Williamsbridge/Baychester Rezoning - Approved! Overview

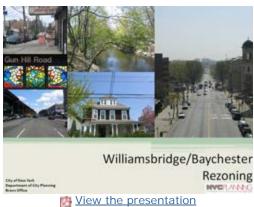
Update October 5, 2011:

On October 5th, 2011, the City Council adopted the Williamsbridge/Baychester Rezoning. The zoning map changes are now in effect.



The Department of City Planning proposes to amend the Zoning Map on all or portions of 181 blocks in the Williamsbridge and Baychester communities to protect and preserve residential areas while fostering vibrant, inviting, and walkable residential and commercial corridors. The Department has developed the proposal in collaboration with Bronx Community Board 12, local institutions and elected officials.

The areas affected by the proposed action comprise (1) the residential Williamsbridge neighborhood in the western part of the study area, (2) the residential Baychester neighborhood in the eastern part of the study area, and (3) the major commercial/residential corridors within the Williamsbridge neighborhood along White Plains Road, East 233rd Street and East Gun Hill Road.



Over the last several years, the residential neighborhoods in the rezoning area have been experiencing development pressure largely due to outdated zoning, which has generally remained unchanged since 1961.





Borough Locator Map

Niew a larger image.

Rezoning Area Map

Niew a larger image.

The proposed actions are intended to achieve three primary objectives:

- Protect neighborhood scale and character by reinforcing existing development patterns;
- Update and add new *commercial overlays* to reinforce existing patterns of commercial uses;
- Create growth opportunities for areas around major corridors and mass transit.

The areas affected by the rezoning are:

- (1) **Williamsbridge areas**: The Williamsbridge neighborhood is generally defined as the area between Bronx Boulevard and Laconia Avenue. In addition, portions of two blocks along Lurting Avenue, south of East Gun Hill Road are included in this rezoning. A three block long portion of Holland Avenue is also included in the proposal. Residential lower density and contextual zoning designations are proposed for approximately 130 full or partial blocks in the Williamsbridge neighborhood to preserve the scale and context of these areas.
- (2) **Baychester areas**: The Baychester neighborhood is generally defined as the area to the east of Laconia Avenue and west of the New England Thruway. Residential lower density and contextual zoning designations are proposed for approximately 29 blocks or block portions in the Baychester neighborhood to preserve the scale and context of these areas.
- (3) Williamsbridge Residential/Commercial corridors: The rezoning area includes the predominantly commercial White Plains Road between East 233rd Street and East Gun Hill Road, East 233rd Street between White Plains Road and Paulding Avenue, and East Gun Hill Road between White Plains and Boston roads. Contextual districts are proposed along White Plains Road, East 233rd Street and East Gun Hill Road corridors to permit medium-density residential and commercial zoning districts along 60 full or partial blocks where current zoning limits residential and commercial uses. In addition 83 blockfronts along Bronxwood Avenue and Laconia Avenue, two thoroughfares which are mainly residential but contain significant commercial areas, are proposed to be rezoned to a moderate-density contextual district with slightly modified commercial overlays. In addition, the depths of commercial overlays are proposed to be adjusted, where appropriate, to reflect existing patterns of commercial development.



Row houses in the Williamsbridge neighborhood



The rezoning area has many wide corridors, including White Plains Road, pictured, with the 2 and 5 Elevated Train



Smaller detached homes in the Baychester neighborhood

Williamsbridge/Baychester Rezoning - Approved! Existing Zoning and Context

The rezoning area, comprised of 181 full or partial blocks, contains a diverse mix of building types ranging from large apartment buildings along Carpenter Avenue to single-family detached homes along Tillotson Avenue by the New England Thruway. The Department of City Planning has undertaken this rezoning study in response to community concerns that the current zoning permits out-of-character development and does not reflect the area's character. Three main *zoning districts*, R6, R5, and R4, dominate the study area. R5 and R4 districts allow for infill densities higher than their base density, which have led to the development of out-of-context buildings in the residential areas of Williamsbridge and Baychester. The other designations mapped in the area are: R4-1, R7-1, C4-2, C8-1, and M1-1.

inappropriate development and commercial invasions of residential streets.



Land Use and Existing Zoning Map View a larger image.

The new housing is inconsistent with the surrounding context despite complying with the current zoning. Generic residential districts do not promote orderly or predictable growth and have altered the scale and character of the lower density areas of Williamsbridge and Baychester. Recent development trends include tearing down single-family detached homes and erecting attached, semi-detached, and multi-family dwellings that break the former coherent <u>street wall</u> and sky plane. Combined with C1-2 and C2-2 <u>commercial overlays</u> mapped throughout the area, the established mix of zoning districts and land use patterns promotes unpredictable and

Major Residential/Commercial Corridors

White Plains Road is a major north-south arterial and the longest street in The Bronx, running from the southern end of the Soundview Penninsula to the Mount Vernon border. The portion which traverses the western edge of Williamsbridge is a 100-foot wide street used by the local Bx-39 bus, the express BxM-11 bus, and the number 2 and 5 trains which operate on an elevated structure above the street. Between East Gun Hill Road and East 217th Street, the street widens out as several islands are located between the north and southbound traffic lines. The avenue in general sees little pedestrian activity, except at the previously discussed transit nodes. The corridor contains a range of buildings which are generally one and two-story commercial structures and some small apartment buildings. Typical uses include grocery stores, beauty parlors, discount stores, eating and drinking establishments and houses of worship. The more active uses are located within two blocks of subway stations at East Gun Hill Road, East 225th Street and East 233rd Street. The underlying residential zoning is R5 north of East 222nd Street and R6 to the south.

East Gun Hill Road is a major 100-foot wide east-west corridor running from Mosholu Parkway at its western terminus to the New England Thruway on the east. The street contains several institutional uses, including religious and educational facilities, but is generally lined with low density commercial uses and occasional residences. The Bx-28, Bx-30 and Bx-38 bus runs along this portion of Gun Hill Road. The portion with the study area lacks a distinct character and street wall due to the various general zoning districts on either side of the street, which include R6, R5, R4, and C8-1.

East 233rd Street is a 100 foot-wide east-west corridor running from Jerome Avenue on the west to the Hutchinson River in the east. While there are several apartment buildings along this street including a 13-story apartment building west of Bronxwood Avenue, the street is generally under built and contains vacant land. Most commercial uses are single-level stores and several provide on-site parking. The Bx-31 serves the portion of East 233rd Street within the study area.

Bronxwood and Laconia Avenues are local 100-foot wide arterials which are predominantly lower to mid-density residential streets with pockets of commercial structures. Bronxwood avenue south of East 226th Street is served by the Bx-8 bus while a few blocks of Laconia Avenue near East 233rd Street are served By the Bx-31 route.

Williamsbridge Neighborhood

Except for the previously discussed residential/commercial thoroughfares, the Williamsbridge neighborhood is a low to mid density residential area. As a general pattern, the oldest housing, some of which dates back to the pre-annexation era of the Village of Williamsbridge, is found in the area closest to White Plains Road. Buildings include detached two-story single family homes, roughhouses, small apartment buildings and the occasional larger multi-family structures found mainly between White Plains Road and Carpenter Avenue. Both density levels and the age of the housing stock decreases as one moves further east from White Plains Road. Over the last decade, the neighborhood has experienced significant out-of-context development, replacing the older housing with new larger residential buildings.

Baychester Neighborhood

Unlike the Williamsbridge neighborhood in the western part of the study area, the Baychester neighborhood (generally east of Laconia Avenue) was largely developed during the middle of the 20th century. Although several early 20th century

houses are located in this area, a substantial amount of housing dates to the post World War II era, when the area became developed as a automobile oriented suburb. Although existing zoning is generally of a lower density than in Williamsbridge, there are similar issues of out-of-context development as existing *infill housing* provisions allow for housing to be built at greater densities than is found in many parts of the area. Boston Road, the main commercial corridor contains a variety of uses, including numerous auto-related facilities such as showrooms and auto repair centers. The northern portions of this neighborhood (which included the remnants of the historic Eastchester Village) were rezoned in 2007 as part of the Wakefield rezoning.

Existing Zoning

The Williamsbridge/Baychester rezoning area is currently composed of three main zoning designations, R4, R5, and R6, with pockets of R4-1, R7-1, C4-2, C8-1, and M1-1 districts. These zoning designations have remained unchanged since their initial mapping in 1961. View the zoning comparison chart.

R4

R4 districts are currently mapped in a portion of the rezoning area generally bounded by Bronxwood Avenue, East Gun Hill Road, Laconia Avenue and 233rd Street and east of Baychester Avenue and Boston Road. R4 districts allow a variety of housing types, including garden apartments, row houses, semi-detached and detached houses. The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) is 0.9, which includes a 0.15 attic allowance. On a block entirely within an R4 district, optional regulations may be used to develop infill housing in predominately built-up areas. On blocks that are predominantly built up, a maximum FAR of 1.35 is permitted through the R4 infill provision. The R4 district along Paulding Avenue is predominantly R4 infill. Infill zoning permits multifamily housing on blocks entirely within R4 or R5 districts in predominantly built-up areas. Detached residences are limited to lots with a minimum of 3,800 square feet in area and a minimum lot width of 40 feet. Semi-detached and attached residences are limited to lots with a minimum of 1,700 square feet in area and a minimum lot width of 18 feet. R4 districts require a minimum front yard depth of 10 feet, which is increased to 18 feet if front yard parking is provided. The maximum building height is 35 feet with a maximum perimeter wall height of 25 feet. Community facilities are permitted at an FAR of 2.0. One parking space is required for each dwelling unit.

R5

R5 districts are located in two sections of the rezoning area. The first section is located in between 222nd Street, 233rd street, White Plains Road and Bronxwood Avenue. The second section is located in the eastern portion of the study area, generally from Laconia Avenue to the New England Thruway and is bifurcated by zoning districts along Boston Post Road. R5 zoning districts allow all housing types including detached, semi-detached, attached and multi-family residences. The maximum (FAR) for all housing types is 1.25. On a block entirely within an R5 district, optional regulations may be used to develop infill housing in predominately built-up areas. On blocks that are predominantly built up, a maximum FAR of 1.65 is permitted through the R5 infill provision. Detached residences are limited to lots with a minimum of 3,800 square feet in area, and a minimum lot width of 40 feet. All other housing types are limited to lots with a minimum of 1,700 square feet in area and a minimum lot width of 18 feet. R5 districts require a minimum front yard depth of 10 feet, which is increased to 18 feet if front yard parking is provided. The maximum building height is 40 feet with a maximum perimeter wall height of 30 feet. Community facilities are permitted an FAR of 2.0. Off-street parking in a grouped facility is required for at least 85 percent of the dwelling units.

R6

R6 districts currently encompass portions of the study area bounded by Carpenter Avenue, 222nd Street, Bronxwood Avenue and East Gun Hill Road and an area bounded by Eastchester Road, Wilson Avenue, Hicks Street and Boston Road. R6 is a *height factor* district wherein residential and community facility uses are permitted with no fixed height limits and building envelopes are regulated by a *sky exposure plane* and *open space ratio*. A maximum FAR of 2.43 is allowed for residential uses. A maximum FAR of 4.8 is allowed for community facility uses. Residential development under the *Quality Housing program* within a R6 district has a maximum FAR of 2.2 on narrow streets (less than 75 feet wide) with a 55-foot building height limit and a maximum of 3.0 FAR on wide streets (75 feet wide or greater) with a height limit of 70 feet. Off-street parking is required for 70 percent of the dwelling units. This requirement is lowered to 50 percent of the units if the lot area is less than 10,000 square feet or if Quality Housing provisions are used. If fewer than five spaces are required, then the off-street parking requirement is waived.

R7-1

A R7-1 district covers a small portion of the rezoning area between Bronx Boulevard and Carpenter Avenue between 233rd Street and 219th Street. R7-1 zoning districts permit residential and community facility uses (<u>Use Group</u> 1-4) with a maximum <u>floor area ratio</u> (FAR) of 3.44 for residential uses and 4.8 FAR for community facility uses. There are no fixed height limits and building envelopes are governed by the sky exposure plane. Off-street parking is required for 60 percent of the dwelling units. Off-street parking is waived if five spaces or less are required.

Developers can also use the Quality Housing Program, which permits a 3.44 FAR on a narrow street with a base height of between 40 and 60 feet and a maximum building height of seventy five feet and 4.0 FAR on wide streets with a base height of between 40 and 65 feet, and a maximum building height of eighty feet. Off-street parking is required for 50% of the dwelling units under Quality Housing.

C4-2

A C4-2 district is mapped on Boston Post Road between Pearsall Street and Eastchester Road. C4 districts are generally intended for regional commercial centers where uses, such as specialty and department stores, serve a larger area and generate more traffic than a neighborhood shopping area. C4-2 districts permit residential uses with a maximum FAR of 2.43 (R6 residential equivalent), commercial uses with a maximum FAR of 3.0 and community facility uses with a maximum FAR of 4.8. C4-2 districts have no fixed height limits and building envelopes are governed by the sky exposure plane. Development under the Quality Housing Program within a C4-2 District has a maximum FAR of 2.2 on narrow streets with a 55-foot building height limit and a maximum FAR of 3.4 on wide streets with a height limit of 70 feet. Off-street parking is required for 70 percent of the dwelling units in a C4-2 District. This requirement is lowered to 50 percent of the units if the lot area is less than 10,000 square feet or if Quality Housing provisions are used.

C8-1

Three C8-1 districts are mapped along Boston Road. C8-1 districts are general service districts that allow commercial and community facility uses in Use Groups 4 through 14 and 16. The most prevalent uses in C8 districts are automotive and heavy commercial uses such as auto repair and showrooms, warehouses, gas stations and car washes. Residential uses are not permitted. The maximum commercial FAR in C8-1 districts is 1.0. The maximum building height is determined by its sky exposure plane, which begins 30' above the street line. Community facilities are permitted at an FAR of 2.4. Off-street parking requirements vary with the use, but generally most uses require one accessory parking space per 300 square feet of commercial space.

M1-1

An M1-1 district is located at the edge of the study area between De Reimer Avenue and Bivona Street on Boston Post Road. In M1-1 districts only light manufacturing and commercial uses are allowed at a maximum FAR of 1.0. Certain community facilities are allowed at a maximum FAR of 2.4. Building envelopes are regulated by the sky exposure plane. Parking requirements vary by use.

Commercial Overlays

In many locations in the rezoning area, commercial overlay districts are mapped to a depth of 150 feet, although most lots along the retail corridors of White Plains Road, 233rd Street, East Gun Hill Road, Bronxwood Avenue and Laconia Avenue are 100 feet deep.



Streets lined with single-family homes have been transformed by multi-family buildings



Out-of-context development has altered the scale and character of lower density areas



East Gun Hill Road, a major corridor, is developed with a mixture of low-scale commercial uses, and limited residential. Inconsistent zoning on both sides of the corridor has limited development potential and created an uninviting urban landscape

Williamsbridge/Baychester Rezoning - Approved! Proposed Zoning

The proposed zoning map amendment will affect all or portions of 181 blocks and will replace existing R4, R5, R6, R7-1 and C8-1 zoning districts with R4A, R4, R5A, R5, R5D, R6, R6A, and R7A districts. The proposal also includes changes to certain *commercial overlays* within the rezoning area to more closely match and reinforce existing land use and development patterns.



Proposed Zoning Map

Niew a larger image.

R4 (from R5)

Four R4 districts are proposed for the rezoning area on all or portions of 35 blocks generally bounded by East 222nd Street, Needham Avenue, Boston Post Road, East 225th Street, and Eastchester Road; Givan Avenue, Corsa Avenue, Burke Avenue, Gunther Avenue, Boston Post Road, and Fenton Avenue; between Bronxwood Avenue and White Plains Road and East 227th Street and East 223rd Street; and between Bronxwood Avenue and White Plains Road and between East 233rd Street and East 227th Street. These areas are characterized by attached and semi-detached two-story, one- and two-family homes with relatively low lot coverage.



Semi-attached and detached oneand two- family homes along Paulding Avenue where the infill provisions will be removed

The proposed R4 District would allow a maximum building height up to 35 feet and a maximum $\underline{floor\ area\ ratio}$ (FAR) of 0.9 (including a 0.15 FAR attic allowance). R4 districts also permit a FAR increase to 1.35 for blocks that are

wholly within a R4 zone and are not split by any other zone through the infill provision. This maximum would more closely match existing FARs and limit out-of character development on these blocks. One parking space would be required for each dwelling unit.

R4A (from R5)

R4A districts are proposed on all or portions of 10 blocks southeast of Boston Post Road along Tillotson Avenue and between Burke, Hammersley, Grave and Edson Avenues. These areas are characterized by small one- to two-story, one- and two family detached homes with pitched roofs.

R4A districts permit only one- and two-family detached residences at a maximum FAR of 0.9 (including the attic allowance). A minimum lot width of 30 feet and a minimum lot area of 2,850 square feet are required. The perimeter wall may rise 21 feet before being setback to the maximum height of 35 feet. Front yards must be at least 10 feet and at least as deep as an adjacent front yard up to a depth of 20 feet. One off-street parking space is required for each dwelling unit.



Small single-family Baychester home in a proposed R4A district

R5 (from R6 and C8-1)

Two R5 districts are proposed for 18 full or partial blocks along Barnes Avenue between White Plains Road and Bronxwood Avenue and along Lurting Avenue. The R5 along Lurting Avenue will bring the East side of the street into conformance. These areas characterized by an assortment of attached and semi-detached two to four-story, one-, two-, and multi-family homes. One- and two-family homes are also in these areas.

As a general zoning district, a R5 district permits all housing types at a maximum FAR of 1.25. A minimum lot width of 40 feet is required for detached houses and a minimum lot width of 18 feet is required for other housing types. A minimum



Small Attached and Semi-

lot area of 3,800 square feet is required for detached houses, and a minimum lot detached homes on Lurting area of 1,700 square feet is required for other housing types. The perimeter wall of all housing types may rise to 30 feet before sloping or being set back to a

Avenue, a proposed R5 district

maximum building height of 40 feet. Front yards must be exactly 10 feet deep or a minimum of 18 feet. One parking space is required for each dwelling unit, or 85% if grouped.

R5A (from R6)

Two R5A districts are proposed for 13 full or partial blocks west of White Plains bounded generally by Carpenter Avenue between E. 231st Street and E. 225th Street and between E. 222nd Street and E. 219th Street. These areas are characterized by large one- and two-family detached homes.

R5A districts permit only one- and two-family detached residences at a maximum FAR of 1.10 (plus 300 sf for a backyard garage). A minimum lot width of 30 feet and a minimum lot area of 2,850 square feet are required. The perimeter wall may rise 25 feet before being setback to the maximum height of 35 feet. Front yards and rear yards must be at least 10 feet and 30 feet respectively. A minimum of 8 feet is required between buildings on adjacent zoning lots. One off-street parking space is required for each dwelling unit.



A large detached single-family home in an adjacent R5A district

R5D (from R4, R5, and R6)

R5D districts are proposed for 86 full or partial blocks along Bronxwood and Laconia Avenues and along E. 233rd Street. These areas are characterized by an assortment of attached and semi-detached two to four-story, one-, two-, and multi-family homes.

R5D districts allow all housing types at a maximum FAR of 2.0. Detached residences require a minimum lot width of 25 feet and a minimum lot area of 2,375 square feet. Semi-detached and attached residences require a minimum lot width of 18 feet and a minimum lot area of 1,700 square feet. A front yard of at least 5 feet is required and must be as deep as an adjacent front yard up to 20 feet. A maximum building height of 40 feet is allowed. Parking is required for 66% of the total dwelling units. Community facilities are permitted at an FAR of 2.0.



A multi-family residential building along Laconia Avenue, a wide corridor in a proposed R5D district

R6 (from R5)

An R6 district is proposed along White Plains Road between E. 222nd Street and E. 233rd Street. The rest of White Plains Road was recently rezoned to R6 and this will make zoning consistent from Olinville to Wakefield. This area is characterized mainly by one- and two-story local businesses and some small mixed-use apartment buildings.

R6 districts allow all housing types at a maximum FAR of 2.43 with a .57 increase for developments following the "Quality Housing" regulations. Detached residences require a minimum lot width of 40 feet and a minimum lot area of 3,800 square feet. Semi-detached and attached residences require a minimum lot width of 18 feet and a minimum lot area of 1,700 square feet. Maximum building height is determined by the sky exposure plane, after a maximum base height of 60 feet. An R6 "Quality Housing" has a maximum base and building height of 60 and 70 feet, respectively, along a wide street. Depending on the size of the lot, parking is required for 70% of the total dwelling units, or 50% for Quality Housing buildings. Community facilities are permitted at an FAR of 4.80.

R6A (from R4, R5, and R6)

Four R6A districts are proposed for 39 full or partial blocks along E. Gun Hill Road from Holland Avenue to Boston Post Road up to E. 215th Street, along Carpenter Avenue and along E. 233rd Street. However, the two R6A districts between Carpenter Avenue and White Plains Road from E. 219th Street to E. 232nd Street are considered neighborhood contextual districts. The areas along Carpenter Avenue and between Holland and Bronxwood Avenues are characterized by older and larger multi-family homes and multi-family apartment buildings of 4 to six stories. East 233rd Street and East Gun Hill Road are characterized by one- and two-story local businesses, some multi-family homes, and vacant and underutilized lots.



Larger apartment buildings in

Williamsbridge, along Carpenter Avenue and west of White Plains Road, in the Proposed R6A

R6A districts allow all housing types and have a max FAR of 3.00 within a contextual envelope. The maximum base and building height is 60 and 70 feet, respectively. Parking is required for 50% of the total dwelling units. Detached residences require a minimum lot width of 40 feet and a minimum lot area of 3,800 square feet. Semi-detached and attached residences require a minimum lot width of 18 feet and a minimum lot area of 1,700 square feet. Community facilities are permitted at an FAR of 3.00.

R7A (from R6)

One R7A district is proposed along 14 blocks on White Plains Road from E. Gun Hill Road to E. 218th Street and along parts of Holland Avenue. This area is characterized by two- to three-story commercial and office buildings, mixed-used two-story buildings, vacant lots, and some multi-family apartment buildings.

R7A districts allow all housing types at a max FAR of 4.00 within a contextual The maximum base and building height is 65 and 80 feet, respectively. Parking is required for 50% of the total dwelling units. The minimum lot width and lot area for detached residences is 40 feet and 3,800 square feet. Semi-detached and attached residences require a minimum lot width of 18 feet and a minimum lot area of 1,700 square feet. Community facilities are permitted at an FAR of 4.00.



Gun Hill Road Station along White Plains Road along the proposed R7A district

Commercial Overlays

The proposal would establish new C1-4 and C2-4 districts in order to recognize existing commercial land use patterns, reduce the potential for commercial encroachment on residential streets and provide new business opportunities.

The proposal would reduce the overlay depths to preclude commercial intrusions into residential side streets by replacing all C1-2 and C2-2 commercial overlays along East Gun Hill Road, E. 233rd Street and along Bronxwood and Laconia Avenues with C1-4 and C2-4 commercial overlays. Most C1-2 and C2-2 overlays along White Plains Road would be changed to C1-4 and C2-4 overlays and their depths reduced from 150 feet to 100 feet to preclude commercial intrusion onto residential blockfronts and to reflect existing land use patterns.

Changing the existing C1-2 and C2-2 commercial overlays to C1-4 and C2-4 commercial overlays would reduce the parking from, generally, one parking space per 300 square feet of commercial floor area to one space per 1,000 square feet of commercial floor area.

Lastly, five new C1-4 and two C2-4 overlays are proposed to reflect existing commercial activity along the south and north side of E. 233rd Street between White Plains Road and Barnes Avenue, along the western side of Laconia Avenue between E. 227th and E. 228th Streets and E. 230th and E. 231st Streets and along the south side of East Gun Hill Road between Lurting and Yates Avenues.

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Williamsbridge/Baychester Rezoning - Approved! Public Review

The Williamsbridge/Baychester rezoning proposal is anticipated to begin the formal review on June 20, 2011 with the Department of City Planning's Certification of the <u>Uniform Land Use Review (ULURP)</u> application (110384 ZMX).

Milestone	Date
Department of City Planning Certification	June 20, 2011 - View the presentation
Community Board 12 Approval	June 23, 2011
Bronx Borough President Hearing	July 20, 2011
Bronx Borough President Approval	August 4, 2011
City Planning Commission Hearing	August 24, 2011
City Planning Commission Approval (Read the CPC report)	September 7, 2011
City Council Approval	October 5, 2011

For more information about this proposal please contact the Bronx Office of the Department of City Planning at (718) 220-8500.

Projects & Proposals

Related Notes

- Litems accompanied by this symbol require the free Adobe Acrobat Reader.
- Brief explanations of terms in *green italics* can be viewed by <u>visiting glossary page</u>. 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.