

Queens Borough President Recommendation

APPLICATION: Jamaica Neighborhood Plan
COMMUNITY BOARD: Q12

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

ULURP #250172 ZMQ – IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Department of City Planning pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section Nos. 14d, 15b, 18c, and 19a, Borough of Queens, Community Districts 8 and 12 as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated February 11, 2025, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-842.

ULURP #N250173 ZRQ – IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of City Planning pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for zoning text amendment to designate the Project Area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (“MIH”) area, Borough of Queens, Community Districts 8 and 12, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated February 11, 2025, and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-842.

ULURP #250171 HAQ – IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)

1. pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:
 - a. the designation of property located at 108-41-108-51 Union Hall Street (Block 10150, Lots 6, 7, 8, 10), 108-32 through 108-34 Guy R Brewer Boulevard (Block 10150 Lots 51, 52), 108-38 Guy R Brewer Boulevard (Block 10150, Lot 54), 108-44 Guy R Brewer Boulevard (Block 10150, Lot 57), 109-43 through 109-47 Union Hall Street (Block 12152, Lots 8, 9, 10, 11) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
 - b. an Urban Development Area Project for such area; and
2. pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the disposition of such property to a developer to be selected by HPD;

to facilitate the development of income restricted housing units pursuant to zoning, Borough of Queens, Community District 12.

PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held by the Queens Borough President in the Borough President’s Conference Room at 120-55 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens NY 11424, via Zoom webinar and livestreamed on queensbp.nyc.gov on Thursday, June 5th, 2025 at 9:30 A.M. pursuant to Section 82(5) of the New York City Charter and was duly advertised in the manner specified in Section 197-c (i) of the New York City Charter. The applicant(s) made a presentation. There were twenty (20) speakers. The hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION

Subsequent to a review of the application and consideration of testimony received at the public hearing, the following issues and impacts have been identified:

- The New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), together with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), New York City Department of Transportation (DOT),

and New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC), is proposing a series of land use actions (the “Proposed Actions”) to support and facilitate implementation of the Jamaica Neighborhood Plan, which is the subject of an ongoing community planning process to meet the long-term vision of Jamaica and its surrounding neighborhoods as more prosperous, resilient and thriving;

- The Proposed Actions consist of the following discretionary approvals:
 - Rezone portions of existing R3-2, R3A, R4, R4-1, R5, RB, R5D, R6, R6A, R7A, R7X, C4-3A, C4-4A, C4-5X, C6-2, C6-3, M1-1, M1-2, and M1-4 districts to R6A, R6D, R7A, R7X, R8A, R8X, C4-4, C4-4D, C6-2, C6-3, C6-3A C6-4, M1-4A, M2-3A, M3-2A, M1-2A/R7A, M1-2A/R7-2, M1-3A/R7X, M1-6A/R9A, and M1-8A/R9X; Replace or eliminate portions of existing C1-2, C1-3, C1-4, and C2-3 overlays mapped throughout the Project Area with C2-4 overlays and map new C2-4 overlays; and modify the boundaries of the Special Downtown Jamaica District to an area generally coterminous with the Project Area.
 - Modify the Special Downtown Jamaica District’s use, bulk, parking and loading, and streetscape regulations in ZR Article XI, Chapter 5. The proposed modifications would establish specific urban design regulations related to bulk and street wall rules, particularly in areas where a mix of residential, commercial, and manufacturing uses would be permitted. In addition, the text of the Zoning Resolution would be amended to: Define some areas wherein C6-3 zoning districts have a residence equivalent to R9-1 residence districts, codify Appendix F to establish proposed R6A, R6D, R7A, R7X, R8A, R8X, C4-4D, C6-2, C6-3, C6-3 (R9-1), C6-3A, C6-4, M1-2A/R7A, M1-2A/R7-2, M1-3A/R7X, M1-6A/R9A, and M1-8A/R9X districts as MIH areas, and create new paired districts including M1-2A/R7A, M1-2A/R7-2, M1-3A/R7X, M1-6A/R9A, and M1-8A/R9X mixed-use districts;
 - Designation of Urban Development Action Areas (UDAA), Approval of an Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP), and Disposition of City-Owned Properties; and
 - Designation of UDAA’s, project approval of UDAAP’s, and disposition of City-owned property for parcels owned and managed by HPD on Block 10150, Lots 6, 7, 8, 10, 51, 52, 54, and 57, and Block 12152, Lots 8, 9, 10, and 11;
- The Proposed Actions would affect an approximately 230-block area (“the Project Area”) focused around Downtown Jamaica (also commonly referred to as Jamaica Center), the industrial districts to the south and east, and portions of Jamaica’s key corridors including Hillside Avenue, Jamaica Avenue, Liberty Avenue, Sutphin Boulevard, Guy R. Brewer Boulevard, and Merrick Boulevard. The Project Area is generally bounded by Hillside Avenue to the north, the Van Wyck Expressway Service Road to the west, 109th Avenue, 115th Avenue, and 116th Avenue to the south; and 191st Street and Farmers Boulevard to the east. The majority of the Project Area is located in Queens Community District 12, with a portion along Hillside Avenue and Queens Boulevard located in Community District 8;
- The Proposed Actions are expected to result in a net (incremental) increase of approximately 12,319 dwelling units (DUs), including approximately 4,000 income-restricted homes, 1,476,220 gross square feet (GSF) of commercial space, 836,034 GSF of community facility space, 24,818 GSF of industrial space, and 1,994,252 GSF of warehouse space and a net decrease of approximately 24,193 GSF of auto-related uses and 380 accessory parking spaces, over 15 years, compared to No-Action conditions;
- The Department of City Planning held over 38 sessions with the public to bring community awareness to the Plan and get input from residents within and around the catchment area, along with Steering Committees and Working Groups that consisted of business owners, nonprofit directors, and other influential community members;

- Jamaica features some of the highest levels of transit accessibility in Queens, with the LIRR, JFK AirTrain, E, F, J, and Z subway lines, and over 30 bus routes providing access to the Project Area. Downtown Jamaica is home to a rail hub at Archer Avenue and Sutphin Boulevard (LIRR, JFK AirTrain, and E, J and Z subway lines), the Jamaica Center subway station (terminus for the E, J, and Z subway lines), as well as bus hubs at Archer Avenue and Parsons Boulevard and Merrick Boulevard between Jamaica Avenue and 89th Avenue. Along Hillside Avenue, the F train is served by stations at Sutphin Boulevard, Parsons Boulevard, 169th Street, and 179th Street. The Jamaica-Van Wyck E train station is across the Van Wyck Expressway from the Project Area's western boundary, and the Briarwood F train station at Main Street. Outside of these nodes, the rest of the Project Area is primarily served by buses, with major corridors along Merrick Boulevard, Liberty Avenue, Guy R. Brewer Boulevard, Sutphin Boulevard, and Jamaica Avenue;
- On May 14th, 2025, Community Board 8 (CB8) voted against this application at their Full Board Meeting with a vote of seventeen (17) in favor, eighteen (18) against, and one (1) abstention. Reasons for their disapproval included:
 - Lack of parking for the patrons of the local businesses, which will be exacerbated by more development
 - Parking is only required for 12% of residents of market-rate DUs
 - Developments that provide affordable housing are not required to provide parking
 - Lack of green space for the neighborhood
 - Much taller buildings will cast shadows on properties
 - Inadequate public transportation and infrastructure to sustain the number of future dwellings/residents;
- On May 21st, 2025, Community Board 12 (CB12) voted for a Resolution of Pause, then consequentially voted against this application at their Full Board Meeting with a vote of one (1) in favor, thirty-five (35) against, and four (4) abstentions;
- At the Borough President's Land Use Public Hearing, the applicant's team presented their plans. The Borough President asked questions about affordable housing, pushing for MIH Option I; flagged a site on Guy R. Brewer and Linden Blvd, suggesting it be used as an H+H site; and inquired about the plan's impact on school seats in Jamaica, citing that P.S. 89 doesn't have a gym. DCP explained that they are trying to include school floor exemptions and other zoning incentives to spur school development. Impacts on police and fire services were highlighted, with the Borough President asking if more manpower may be needed. He also discussed the need for open space, explaining that Rufus King Park needs improvement and how more open space is needed for incoming residents. He suggested SBS grants for businesses along Jamaica Avenue to promote uniformity when improvements come. He asked about the validity of the EIS considering the water table at York College, to which DCP replied that the EIS is a broad perspective on impacts, not a specific one. He also pushed for new library opportunities, namely at Rochdale Village and Baisley Houses, working with job programs for local hiring, and discussing potential nonprofit, DYCD-sponsored programs for youth. There was a large concern about parking along Jamaica Avenue, with the Borough President stating that though the busway is needed, drivers can't shop on Jamaica Avenue due to the lack of parking. Finally, the Borough President pushed the need for an arts district, with JCAL helping lead the effort as an existing arts nonprofit in the area;

- There were twenty (20) public speakers registered to testify for this application. Eleven (11) speakers were in support of the application, and nine (9) speakers were against the application. Reasons cited in support of the application included questions and comments that sought to modify the Neighborhood Plan to consider adding more public facilities such as schools or updating existing facilities like parks and subways. Reasons cited against the Neighborhood Plan included overcrowding concerns, infrastructure strain, lack of parking and lack of awareness of the overall plan within the community;
- The Borough President's Office received two (2) written testimony letters in support of the Neighborhood Plan. They echoed verbal testimony in their overall support for the Plan's benefits and also advocated for more resources and funding in Jamaica.

RECOMMENDATION

Community-led planning takes long nights, dedication and, most importantly, community input. I applaud the Jamaica Steering Committee and the Department of City Planning for conducting over 30 workshops, meetings and information sessions across Jamaica. For months, business owners, residents and community leaders met to make educated recommendations about housing, open space, economic development, cultural and historical assets, healthcare facilities, libraries, schools and more. Together with my office and other city agencies, countless community members came together to create a vision that allowed for sustainability in terms of the climate, culture and future growth.

As the Borough President and as a son of Southeast Queens, I know how vital Jamaica is to the borough's identity as an economic and cultural engine of the city. But for generations, Jamaica had been systematically disinvested in and its families left to fend for themselves. But those days are done.

Finally, in collaboration with those same families and our steadfast partners in city government, we are addressing the very real needs of Jamaica residents while working toward a brighter future for this vibrant and resilient neighborhood. I couldn't be prouder of the efforts of all those who touched this plan throughout this community-centered process.

There is no such thing as a perfect plan, however, and there are a number of additional needed investments and changes this community must see happen in coordination with the Neighborhood Plan.

Based on the above consideration, I hereby recommend approval with the following conditions:

COMMUNITY FUNDING AND GRANTS

- **\$50 million Educational Fund** to support surrounding local schools. This money would be made available to schools for programming, supplies and other incidentals.
- **\$5 million Community Benefits Fund** for surrounding community-based organizations (CBOs) and nonprofit organizations doing work in and around the rezoning area.
- **\$2 million Food Pantry Fund** for existing pantries to continue their work despite other funding or supply chain gaps. We must continue to stabilize those in most need.
- **Local Infrastructure Fund** to be managed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Jamaica Working Group (see below). For each development that will be built as a result of the Rezoning, 1 percent of the total pro-forma budget should be allocated to infrastructure costs for sewers, storm drains, and other sustainable infrastructure.
- **Small Business Grants** for all independent business owners and/or the Business Improvement District (BID) in the Jamaica catchment area. The Department of Small Business Services (SBS) should work with the NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to administer up to \$10,000 one-time grants for business owners to make repairs, cosmetic changes or renovations to their storefronts and inside.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

- **Neighborhood-wide sanitary and stormwater sewer infrastructure improvements.** Despite the Draft Environmental Impact Statement's (DEIS) declaration that the Rezoning does not trigger any significant adverse impacts related to the sewer system, I know our Jamaica residents have suffered from flooding and sewage back-ups for decades. The City should prioritize homes that are not yet hooked up to the municipal system, as well as expanding storm sewer capacity and drainage. The City should also explore the possibility of a mini-blue belt in areas where the water table does not allow for sewers.
- **Explore a buy-out program for flood-prone areas.** Existing programs like "Build It Back" have been vital to rebuilding or relocating residents in natural-disaster areas. The City should explore a citywide buy-out program for homeowners in flood-prone areas that cannot be fixed with sewer infrastructure or other interventions.
- **\$503,000 for one new Motorized Litter Patrol (MLP) Truck cleaning crew and collection truck,** as identified by the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), within the Jamaica Rezoning catchment area.

HOUSING

In response to concerns about gentrification and displacement, I would like to see the City support these important cornerstones of affordable housing within and around the Jamaica Rezoning Area.

- **Closing out all maintenance tickets at NYCHA-South Jamaica Houses.** The City should prioritize all outstanding tickets at South Jamaica Houses to address decades-long inequality in public housing as well as ensuring new generations can live safely and thrive in these apartments. NYCHA should also explore funding renovations for one of its two senior centers. NYCHA should report quarterly progress of ticket closures to Community Board 12, the Borough President and the Council Member.
- **Faith-based organization development partnership education.** The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) shall make a concerted effort to host workshops or meetings (virtually or in-person) for all faith-based organizations in and around the Jamaica Rezoning Area. This is to make sure all institutions are aware of their place in building and preserving affordable housing, as well as preserving their congregations.
- **Parsons Boulevard Department of Health and Mental Health (DOHMH) Building Redevelopment.** The City should work to redevelop the site at 90-37 Parsons Boulevard to upgrade medical services as well as build 100% affordable housing above the newly proposed clinic.
- **Gotham Health South Queens, H+H Center capital improvements.** H+H should explore updates the Gotham Health South site with any necessary capital projects, including but not limited to green space reincorporated into the parking lot. With so many healthcare deserts in Southeast Queens, this expansion and partnership would fulfill a critical need.
- **Expanding the Basement Apartment Conversion Pilot Program (BACPP).** With the approval of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in the citywide zoning text amendment "City of Yes for Housing Opportunities," HPD should explore with New York State to expand the eligibility of the BACPP to include Community District 12. Creating opportunities for low-interest or zero-interest loans for homeowners to redevelop their basements to be safe and livable for new tenants would generate possibly hundreds of new units throughout Southeast Queens.
- **Expanding the eligibility of CityFHEPs Housing Vouchers.** As a citywide program for families and individuals transitioning out of HRA or DSS homeless shelters, the Mayoral Administration should put more funding into the CityFHEPs program as well as eliminating qualifying rules such as having a person work 10 hours per week for the last 30 days of their shelter stay.

- **Resources around "Housing Connect" education.** HPD should explore the commitment to host a minimum of five (5) public information sessions (virtually and in person) to teach individuals how the lottery system works, what income bands are, and how residents can apply for the lottery.

OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Jamaica Working Group.** If the rezoning is approved, there should be a Working Group (similar to the Steering Committee) that establishes a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and meets quarterly to assess goals and promised community benefits. DCP should convene this group through the first five years of the rezoning to ensure that all benefits are given, and all City projects are on schedule.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- **The City should explore investing \$25 million for the complete renovation of Roy Wilkins Park's existing Recreation Center.**
- **The City should explore investing at least \$75 million for the following existing parks in and just outside of the Jamaica rezoning catchment area:**
 - Baisley Pond Park
 - Briarwood Playground
 - Capt. Tilly Park
 - Chapel at Prospect Cemetery
 - Detective Keith Williams Park
 - Gateway Park
 - Gwen Ifill Park
 - Haggerty Park
 - Harvard Playground
 - Howard Von Dohlen Park
 - Jamaica Playground
 - Latimer Playground
 - Major Mark Park
 - Marconi Park
 - Norelli-Hargreaves Playground
 - Peters Field
 - Roy Wilkins Park
 - Rufus King Park
 - St. Albans / Archie Spigner Park

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

- **The City should explore the possibility of a new library branch** to be built within or outside of the Jamaica Rezoning Area, as well as expense funding for staffing and programming.
- **The City should explore investing at least \$215 million in capital funding for existing libraries:**
 - Central Library
 - South Jamaica Library
 - Baisley Library
- **New police precinct** to be built within or just outside of the Jamaica Rezoning Area, as per the DEIS mitigation.
- **New firehouse** to be built within or just outside of the Jamaica Rezoning Area, as per the DEIS mitigation.

SCHOOLS

- **The School Construction Authority (SCA) should explore finding new school sites** within and outside of the Jamaica Rezoning Area, including newly proposed developments on the ground floor, as well as exploring the investment of building out annexes for existing schools short on space.
- **The City should explore investing at least \$250 million in the following existing schools** in and just outside of the Jamaica rezoning catchment area:
 - August Martin High School
 - Cambria Heights Academy
 - Eagle Academy
 - High School for Law Enforcement
 - Hillcrest High School
 - Hillside Arts and Letters Academy
 - I.S. 238
 - I.S. 250
 - Jamaica Gateway to the Sciences
 - J.H.S. 008
 - J.H.S. 217
 - New Dawn Charter High School II
 - North Queens Community High School
 - Pathways College Prep School
 - Pathways to Graduation Queens
 - P.S./I.S. 116
 - P.S. 117
 - P.S. 140Q
 - P.S. 182Q
 - P.S. 40Q
 - P.S. 48Q
 - P.S. 50Q
 - P.S. 86
 - P.S. 312Q
 - P.S. 349
 - P.S. 354Q
 - P.S. 993Q
 - Queens Collegiate High School
 - Queens Gateway to Health Sciences Secondary School
 - Queens HS for the Sciences
 - Queens Satellite HS for Opportunity
 - Queens School of Inquiry
 - Richmond Hill High School
 - Thomas A. Edison High School
 - York College
 - Young Women's Leadership School

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

- **Jamaica Ave improvements.** In addition to the nearly \$70 million allocated to Downtown Jamaica from the Jamaica Now Neighborhood Action Plan, DOT and Parks should focus on sustainability such as pervious pavement, rain gardens, etc., along Jamaica Avenue.
- **Merrick Boulevard median renovations and upgrades** between Hillside and Linden Boulevards. DOT and Parks should work to repave and redesign these medians to have native plants and flora as well as improved pedestrian crossing and sightlines.
- **Major corridor improvements** such as establishing bike lanes, public garbage cans and regular trash pick-up hours through DSNY, and new trees and flora along the following routes:
 - Sutphin Boulevard between Liberty Avenue and 109th Street
 - Guy R. Brewer Boulevard between Archer Avenue and Linden Boulevard
 - Hillside Ave improvements between Queens Boulevard and 193rd Street
- **Change the Jamaica Ave Busway hours of operation** to Monday-Friday 6-10AM, 4-7PM with no hours of operation on Saturday or Sunday.

TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE

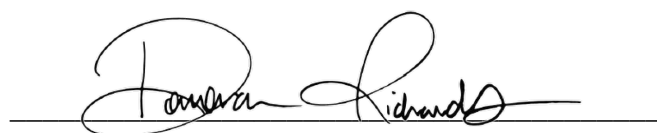
- **Archer Ave Bus Terminal** full ADA-accessibility renovation and redesign, complete with sidewalk and pedestrian crossing improvements.
- **Parsons Blvd F-Train Station** full ADA-accessibility renovation and redesign.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- **Local 30 percent hiring goal** of eligible new jobs (temporary and permanent) to be filled by local residents in Community Boards 8 and 12. These numbers should be reported quarterly to the Borough President, Council Member and respective Community Boards, and should also include zip codes of local residents that were hired. Any job fair or workforce development plans should also be made available to the aforementioned parties.
- **30 percent M/WBE Hiring Goal** (with the intention of exceeding said goal) for the total projected number of jobs, both permanent and temporary. These numbers should also be reported quarterly to the Borough President, Council Member and respective Community Boards.
- **Culturally competent workforce development** and outreach to Community Boards 8 and 12. For example, there should be a program that connects residents to union apprenticeships.
- **The City should, wherever possible, support and incentivize prevailing wages and safety standards** for all future worksites within and just outside the Jamaica Rezoning Area.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING

- **Partnership with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)** to have more robust afterschool programming.
- **NYCHA Baisley Houses Community Center** to be upgraded and reopened.



PRESIDENT, BOROUGH OF QUEENS

06/30/2025

DATE