



The City of New York

## Queens Community Board 11

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

**Paul DiBenedetto** Chairperson / **Joseph Marziliano** District Manager

To: All Board Members

From: Paul DiBenedetto, Chair

Date: May 22, 2024

Re: City of Yes – Housing Opportunity

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### **Committee Members**

Paul DiBenedetto, Chair

Henry Euler, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair\*

Eileen Miller\*

Jena Lanzetta

Joan Garippa

### **Board Members**

Christina Scherer\*

Mohan Jethwani

Karen Mazza\*

### **CB11 Staff**

Joseph Marziliano, District Manager

Jane Bentivenga, Community Coordinator\*

\*Via Zoom

### **Guests**

Scott Solomon, Dept. of City Planning

Suzy Monteverdi, representing AM Ed Braunstein's office

Paul Graziano, representing Queens Civic Congress

On Tuesday May 21, 2024, the CB11 Ad-Hoc Zoning Committee met to discuss the NYC Dept. of City Planning's (DCP) proposed City of Yes Housing Opportunity zoning text amendment.

Mr. Marziliano began the meeting by introducing CB11 Chair, Paul DiBenedetto. Mr. DiBenedetto gave the floor to Mr. Solomon who gave those in attendance a Power Point presentation regarding this proposal. (Please see the following link for the presentation slides:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sc/fi/f3l8miguquj84hd5g65qz/City-of-Yes-for-Housing-Opportunity-Queens-CD-11\\_w-appendix.pdf?rlkey=td8208c9j4i3lnl2sxo9mh3op&st=qktqfg3v&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sc/fi/f3l8miguquj84hd5g65qz/City-of-Yes-for-Housing-Opportunity-Queens-CD-11_w-appendix.pdf?rlkey=td8208c9j4i3lnl2sxo9mh3op&st=qktqfg3v&dl=0)

Mr. Jethwani commented that this should have been presented as it pertained to the zones in CB11, not citywide. Ms. Lanzetta asked what streets will be affected with the proposed TOD (Transit Oriented Development) Zone relating to the Long Island Railroad (LIRR). It will be 32 Avenue on the north, 48 Avenue on the south, 220 Street to the east and the Clearview Expressway to the west. The parameters are similar near the Auburndale, Douglaston and Little Neck LIRR train stations. Mrs. Garippa stated that Udall's Cove lies within the one-mile radius in the eastern part of CB11 and that most of Douglaston lies within the TOD there, as both LIRR stations are so close to one another. Mr. Solomon said it wouldn't pertain to parkland.

Mr. Marziliano asked when the allowance for larger corner buildings was changed. Mr. Solomon said it began changing in the 1950's and ultimately was put into the 1961 Zoning Resolution. Under this proposal, they would be allowed on commercial corridors and near transit. Lots to be included in Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) must be 5,000 s.f. Mr. DiBenedetto stated that most corner lots in our neighborhoods are 5,000 s.f. and thus, would result in many apartments being built in place of the current houses that would be torn down. Mr. Marziliano asked if there were any provisions in this proposal to increase sanitation pickup, sewage, drainage or other need infrastructure. Mr. Solomon said it does not but that would be addressed by the environmental impact statement if needed. Mr. Marziliano also asked about fire/egress regulations for additional dwelling units (ADU). Mr. Solomon said they would be subject to the existing fire code. ADU's would not be viable in some instances.

Ms. Lanzetta commented that there are already three (3) large apartments in the proposed area in northwest Bayside. Ms. Lanzetta added that she would like to see this radius made smaller if not altogether removed. Ms. Monteverdi added that AM Braunstein remains opposed to this. Mr. Euler agreed with Ms. Lanzetta regarding the already-existing apartment buildings. Mr. Euler asked if an ADU could be constructed up to 800 s.f. as a separate building with no parking requirement. Mr. Solomon stated that an ADU can be up to 800 s.f. and there is no additional parking required. Mr. Euler inquired if more than one ADU is allowed on a property. No, that is not allowed. Mrs. Miller asked where will all the extra vehicles parked if the parking requirement is lifted? This will become an issue.

Mr. DiBenedetto inquired about housing expectations after the 1961 Zoning Resolution. He stated that DCP projections of the 1961 zoning were that of NYC at the turn of the millennium (year 2000) and were for 16 million residents. He also spoke about recent and post-Covid population numbers. He also commented that there will be a project on the Creedmoor site which will provide a lot of housing and is just south of CB11; he also mentioned the shopping center property on 61 Avenue in Douglaston which is R-4 zoning and ripe for major increases in housing units that are more affordable and as an example how DCP should work with CB's to find housing options that work.

Mr. DiBenedetto said that the predominate housing in CB11 is one- and two-family. Mr. Solomon said that this would allow some property owners to build larger housing in certain areas. He did say there is a significant market rate with this. Mr. DiBenedetto also stated that neighborhoods like Williamsburg and Long Island City also provide a lot of density already. Is it really needed here?

Mr. Euler made a motion to accept the Dept. of City Planning's City of Yes Housing Opportunity proposal. Mrs. Garippa seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Mrs. Garippa stated that

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density was addressed when a lot of rezoning was done in the early 2000's. Mr. Solomon stated that as a result of those amendments, a lot of properties were non-compliant and remain so today.

Mr. Marziliano made several reservations. He finds it interesting that an over-developed city, like the City of New York, is going to trust developers to do the right thing. He also stated that all the City of Yes proposals seem to roll back all the Community Boards' voluminous record of work over the years going back to 1969. It appears to be a shuffling of the zoning that will put an extra burden on single-family zoning. ADU's are the antithesis of community boards' work over the years in addition to the removed of backyard space, the establishment of boathouses and attic and cellar apartments. Mr. Marziliano stated there were always provision for extra-needed infrastructure with the changes. Mrs. Garippa agreed and that feels that this proposal is being built on a faulty premise. She feels that the many empty office buildings in Manhattan and elsewhere should be converted to living space. Mr. Solomon said that is part of this proposal as well.

At this point, Mr. DiBenedetto gave the floor to Mr. Graziano, representing the Queens Civic Congress. Mr. DiBenedetto also stated Mr. Graziano will be giving a presentation to the full Board on June 3, 2024. Mr. Graziano said that he has done an analysis of the neighborhoods along the Port Washington line of the LIRR. He has also analyzed neighborhoods to the south that are also located near other branches of the LIRR and even others outside of Queens. He stated that a developer could buy two properties in order to meet the requirement of a 5,000 s.f. lot. There are already several properties that meet it. Many of the neighborhoods he analyzed have private deed restrictions. The City already worked with them over the years on rezoning to adhere to those restrictions as closely as possible. He also stated that there are more housing units now as compared to 1970 even though the population did not increase as much as housing units did. Mr. Graziano said that this is more of a mismatch of housing and affordability. All one-family zones will become one- and two-family zones with an allowable ADU.

Mr. DiBenedetto called the question. A roll call vote was taken. All were opposed. The motion did not pass. This item is scheduled for a public hearing at CB11's June 3, 2024 monthly Board Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted May 22, 2024*