



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

December 17, 2003/Calendar No. 17

C 030526 ZMQ

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the New York City Housing Authority pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 30c:

1. eliminating from an existing R5 district a C1-2 District bounded by a line 200 feet southerly of Beach Channel Drive, Beach 54th Street, Beach Channel Drive, and Beach 53rd Street;
2. changing from a C4-1 district to an R5 District property bounded by a line 100 feet northerly of Oceanview Boulevard, Beach 62nd Street, Arverne Boulevard, and Beach 59th Street; and
3. establishing within the existing R5 District a C2-4 District bounded by a line 200 feet southerly of Beach Channel Drive, Beach 54th Street, Beach Channel Drive, and Beach 53rd Street; and
4. establishing within the proposed R5 District a C2-4 District bounded by a line 100 feet northerly of Oceanview Boulevard, Beach 62nd Street, Arverne Boulevard, and Beach 59th Street;

Community District 14, Borough of Queens, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated August 11, 2003.

The application for an amendment of the Zoning Map was filed by New York City Housing Authority on June 10, 2003, to rezone portions of three blocks from C4-1 and R5/C1-2 to R5/C2-4 to facilitate new commercial and retail development.

BACKGROUND

This application submitted by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) proposes to rezone portions of three blocks in the Arverne and Edgemere areas of Far Rockaway, Queens Community District 14 in order to facilitate new commercial and community facility

development intended to serve these communities. The rezoning actions are part of a larger plan, known as the Ocean Bay Hope VI Revitalization Plan aimed at improving the physical and visual amenities of the Ocean Bay Houses (formerly known as the Arverne and Edgemere Houses). Currently \$264 million is budgeted for the revival of this Rockaway community through the Hope VI Revitalization Program of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Other on-site development plans include complete modernization of the existing apartments, expansion and renovation of an existing community center, day care center and all lobbies and building facades. The off-site components of the Ocean Bay Hope VI Revitalization Plan include the development of a health and education center and the upgrading of surrounding public streets. NYCHA intends to issue a Request for Proposals for the two rezoning sites.

The areas proposed to be rezoned contain two NYCHA-owned sites (*Sites "A" and "C"*). Rezoning of these sites would facilitate the construction of approximately 78,000 square feet of retail space, 18,000 square feet of office space and would provide 82 on-site accessory parking spaces.

Block 15901, part of Lot 8 and Lot 57; and Block 15900, Lot 8 and part of Lot 4 is generally bounded by Beach 62nd Street (west), Arverne Boulevard (north), Beach 59th Street (east) and the Rockaway Freeway (south), and is located in a C4-1 zoning district. The immediate surrounding area is developed with one- and two-story residential buildings, an abandoned school building and a post office to the north, six-story apartment buildings to the east, and one- and two- story residential buildings and the elevated IND subway line ("A" Train) to the south.

The approximately 107,500 square foot rezoning area encompasses *Site "A"* which is a 73,265 square foot vacant land owned by NYCHA (Block 15901, Lots 8 and 57) , two privately-owned lots, and a mapped but unimproved street. Except for a 2-story building leased for offices by Human Resources Administration at the eastern edge, the rezoning area is vacant land. NYCHA proposes to rezone this parcel to R5 with a C2-4 overlay to facilitate new commercial/retail development on a portion of *Site "A"*. Proposed uses on *Site "A"* would include 60,000 square foot retail/commercial space and on-site accessory parking for 60 cars.

The proposed zoning change from C4-1 to R5/C2-4 would facilitate the project by reducing the parking requirement from 1 parking space per 100 square feet of floor area to 1 parking space per 1,000 square feet of floor area. There would be no change in the maximum allowable FAR for residential (1.25), commercial (1.0) and community facility (2.0) uses, however the C4 district is for major commercial centers located outside of the central business districts, the proposed C2-4 overlay permits a wide range of local retail and service establishments intended to serve the neighborhood.

Block 15890, part of Lot 42 and Lots 54, 58, 62, 64, 66 and 69 is generally bounded by Beach 54th Street, Beach Channel Drive, and Beach 53rd Street and a line 200 feet south of Beach Channel Drive zoned R5 with a C1-2 overlay. The immediate surrounding area includes the seven-story Ocean Bay Apartment buildings to the west and north, a hospital to the east and a six-story nursing home to the south.

The approximately 41,120 square foot parcel located at the northern edge of Block 15890 includes “Site C” and a portion of a privately owned lot used for parking. *Site “C”*, an approximately 37,120 square foot parcel, owned by NYCHA, occupies most of the rezoning area. It contains 6 lots, two of the 6 lots (Lots 62 and 69) are vacant, and the remaining 4 lots are developed with one-story commercial buildings, that contain 6 vacant storefronts and 6 retail establishments, including a laundromat, beauty supply store, grocery store, two restaurants, delicatessen, and pharmacy.

NYCHA proposes to rezone this parcel to change the C1-2 overlay to C2-4 to facilitate the development of a two-story town center. The town center would include 18,000 square feet of retail space at the ground floor and 18,000 square feet of office space on the second floors including medical and dental offices to serve the neighborhood. The proposal would also facilitate 22 on-site parking spaces.

The proposed zoning change from C1-2 to C2-4 would facilitate the project by reducing the parking requirement from 1 parking space per 200 square feet of floor area to 1 parking space per 1,000 square feet of floor area. There would be no change in the maximum allowable FAR for residential (1.25), commercial (1.0) and community facility (2.0) uses. The proposed C2-4 overlay would permit a wider range of local retail and service establishments than the existing C1-2 district and is intended to serve a wider neighborhood.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 030526 ZMQ) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq. and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated SEQR number is 05NYCHA03. The lead agency is the New York City Housing Authority.

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on May 30, 2003.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 030526 ZMQ) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on August 11, 2003, and was duly referred to Community Board 14 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 14 held a public hearing on this application on October 14, 2003, and on that day, by a vote of 22 to 5 with 2 abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending disapproval of the application.

Borough President Recommendation

This application was considered by the Borough President, who issued a recommendation on November 11, 2003 approving the application.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On November 5, 2003 (Calendar No. 2), the City Planning Commission scheduled November 19, 2003, for a public hearing on this application (C 030526 ZMQ). The hearing was duly held on November 19, 2003 (Calendar No. 5). There was one speaker in favor of the application and no speakers in opposition.

The project manager from the New York City Housing Authority described the proposed action. The representative stated that under the existing zoning the proposed development would not be feasible because of the existing zoning's high parking requirement.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission believes that this amendment of the Zoning Map is appropriate.

The application proposes the rezoning of two sites (Site A and Site C) from C4-1 to R5 with a C2-4 overlay and change an existing C1-2 overlay to C2-4. The Commission notes that the proposed rezoning will not change the use conformance and bulk compliance on the subject sites.

The Commission notes that on Site A, the proposed C2-4 district would be a northward extension of the existing C2-4 commercial overlay mapped south of, and adjacent to, the subject site. The proposed underlying R5 district was drawn from the existing R5 district, mapped directly north of, and adjacent to, the subject site.

The Commission acknowledges that there is currently no nearby retail uses to serve the residents of the Ocean Bay Apartments, and the Commission believes that the proposed rezoning of Site A would facilitate the development of commercial uses which will serve the residents.

The Commission notes that the proposed rezoning on Site C will facilitate the development of a town center with 18,000 square feet of retail establishments on the ground floor and 18,000 square feet of office space on the second floor to the serve the needs of the neighborhood.

The Commission believes that the proposed rezonings will facilitate additional development in this area by lowering the existing high parking requirement..

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant impact on the environment; and be it further

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Sections 197-c and 200 of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and the consideration

described in this report, the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York, effective as of December 15, 1961, and as subsequently amended, is further amended by changing the Zoning Map, Section No. 30c:

1. eliminating from an existing R5 district a C1-2 District bounded by a line 200 feet southerly of Beach Channel Drive, Beach 54th Street, Beach Channel Drive, and Beach 53rd Street;
2. changing from a C4-1 district to an R5 District property bounded by a line 100 feet northerly of Oceanview Boulevard, Beach 62nd Street, Arverne Boulevard, and Beach 59th Street; and
3. establishing within the existing R5 District a C2-4 District bounded by a line 200 feet southerly of Beach Channel Drive, Beach 54th Street, Beach Channel Drive, and Beach 53rd Street; and
4. establishing within the proposed R5 District a C2-4 District bounded by a line 100 feet northerly of Oceanview Boulevard, Beach 62nd Street, Arverne Boulevard, and Beach 59th Street;

Borough of Queens, Community District 14, as shown on a diagram dated August 11, 2003 (C 030526 ZMQ).

The above resolution (C 030526 ZMQ), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on December 17, 2003 (**Calendar No. 17**), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair
KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, ESQ., Vice Chairman
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,
ANGELA R. CAVALUZZI, R.A., RICHARD W. EADDY,
ALEXANDER GARVIN, JANE D. GOL, CHRISTOPHER KUI,
JOHN MEROLO, DOLLY WILLIAMS, Commissioners