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**The City of New York  
Community Board 8 Manhattan  
Task Force on Residential Rezoning  
Tuesday, September 17, 2024 - 6:30 PM**  
This meeting was conducted via Zoom

**MINUTES:**

**Board Members Present:** Adam Wald, Elizabeth Rose, Sebastian Hallum Clarke, Judy Schneider, Michele Birnbaum, Craig Lader, Sahar Husain, Ed Hartzog

**Approximate number of public attendees:** 12

Meeting was called to order at 6:33pm

**Introduction**

Elizabeth Rose summarized the background, objectives, and approach of the task force.

There are some blocks in CD8 that are zoned as C8-4 and M1-4 blocks. We are reviewing these blocks with a view to rezoning these blocks as residential in order to help address the residential housing crisis and support additional affordable housing in Community Board 8.

An overview of permitted uses and bulk controls in the M1-4 and C8-4 was presented. Under the current zoning, the blocks under review allow up to 6.5 FAR (Floor Area Ratio) for Community Facility use; there is currently no height limit.

**Principles for our rezoning proposal:**

1. Want a FAR (Floor Area Ratio) of at least 6.5, which is the current FAR for a community facility on these blocks. We don't want to take away from the bulk of what could be built today.
2. Want to ensure high enough FAR for all or most lots to meet MIH requirements
3. Want the FAR close to the minimum FAR needed in order to meet MIH requirements (so as not to over-incentivize redevelopment)
4. Want to use a contextual zone, which allows for a height limit.
5. Want to mirror adjacent/opposite uses
6. Want to grandfather existing uses

Elizabeth noted these principles were developed through the early meeting discussions of this Task Force, and are open to change.

The plan for the next few months is:

- October: study the final set of blocks
- November: Summarize and provide feedback
- December: Propose resolution to the full board of CB8M

### **Block 1569**

Co-chair Wald summarized the existing conditions for block 1569, on the southern side of East 90th Street between First and York Avenues. Current buildings include a self storage facility, the Spence school gym, and a residential condominium.

Adam proposed an R8A equivalent, with a FAR of 6.0 (7.2 with IH), and a height limit of 145’.

### **Block 1570**

Co-chair Wald summarized the existing conditions for block 1570, on the northern side of East 90th Street between First and York Avenues. These include rent-stabilized and market-rate apartment buildings.

Co-chair Wald summarized the existing conditions for block 1570, on the southern side of East 91th Street between First and York Avenues. This includes a manufacturing facility, a garage, and part of Sacred Heart School. Adam commented that the manufacturing and garage sites are ideal sites for the residential conversion we’re seeking in this task force.

Adam proposed an R8A equivalent, with a FAR of 6.0 (7.2 with IH), and a height limit of 145’.

### **Discussion**

The TFRR heard comments from a number of neighbors and board members, which are summarized below:

- **Bike Path Access:** The streets discussed are vital bike paths to Central Park.
- **Affordable Housing Concerns:** There's concern over the potential loss of existing affordable housing on East 90th Street due to development.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The task force plans to invite stakeholders to the November meeting for feedback and discussion. Co-Chair Rose explained that these meetings are open to any stakeholder to attend, and that we intend to in particular do outreach to invite stakeholders to attend the November meeting, which is focused on summarization and providing feedback.
- **Developer Interest:** Harley Neiditz from Assemblymember Seawright’s office inquired about developer interest in East 91st Street, but the task force has not engaged with any developers.
- **Comment on best targets:** The manufacturing buildings on East 91st Street might be more appropriate for redevelopment. If we convert this to a residential block with a height limit, are we encouraging a developer to try to do something with these buildings? On East 90th Street where there is currently a warehouse, would those remain grandfathered in their current status?
  - Co-chair Wald noted: The rezoning will encourage residential development by making residential uses permitted. If we zone this land as residential, these buildings' current uses will be grandfathered in.
- **Zoning Implications:** Proposed rezoning will allow residential uses and potentially enable self-storage facilities to convert to residential if they close.
- **Building Preservation:** There’s a desire among members to preserve existing residential buildings amidst potential redevelopment.
- **Support for Affordable Housing:** Some members expressed support for affordable housing, but question how the new zoning will ensure it given the underlying cost of land. Additional infrastructure is required as well.
  - **Mandatory Inclusionary Housing:** Co-chair Rose noted that the rezoning will require mandatory inclusionary housing should these sites be redeveloped.
- **Discussion on Zoning Parameters:** The focus of the conversation has been on zoning limits in terms of feet rather than stories, with height limits set for residential development.

### **Summary of Opinions**

The attendees were asked to show their support or opposition to the proposed R8A zone type for each of the three “blocks” discussed using the red and green response buttons in Zoom.

In total there were 13 potential votes in the room, excluding co-chairs, staff, and representatives of elected officials.

- Block 1569 (South side of 90th Street): Proposal to rezone to R8A. 8 green, no red.
- Block 1570 (North side of 90th Street): Proposal to rezone to R8A. 7 green, 4 red. Subsequent discussion confirmed the interpretation of the red votes as “we don’t want to create incentives to disturb the existing buildings.” These respondents supported the R8B zone type for this block over R8A.
- Block 1570 (South side of 91st Street): Proposal to rezone to R8A. 10 green.

**October meeting:**

The next meeting will cover blocks 1571 (91<sup>st</sup>-92<sup>nd</sup> streets between 1<sup>st</sup> and York avenues) and 1557 (94<sup>th</sup>-95<sup>th</sup> streets between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> avenues).

**Other:**

There were some questions and discussion about the community facility being developed on the south side of 91<sup>st</sup> street and how it will be used. Attendees were encouraged to bring these questions to the social services committee (provider and model for how this shelter will be operated) or the zoning and development committee (legality of the facility in its existing zone).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm.

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