

In a companion [post](#) we comment on recent reports that suggest that the Mayor will appoint a new charter revision commission that will try to curb our community input on major land use decisions in our city by removing community boards from the ULURP (Uniform Land Use Review Procedure) Process and limiting the role of our borough presidents, already grossly underfunded. It is very important that community groups and concerned New Yorkers AGITATE – not just to oppose any City Hall efforts to erode borough power and influence but also – to [enhance](#) these borough officers as any plain reading of the [City Charter](#) indicates it empowers those five elected officials to do much more for New Yorkers than successive meat cleaver like budget cuts enable them to do. -CBB

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Developers Delight? A Warning Community Board Input Could End

by [Eliot Brown](#) 8:05 AM January 8, 2009



James Hamilton.

There's been a [bit](#) of [chatter](#) in the past few days, at least on a [handful](#) of [blogs](#), about the future of the city's seven-month rezoning approval process (the Uniform Land Use Review Process, or ULURP), with rumors floating around that it will come under the microscope of the yet-to-be-created [Charter Review Commission](#).

[ULURP](#) is required for any rezonings—and therefore many large developments—citywide. It includes non-binding recommendations from local community boards and borough presidents, and requires approvals from the City Planning Commission and the City Council.

In an [interview](#) with me earlier this week, Council Speaker Christine Quinn said she indeed wanted the Charter Review Commission to take a look at ULURP, and she would push for changes to its structure. Her concerns, she said, mostly lie with the preliminary scoping process, when the parameters of what can and cannot ultimately get built are established. Right now, the City Planning Commission has control over that, a structure she said needs another look [[more in the interview here](#)].

On Tuesday, I asked Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, who has devoted considerable attention to land-use matters, about potential changes to the process.

He emphasized the importance of a continued role for the community boards and the borough presidents in the process, but also warned that the Bloomberg administration's proposed budget cuts now to the community boards may make it easier to reduce the community's role in land use at a later date.

“Are we at the tipping point where ramifications of this could be basically the collapse of the land use process?” he said. “Because if you keep all these offices but kill the budgets, you’re killing the process.”

“If the resources are drying up because the excuse is, ‘We have a fiscal crisis,’ and then you have a charter revision that says, ‘You know what, we can shorten the time ... You don’t really need the community boards, you don’t really need the borough presidents,’” he said. “You see how this snowballs, so, am I sounding an alarm? Yes.”