

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION
ULURP APPLICATION NOS: C 100310 ZMX C 100312 ZSX C 110234 HAX C 110297 ZSX
CROTONA PARK EAST-WEST FARMS REZONING
7/12/11

DOCKET DESCRIPTION

CD 3 & 6-ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 100310 ZMX-IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Industco Holdings, LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for an amendment of the Zoning Map, Section No. 3d:

1. changing from an M1-1 District to an R6A District property bounded by a line midway between Longfellow Avenue and Boone Avenue and its northeasterly prolongation, a service exit of the Cross Bronx Expressway, Boone Avenue, and East 172nd Street;
2. changing from an M1-1 District to an R7A District property bounded by Boone Avenue, a service exit of the Cross Bronx Expressway, a line 200 feet northeasterly of East 174th Street, a line 100 southeasterly of Boone Avenue, East 173rd Street, a line 50 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, a line 350 feet southwesterly of East 172nd Street, Sheridan Expressway, Westchester Avenue, Whitlock Avenue, Freeman Street, Boone Avenue, and the former centerline of Boone Avenue;
3. changing from an M1-1 District to an R7X District property bounded by a line 100 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, a line 200 feet northeasterly of East 174th Street, a service exit of the Cross Bronx Expressway, Sheridan Expressway, East 173rd Street and its southeasterly centerline prolongation;
4. changing from an R7-1 District to an R8X District property bounded by Longfellow Avenue, Boston Road, West Farms Road, a line 250 northeasterly of Rodman Place, a line 100 feet southeasterly of Longfellow Avenue and its northeasterly prolongation, a line 100 feet easterly of Longfellow Avenue, and the Cross Bronx Expressway;
5. changing from an M1-1 District to an R8X District property bounded by:
 - a. a line 100 feet southeasterly of Longfellow Avenue and its northeasterly prolongation, a line 250 feet northeasterly of Rodman Place, West Farms Road, the southeasterly prolongation of the northeasterly street line of Rodman Place, and a service exit of the Sheridan Expressway; and
 - b. a line 50 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, East 173rd Street and its southeasterly centerline prolongation, Sheridan Expressway, and a line 350 feet southwesterly of East 172nd Street;
6. establishing within a proposed R6A District a C2-4 District bounded by:

- a. a line midway between Longfellow Avenue and Boone Avenue and its northeasterly prolongation, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 174th Street, Boone Avenue, and a line 100 feet southwesterly of East 174th Street;
 - b. a line midway between Longfellow Avenue and Boone Avenue, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 173rd Street, Boone Avenue and East 173rd Street; and
7. establishing within a proposed R7A District a C2-4 District bounded by:
- a. Boone Avenue, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 174th Street, a line 100 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, a line 100 feet southwesterly of East 174th Street; and
 - b. Boone Avenue, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 173rd Street, a line 100 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, East 173rd Street, a line 50 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, and a line 350 feet southwesterly of East 172nd Street;
8. establishing within a proposed R7X District a C2-4 District bounded by:
- a. a line 100 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 174th Street, West Farms Road, and a line 100 feet southwesterly of East 174th Street; and
 - b. a line 100 feet southwesterly of Boone Avenue, a line 100 feet northeasterly of East 173rd Street, West Farms Road, and East 173rd Street; and
9. establishing within a proposed R8X District a C2-4 District bounded by:
- a. Longfellow Avenue, a line 80 feet northeasterly of Rodman Place, a line 100 feet southeasterly of Longfellow Avenue, and Rodman Place;
 - b. a line 70 feet northwesterly of West Farms Road, a line 250 feet northeasterly of Rodman Place, West Farms Road, and the Cross Bronx Expressway; and
 - c. a line 50 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, East 173rd Street, West Farms Road, a line 100 feet southwesterly of East 173rd Street, a line 100 feet southeasterly of Boone Avenue, East 172nd Street, West Farms Road, and a line 350 feet southwesterly of East 172nd Street;

Borough of Bronx, Community Districts 3 and 6, as shown in a diagram (for illustrative purposes only) dated May 9, 2011 and subject to the conditions of CEQR Declaration E-277.

CD 3 ULURP Application No; C 100312 ZSX –IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Industco Holdings, LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the grant of a special permit to Section 74-743* of the Zoning Resolution:

- a. to allow the distribution of total allowable floor area, dwelling units and lot coverage without regard for zoning lot line and zoning district boundaries;
- b. allow the location of buildings without regard for the applicable height and setback and court regulations; and
- c. to exclude portion of a building containing permitted or required accessory off-street parking spaces to be excluded from the calculation of lot coverage;

in connection with two proposed mixed use developments (Zoning Lot A, Block 3013, Lots 12, 29, 31, 35 37 & 46 and Zoning Lot B, Block 3014, Lots 9, 15 & 45), in R7A/C2-4**, R8X/C2-4** Districts, within a Large Scale General Development bounded by Boone Avenue, East 173rd Street, West Farms Road, and a line approximately 351 feet southwesterly of East 172nd Street, Borough of The Bronx, Community District 3.

- Note: Section 74-743 is proposed to be changed under a concurrent related application (N 100311 ZRX) for a zoning text amendment.

** Note: The site is proposed to be rezoned from an M1-1 District to R7A/C2-4 Districts under a concurrent related application (C 100310 ZMX).

Plans for this proposal are on file with the City Planning Commission and may be seen in Room 3N, 22 Reade Street, New York, New York 10007.

CD 3 ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 110234 HAX-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 1525 West Farms Road (Block 3014, Lot 45) as an Urban Development Action Area; and
 - b) an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
- 2) pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for disposition of such property.

To facilitate the disposition of the property to an adjacent leaseholder for the future development of affordable housing, Community District 3, Borough of the Bronx.

CD 3 ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 110297 ZSX-IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Industco Holdings, LLC pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter for the grant of a special permit pursuant to Section 74-744 of the Zoning Resolution to allow residential and non residential uses to be arranged within a building without regard for the use regulation set forth in Section 32-42 (Location within buildings), in connection with two proposed mixed use developments (Zoning Lot A, Block 3013, Lots 12, 29, 31, 35, 37 & 46 and Zoning Lot B, Block 30-14, Lots 9, 15 & 45), in R7A/C2-4**, R8X** and R8X/C2-4** Districts, within a Large-Scale General Development bounded by Boone Avenue, East 173rd Street, West Farms Road, and a line approximately 331 feet southwesterly of East 172nd Street, Borough of the Bronx, Community District 3.

** Note: The site is proposed to be rezoned from an M1-1 District to a R7A/C2-4, R8X and R8X/C2-4 Districts under a concurrent related application (C 100310 ZMX).

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this ULURP is to rezone an 11-block area along West Farms Road and Boone Avenue between East Tremont Avenue to the north and Freeman Street to the south from a M1-1 zone to provide a mix of residential, commercial and community facility uses. This application also looks for approval of a number of special permits to designate Block 3013, Lots 12, 29, 31, 35, 37 and 46, and Block 3014, Lots 9, 15 and 45 as a Large Scale General Development (LSGD) area; to lift restrictions on the location commercial uses; and to allow parking spaces to be distributed without the confinement of zoning lot boundaries.

The proposed rezoning would allow for the creation of approximately 2,635 housing units, 92,941 square feet of commercial space, 11,888 square feet of community facility space, and publicly accessible, mid-block open space corridors. The sites controlled by the applicant would produce 1,325 housing units, 46,033 square feet of commercial space, and 11,888 square feet of community facility space intended for daycare. The applicant is also considering the development of an 88,620 square foot, 540-seat elementary school, pending New York City Department of Education siting approval, in lieu of the daycare facility and one of the residential buildings.

The proposed rezoning straddles two community boards, Bronx Community Boards 3 and 6, and will thus be first analyzed in the context of each community board, and then as a whole.

Bronx Community Board 3

The proposed rezoning area in Bronx Community Board 3 is bound by the Cross Bronx Expressway to the north, Sheridan Expressway to the east, Freeman Street to the south, and Boone Avenue, and the midblock of Boone and Longfellow Avenues to the west. The entire area is currently zoned M1-1. The following zones are being proposed:

- **R6A:** Western side of Boone Avenue between East 172nd Street and the Cross Bronx Expressway.

- **R7A:** Eastern side of Boone Avenue between Freeman Street and the Cross Bronx Expressway; West Farms Road between Freeman Street and 240 feet north of Jennings Street; and West Farms Road between 200 feet north of East 174th Street and the Cross Bronx Expressway.
- **R7X:** West Farms Road between East 173rd Street and 200 feet north of East 174th Street.
- **R8X:** West Farms Road between 240 feet north of Jennings Street and East 173rd Street.
- **C2-4:** Eastern side of Boone Avenue between 268 feet north of Jennings Street and 100 feet north of East 173rd Street; the northwest corner of Boone Avenue and East 173rd Street; the northwest and southwest corners of Boone Avenue and East 174th Street; East 173rd Street between Boone Avenue and West Farms Road; East 174th Street between Boone Avenue and West Farms Road; and West Farms Road between 240 feet north of Jennings Street and East 172nd Street.

These actions would allow for the construction of six-to-fifteen story residential buildings along West Farms Road and Boone Avenue, with commercial overlays on the corners. Also, the Large-Scale General Development Plan would allow for setback and height requirements to be adjusted that allows for taller buildings on certain blocks, while allowing shorter buildings on others. Additionally, this action will allow parking to be configured under certain sites that do not have issues with rock outcroppings that will remain.

Currently this area is a mix of manufacturing, wholesale, warehouse and automobile uses. The immediate surrounding neighborhood is characterized by primarily one-to-three family homes, five-to-six story apartment buildings, and public schools to the west and south, New Horizons shopping mall and the Cross Bronx Expressway to the north and northwest, and the Sheridan Expressway, manufacturing, hotel, automobile uses and Starlight Park to the east.

This area is well-served by transportation with the IRT 2 and 5 local trains stopping at 174th Street and Freeman Street stations 4½ blocks west from the western most edge of the proposed rezoned area, and the IRT 6 local train stopping at Whitlock Avenue two blocks south from the southernmost point of the proposed rezoning. The area also has a number of buses, including the BX4, 4A and 27 along Westchester Avenue; BX5 and 35 terminating at Westchester Avenue and East 165th Street, three blocks south of the proposed rezoned area; BX11 along East 172nd Street, Jennings Street and West Farms Road; BX19 along Southern Boulevard; BX21 along Boston Road; and BX36 along East 174th Street. Also, as mentioned, the area is abutted by the Cross Bronx Expressway to the north and Sheridan Expressway to the east. Access to the Bronx River Parkway is ½ mile to the east.

Bronx Community Board 6

The proposed rezoning area in Bronx Community Board 6 is bound by East Tremont Avenue to the north, West Farms Road and Sheridan Expressway to the east, East 176th Street to the south, and Longfellow Avenue and Boston Road to the west. The entire area is proposed to be rezoned from M1-1 to R8X with a C2-4 overlay along Boston and West Farms Roads. These actions would allow for the development of residential buildings up to 15 stories in height with first floor commercial uses.

Currently this area is a mix of hotel, manufacturing, automobile and vacant uses. The immediate surrounding area is characterized by five-to-six story apartment buildings to the north, east and west, high-rise towers to the northwest, one-to-three family homes to the north and east, commercial taxpayer and mall structures to the north and west, the Bronx River Art Center to the north, a bus depot to the south east and underutilized manufacturing uses to the east. The Bronx Zoo and River Park are also ¼ mile to the north.

The area is well-served by transportation with the IRT 2 and 5 local trains stopping at West Farms Square-East Tremont Avenue station along the north and west boundaries of the site. Additionally, the East 180th Street station for these lines is four blocks to the northeast and provides express train service via the IRT 5 during rush hours. The area is also well-served by bus transportation with the BX9 and Q44 buses terminating around West Farms Square; the BX21, 36, 40 and 42 buses at West Farms Square; and the BXM10 Express Bus along East Tremont Avenue. The area is also abutted by the Cross Bronx Expressway to the south and Sheridan Expressway to the east. Access to the Bronx River Parkway is 2/5 mile to the east.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION

This application was reviewed pursuant to SEQRA and CEQR. An Environmental Assessment Statement was prepared for this application and designated as a Type I action on January 25, 2010, resulting in a Positive Declaration that requires an Environmental Impact Statement. The City Planning Commission certified this application as complete on May 9, 2011.

COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Bronx Community Board #6 held a public hearing and approved this application on June 8, 2011 with a vote of 18 in favor, two against, and zero abstentions. Bronx Community Board #3 held a public hearing and approved this application on June 21, 2011 with a vote of 25 in favor, zero against and one abstention.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

The Bronx Borough President held a public hearing on this application on June 16, 2011. The applicants were present and spoke in favor of this application. Four members from the community were also present and expressed some concerns over the scope of the project. The following comments were noted:

- There would be reduced open space acreage per person as a result of this project and is identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- The creation of an open space fund to support Starlight Park and the surrounding neighborhood parks.
- Whether or not there was adequate community involvement in the process.

- Whether or not the project was explained clearly to residents at the Community Board hearings.
- Request for at least 30% of the units to be low-income.

There were additional written statements from The Metallic Lathers & Reinforcing Ironworkers Union, Local 46 and the International Union of Elevator Constructors, Local 1, requesting approval only if a union labor agreement is reached for the project.

The Bronx Borough Board also held a hearing on the matter on June 23, 2011 and unanimously voted in favor of the project.

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

The Crotona Park East-West Farms rezoning has the potential to transform a desolate stretch of West Farms Road and an underutilized corner of West Farms Square into a vibrant and active stretch of street. The applicant plans on constructing over 1,300 of the potential 2,600 units over a ten-year period.

I applaud the applicant in their initiative to work with the community and elected officials to create a plan that incorporates the needs of the neighborhood. A number of public hearings took place, as well as a scoping session on March 4, 2010. I appreciate that our suggestions of adding commercial overlays on West Farms Road and step streets at the mid-block open space corridors were readily included. Also, I am happy that the applicant will be committing to constructing a mixed-income community. To achieve a balance, I request that at least 30% of the units proposed will be for low-income residents, and at least 30% will be for moderate and middle-income residents. If there is opportunity for homeownership, then I strongly urge the applicant to pursue it. Crotona Park East has a number of stable, homeownership developments and is one of the few neighborhoods in the South Bronx that provides a substantial number of homeownership opportunities. A cooperative or condominium option would be complimentary.

In terms of community input, I am pleased a site is set aside for an elementary school, if the need arises, and appreciate the outreach to the Department of Education to potentially facilitate this option. Even if this site is not used for a school, the applicant has committed to providing daycare, which is desperately needed in our communities. Also, I am glad the applicant has been in talks with community groups to explore the creation of an open space fund that would support neighborhood parks, such as Starlight Park and River Park. I urge that discussion continue to create such a fund.

I also am excited to see the transformation of West Farms Square. West Farms Square's presence as a crossroads of major Bronx streets, bus terminus, proximity to the Bronx Zoo and Bronx River Arts Center, and excellent subway access through its own station and its proximity to the East 180th Street express station, has been underappreciated and underutilized. West Farms Square can become a vibrant and safe intersection with the addition of streetlife on the southern end that compliments the activity around the subway entrances on the northside. The

scale of the proposed buildings would match the existing character of the high rise project-based Section 8 buildings on the northwest corner.

As much as I applaud this rezoning, I do have some concerns, the first of which deal with Boone Street and the area immediately west. The character of Boone Street will drastically change as a result of the rezoning. Boone Street, unlike West Farms Road, is an active, narrow corridor currently bustling with jobs. Although the applicant has indicated many of the 184 existing manufacturing, wholesale and warehouse jobs are planning to relocate, I remain concerned about the loss of skilled labor jobs in the borough. The economy of The Bronx cannot thrive on low-paying, part-time retail employment. The Department of Small Business Services needs to play a larger role in the ULURP process when manufacturing jobs are impacted by a rezoning.

Furthermore, I am concerned about the height of the buildings along Boone Street and their impact and influence on the existing community to the west in Crotona Park East. Crotona Park East is a mixed-density neighborhood that contains a series of low-rise, homeownership developments, such as Charlotte Gardens, Salter Square and the West Farms Homeowners Association (located one block from the rezoning). Development in the neighborhood recently has dwarfed these structures. Crotona Park East provides one of the few comprehensive clusters of homeownership opportunities in the South Bronx. Additionally, there are a number of century-old detached homes in West Farms at the north end of this rezoning. If a plan like this is to move forward, then City Planning needs to make sure that the balance of density is limited to this rezoning by downzoning a good portion of Crotona Park East and West Farms.

Finally, I ask the applicant to strongly consider two things. First, whether or not the Sheridan Expressway is decommissioned, streetlife must be encouraged along West Farms Road. Aside from the promised commercial space, entrances to the residential portion of the buildings are also a necessity. True transformation can only take place if people are given a reason to walk along the street, otherwise this will create a high-rise, yet desolate corridor. Second, I urge the developer to hire Bronx residents and use Bronx certified suppliers and vendors for construction. The Bronx is abundant in qualified skilled labor, and these Bronxites deserve the opportunity to work on a project of such impact and magnitude.

Overall, I believe that the Crotona Park East-West Farms rezoning will benefit both Bronx Community Boards 3 and 6. I ask both the applicant and the City to address my concerns mentioned above to make this project a true success.

I recommend approval of this application.