

# The City of New York

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## COMMUNITY BOARD 11

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### COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Community Board Members  
From: Henry Euler, East Flushing/North Bayside Zoning Committee  
Date: January 30, 2009

Re: North Flushing Rezoning  
N 090282XRY-Zoning Text Amendment  
090281 ZMQ- Zoning Map Amendment

A joint Public Hearing of Community Boards 7 and 11 was held on Thursday, January 29, 2009 at Holy Cross High School, 26-20 Francis Lewis Boulevard, regarding the application by the Department of City Planning to rezone North Flushing. The presentation of the application was given by Brendan Pillar.

The meeting was chaired by Community Board 7 Chair Eugene Kelty and Jerry Iannece representing Steve Newman for Community Board 11. Christine Haider asked Henry Euler to be her representative as Zoning Chair for Auburndale and North Bayside on CB 11 since she was unable to attend the hearing. Tyler Cassell was present as Zoning Chair for CB 7. Other CB 11 members present were Joseph Sollano, Dennis Novick, Ed Doster, JoAnn Ferrari, George Karahalis and Paul DiBenedetto. Susan Seinfeld and Linda Vallerugo were also in attendance. Several members of CB 7 were present and an estimated 200 community residents attended the hearing. Councilmember Tony Avella, State Senator Frank Padavan, Mark Scott for Borough President Helen Marshall, Gene McSweeney for Ann-Margaret Carrozza, Kevin Kim for Congressman Gary Ackerman and Randy LaForgue for Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum were present.

Councilman Tony Avella spoke about the ULURP procedure and stated that this rezoning plan could possibly be completed in 3 to 4 months instead of the usual 7 months because of the cooperation between the affected Boards 7 and 11. He said that he felt that City Planning addressed every issue raised regarding this plan to this point, and that the initiative would protect the character of the residential neighborhoods covered in the rezoning.

City Planning representative Brendan Pillar proceeded to give a detailed presentation of the rezoning. The rezoning covers 257 blocks with about 50 of those blocks in CB 11. The rezoning has approximate boundaries of 25th and 26th Avenues on the north, Clearview Expressway and Francis Lewis Blvd. on the east, the LIRR, Depot Road and Northern Blvd. on the south and Union Street on the west. In CB 11, the plan covers North Auburndale and parts of Northwest Bayside.

The goal of the rezoning is to update existing zoning designations with newer, lower density designations to reflect the existing housing stock and to ensure that future development does not significantly change the character of the communities in the plan. Most of the blocks (165) in the plan will be rezoned to R2A. Some areas within R5 designations will be downzoned to more appropriate contextual R4 designations. In CB 11, 50 blocks will be rezoned generally from Utopia Pkwy to the Clearview Expressway, 26 Ave to the area by Bayside High School and PS 159 and on the western side of the district to Station Road. The amendment changes R2 zones to R2A, changes some R4-1 to R3X and R-5 areas to R4-1 and R4. Mr. Pillar went through each of the 12 designations to be used in the rezoning and showed the locations where those classifications would be used.

A large section of Broadway/Flushing currently zoned R1-2 will be designated R1-2A. This is a new city wide zoning classification which will remove sky exposure plane, impose a perimeter wall height of 25' and building height of 35', 20' front yards with lineup, limited FAR and lot coverage. This will curb over-scaled single family homes in the Broadway/Flushing neighborhood. It is similar to what R2A does for R2 zones.

In this rezoning plan, commercial overlay depths will be reduced from 150 feet to 100 feet to prevent intrusion of commercial businesses into residential areas and existing C1-2 zones will be replaced by C1-3 zones.

A one block section of Beechhurst outside of the North Flushing area will be rezoned from R1-2 to R2. It is being attached to this plan in order to complete that rezoning process.

After Mr. Pillar's presentation, Community Board members and local residents had an opportunity to ask questions. Many of the questions had to do with what was allowed in specific zones. Some of the questions from residents dealt with specific locations. It was also ascertained that City Planning had made no changes to the plan since it was presented to the CB 7 and 11 zoning committees in December.

Mr. Pillar was asked when the rest of Auburndale, Hollis Hills and Oakland Gardens would be rezoned. He reiterated what has been said in the past, namely that those areas are currently being worked on by City Planning and that a plan would be forthcoming in the very near future. City Planner Edgar Bajana is handling that rezoning initiative. Mr. Pillar could not give a specific date when the plan would be announced.

Several people had signed up to give statements. All of the people who spoke represented local civic associations and all gave positive endorsements to this rezoning plan. No one present at this hearing spoke against the rezoning plan. The new zoning designation R1-2A was also given high marks. One reservation expressed regarding this new designation, however, was that the street wall height in this zone was being set at 25 feet instead of 21 feet. Other than that, a swift adoption of the zoning plan and the new designation was urged.

Senator Frank Padavan also gave his approval to the plan and commended all involved for their hard work and cooperation. He asked when the City Council might be voting on this rezoning plan. Councilman Avella stated that if all went as planned, that this rezoning could be approved as early as late March. Councilman Avella also stated the rules regarding how new construction and homeowner alterations are handled with respect to whether they come under new zoning rules or are grandfathered under old zoning rules when a rezoning is done. He urged residents to contact his office if there were any questions or concerns regarding this issue.

Jerry Iannece stated that the Boards will vote on the two applications at their Board meetings in February. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.