



Queens Civic Congress

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QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS OPPOSES JA. PLAN AT CITY COUNCIL

The Queens Civic Congress (QCC) called on the City City Council to send “The Jamaica Plan” back to the City Planning Commission. “We urge the Council to make good its promise to the people of Jamaica to 'fix' the inequities of the Jamaica Plan by sending it back to the Commission for correction,” testified QCC Executive Vice President for Planning Patricia Dolan about the plan approved last week (July 16, 2007) by the City Planning Commission. “The Jamaica Plan represents a line in the sand and Queens community members will find any vote for without the intelligent and meritorious changes recommended by the Queens Civic Congress as no different than any vote to raise our taxes,” declared Sean Walsh, President of this umbrella group of 100 civic, cooperative, condo, tenant and other community associations throughout the borough of Queens. “We need a revision that would no longer threaten to overwhelm Jamaica and adjacent communities, explained Corey Bearak, Executive Vice President for Public Affairs for QCC, whose membership represents almost every community in the borough.

Ms. Dolan's testimony yesterday (Monday, July 23, 2007) to the City Council on “The Jamaica Plan” [070314ZMQ; 070315ZRQ; 070316HUQ; 070317HGQ; 070322HDQ; 070318PPQ; and 070158MMQ] follows.

I am Patricia Dolan, executive vice president of the Queens Civic Congress, a coalition of more than 110 community, tenant, co-op and condo and homeowner organizations representing every corner of Queens--including Southeast Queens Concerned Neighbors, Hollis Park Gardens Civic, United Neighbors, Cambria Heights Civic and other Southeast Queens neighborhood based civics.

The Queens Civic Congress supports the proposal for Jamaica Center. This part of the Jamaica Plan would create a greater concentration of commercial and residential development in the Special District (Gateway Area) and provide long overdue opportunities for residential development and business growth.

When the Plan turns to the low density, low rise neighborhoods adjacent to Jamaica Center, it reinforces the kind of heedless, unplanned, overdevelopment that has burdened these communities in recent years. The Jamaica Plan for the smaller, outlying residential neighborhoods of Jamaica is deeply flawed and fails to follow the example of recent zoning actions. In those rezonings of several Queens neighborhoods, the Department of City Planning completed contextually accurate rezonings that closely reflect the character of each block and section. We urge the Council to separate these Jamaica neighborhoods from the Plan and to direct the Department of City Planning to undertake a fast follow up rezoning of them.

The Jamaica Plan's proposal for Hillside Avenue would introduce high rise, high density, out of scale development to a swath of Queens that could not support the influx of thousands of new residents and the impacts they would bring. The Plan would establish Hillside Avenue as a model for future development of the borough's major corridors, using Fourth Avenue in Brooklyn as a template—an unacceptable prospect that Queens communities will not accept. We urge the City Council to remove Hillside Avenue from the Plan.

The Plan allows continued, largely uncontrolled growth of waste transfer stations and other noxious uses in the manufacturing districts without protecting small homes that preexist the creation of the M districts. The Plan's proposals for these manufacturing districts do not correct any of the burdens these facilities impose on Jamaica—nor does it explain how to develop a thriving business core within sniffing distance of a concentration of waste transfer stations.

The Plan offers developers of “inclusionary housing” opportunities to build higher and bulkier buildings without requiring developers to produce on site “affordable” housing units for current residents of Jamaica. The Congress will not support exporting affordable housing from the neighborhoods where it is most needed.

We urge the Council to make good its promise to the people of Jamaica to “fix” the inequities of the Jamaica Plan by sending it back to the Commission for correction.

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[Editor's Note: reach QCC executive vice-president Patricia Dolan at (718) 263-1760]

Queens Civic Congress Members

Association of Old Forest Hills ♦ Auburndale Improvement Association ♦ Bayside Civic Database ♦ Bayside Clear-Spring Council ♦ Bayside Hills Civic Association ♦ Bayswater Civic Association ♦ Bay Terrace Community Alliance, Inc. ♦ Bellaire-BellVill Civic Association ♦ Belle Harbor Property Owners Association ♦ Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association ♦ Bellerose Hillside Civic Association ♦ Bell Park Manor Terrace Community Council ♦ Bowne Park Civic Association ♦ Briarwood Community Association ♦ Cambria Heights Civic Association ♦ Cherry Robinson Homeowners ♦ C.O.M.E.T. (Communities of Maspeth-Elmhurst Together) ♦ Concerned Citizens of Laurelton ♦ Cornucopia Society ♦ Creedmoor Civic Association ♦ Deerfield Area Association ♦ Doug-Bay Manor Civic Association ♦ Douglas Manor Association ♦ Douglaston Civic Association ♦ Dutch Kills Civic Assn. of Long Island City ♦ East Flushing Civic Association ♦ Federated Block Associations of Laurelton ♦ Federation of Civic Associations of Southeast Queens ♦ Floral Park Community Council ♦ Flushing Heights Civic Association ♦ Flushing on the Hill Taxpayers Association ♦ Forest Hills Chamber of Commerce ♦ Forest Hills Crescents Association ♦ Forest Hills-Van Court Association ♦ Fresh Meadows Homeowners Association ♦ Georgetown Mews ♦ Glendale Civic Association of Queens ♦ Glen Oaks Village Owners, Inc. ♦ Greater Astoria Historical Society ♦ Greater Whitestone Taxpayers Civic Association ♦ Harding Heights Civic Association ♦ Hillcrest Estates Civic Association ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #1 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #2 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #3 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #4 ♦ Hollis Hills Civic Association ♦ Holliswood Civic Association ♦ Hollis Park Gardens Civic Association ♦ Holly Civic Association ♦ Hunters Point Community Coalition ♦ Hyde Park Gardens Cooperative ♦ Jackson Heights Beautification Group ♦ Jamaica Estates Association ♦ Jamaica Hill Community Association ♦ Juniper Park Civic Association ♦ Kew Forest Neighborhood Association ♦ Kew Gardens Civic Association ♦ Kew Gardens Hills Homeowners Association ♦ Kissena Park Civic Association ♦ Little Neck Bay Civic Association ♦ Little Neck Pines ♦ Malba Civic Association ♦ Meadowlark Gardens Owners ♦ Middle Village Maspeth Civic Association ♦ Middle Village Property Owners Association ♦ Mitchell Linden Civic Association ♦ Neponsit Property Owners Association ♦ Newtown Civic Association ♦ North Bellerose Civic Association ♦ North Flushing Civic Association ♦ North Hills Estates Civic Association ♦ Northwest Clearview Homeowners Association ♦ Norwood Civic Association ♦ Oakland Terrace/ Gardens Community Council ♦ Off Broadway Homeowners Association ♦ Our Neighborhood Improvement Association ♦ Parkway Village Historical Society ♦ Queensboro Hill Neighborhood Association ♦ Queens Colony Civic Association ♦ Queens Community Civic Corp. ♦ Queens Village Civic Association ♦ Ramblersville-Hawtree Civic Association ♦ Richmond Hill Historical Society ♦ Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association ♦ Rockaway Park Homeowners/ Residents ♦ Rocky Hill Civic Association ♦ Rosedale Civic Association ♦ Royal Ranch Association. ♦ Southeast Queens Concerned Neighbors ♦ South Ozone Park West Civic Association ♦ Springfield/Rosedale Community Action Association ♦ Station Road Civic Assoc. of Auburndale ♦ Sunnyside Gardens/Harrison Place Homeowners ♦ Surrey Estates Civic Association ♦ Union Turnpike Merchants Association ♦ United Forties Civic Association ♦ United Neighbors Civic Association ♦ Utopia Estates Civic Association ♦ Waldheim Neighborhood Association ♦ Wayanda Civic Association ♦ West Cunningham Park Civic Association ♦ Westmoreland Association ♦ Woodside Community Council