

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION
ULURP APPLICATION NO: **C 130273 ZMX**
East Fordham Road Rezoning
7/15/13

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

CD# 6-ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 130273 ZMX--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 an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 3c:

1. eliminating from within an existing R6 District a C2-3 District bounded by Belmont Avenue, the northeasterly terminus of Belmont Avenue and its southeasterly prolongation, Crotona Avenue, and East Fordham Road;
2. eliminating from within an existing R6 District a C2-4 District bounded by Hughes Avenue, a line perpendicular to the northwesterly street line of Belmont Avenue distant 100 feet northeasterly (as measured along the street line) from the point of intersection of the northwesterly street line of Belmont Avenue and the northeasterly street line of East Fordham Road, Belmont Avenue, and East Fordham Road;
3. changing from an R6 District to an R6B District property bounded by:
 - a. Bathgate Avenue, East 191st Street, the northeasterly street line prolongation of a line 100 feet southeasterly of Hoffman Street, a line 160 feet northeasterly of East 191st Street, a line 175 feet northwesterly of Hughes Avenue, East 191st Street, Hughes Avenue, and a line 100 feet northeasterly of East Fordham Road; and
 - b. Hughes Avenue, the northeasterly terminus of Hughes Avenue and its southeasterly prolongation, Belmont Avenue, and a line perpendicular to the northwesterly street line of Belmont Avenue distant 100 feet northeasterly (as measured the street line) from the point of intersection of the northwesterly street line of Belmont Avenue and the northeasterly street line of East Fordham Road;
4. changing from an R6 District to a C4-5D District property bounded by:
 - a. Hughes Avenue, a line perpendicular to the northwesterly street line of Belmont Avenue distant 100 feet northeasterly (as measured along the street line) from the point of intersection of the northwesterly street line of Belmont Avenue and the northeasterly street line of East Fordham Road,

Belmont Avenue, the northeasterly terminus of Belmont Avenue and its southeasterly prolongation, Crotona Avenue, and East Fordham Road;

- b. a line 100 feet southwesterly of East Fordham Road, Belmont Avenue, a line 315 feet northeasterly of East 189th Street, Hughes Avenue, and a line 295 feet northeasterly of East 189th Street; and
 - c. a line 100 feet southwesterly of East Fordham Road, a line 110 feet southeasterly of Cambreleng Avenue, and a line 365 feet northeasterly of East 189th Street;
5. changing from a C8-1 District to an R6 District property bounded by:
- a. Arthur Avenue, a line 295 feet northeasterly of East 189th Street, and a line 100 feet southwesterly of East Fordham Road; and
 - b. a line 110 feet southeasterly of Cambreleng Avenue, a line 365 feet northeasterly of East 189th Street, a line 160 feet southeasterly of Cambreleng Avenue, and the northeasterly centerline prolongation of East 189th Street;
6. changing from a C8-1 District to a C4-5D District property bounded by a line 100 feet northeasterly of East Fordham Road, Hughes Avenue, East Fordham Road, Southern Boulevard, a line passing through two points: the first on the westerly street line of Southern Boulevard distant 140 feet northerly (as measured along the street line) from its point of intersection of the northeasterly street line of former East 188th Street and the second on a line 100 feet southeasterly of Crotona Avenue distant 230 feet northeasterly (as measured along this line) from its intersection with the northeasterly street line of former East 188th Street, a line 100 feet southeasterly of Crotona Avenue, a line 100 feet northeasterly of former East 189 Street, Crotona Avenue, East 189th Street, a line 160 feet southeasterly of Cambreleng Avenue, a line 365 feet northeasterly of East 189th Street, a line 110 feet southeasterly of Cambreleng Avenue, a line 100 feet southwesterly of East Fordham Road, a line 295 feet northeasterly of East 189th Street, Arthur Avenue, a line 100 feet southwesterly of East Fordham Road, Bathgate Avenue, East Fordham Road, and Bathgate Avenue; and
7. establishing within an existing R6 District a C2-4 District bounded by a line 100 feet southwesterly of East Fordham Road, Arthur Avenue, a line 100 feet southwesterly of East Fordham Road, a line midway between Arthur Avenue and Hughes Avenue, East 188th Street, Arthur Avenue, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 187th Street, and a line midway between Hoffman Street and Arthur Avenue;

Borough of the Bronx, Community District 6, as shown on a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated May 20, 2013 and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-304.

BACKGROUND

The East Fordham Road rezoning will impact three full and fifteen partial City blocks along East Fordham Road between Bathgate Avenue and Southern Boulevard; Arthur Avenue between East Fordham Road and East 187th Street; and East 191st Street between Bathgate and Hughes Avenues. The proposed action will change a C8-1 district to a C4-5D district for properties along East Fordham Road; change a C8-1 district along Beaumont Avenue between East Fordham Road and East 189th Street to a R6 district; change a R6 district to a R6B district along East 191st Street and a portion of Hughes Avenue; and add a C2-4 overlay district along Arthur Avenue.

The C4-5D district will allow a 4.0 FAR for commercial uses, 4.2 FAR for community facility uses, and a 4.2 FAR for residential uses, with the option to achieve a 5.6 FAR with inclusionary housing. The maximum building height will be 100 feet, with a setback between 60 and 85 feet. This district mandates active ground floor uses with at least fifty percent glazing between two and twelve feet above curb level. Parking is required for every 1,000 square feet of commercial floor area and fifty percent of the units. For affordable units, twenty percent is required.

The R6 district will bring properties along Beaumont Avenue into compliance with much of the Belmont neighborhood. The maximum FAR is 2.43 for residential uses and 4.8 for community facility uses. Under the Quality Housing Program, maximum FAR is 2.2 along narrow streets (such as Beaumont Avenue) and 3.0 along wide streets. Parking is required for seventy percent of the dwelling units and lowered to fifty percent if the lot is less than 10,000 square feet or if Quality Housing is utilized.

The R6B district is a contextual district will allow a maximum FAR of 2.0 with a 50-foot height limit and a setback between 30-40 feet. New structures in a R6B district must contextually line up with existing structures to maintain uniform street character. Parking is required for fifty percent of the units, and is waived if five spaces or fewer.

The C2-4 overlay district will bring existing commercial uses along Arthur Avenue into compliance and allow for additional commercial opportunities. One parking space is required for every 1,000 square feet of commercial floor area.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

This application was reviewed pursuant to CEQR and SEQRA and received a Positive Declaration as an unlisted action. The proposed actions are believed to impact the following, requiring further review: Open Space, Shadows, Traffic, Transit, Pedestrians, Air Quality, Noise, and Neighborhood Character.

The City Planning Commission certified this application as complete on May 20, 2013.

COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Bronx Community Board #6 held a public hearing on June 12, 2013 and approved this application with 18 in favor and none against or abstaining.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

The Bronx Borough President held a public hearing on this application on July 2, 2013. A representative from the Department of City Planning was in attendance and spoke in favor of this application.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

This rezoning is long overdue to help bolster East Fordham Road, already the borough's largest and most vibrant shopping district. The C8-1 zoning that was been here for so long was introduced at a time when automobilization of America was at its height and US-1, of which this portion of East Fordham Road is a part of, was still considered a major highway route along the entire East Coast. While there were a number of impacts noted in the Environmental Assessment Statement resulting in a Positive Declaration, in this case the impacts are all truly positive for the surrounding area.

The upzoning of this stretch of Fordham Road will also better integrate four of the borough's most popular institutions and tourist destinations, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Zoo, Fordham University and Arthur Avenue, into the Fordham retail and office hub. This rezoning not only provides for much-desired mixed-income housing, but extends a greater variety of retail opportunities to Southern Boulevard, and lays the groundwork for Fordham University to have an even more prominent presence in the community by encouraging development along East Fordham Road, as opposed to side streets in Belmont.

The rezoning allows for some height, but caps buildings at approximately ten stories, as not to affect the character of the Belmont neighborhood, or impact on the vistas from the New York Botanical Garden and Bronx Zoo. This rezoning will also be a boon to the Fordham Metro-North station, already the third-busiest station in the system, by providing much-needed transit-oriented development on the eastern side of Fordham Plaza. I am also pleased that provisions were made to respect the lower-scale character of East 191st Street, just south of Fordham University. Finally, in an effort to better integrate East Fordham Road with Belmont, the overlay of a C2-4 district will not only bring existing businesses on Arthur Avenue into compliance, but will provide a vibrant gateway for residents and tourists alike as they stroll towards the heart of Belmont at Arthur Avenue and East 187th Street from East Fordham Road.

I recommend approval of this application.