



Instructions to testify at this meeting by computer, smartphone, or tablet are posted at:

- Web Address: [nyc.gov/engage](https://nyc.gov/engage) under "[Upcoming Meetings](#)"
  - Click: "[City Planning Scoping Meeting for Staten Island Special Districts Update](#)"
- If you wish to testify at the meeting by phone, please dial:
  - Toll Number: 888-788-0099
- When prompted, enter:
  - Meeting ID: 939 4180 7008
  - Password: 1
  - Press # if participant ID is requested
- If you would like to testify via phone, need light assistance with technical issues, or have any questions about participation, you may dial the phone number above, then enter the following meeting ID and password when prompted:
  - Meeting ID: 618 237 7396
  - Password: 1
  - Press # if participant ID is requested

*If any speakers experience technical issues that don't allow them to speak, please visit the "How-to Guides" page on NYC Engage website for assistance or hang up and call the phone number above to receive help*



This is the **Public Scoping Meeting** for the Staten Island Special Districts Update Proposal.

For our record, the **CEQR** application number for this project is **20DCP130R**.

Today's date is January 28, 2021 and the time is approximately 4:00 PM

I'm **Olga Abinader**, and I'm the Director of the **Environmental Assessment and Review Division (EARD)** of the **NYC Department of City Planning**. I'll be chairing today's scoping meeting.

**The Department of City Planning** is acting on behalf of the City Planning Commission as the **lead agency** for the proposal's **environmental review**.

As lead agency, the Department is overseeing the preparation and completion of an **Environmental Impact Statement**, or EIS, for the **Staten Island Special Districts Update** proposal.

Joining me are several of my colleagues from the Department of City Planning.

**Stephanie Shellooe** is the Deputy Director of the Department's Environmental Assessment and Review Division.

**Christopher Hadwin** is the Director of the Department's Staten Island Borough Office.

**Aleena Farishta** is the Deputy Director of the Department's Staten Island Borough Office.

**Annabelle Meunier** is a Team Leader in the Environmental Assessment and Review Division.

**Laura Kenny** is the Associate Project Manager for this proposal in the Environmental Assessment and Review Division.

**Joe Helferty** is a Senior Team Leader from the Staten Island Borough Office on the project team.

**George Todorovic** is an Associate Project Manager from the Staten Island Borough Office on the project team.

**William Vidal** is the Counsel for this proposal in the Department's Counsel's Office.

- Together, we are here to receive your comments on the Draft Scope of Work for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, for the **Staten Island Special Districts Update** proposal.
- The **Draft Scope of Work** identifies all of the subjects that will be analyzed in the upcoming **DEIS** and explains how those subjects will be studied.
- The **Draft Scope is available** on the Department of City Planning website.

- The purpose of today's scoping meeting is to allow for **public participation** in the preparation of the DEIS at the earliest stage possible.
- Toward that end, the Department will have an opportunity today **to receive comments on the Draft Scope** from elected officials, government agencies, community board representatives, and members of the public.
- We also welcome **written comments** on the Draft Scope of Work.
- Written comments can be submitted through **Monday, March 1, 2021.**

- At the end of the written comment period, the Department, as lead agency, will **review all comments** – those we hear today as well as all written comments we’ve received.
- After carefully reviewing all comments, the Department will decide what **changes**, if any, need to be made to the Draft Scope of Work and issue a **Final Scope of Work**.
- It is the Final Scope of Work that will serve as the basis for **preparing the DEIS**.

- Today's scoping meeting marks the beginning of the **environmental review process** for the **Staten Island Special Districts Update** proposal.
- **No decisions will be made today** regarding the Draft Scope of Work.
- The purpose of the meeting is to **allow the public to provide their comments** about the Draft Scope of Work, and to allow the Department to **listen to those comments**. It's important for all voices to be heard today.

- I will now focus on the structure of today's meeting, which will be held in two separate but identical sessions. Each session is going to follow the same **three (3) part structure**.
- During the first part, colleagues from of DCP's Staten Island Borough Office will give a **brief overview** describing the Staten Island Special Districts Update proposal. A representative of WSP, the environmental consultant firm for the proposal, will then provide a short summary of the **Draft Scope of Work**.
- During the second part of the meeting, we will be **receiving comments** on the Draft Scope from elected officials, government agencies, and community board representatives.
- During the third and final part of the meeting, the Department will **receive comments** from the general public. The meeting will end only when everyone who has signed up to provide testimony has had a chance to be heard.

- Onto a few logistics **for today's scoping meeting**. The protocol is intended to ensure that **everyone has a chance to speak, and all voices can be heard**.
- If you wish to speak and plan to access the meeting online using a computer or tablet, or smartphone, please remember to register online through the "City Planning Scoping Meeting for Staten Island Special Districts Update" page of the NYC Engage Portal, at [www.nyc.gov/NYCEngage](http://www.nyc.gov/NYCEngage)
- A link to join us and provide your testimony will be emailed to you after you have completed the registration process on the NYC Engage Portal. We will add you to our speakers' list.

- When it is your turn to speak, your name will be called and you will be granted temporary speaking privileges by Department of City Planning staff, so please listen closely for your name to be called.
- Once your name has been called, we will help you unmute your microphone, and you will be asked to convey your remarks. To allow us to hear from everyone who wishes to speak, we ask you to please limit your remarks to 3 minutes. A **3:00-minute countdown clock** will run on the screen, if you are participating online. At the 3:00-minute mark, your time will expire. At that time you will be asked to conclude your remarks.
- Please also note that your testimony will be verbal only. We will be able to hear you, but we will not be able to see you.

- An additional note of instructions for those of you joining us by phone today: If you wish to provide testimony via telephone, please select \*9 when prompted.
- Please listen for me to call out the last three digits of your phone number. At that point, you will be given the temporary ability to share your testimony.
- You must press \*6 to unmute your telephone, and we will be able to hear you speak. When your testimony is complete, or your three minutes have expired, whichever comes first, you must press \*6 again to mute yourself.
- We would like to encourage dial-in participants who wish to provide testimony to register via phone using the dial-in participant hotline.
- Please note that muting and unmuting registered speakers may take a moment, as we are adjusting to this new meeting format.

## **Time Limits:**

- Speakers from the general public have three minutes to give testimony. There are a few exceptions to the three-minute time limit. Elected officials, for example, are given the courtesy of jumping to the front of the queue and are not limited to three minutes.

## **Livestream Viewers:**

- To those of you viewing us on livestream, and wishing to testify, please be mindful of potential background noise during your testimony. Make sure that the livestream is muted when you begin your testimony, to avoid hearing an echo.



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**Written comments will be accepted by the lead agency through  
Monday, March 1, 2021.**

Comments can be emailed to: [20DCP130R\\_DL@planning.nyc.gov](mailto:20DCP130R_DL@planning.nyc.gov)

Comments can be mailed to:

**New York City Department of City Planning, Environmental Assessment & Review  
Division**

**Attn: Olga Abinader, Director**

**120 Broadway, 31st Floor**

**New York, NY 10271**



# STATEN ISLAND SPECIAL DISTRICTS UPDATE

Scoping Meeting

CEQR application number: 20DCP130R

January 28, 2021





- Proposal Overview
- Draft Scope of Work
- Public comments on the Draft Scope

# Existing Special Districts – Areas affected by the proposal

Community Boards | Neighborhoods | Year Established

## Special Hillside Preservation District (SHPD) | 1987

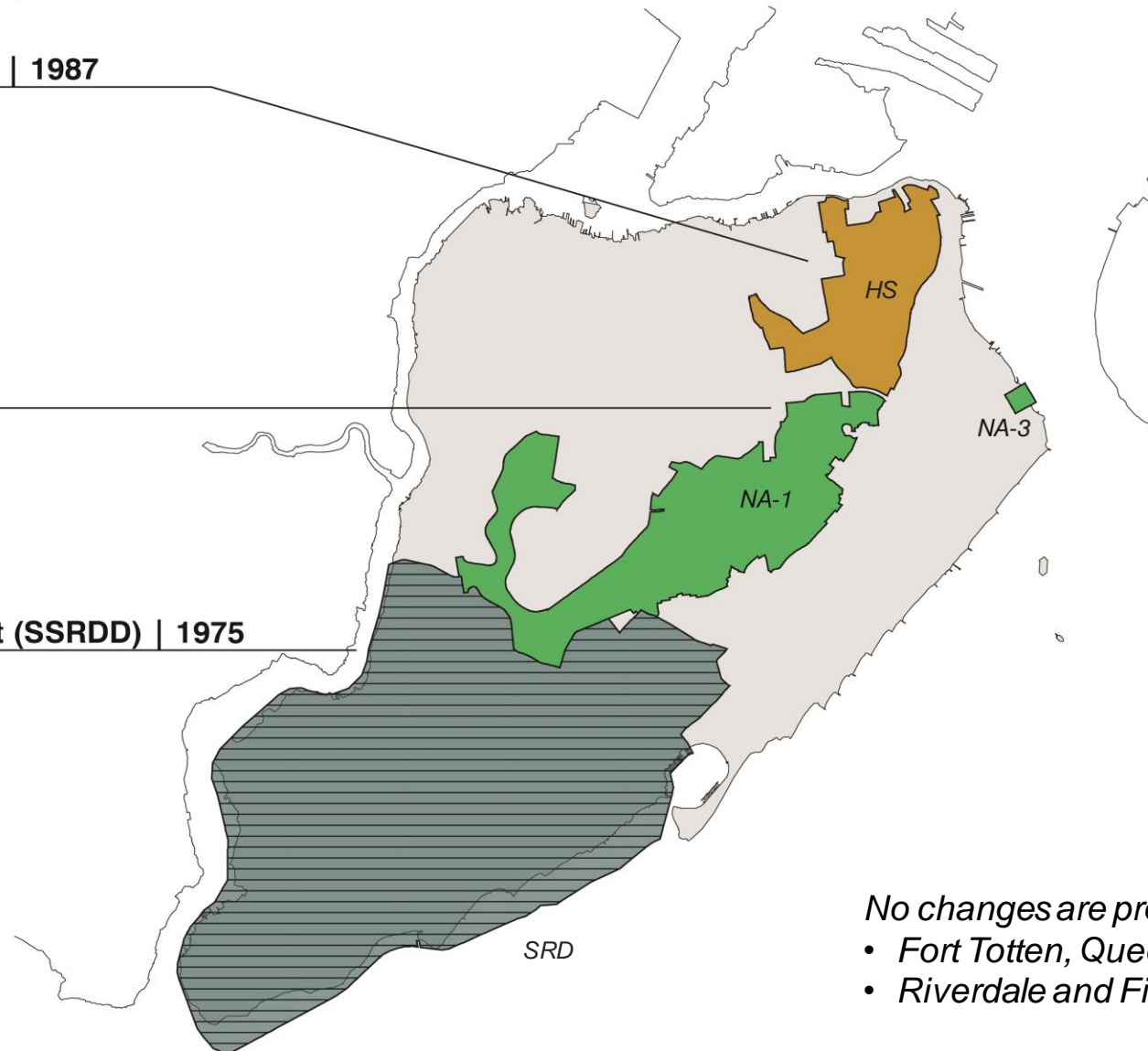
- CB 1
- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| ■ Silver Lake   | ■ West Brighton |
| ■ Grymes Hill   | ■ Ward Hill     |
| ■ Tompkinsville | ■ Randall Manor |
| ■ New Brighton  | ■ St. George    |

## Special Natural Area District (SNAD) | 1974

- CB 2
- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| ■ Todt Hill    | ■ Lighthouse Hill |
| ■ Emerson Hill | ■ Shore Acres     |

## Special South Richmond Development District (SSRDD) | 1975

- CB 3
- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| ■ Tottenville     | ■ Annadale        |
| ■ Charleston      | ■ Eltingville     |
| ■ Rossville       | ■ Arden Heights   |
| ■ Sandy Ground    | ■ Great Kills     |
| ■ Woodrow         | ■ Prince's Bay    |
| ■ Bay Terrace     | ■ Richmond Valley |
| ■ Pleasant Plains |                   |

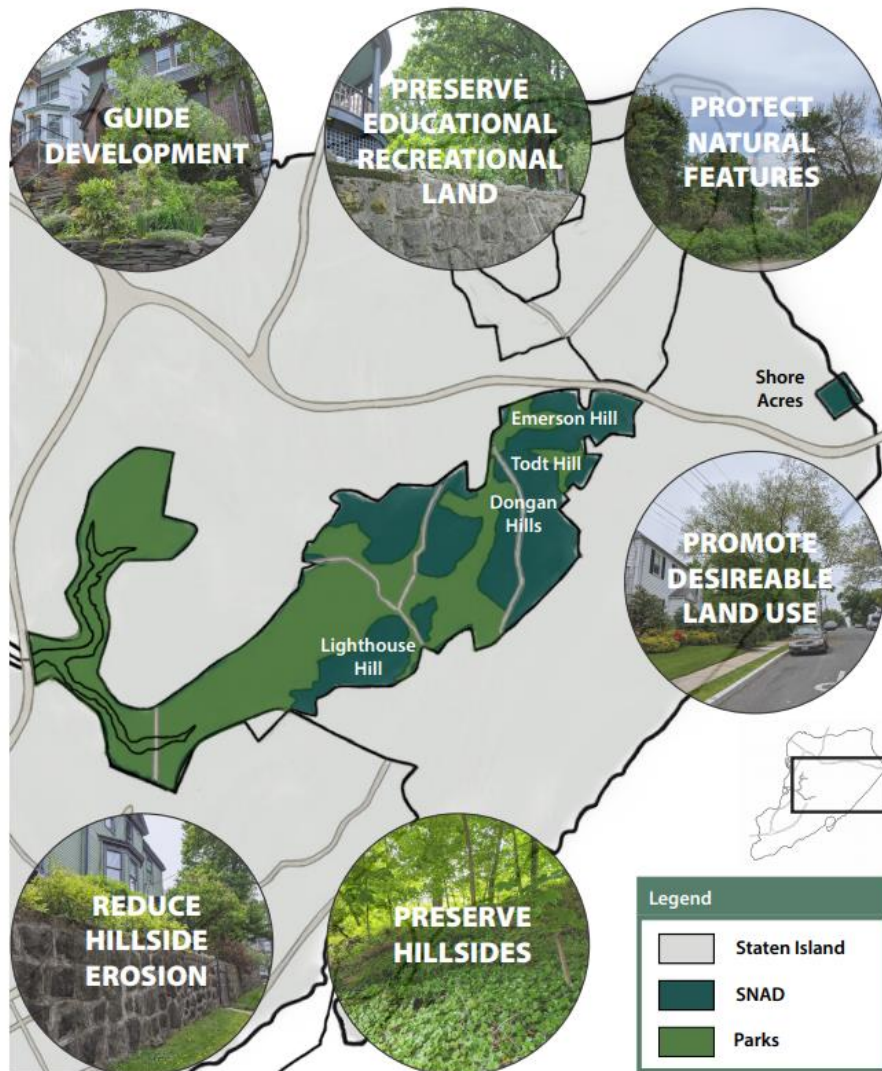


*No changes are proposed for the SNAD in:*

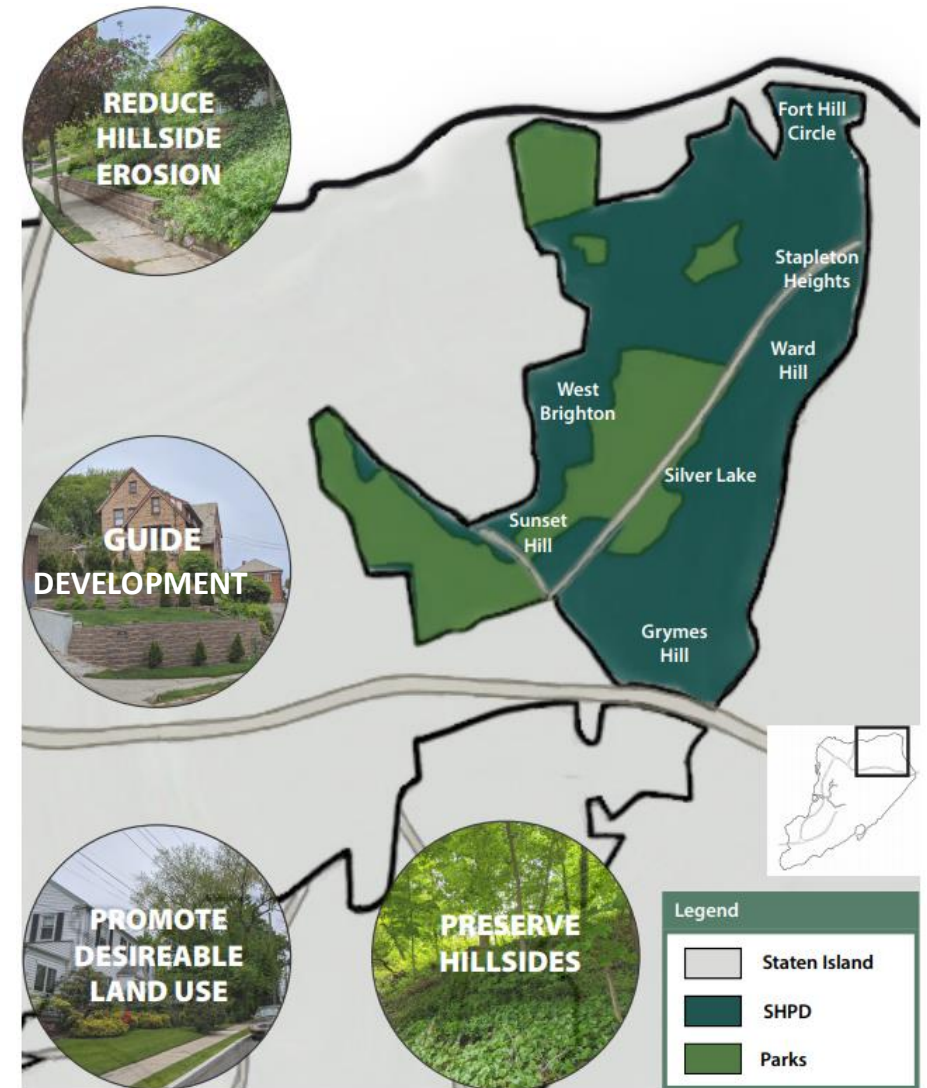
- Fort Totten, Queens
- Riverdale and Fieldston, Bronx

# Background and Goals of the Special Districts

## Special Natural Area District (SNAD)



## Special Hillside Preservation District (SHPD)



*The special districts have enhanced neighborhood character by creating bucolic and tree-lined streets and preserved hillsides and wetlands. Our proposal aims to uphold these goals and improve the approvals process for new development.*

# Background and Goals of the Special Districts

## Special South Richmond Development District (SSRDD)

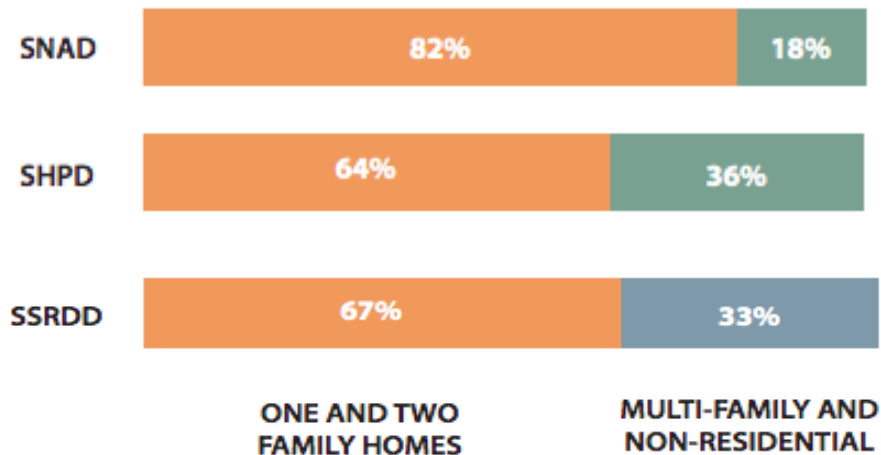


*The special districts have enhanced neighborhood character by creating bucolic and tree-lined streets and preserved wetlands. Our proposal aims to uphold these goals and improve the approvals process for new development.*

# Purpose & Need - Why is an update needed to these regulations?

## Existing regulations

- **Rigid rules** for development of small sites.
- **Rules have not been updated** to reflect best practices or updated ecological science since the 1970s.
- Lack of clarity on what is permitted with **inconsistent outcomes**.
- **Little oversight on large sites** with natural resources that affect the public realm.
- Most applications are **enlargements or new pools/patios for 1-2 family homes**.
- On average seeking an approval costs **thousands of dollars** and takes at least 1 year.



## Who is asking for these changes?

**SI homeowners** and **communities** have asked DCP:

- Why do homeowners need City Planning Commission approvals for **simple alterations** when this isn't required elsewhere in Staten Island?
- The process is so complex and burdensome - **how can homeowners save time and money** for these **small projects**?
- Why can't the City focus review on **larger sites** or more **environmentally sensitive sites**?

### **SI Working Group:**

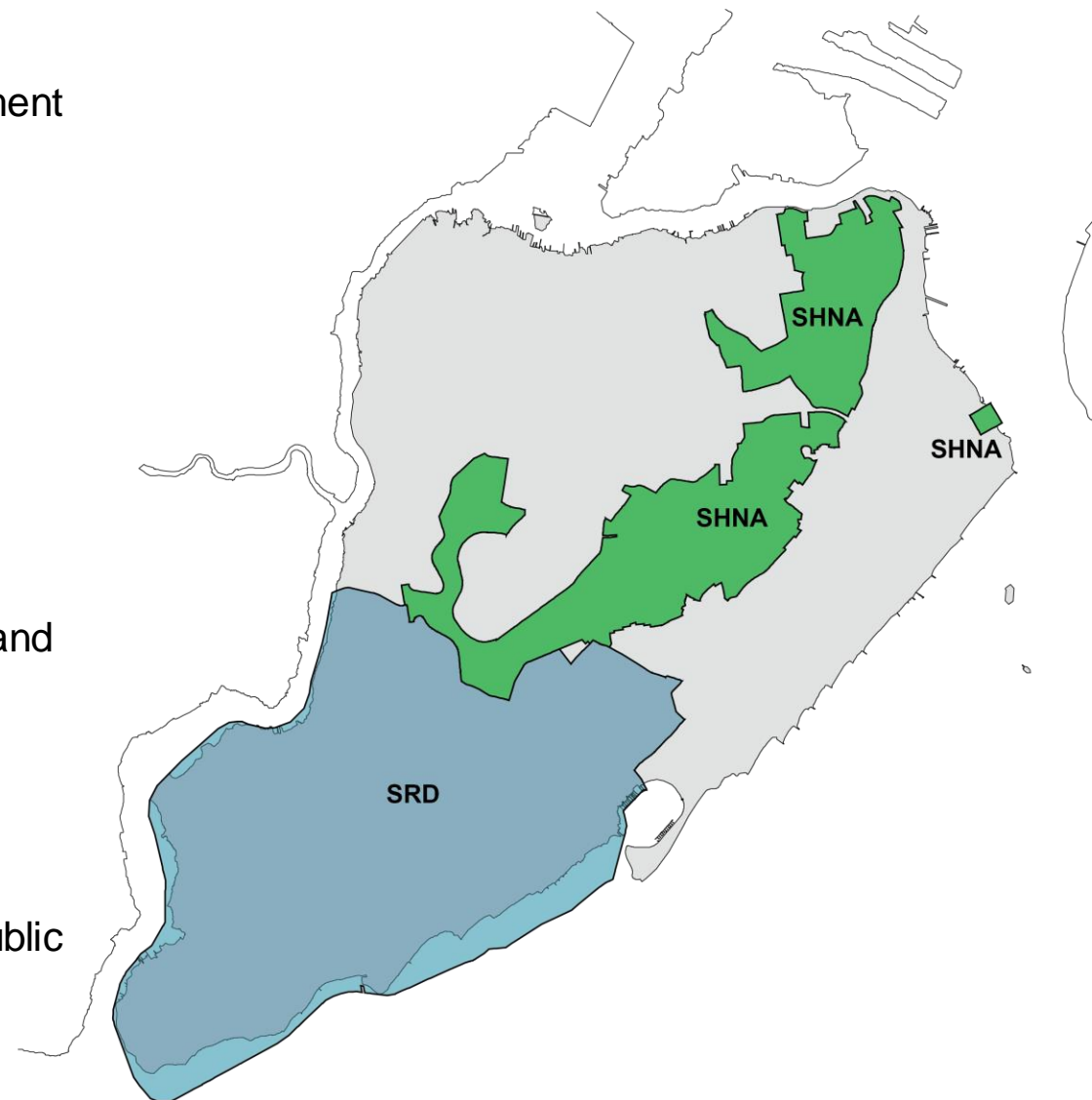
- SI AIA
- SI BIA
- Protectors of Pine Oak Woods
- Serpentine Art and Nature Commons
- Environmental professionals
- Community Boards 1, 2, and 3
- Elected officials
- City and State agencies

## Proposed Actions:

- **SHPD and SNAD** – Zoning Text Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment to establish the Special Hillside and Natural Area District (SHNAD)
- **SSRDD** – Zoning Text Amendment to update process/regulations

## Principles established by DCP and the Working Group:

- Create **homeowner-friendly zoning** regulations by simplifying the approvals process and removing red tape for small properties.
- Provide **greater predictability** for the protection of natural resources and neighborhood character, with clearer rules based on nearly 50 years of **best practices and updated ecological science**.
- Give the CPC and the community board **greater oversight and more input on large developments** that have a significant impact on the public realm, neighborhood character, and natural areas.





## **Updating the Review Process for SHPD, SNAD, and SSRDD:**

- Remove CPC review for most small sites (less than 1 acre).
- **Focus CPC and community board review** where development is proposed on:
  - Large sites (+1 acre)
  - New private roads (any size)
  - Ecologically sensitive sites with 4+ lots/buildings or 8+ dwelling units in the newly proposed Escarpment Area of SHNAD (any size)

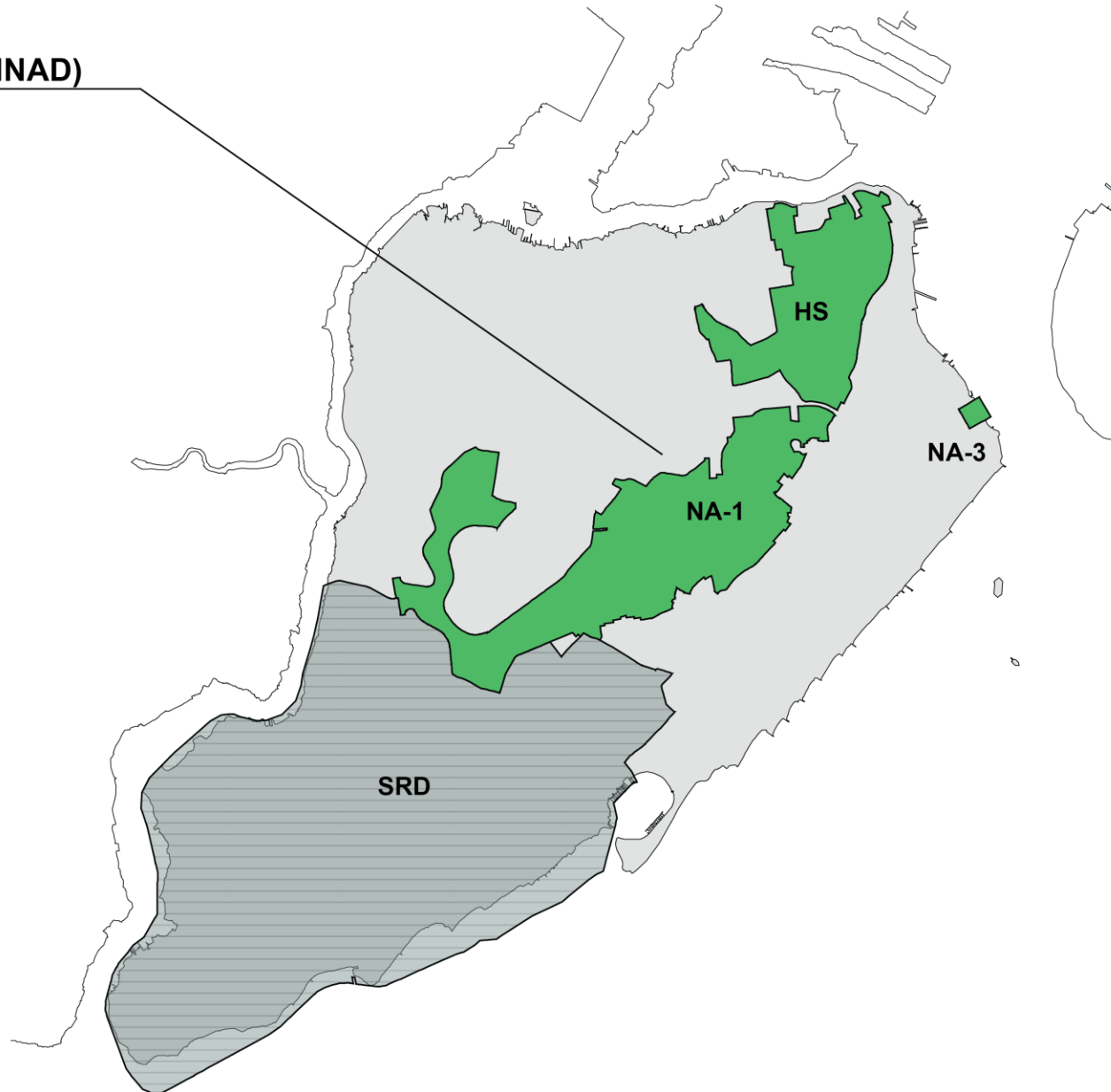
## **Other updates included within the Draft Scope:**

- Updating the CPC Review Process for Cross Access regulations applicable in Staten Island.
- Clarifying Lower-Density Growth Management Area (LDGMA) requirements for ground floor use applicable in commercial overlays in Staten Island.

# Special Hillside and Natural Area District (SHNAD) Proposal

## Special Hillside and Natural Area District (SHNAD)

- |      |                 |                   |
|------|-----------------|-------------------|
| CB 1 | ■ Silver Lake   | ■ West Brighton   |
|      | ■ Grymes Hill   | ■ Ward Hill       |
|      | ■ Tompkinsville | ■ Randall Manor   |
|      | ■ New Brighton  | ■ St. George      |
| CB 2 | ■ Todt Hill     | ■ Lighthouse Hill |
|      | ■ Emerson Hill  | ■ Shore Acres     |



# Current SNAD & HS Structure



*\*These rules do not exist in SSRDD*

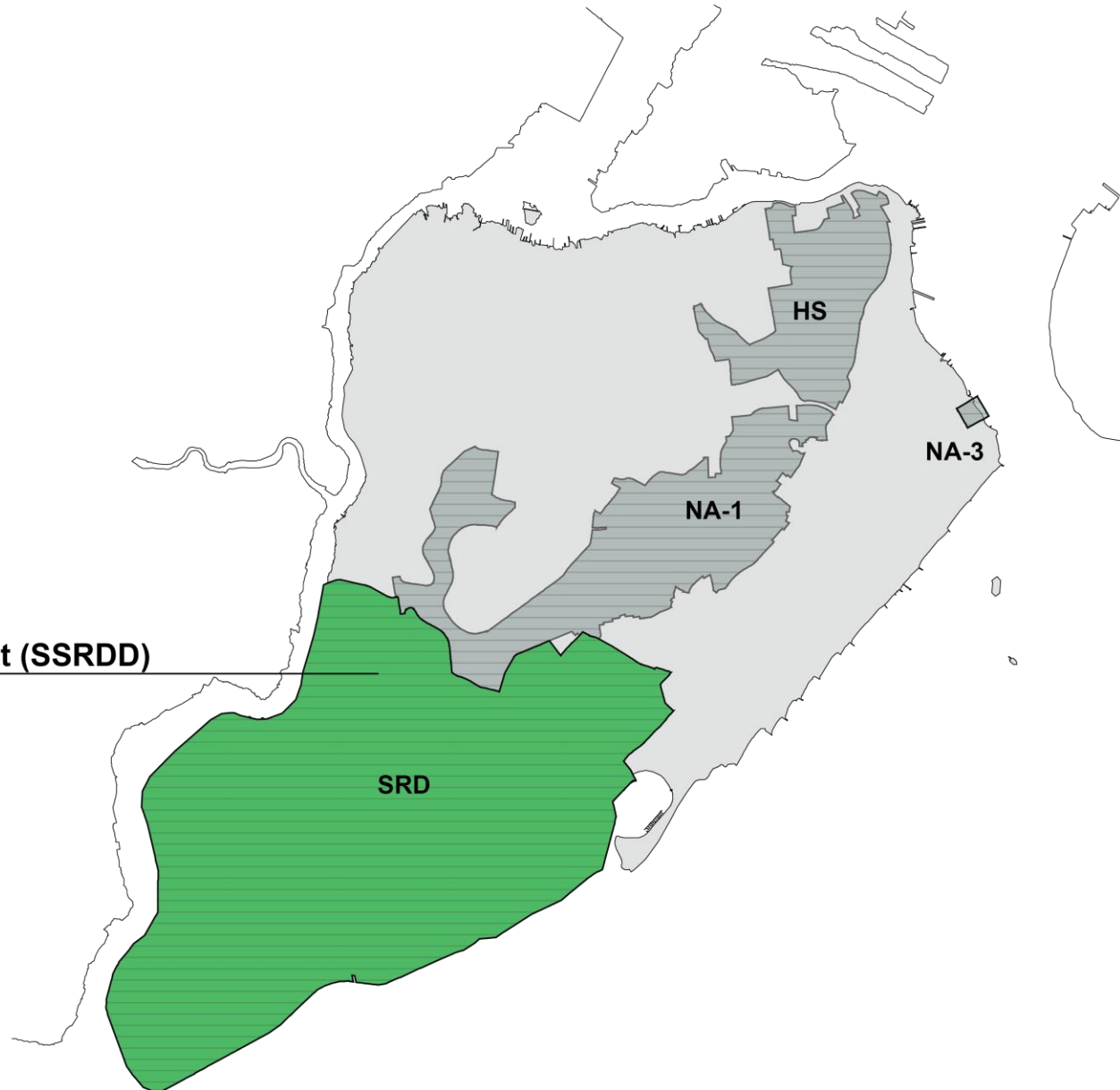


## Zoning Map Amendment & Zoning Text Amendment

- **Reflect today's best practices** in zoning to balance developments with the preservation of steep slopes and natural features.
- **Simplify the process for small sites** to develop as-of-right while offering the same protections as today.
- **Strengthen CPC and community review on larger sites** that have a more significant impact on the public realm.

## Special South Richmond Development District (SSRDD)

- CB 3
- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| ■ Tottenville     | ■ Annadale        |
| ■ Charleston      | ■ Eltingville     |
| ■ Rossville       | ■ Arden Heights   |
| ■ Sandy Ground    | ■ Great Kills     |
| ■ Woodrow         | ■ Prince's Bay    |
| ■ Bay Terrace     | ■ Richmond Valley |
| ■ Pleasant Plains |                   |





**Redundant rules** because of citywide regulations adopted since 1975

Rules that don't reflect current **CPC best practices** and aren't codified in zoning.

**Park Streets\***

**Arterial Streets\***

**Special Areas  
D, F, and K\***

**Designated  
Open Space\***

**Group Parking**

**Tree Removal  
Authorization**

*CPC review for front yard landscaping, street trees and curb cuts.*

*CPC review for curb cuts and setbacks on major roadways.*

*CPC review for sites in certain areas of SRD.*

*CPC review to ensure DOS is balanced with development.*

*CPC review for parking lots +30 spaces, and compliance with citywide parking lot standards.*

*CPC review to remove trees outside building footprints and parking areas.*

Regulations that no longer reflect built conditions or have **low applicability**

*\*rules with asterisk do not exist in SNAD/HS*



## Zoning Text Amendment

- **Remove redundant zoning regulations** and outdated district elements that overlap with citywide zoning rules and do not reflect current built conditions.
- **Reflect today's best practices** in zoning that have been developed since 1975 to help guide development and preserve natural features.
- **Simplify the process for small sites** to develop as-of-right with the same protections as today.
- **Strengthen CPC and community review on larger sites** that have a more significant impact on the public realm.



**Based on feedback to simplify the prior Special Districts proposal, this draft proposal includes the following changes:**

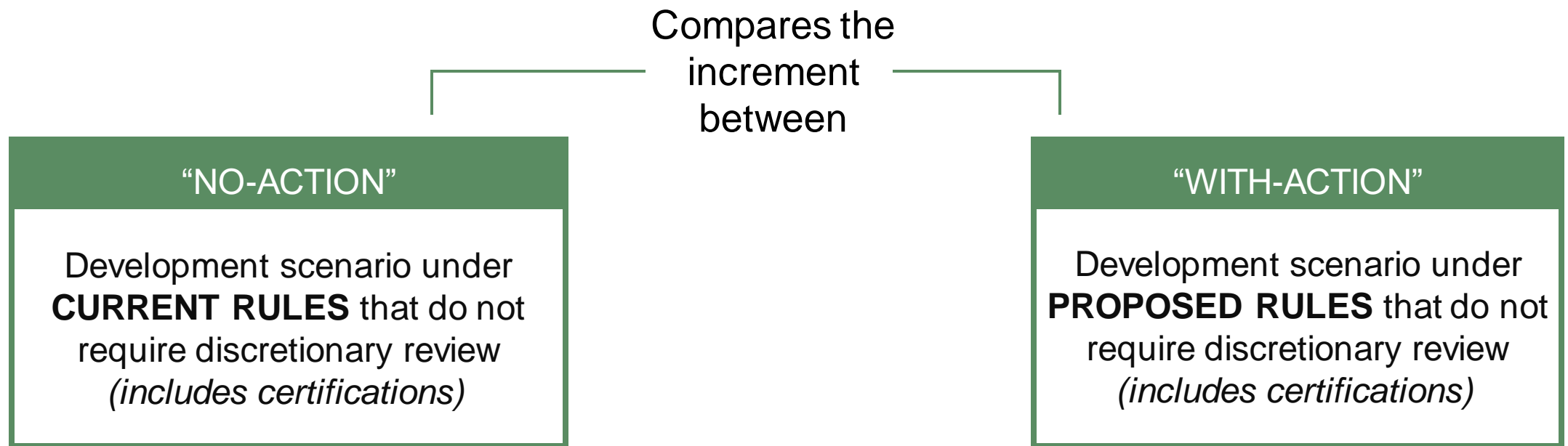
- **Simplified wetland proposal** – the proposal doesn't include a 60-foot planted buffer between homes and wetlands. Instead, NYSDEC would continue to regulate wetlands similar to how they do today, and the updated proposal would reflect today's best practices to ensure development is appropriate and doesn't conflict with these sensitive features.
- The proposal **does not place additional planting or restricted lot coverage/hard surface** requirements on sites next to wetlands, Parks, or Bluebelts, recognizing Staten Islanders are good stewards of these important resources.
- **Simplified tree planting and groundcover** requirements reflect today's best practices in SNAD/Hillsides and don't place additional burden on homeowners.
- **Flexible habitat preservation** – Instead of a rigid and uniform requirement for all large sites (1+ acre), the updated proposal would utilize a survey of existing conditions and consultation with the community to determine the appropriate amount of preservation necessary to balance good development with ecological preservation and connectivity.
- **Separate South Richmond** from the SNAD and Hillsides proposal to recognize its unique zoning rules, with a focus on reflecting today's best practices and simplifying the review process for small properties.



## Environmental Impact Statement:

- Analytical Framework
- Prototypical Analysis
- Conceptual Analysis

- **Prototypical (Generic) Examples** for "small sites" to show scenarios that allow development without CPC discretionary review. The prototypical examples compares the changes to proposed regulations (including elimination of existing discretionary actions), in which the development would proceed as-of-right in the future With-Action scenario.

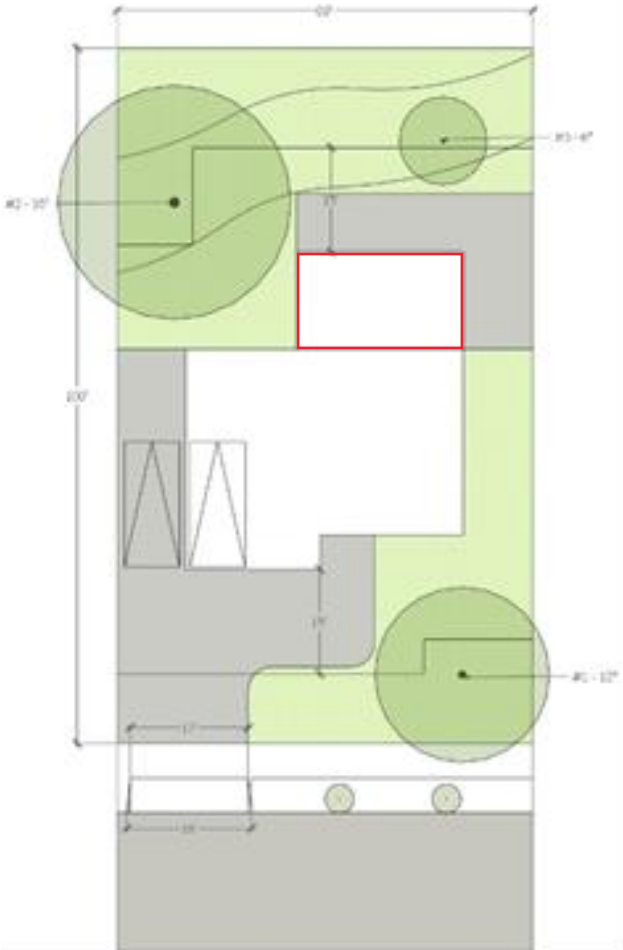


- **Conceptual Analysis** shows example scenarios that would require discretionary review under the proposal.

## Enlargement of single-family detached home, R1-2 District in existing SHPD/SNAD

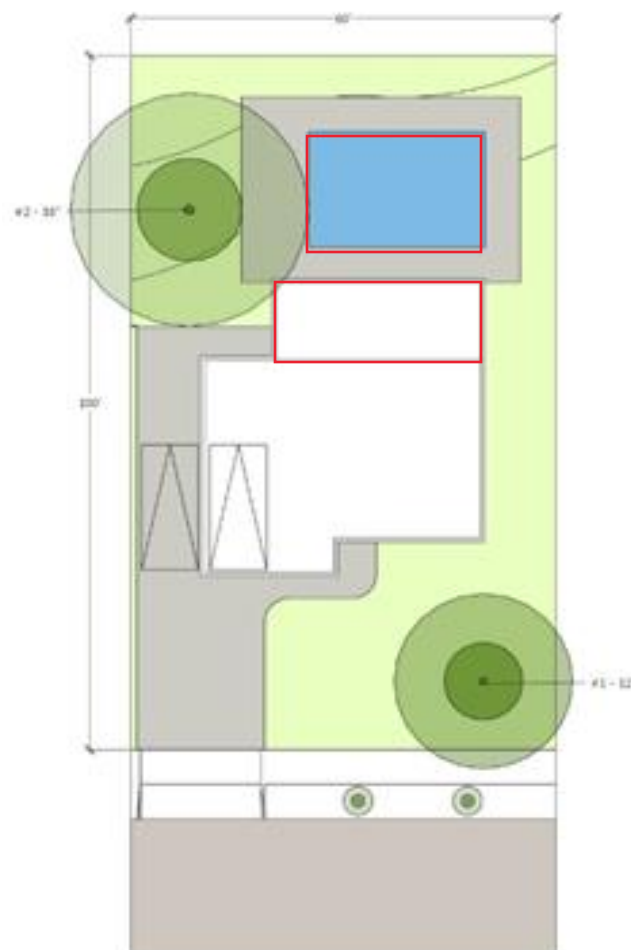
### NO-ACTION

*(Current Rules)*



### WITH-ACTION

*(Proposed Rules)*



### NO-ACTION SCENARIO

- Limited enlargement possible without CPC authorizations for tree removal or topographic modification.

### WITH-ACTION SCENARIO

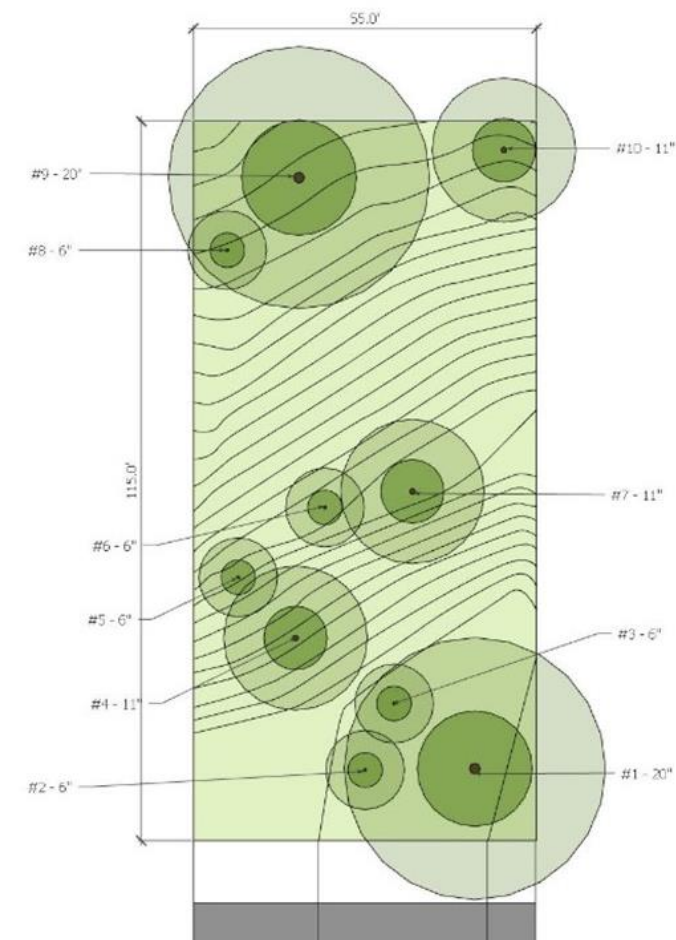
- In-ground pool allowed as-of-right
- As-of-right tree removal and adjusted tree credit values
- Lot coverage requirements
- Permeability requirements

### Improved outcomes:

- *greater site planning flexibility*
- *preserve natural features*
- *adequate space for planted areas*
- *achieve storm-water management consistently*

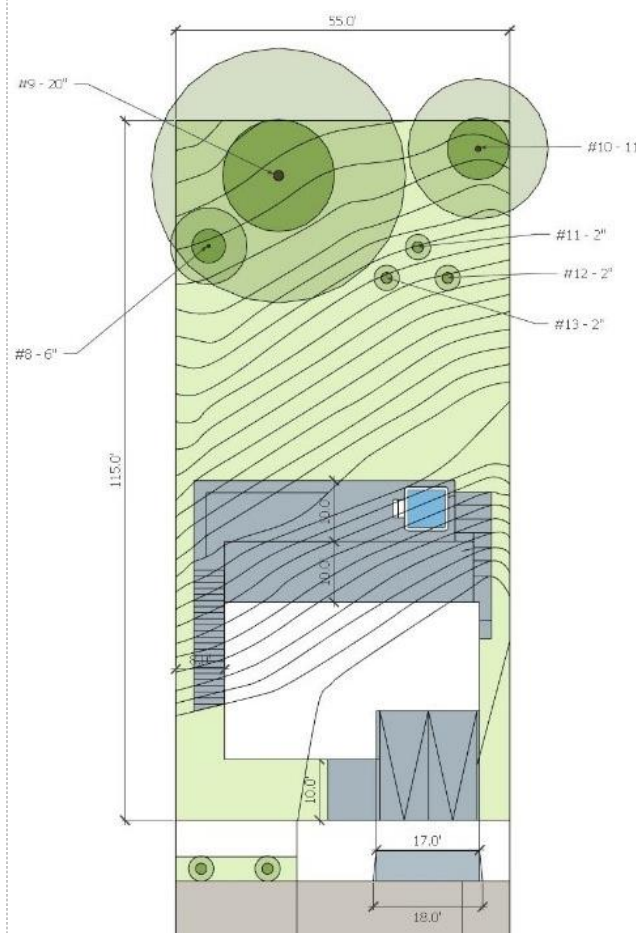
### NO-ACTION

(Current Rules)



### WITH-ACTION

(Proposed Rules)



### NO-ACTION SCENARIO

- Limited development without CPC review in SNAD (unless lot is less than 10,000 sf and no natural features are disturbed).
- SHPD allows development as-of-right on Tier I sites, and requires Authorizations on Tier II sites.

### WITH-ACTION SCENARIO

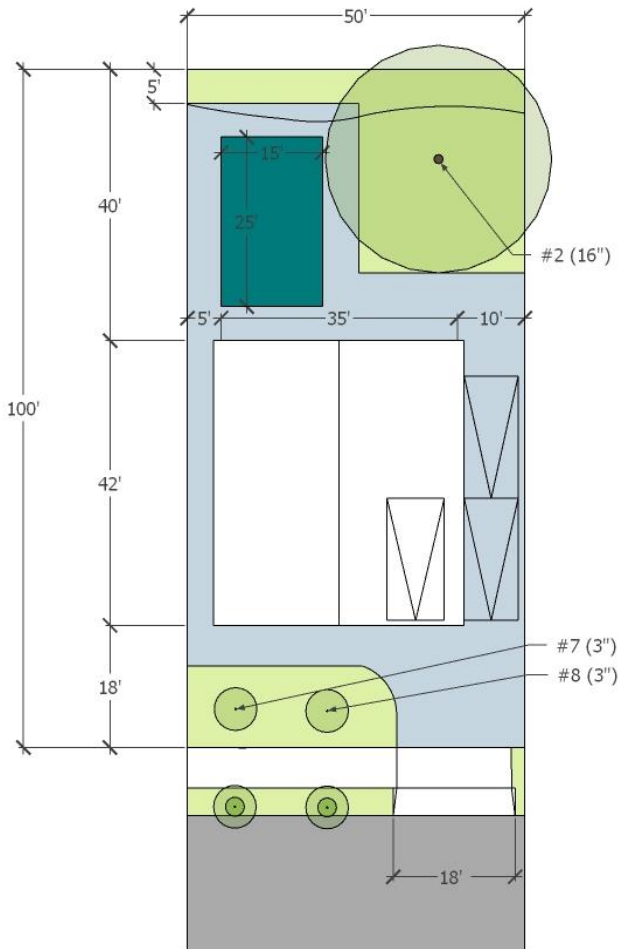
- Development allowed as-of-right
- As-of-right tree removal and adjusted tree credit values
- Lot coverage requirements
- Permeability requirements

### Improved outcomes:

- greater site planning flexibility*
- preserve natural features*
- adequate space for planted areas*
- achieve storm-water management consistently*

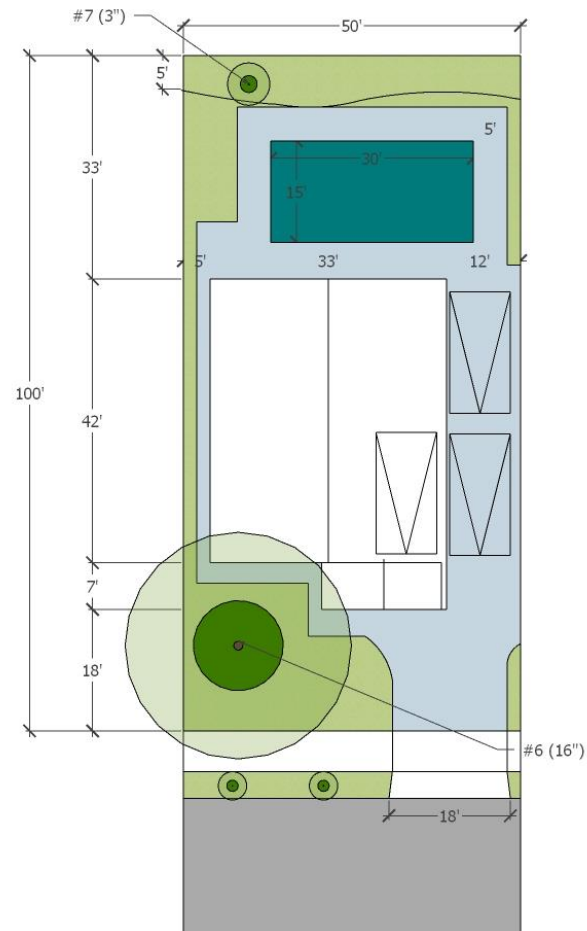
### NO-ACTION

*(Current Rules)*



### WITH-ACTION

*(Proposed Rules)*



### NO-ACTION SCENARIO

- Limited disturbance to trees or topography allowed without CPC review (outside of building or required parking area)

### WITH-ACTION SCENARIO

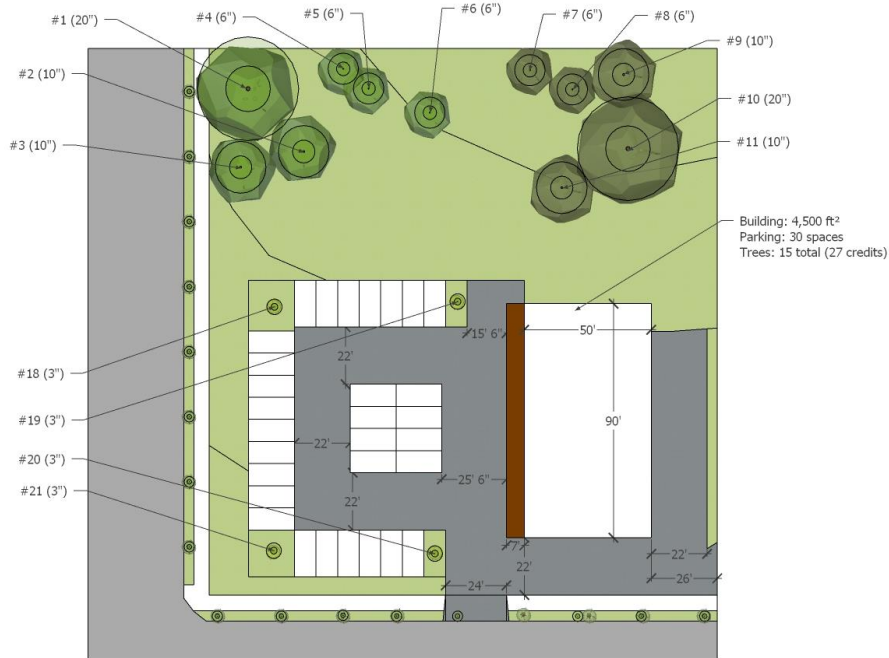
- In-ground pool allowed as-of-right
- As-of-right tree removal and adjusted tree credit values

#### Improved outcomes:

- greater site planning flexibility*
- encourage preservation of mature trees*

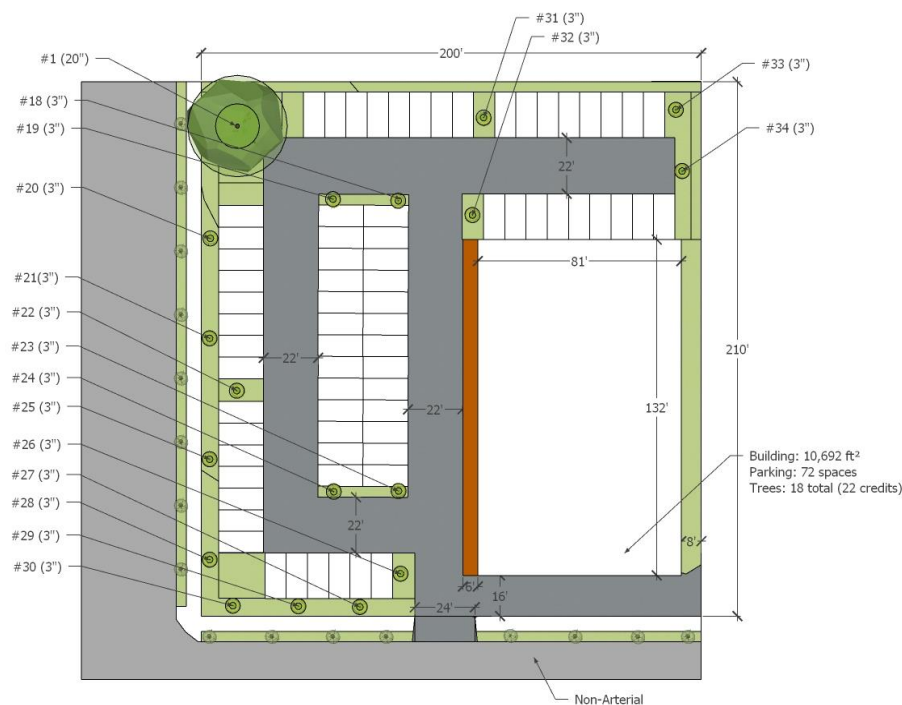
### NO-ACTION

*(Current Rules)*



### WITH-ACTION

*(Proposed Rules)*



### NO-ACTION SCENARIO

- Maximum of 30 parking spaces possible without CPC review
- Limited disturbance to trees or topography allowed without CPC review beyond building and required parking

### WITH-ACTION SCENARIO

- More than 30 parking spaces allowed as-of-right on site less than 1 acre
- Adjusted Tree Credit values
- Greater site planning flexibility

### EXISTING

- Current goals of these districts aim to preserve significant natural features.
- Over the past 50 years, preservation of the Serpentine Ridge, hillsides, and forested woodlands and wetlands have occurred mostly on larger sites in all districts due to CPC and community review.
- Current rules don't provide sufficient guidance or clarity on how site planning can achieve a balance of preservation and development.

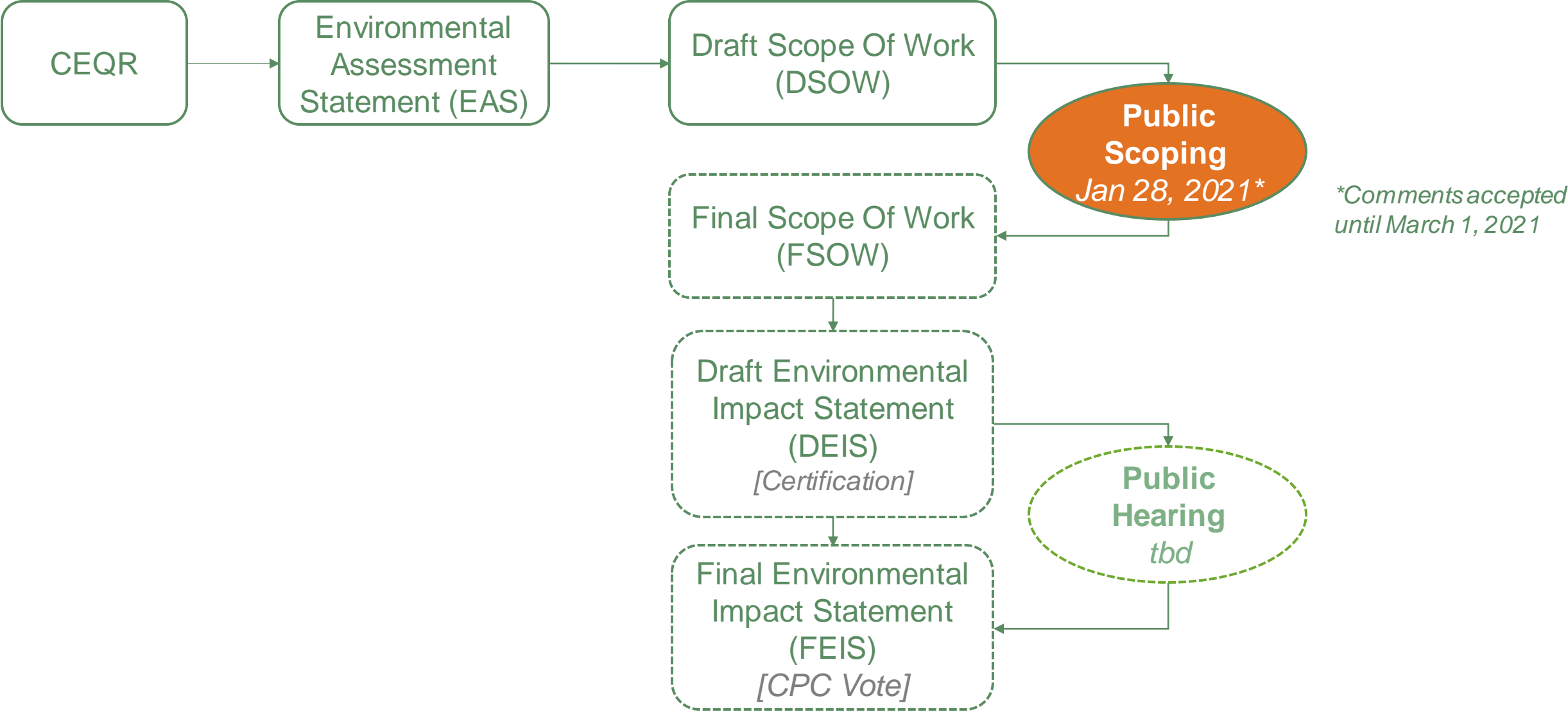
### PROPOSED

- CPC authorizations would be required for most properties  $\geq 1$  acre.
- For sites  $\geq 1$  acre with existing natural resources, a certain amount would be preserved through CPC discretionary review. The total amount preserved would be dependent upon the ecological value of the most sensitive natural resources as well as how their arrangement is connected to any other natural resources on adjacent sites.



■ Natural habitat to be preserved (for illustrative purposes)

# Environmental Review Process



- A “Generic Environmental Impact Statement” (GEIS) may be appropriate for:
  - An entire program or plan having wide application or restricting the range of future alternative policies or projects, including new or significant changes to existing land use plans, development plans, **zoning regulations** or agency comprehensive resource management plans.<sup>1</sup>
  - Actions that affect an area so large that site-specific description is not appropriate.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 6 NYCRR §617.10(a)(4)

<sup>2</sup> CEQR Technical Manual, p. 2-2



- Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS)
  - EAS Form and Supporting Analysis
  - Positive Declaration
- Draft Scope of Work of an Environmental Impact Statement
  - Issued December 21, 2020
  - Approach to analysis of Proposed Action
  - Establishes Analysis Year (2030)
  - Compares No Action Condition (current rules) to With Action Condition (proposed rules)



## **EIS Chapters**

- Executive Summary
- Project Description
- Land Use, Zoning, & Public Policy
- Shadows
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Urban Design & Visual Resources
- Natural Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Air Quality
- Public Health
- Neighborhood Character
- Alternatives
- Conceptual analysis
- Mitigation

- Unavoidable Adverse Impacts
- Growth-Inducing Impacts
- Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

## **Topics Screened Through EAS**

- Socioeconomic Conditions
- Community Facilities & Services
- Open Space
- Water and Sewer Infrastructure
- Solid Waste & Sanitation Services
- Energy
- Transportation
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Climate Change



- Public Comment period is open until, Monday, March 1, 2021
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  - Information on the proposal and scoping documents can be found on DCP website: [www.nyc.gov/specialdistricts](http://www.nyc.gov/specialdistricts)