DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW DIVISION

Amanda M. Burden, AICP, *Director*
Department of City Planning

POSITIVE DECLARATION

Date: December 13, 2006

Project Identification
CEQR No. 07DCP030M
ULURP Nos. Pending
SEQRA Classification: Type I

Lead Agency
City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007
Contact: Robert Dobruskin
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Name, Description and Location of Proposal:

Manhattan 125th Street Corridor Rezoning and Related Actions
The New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) is proposing zoning text and map amendments that would affect 24 blocks along the 125th Street corridor in East, Central and West Harlem. The area proposed to be rezoned is generally bounded by 124th Street, 126th Street, Broadway and Second Avenue and includes parts of Manhattan Community Districts 9, 10 and 11. The proposed rezoning area is currently zoned R7-2, C4-4, C4-4A, C4-5, C4-7, and M1-2. The rezoning proposal would create a new special district, the Special 125th Street District, within the rezoning area and change the area's underlying zoning to R6A, R7-2, R7A, C4-4A, C4-4D, C6-3, and C4-7, as modified by the proposed special district.

The proposed action also includes the disposition of City-owned property, an Urban Renewal Plan amendment, a City Planning Commission (CPC) certification pursuant to the Special TA (transit land use) District, and Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP) designation and project approval in connection with a known development on a site within the rezoning area.

The proposed changes are part of a comprehensive City initiative to support the ongoing revitalization of 125th Street. The proposal would increase permitted floor area ratios (FARs) in the rezoning area to encourage new mixed-use commercial and residential development, provide an inclusionary housing bonus to facilitate the development of affordable housing, and map contextual zoning districts to protect the existing character and scale of predominantly residential areas.

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The proposed action could result in new development, including residential and commercial uses, on numerous sites within the proposed rezoning area. The Department of City Planning (DCP) has identified 26 projected development sites in the rezoning area on which development would be expected to occur as a result of the proposed action. In addition, DCP has identified 23 potential development sites in the rezoning area. If development does not occur on the projected development sites, the same overall amount of development could occur instead on some or all of the potential development sites. For analysis purposes, the build year for the proposed action is 2017. A ten year period is typically believed to be the length of time over which developers would act on the change in zoning and the effects of the proposed action would be felt.

The 26 projected development sites currently contain 28 dwelling units (DUs); 475,091 square feet (sf) of commercial uses (350,974 sf or retail, 115,605 sf of office/commercial and 8,512 sf of hotel), 40,788 sf of storage/manufacturing uses; 116,908 sf of parking/auto related uses; 80,058 sf of community facility space; and 256,745 sf of vacant floor area.

Under future conditions without the proposed action (No-Build Scenario), some as-of-right development is expected to occur on the 26 projected development sites. Development under the No-Build Scenario is expected to consist of 314 DUs; 635,434 sf of retail space; 512,305 sf of office space; 8,512 sf of hotel space (together the retail, office, and hotel space would comprise a total of 1,156,251 sf of commercial space); 26,824 sf of storage/manufacturing uses; 112,404 sf of parking/auto related uses; 182,493 sf of community facility space; and 20,586 sf of institutional conversion space.

Under future conditions with the proposed action (Build Scenario), development on the 26 projected development sites would result in 2,792 residential units, including 530 affordable housing units; 843,923 sf of commercial retail space; 844,361 sf of commercial office space; 20,184 sf of hotel space (total commercial space would be 1,708,468 sf); 71,508 sf of community facility space; 20,586 sf of institutional conversion space; and 1,998 sf of parking/auto related uses.

Compared to future conditions absent the proposed action (No-Build Scenario), development on the 26 projected development sites under the proposed action (Build Scenario) would result in an incremental (net) gain of 2,478 residential units, including 530 affordable housing units; 208,489 sf of commercial retail space; 332,056 sf of commercial office space; 11,672 sf of hotel space (total increment of commercial space would be 552,217 sf); a decrease of 110,985 sf of community facility space; a decrease of 26,824 sf of storage and manufacturing space; and a decrease of 36,687 sf of parking/auto related uses by the proposal's build year of 2017.

The proposed action requires CPC and City Council approvals through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP).

Statement of Significant Effect:

On behalf of the City Planning Commission, the Environmental Assessment and Review Division has determined, pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.7, that the proposed action may have a

significant effect on the quality of the environment as detailed in the following environmental impacts, and that an environmental impact statement will be required:

1. The action, as proposed, may result in significant effects related to land use, zoning, and public policy in the vicinity of the affected area.

2. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on socioeconomic conditions in the vicinity of the affected area.

3. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on community facilities and services in the vicinity of the affected area.

4. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on publicly accessible open space facilities in the vicinity of the affected area.

5. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse shadow impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.

6. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on historic resources in the affected area.

7. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources in the vicinity of the affected area.

8. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in the vicinity of the affected area.

9. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on natural resources in the vicinity of the affected area.

10. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse hazardous materials impacts in the affected area.

11. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse infrastructure impacts in the affected area.

12. The action, as currently proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on solid waste and sanitation services in the vicinity of the proposed action.

13. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on energy supply and demand in the vicinity of the proposed action.

14. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts to transportation systems including traffic and parking conditions in the vicinity of the affected area.

15. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts to transportation systems including transit and pedestrian conditions in the vicinity of the affected area.

16. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts to air quality in the vicinity of the affected area.

17. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse noise impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.

18. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse construction-related impacts.

19. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse public health related impacts.

Supporting Statement:

The above determination is based on an Environmental Assessment Statement prepared for the action which finds that:

1. The proposed action would alter existing land use and zoning patterns and introduce new residential and commercial uses to the affected area.

2. Compared to projected conditions in the future without the action, the proposed action would result in new commercial and residential development, including affordable housing, which has the potential to alter economic conditions in the area.

3. The proposed action would bring additional residents into the area which could place additional demands on community facilities in the area.

4. The proposed action would bring additional residents and employees into the area which could place additional demands on available open space resources.

5. The proposed action would result in new construction which could cast shadows on sensitive receptors warranting an assessment of potential shadow impacts.

6. The proposed action would result in new construction which could disturb soil in portions of the affected area which may be archaeologically sensitive, and could affect the context of existing architectural resources in the area.

7. The proposed action would result in development which could differ from existing urban design elements in the affected area, and may affect the urban design character and visual resources of the surrounding area.

8. The proposed action would result in new residential and commercial development which could alter existing neighborhood character by affecting urban design, noise, traffic, socioeconomic conditions, and historic resources.

9. The proposed action would result in new residential and commercial development which could affect natural resources.

10. The proposed action would result in demolition and construction in the affected area which could potentially expose construction workers and the public to hazardous materials.

11. The proposed action would result in new residential and commercial development which would result in an increase in water supply demand and increase in waste water and sewage which could adversely affect infrastructure.

12. The proposed action would result in new development which would result in the generation of solid waste, and which would require sanitation services.

13. The proposed action would result in new residential and commercial development which would result in an increase in energy demand.

14. The proposed action would increase travel demand which would result in additional vehicular trips and additional parking demand in the vicinity of the affected area.

15. The proposed action would increase travel demand which would result in additional pedestrian and transit trips in the vicinity of the affected area.

16. The proposed action would result in new residential and commercial development which could result in increased mobile source (vehicular) and stationary source (HVAC system) emissions.

17. The proposed action could potentially result in noise impacts due to the introduction of sensitive receptors, including residential uses.

18. The proposed action would result in new development that would involve demolition and construction activities which may result in construction-related impacts.

19. The proposed action would result in new development which could result in public health related impacts.

Public Scoping:

A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, January 17, 2007, at 4:00 PM at the Harlem State Office Building located at 163 West 125th Street, between Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd and Lenox Avenue/Malcolm X Blvd, New York, NY 10027. Comments received during the draft scope's public hearing, and written comments received up to 10 days after the hearing will be considered and incorporated as appropriate into a final scope of work. The final scope of work will be used as a framework for preparing the Draft EIS (DEIS) for the proposed action.

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This determination has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

The CEQR lead agency hereby requests that the applicant prepare or have prepared at his option, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement in accordance with 6 NYCRR 617.9(b) and Sections 6-08 and 6-12 of Executive Order No. 91 of 1977 as amended (City Environmental Quality Review).

Should you have any questions pertaining to this Positive Declaration, you may contact Glen A. Price III, Director, Studies Implementation Division at (212) 720-3491.

Robert Dobruskin

Date: 12/13/06

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