions allow homes to nearly double their floor area, resulting in development considerably larger than typical homes in the vicinity.



 [Existing Zoning Map](#)
[\[Click to enlarge\]](#)

In certain parts of whitestone where large lots are prevalent, the R2 zoning allows for greater density than is characteristic of the areas. For example, an 80-foot wide lot with an area of 7,600 square feet could be subdivided and a second home could be added or the existing home could be demolished and replaced by two homes on lots half the size of the original.

Scattered retail uses on blockfronts throughout the study area are usually mapped with C1-2 commercial overlays. The C1 overlay accommodates the local retail and service shops needed in residential neighborhoods. In these areas, the overlays are generally mapped at a depth of 150 feet and often extend onto side streets with entirely residential uses. In other areas, there are commercial overlays where there are no commercial uses. Both these situations can lead to commercial encroachment into residential areas.

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Proposed Zoning

Proposed Zoning:

Housing throughout the whitestone rezoning area is predominantly one- and two-family detached residences. Many areas are characterized by large homes on large lots. In other areas there is a mix of one- and two-family semi-detached homes. The proposal has four principal objectives:

- Protect areas developed with large homes on large lots by limiting subdivision into smaller lots;
- Ensure that new single-family houses match the scale of existing development;
- Prevent out-of-character multifamily and attached developments in areas developed primarily with one- and two-family detached residences; and
- Prevent commercial uses from encroaching on residential side streets.



 [Proposed Zoning Map](#)
[\[click to enlarge\]](#)

 [Adopted Zoning Map](#)
December 21, 2005

R 1-2

Three areas are proposed to be rezoned from R2 to R1-2 districts: in the northwest of the study area around Francis Lewis Park; along Riverside Avenue in the northeast of the study area; and around the intersection of Cryder Lane and 160th Street. In the proposed R1-2 zoning districts, residential development would be limited to one-family detached houses, the same as the existing R2. The maximum FAR would remain 0.5. The minimum lot size and lot width requirements would increase to 5,700 square feet and 60 feet respectively, from the 3,800 square feet and 40 feet currently required in the affected areas. The minimum front yard would increase to a 20-foot depth from the 15-foot depth required under R2 zoning, and minimum side yards would increase to 20 feet (total), from the 13 feet (total) currently required. Maximum building height would be controlled by the sky exposure plane, a theoretical inclined plane that cannot be penetrated by the building.



Proposed R1-2 District
14th Avenue & 165th Street

R2A

The proposed action would rezone certain areas from R2, R3-1 and R3-2 to R2A districts. In R2A zoning districts, residential development would be limited to one-family detached houses, the same as in R2. A minimum 20-foot side yard would be required for development on corner lots. A front yard lineup provision would require that homes locate on their lots at a depth of at least 15 feet and equal to an adjacent neighbor up to a depth of 20 feet. Floor area exemptions are limited to 300 square feet for an enclosed accessory parking structure. Maximum building height would be 35 feet, and maximum perimeter wall height 21 feet.



Proposed R2A District
23rd Avenue & 169th Street

View a  [presentation on R2A zoning.](#)

R3X

Two areas are proposed to be rezoned to R3X: along Clearview Park now zoned R3-2, and at the intersection of Francis Lewis Boulevard and 21st Road currently zoned R3-2 and R2. In R3X districts, residential development would be limited to one- or two-family detached residences with a

minimum lot size of 3,325 square feet, and a minimum lot width of 35 feet. The base FAR of 0.5 (and 0.1 attic allowance) is the same as in R3-2 districts. A minimum 10-foot front yard is required in R3X districts, with lineup provisions up to a depth of 20 feet; side yards must total at least 10 feet, each a minimum of two feet wide. The proposed R3X designation would set maximum front wall height at 21 feet, and maximum building height at 35 feet.



Proposed R3X District
200th Street and 17th Avenue

R3A

A large section of the study area south of the Cross Island Parkway east of Parsons Boulevard and west of Clintonville Street, would be rezoned from R3-2 and R3-1 to R3A. In the proposed R3A zoning district, residential development would be limited to one- and two-family detached houses. The minimum lot size is 2,375 square feet and lot width is 25 feet. The maximum FAR would remain 0.5, and the attic allowance would remain 0.1. Front yard requirements call for a minimum depth of 10 feet with lineup provisions, and side yards totaling at least 8 feet. Like the R3X designation, perimeter wall height is limited to no more than 21 feet, and total building height to 35 feet.



Proposed R3A District
21st Avenue & 149th Street

 [View the Zoning Comparison Chart](#)

Proposed Commercial District Changes:

At Clintonville Street and 10th Avenue, and along Utopia Parkway between 19th Avenue and 21st Road, the proposed action would remove existing C1-2 and C2-2 commercial overlays to reflect their residential character. In six areas, existing 150-foot deep C1-2 commercial overlays would be reduced to 100 feet to prevent encroachment of commercial uses onto residential midblocks. The C1-2 designation would be changed to C1-3 to reduce parking requirements.

In two areas, existing C1-2 and C2-2 commercial overlays would be extended to reflect existing commercial uses. The C1-2, C1-3 and C2-2 districts have a maximum commercial FAR of 1.0 in underlying R2 and R3 districts.

Related Notes

-  Items accompanied by this symbol require the [free Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).