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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Task Force on Residential Rezoning
Tuesday, February 13, 2024 - 6:30 PM**
This meeting was conducted via Zoom

MINUTES:

Board Members Present: Adam Wald, Elizabeth Rose, Elizabeth Ashby, Michele Birnbaum, Ed Hartzog, Valerie Mason, Barbara Rudder, Judy Schneider

Approximate number of public attendees: 20

Meeting was called to order at 6:32pm

Item 1: Review Existing Conditions - East 60s Blocks

The Co-chairs gave a presentation on the existing buildings in the blocks in the East 70s and 60s that are currently zoned for manufacturing or commercial only use. The presentation also showed a comparison of several potential zone types, providing the FAR, height limit, and other data based on both current rules and proposed changes under City of Yes. We discussed the value of focusing on zone types that equal or exceed the currently available FAR of 6.5 in these blocks, and counter the lack of height limit of the current zoning. All potential zone types discussed were contextual, meaning they have a height limit; each of these also has a non-contextual version that typically allows for slightly less FAR but does not have a height limit. The presentation provided photo examples of buildings that conform to each of the zone types discussed, as well as photos of existing non-conforming residential buildings in mid-block locations on the Upper East Side. Existing non-conforming buildings shown ranged in estimated FAR from about 7.4-8.4. Finally, the presentation raised the topic of potential priorities and trade-offs as the task force considers applying different zone types to these blocks.

Item 2: Discussion of Potential Zoning Types

The meeting then turned to a discussion of priorities and feedback from the attendees.

There was general agreement that building housing including MIH was important. There was also consensus that height limit was the priority for most attendees. For many attendees, lower height was discussed as characteristic of the neighborhood and important to ensuring light. There were also comments that height limits in the mid-block are consistent with CB8s prior proposal for a special district for height limits on avenues. There were also comments that unlimited building height doesn't necessarily yield additional apartment units, and higher density but shorter buildings might better generate more units. A few attendees expressed that taller, thinner buildings were better as one can see around them, and they allow for more green space. Other priorities mentioned included green space/greenery outside of buildings, parking, circular driveways to reduce traffic back-up, and building setbacks from the street wall (with greenery in front).

There was a suggestion to design a survey to go out to the community, targeting the existing residential buildings in the subject blocks.

As the task force looks at specific zone options for individual blocks, there was a request for visuals of the individual blocks to understand existing context.

As we discussed the block containing the Animal Medical Center, there was unanimous support for ensuring this organization/facility remain in this location.

There was also discussion of the Friedland rezoning proposal on East 94th street, and requests from the community members attending for support from the Community Board. The District Manager provided information about the ULURP process.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Rose and Adam Wald, Co-Chairs.