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: May 20, 2005

**Project Identification**
CEQR No. 05DCP081Q
ULURP No. Pending
SEQRA Classification: Type I

**Lead Agency**
City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007
Contact: Robert Dobruskin
(212) 720-3423

**Name, Description and Location of Proposal:**

Downtown Jamaica Redevelopment Plan
The New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) and New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) are proposing the following actions affecting the downtown Jamaica area in Queens Community Districts 12 and 8:

- DCP is proposing zoning map amendments to change approximately 793 acres of land currently zoned R2, R3-2, R4, R5, R6, C4-2, C4-6, C6-1, C6-1A, C8-1, M1-1 and M1-5 to R3A, R3X, R4, R4-1, R5, R6A, R6B, R7A, R7X, C4-3A, C4-4A, C4-5X, C6-2, C6-3, M1-2 and M1-4. Under the proposed action, new C1-4 and C2-4 commercial overlays would be mapped along commercial streets, and existing C1-2 and C2-2 overlays would also be changed to C1-4 and C2-4.
- DCP is proposing zoning text amendments to establish the Special Downtown Jamaica District (SDJD), which is proposed to extend over all or portions of 71 blocks in Jamaica's CBD. The proposed SDJD, between 169th Street and 138th Place, south of Hillside Avenue and north of Liberty Avenue, would consist of three distinct sub-districts with assigned floor area ratios (FAR) ranging from 2.0 to 8.0. This area is currently zoned C4-2, C4-6, C6-1, C6-1A, R5, R6, M1-1, M1-4 and M1-5.
- HPD is proposing an Urban Renewal Designation, developed in collaboration with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and DCP, for three full blocks in the area immediately surrounding the Jamaica AirTrain Station. The proposed Jamaica Gateway Urban Renewal Area would encourage mixed-use development containing office, retail, and residential uses, a hotel, new open space, and parking on key development sites adjacent to the Jamaica Station.

James Merani, *Deputy Director*
22 Reade Street, New York, N.Y. 10007-1216 Room 4E (212) 720-3420
FAX (212) 720-3495
rdobrus@planning.nyc.gov

**Downtown Jamaica Redevelopment Plan**
**CEQR No. 05DCP081Q**

The area proposed for rezoning covers approximately 355 blocks in Jamaica's business and shopping district and the adjacent residential communities of Jamaica, South Jamaica, Hollis, and St. Albans and is generally bounded by the Van Wyck Expressway service road to the west, 87th Road and Highland Avenue to the north, 189th, 190th, and 191st streets and Farmers Boulevard to the east and 104th, 105th, 108th, 109th, Sayres, and 110th avenues to the south. The rezoning area encompasses approximately 782 acres of land currently zoned R2, R3-2, R4, R5, R6, C4-2, C4-6, C6-1, C6-1A, C8-1, M1-1, and M1-5. These areas would be rezoned to R3A, R3X, R4, R4-1, R5, R6A, R6B, R7A, C4-3A, C4-4A, C4-5X, C6-2, M1-1, M1-2, and M1-4, with new C1-3, C1-4, C2-3 and C2-4 commercial overlays mapped along certain commercial streets. Existing C1-2 and C2-2 overlays would be changed to C1-4 and C2-4, generally to reflect the reduction in depth to 100 feet.

The proposed action would directly affect 355 blocks in the rezoning area. The proposed changes are all part of a comprehensive strategy intended to support Jamaica's central business district ("CBD"), while providing for appropriately scaled development in the neighboring low-rise residential communities.

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

Although not intended to facilitate any specific development projects, the proposed action would affect all or portions of 328 blocks of the Jamaica area in Queens Community District 12 and all or portions of 27 blocks of the Jamaica area in Queens Community District 8. The proposed action could result in different types of development on numerous sites within the proposed rezoning area. The proposed action could result in the development of approximately 5,291 dwelling units, approximately 3,156,253 square feet of commercial floor area, approximately 108,894 square feet of industrial floor area, and approximately 457,524 square feet of community facility floor area. Under future conditions without the proposed action, 1,365 new dwelling units could be developed and approximately 1,668,133 square feet of commercial floor area, approximately 505,226 square feet of industrial floor area, and approximately 214,344 square feet of community facility floor area could be developed. In total, the proposed action would result in a net increase of approximately 3,926 dwelling units, approximately 1,488,120 square feet of commercial floor area, and approximately 243,180 square feet of community facility floor area, and a net decrease of approximately 396,332 square feet of industrial floor area. For analysis purposes, it is projected that the full effects of the proposed action would occur by 2015.

**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, commercial, and community facilities uses to the affected area.

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

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

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

5. 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.

6. 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.

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

8. The proposed action would result in new residential, commercial, and community facilities development which could affect natural resources.

9. 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.

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

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

12. The proposed action would result in new residential, commercial, and community facilities development which would result in an increase in energy demand.

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

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

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

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

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

**Downtown Jamaica Redevelopment Plan**
**CEQR No. 05DCP081Q**

**Public Scoping:**

A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, June 23, 2005 at 4:00 PM at the York College (in the York College Academic Core Building) located at 94-20 Guy R. Brewer Boulevard. Written comments will be accepted by the lead agency through the tenth day following the scoping meeting.

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: 5/20/05

Robert Dobruskin, Director
Environmental Assessment & Review Division
Department of City Planning