



The City of New York

# Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills  
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

**Jerry Iannece** Chairperson / **Susan Seinfeld** District Manager

## COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: All Board Members  
FROM: Joan Garippa, Co-Chair, Little Neck Zoning Committee  
Allan Palzer, Co-Chair Little Neck Zoning Committee  
Joseph Sollano, Chair, Douglaston Zoning Committee  
RE: ULURP # N 130331 ZRY  
Flood Resilience Zoning Text Amendment  
DATE: June 5, 2013

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On Tuesday June 4, 2013, the Little Neck and Douglaston Zoning Committees convened to review the above referenced item. Committee members present were the Chairs, Joan Garippa, Allan Palzer and Joe Sollano, Board Members Alim Gafar, Roy Giusetti, Chris Petallides, Gordon Keit and community member Ed Doster. Also present were Susan Seinfeld, District Manager, John Young, Queens Director and planner, Hye-Kyung Yang from the Dept. of City Planning,

Following Superstorm Sandy in October, 2012, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a new 100-year flood map (now being further reviewed and revised), and the Mayor issued an Executive Order that required the City to revise Zoning Text and Building Codes in order to remove regulatory barriers that would hinder or prevent reconstruction of properties.

Buildings that were severely damaged or destroyed during Superstorm Sandy will have to comply with the new flood resistant construction standards. Property owners living within the newly-enlarged FEMA flood zones will have to modify their property to comply with these new standards in order to obtain flood insurance. At the end of the year, FEMA flood insurance rates will be released based on the new zones. The final FEMA Flood Zone maps will be adopted in 2015. In 2016, the City will monitor compliance with the zoning text.

Basically, FEMA requires buildings to be elevated 1-2' above the FEMA flood elevation to a line called the Freeboard Requirement or FRCE, Flood-Resistant Construction Elevation. In residential areas, homes will be allowed to be built to a higher elevation. The building height will be measured from the FRCE to the roofline, thereby allowing the home to recapture lost floor area. Front yard exemptions will be made for stairs and ramps to access higher homes with both unenclosed and roofed porches. Mechanical equipment with screening will be permitted obstructions in rear yards that are at higher levels. The ground floors will not be allowed to be used for anything but storage or parking and no cellars or basements will be permitted. Existing basements and cellars will have to have storm vents to allow water to pass through. New streetscape requirements will allow yards to be raised from the curb with 30" retaining walls and a slope up to the building.

The Committee members reviewed the 100-year flood maps. There are homes in Doug-Bay, Douglas Manor and in Little Neck, north of the LIRR, that are within the flood zone. Discussion followed and concerns were raised about the added costs for new homes, the possible depreciation of market values and the high cost of reconstructing existing homes to meet these requirements which can mean raising the house above the FRCE. Federal flood insurance may not be available to property owners who do not comply.

Alim Gafar asked about how the changes will affect the landmarked areas that are in the flood zone. Mr. Young said that they will be discussing this with the Landmarks Preservation Commission.