



Queens Civic Congress

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QUEENS CIVICS URGE CITY TO DOWNZONE MORE NABES

Prepared and Presented
By
Patricia Dolan, Executive Vice President for Zoning & Planning
to
City Council Zoning Subcommittee
on
The City Planning Commission

Good morning. I am Patricia Dolan, the executive vice president of the Queens Civic Congress, a coalition of more than 110 neighborhood based civic organizations.

Thank you for the opportunity to address some of the problems facing neighborhoods—especially in Queens. Over the past few years, the Department of City Planning has worked hard and with excellent effect to rezone almost twenty Queens neighborhoods. Over the past year, the Department's pace has diminished. There remain many neighborhoods to be studied for rezoning and other long overdue actions for the Department to address.

The continued absence of any protections in the Zoning Resolution for one family row houses encourages conversion of these homes to multiple occupancy. Recent rezonings of Middle Village, Bayside, Hillcrest/Jamaica Hill, College Point and other low-density neighborhoods will remain incomplete until a one family occupancy row house zoning district is adopted by the Commission and enacted by the Council. The Queens Civic Congress has proposed a draft text amendment that addresses this serious lapse in the Zoning Resolution.

More than a year after adopting the R-2A low-density zone, which protects mapped neighborhoods from effects of overbuilding, the Department of City Planning has not addressed the same kind of lower floor loopholes in the R-1 and R-1-2 zones that made the R-2A rezonings necessary. It is past time for the Department to act.

Exempting corner lots from yard requirements invites overdevelopment of these parcels. In some cases, property owners are razing corner houses to build six or even eight units on lot zoned for lower density use.

The principal issues surrounding community facilities remain despite limited reforms adopted three years ago: the Zoning Resolution gives community facilities a bulk bonus of up to 100% and encourages intrusions into the side and rear yards. And the Resolution continues to permit community facilities to impose non-conforming structures, especially in residential districts, without regard to parking, shadows or quality of life. Despite promises by City Planning to revisit the concerns expressed by many civics when the community facilities reforms were adopted, no such review of the reforms has taken place. We continue to await public discussion of proposals for community facilities in higher density districts.

The Civic Congress looks forward to working with the Department of City Planning and with the City Council on behalf of neighborhoods across the city.

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[Editor's Note: Patricia Dolan is also the president of the Kew Gardens Hills Civic Association. She can be reached at 718 263-1760]

The entire Queens Civic Congress Platform may be viewed on the internet at:
<http://www.queensciviccongress.org/Platform/final2004Platform-forvote.pdf>

Queens Civic Congress Members

Bayside Civic Database ♦ Bayside Hills Civic Association ♦ Bayswater Civic Association ♦ Bay Terrace Community Alliance, Inc. ♦ Bellaire-Bell Vill 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 ♦ Broadway-Flushing Homeowners ♦ Cambria Heights Civic Association ♦ Cherry Robinson Homeowners ♦ C.O.M.E.T. (Communities of Maspeth-Elmhurst Together) ♦ Concerned Citizens of Laurelton ♦ Creedmoor Civic 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 ♦ Flushing Suburban Civic Association ♦ Forest Hills Chamber of Commerce ♦ Forest Hills Crescents Association ♦ Forest Hills-Van Court Association ♦ Fresh Meadows Homeowners Association ♦ Georgetown Mews ♦ 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 Owners Corp. ♦ 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 ♦ Lost Community Civic Association ♦ Malba Civic Association ♦ Middle Village Property Owners Association ♦ Mitchell Linden Civic Association ♦ Neponsit Property Owners ♦ Newtown Civic Association ♦ North Bellerose Civic Association ♦ North Flushing Civic Association ♦ North Hills Estates Civic Association ♦ Northwest Clearview Homeowners Association ♦ Norwood Civic Association ♦ Oakland Gardens/Terrace Community Council ♦ Off Broadway Homeowners Association ♦ Old Forest Hills, Association of ♦ Our Neighborhood Improvement Association ♦ Ozone Tudor Civic 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 Association ♦ Rockaway Action Committee ♦ Rocky Hill Civic Association ♦ Rosedale Civic Association ♦ Royal Ranch, Inc. ♦ Sagamore Douglaston Civic Association ♦ South East Queens Concerned Neighbors ♦ South Ozone Park Civic Association West ♦ Springfield/Rosedale Community Action Association ♦ Harrison Place Homeowners/Sunnyside Gardens ♦ Surrey Estates Civic Association ♦ The New Property Civic Association ♦ Union Turnpike Merchants Association ♦ United Forties Civic Association ♦ United Neighbors Civic Association ♦ Utopia Estates Civic Association ♦ Village Mall at Hillcrest Condominium ♦ Waldheim Neighborhood Association ♦ Wayanda Civic Association ♦ West Cunningham Park Civic Association ♦ Westmoreland Association ♦ Woodside Community Council