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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Task Force on Residential Rezoning
Tuesday, October 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, Barbara Rudder, Ed Hartzog

Approximate number of public attendees: 13

Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm

Introduction

Co-Chair Rose summarized the objective of the task force. There are portions of the Upper East Side that are zoned for only commercial and/or manufacturing uses, where new residential uses are forbidden. The task force seeks to develop a proposal to rezone these blocks to allow new residential uses of these blocks/lots should they be redeveloped.

The general principles for zone selection include:

- Zone density at least equivalent to currently allowable community facility use (6.5 FAR)
- Sufficient density for future development to require MIH (minimum of 12,500 SF)
- Minimize incentive to demolish existing residential facilities
- Use contextual zones to create height limits
- Consistency with adjacent/opposite lots and existing buildings

Block 1571 (East 91st Street through to East 92nd Street between First and York Avenues)

Co-Chair Wald summarized the existing conditions in block 1571.

The northern side of E 91st Street includes offices, residential apartments, the ASPCA building, a community facility, and a gym. These lots are opposite another block in this study that was previously proposed to be zoned R8A. The proposed zone for this block is R8A (which means 6.0 FAR, or 7.2 FAR with IH).

The southern side of E 92nd Street includes a hotel, community facility, animal hospital, and a self-storage facility. These lots are across the street from 25-story and adjacent to a 32-story mid-block buildings. The proposed zone for these lots is R10A (which means 10 FAR, or 12 FAR with IH).

Block 1557 (East 94th Street through to East 95th Street between First and Second Avenues)

Co-chair Wald summarized the existing conditions in block 1557.

The northerly side of E 94th Street includes a construction site for a life sciences development already in progress. There is existing development in progress within the mid-block expected to reach 190'. The proposed zone for these lots is R10A.

The southerly side of E 95th Street includes a community facility, life sciences, several residential buildings, and a parking garage. There is existing development in the mid-block of 204' and development in progress expected to reach 190'. The proposed zone for these lots is R10A.

Block 1556 (East 94th between First and Second Avenues)

Co-chair Wald summarized the existing conditions in block 1556.

The southerly side of E 94th street includes offices, residential, and commercial uses. The proposed zoning this to R8A.

Discussion

Comments from members of the public:

- Residents shared information about the current situation in the blocks under discussion.
- Concerns about the presence of abandoned buildings in the neighborhood.
- Concerns about the disruption of potential construction to residents.
- Concerns about how increasing the density of E 91st Street may impact traffic flows, especially near the entrance to Marine Transfer Station.
- Concerns that continued commercial trash pick-up will make greater residential use unattractive
- Concerns about lack of residential parking given the bus turn-arounds on York avenue at 92nd Street
- Suggestions to consider allowing ground-floor retail on E 94th Street and public outdoor spaces.

Comments from members of the board:

- Questions were raised about grandfathering existing uses and if a prior use is vacant for a period of time whether that use could be returned after rezoning. The co-chairs explained that either continuous existing uses can continue in a grandfathered capacity under certain conditions, or we can propose mixed use that would allow a variety of uses for the indefinite future.
- Sebastian suggested increasing the residential density for the north side of E 91st Street to R10A, to match the proposed R10A on the south side of E 92nd Street.
- Michele expressed concerns that R8A zoning on both sides of E 91st Street might feel like a canyon, while others shared examples of similar zoning applied elsewhere in the neighborhood which are pleasant.

Straw Polls

Block 1571:

- Proposal to rezone to R8A on the north side of E 91st: 5 Yes, 10 No. (18 participants present)
 - Several of the “No” votes expressed a preference for R8B.
- Proposal to rezone to R10A on the south side of E 92nd: 8 Yes, 8 No. (18 participants present)

Block 1557:

- Proposal to rezone to R10A on the north side of E 94th Street: 9 Yes, 5 No.
 - A “No” voter expressed a desire for ground-floor commercial and/or public spaces.
- Proposal to rezone to R10A on the south side of E 95th Street: 7 Yes, 2 No (17 Participants). A participant asked why this block was proposed for R10A instead of R8A. The response was because of the existing buildings already on the block.

Block 1556

- Proposal to rezone to R8A on the south side of E 94th Street: 7 Yes, 3 No.
 - A “No” voter expressed a desire to avoid “missing teeth” buildings along the street.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

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