158-06 Northern Boulevard Rezoning
Queens Community District 7
November 2025

Project Description

1. Introduction

Northern 158 Holding LLC (the "Applicant") requests approval of the following actions in the Murray Hill neighborhood of Queens Community District 7:

1. a zoning map amendment to change an R5B/C1-2 zoning district to an R7A/C2-4 zoning district and to change an R2 zoning district to R7A/C2-4 and R7A zoning districts in an area generally bounded by Northern Boulevard to the north, 158th Street to the west, 159th Street to the east, and a line 150 feet from Northern Boulevard and the right-of-way of the Long Island Rail Road ("LIRR") to the south, including Block 5277, Lots 1, p/o 16, and 25 (the "Rezoning Area"); and

2. a zoning text amendment to ZR Appendix F: Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Areas ("MIH") and former Inclusionary Housing Designated Areas for Community District 7, Queens to establish the Rezoning Area as an MIH Area.

The proposed actions would facilitate the redevelopment of the Development Site with a new ten-story, mixed-use building with approximately 70,765 square feet of floor area and a floor area ratio ("FAR") of 5.0. The proposed development would contain approximately 61,483 square feet of residential floor area and approximately 76 dwelling units, of which approximately 19 units would be permanently affordable pursuant to MIH. The proposed development would also contain approximately 9,282 square feet of commercial floor area for local retail.

2. Background

With the enactment of the Zoning Resolution in 1961, the Rezoning Area was designated with an R4/C1-2 zoning district within 150 feet of Northern Boulevard and an R2 zoning district beyond 150 feet of Northern Boulevard. The R4/C1-2 portion of the Rezoning Area was changed to R5B/C1-2 and reduced to 100 feet from Northern Boulevard in the East Flushing Rezoning (C 050277 ZMQ, effective July 27, 2005). The City-initiated East Flushing Rezoning rezoned all or portions of 103 blocks in East Flushing affecting an area generally bounded by Northern Boulevard and 35th Avenue to the north, Laburnum Avenue to the south, 166th Street to the east, and 149th Place to the west. The East Flushing Rezoning was intended to support development at underutilized sites along Northern Boulevard and Sanford Avenue, while protecting remaining areas from out-of-character multi-family residential development.

3. Description of the Surrounding Area

The Rezoning Area is located in the Murray Hill neighborhood of Queens Community District 7. Land uses and built context within the area surrounding the Rezoning Area are generally a mix of one- and two-story commercial buildings and multi-family buildings ranging in height from four to six stories along Northern Boulevard, Cocheron Avenue, and 162nd Street. Beyond these corridors, land use and built context is generally low-density residential and community facility uses. Within the surrounding area, Northern Boulevard is generally developed with one- and two-story commercial buildings containing a mix of national chain and local stores, eating and drinking establishments and automobile-oriented businesses, as well as several four- to six-story apartment buildings. Northern Boulevard is a major commercial east/west corridor and designated arterial highway in Queens that is considered a wide street at approximately 100 feet wide.[1] The midblocks beyond Northern Boulevard are characterized by one- and two-family buildings and multi-family walk-up buildings. Local community facility uses include several houses of worship, a public library, and schools.

[1] ZR § 12-10 defines a wide street as any street 75 feet or more in width.

Mass transit options are accessible within the surrounding area. There are several bus lines that operate within the surrounding area, including Q12 [Little Neck – Flushing via Northern Blvd] and Q28 [Flushing - Bay Terrace Rush via Northern Blvd / Francis Lewis Blvd / Crocheron Av] bus lines that provide connections to the Flushing Main Street subway station serving the 7 line. The Broadway LIRR station is approximately 0.3 miles from the Rezoning Area.

Land uses and built context within the surrounding area are generally consistent with underlying zoning. An R1-2A district is generally located north of Northern Boulevard. R1-2A is a low-density residential zoning district that allows all housing types on qualifying residential sites and certain community facility uses. Commercial and industrial/manufacturing uses are not permitted. R1-2A allows a maximum residential FAR of 1.0 with qualifying affordable housing and a maximum community facility FAR of 1.0. The maximum permitted building height is 35 feet for qualifying residential sites. In the Outer Transit Zone, off-street accessory parking is required at a rate of 100 percent for standard housing and parking is not required for qualifying affordable housing.

An R2 district is generally located south of Northern Boulevard, west of 159th Street, north of Depot Road, and east of 156th Street. R2 is a low-density residential zoning district that allows all housing types on qualifying residential sites and certain community facility uses. Commercial and industrial/manufacturing uses are not permitted. R2 allows a maximum residential FAR of 1.0 with qualifying affordable housing and a maximum community facility FAR of 1.0. The maximum permitted building height is 35 feet for qualifying residential sites. In the Outer Transit Zone, off-street accessory parking is required at a rate of 100 percent for standard housing and parking is not required for qualifying affordable housing.

An R4 district is generally located south of the LIRR right-of-way, east of 156th Street, north of Sanford Avenue, and west of 161st Street. R4 is a low-density residential zoning district that allows all housing types on qualifying residential sites and certain community facility uses. Commercial and industrial/manufacturing uses are not permitted. R4 allows a maximum residential FAR of 1.5 with qualifying affordable housing and a maximum community facility FAR of 2.0. The maximum permitted building height is 45 feet for qualifying residential sites. In the Outer Transit Zone, off-street accessory parking is required at a rate of 35 percent for standard housing and parking is not required for qualifying affordable housing.

An R5 district is generally located west of 156th Street, south of Roosevelt Avenue, and north of Barclay Avenue. R5 is a medium-density residential district that allows all housing types and certain community facility uses. No commercial or industrial/manufacturing uses are permitted. R5 districts have a maximum residential FAR of 2.0 with qualifying affordable housing and a maximum community facility FAR of 2.0. The maximum permitted building height is 55 feet for qualifying residential sites. In the Outer Transit Zone, off-street accessory parking is required at a rate of 35 percent for standard housing and parking is not required for qualifying affordable housing.

R5B districts are located to the east and west along Northern Boulevard as well as to the south along Sanford Avenue. R5B is a medium-density residential district that allows all housing types and certain community facility uses. No commercial or industrial/manufacturing uses are permitted. R5B districts have a maximum residential FAR of 2.0 with qualifying affordable housing and a maximum community facility FAR of 2.0. The maximum permitted building height is 55 feet for qualifying residential sites. In the Outer Transit Zone, accessory off-street residential parking spaces are required for 25 percent of standard dwelling units and parking is not required for qualifying affordable housing units.

C1-1 and C1-2 commercial overlays are mapped along Northern Boulevard within the R5B zoning district. C1-1 and C1-2 districts are commercial overlay districts mapped within residence districts along streets that serve local retail needs. Typical retail uses include neighborhood grocery stores, restaurants, and beauty parlors. When mapped with an R5B zoning district, C1-1 and C1-2 permit a maximum commercial FAR of 2.0, but commercial uses are limited to the first or second floors. Parking requirements vary by use. A parking waiver is available if the requirement is for ten or fewer accessory spaces.

Nearby open space resources include Leonard Square, a 0.06-acre triangle/plaza approximately one-tenth of a mile west of the Rezoning Area, and Bowne Park, an 11.79-acre park approximately one half-mile north of the Rezoning Area.

The surrounding area is located within the Outer Transit Zone, where lower accessory residential parking requirements apply, and parking is not required for qualifying affordable housing. The surrounding area is located within a FRESH zone where discretionary tax incentives are available if a FRESH supermarket is constructed. There are no MIH Areas or Former Inclusionary Housing Designated Areas within the surrounding area.

4. Description of the Rezoning Area

The Rezoning Area is approximately 43,587 square feet and is generally bounded by Northern Boulevard to the north, 158th Street to the west, 159th Street to the east, and a line 150 feet from Northern Boulevard and the right-of-way of the LIRR to the south, including Block 5277, Lots 1, p/o 16, and 25. The Rezoning Area has approximately 210 feet of frontage on Northern Boulevard, approximately 150 feet of frontage on 158th Street, and approximately 290 feet of frontage on 159th Street.

In addition to the Development Site, described below, the Rezoning Area includes two non-Applicant owned properties on Block 5277, Lots 1 and 25. Lot 1 is an approximately 11,500 square foot interior lot. It is improved with a two-story community facility building occupied by a house of worship use (the Dar Al-Taqwa Islamic Center). Lot 25 is an approximately 17,945 square foot corner and interior lot. It is improved with a two-story and basement commercial building occupied by multiple retail and service uses.

5. Description of the Proposed Development Site

The Applicant-owned Development Site consists of Block 5277, p/o Lot 16. It is an approximately 14,142 square foot corner and interior lot. It is improved with a two-story and cellar commercial building with unenclosed parking. It is occupied by a medical center. There are curb cuts on Northern Boulevard and 158th Street.

6. Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed actions would facilitate the development of a new ten-story, mixed-use building at the Development Site with approximately 70765 square feet of floor area (5.0 FAR). The proposed development would have approximately 61,483 square feet of residential floor area with approximately 76 dwelling units. Pursuant to the MIH program, 19 units would be permanently affordable pursuant to MIH Option 1. The proposed development would have approximately 9,282 square feet of commercial floor area on the first floor for local retail use. The proposed development would rise to a height of 105 feet (ten-stories) above a 85-foot base height. Open space for building residents would be provided on building rooftops. Accessory off-street parking with approximately 26 spaces would be provided in a cellar garage accessible from 158th Street.

7. Actions Necessary to Facilitate the Project

The actions necessary to facilitate the proposed development are: (1) a zoning map amendment to change an R5B/C1-2 zoning district to an R7A/C2-4 zoning district and to change an R2 zoning district to R7A/C2-4 and R7A zoning districts within the Rezoning Area; and (2) a zoning text amendment to ZR Appendix F to establish the Rezoning Area as an MIH Area.

<u>Zoning Map Amendment to R7A/C2-4 and R7A Zoning Districts</u>
As noted above, an R7A zoning district would be mapped within the area generally bounded by Northern Boulevard to the north, 158th Street to the west, 159th Street to the east, and a line 150 feet from Northern Boulevard and the right-of-way of the LIRR to the south, including Block 5277, Lots 1, p/o 16, and 25. A C2-4 commercial overlay would be mapped to a depth of 100 feet on western half of the blockfront and would extend over the entire eastern half of the blockfront.

R7A is a medium-density contextual residential district that allows residential and community facility uses. No industrial/manufacturing uses are permitted within R7A districts. R7A districts permit a maximum residential FAR of 5.01, a maximum base height before setback of 85 feet, and a maximum permitted building height of 115 feet. Within the Outer Transit Zone, accessory parking is required for 15 percent of the standard residential units and not required for qualifying affordable units. Up to 15 accessory residential spaces may be waived.

When mapped with the proposed R7A zoning district, the proposed C2-4 commercial overlay allows local retail and service uses. This is consistent with the historic commercial character of Northern Boulevard, as well as the commercial context along 159th Street and existing commercial overlay mapped on the east side of 159th Street. Accessory parking requirements vary by use but are generally one space per 1,000 square feet of commercial use. Up to 40 accessory commercial spaces may be waived.

Zoning Text Amendment to ZR Appendix F

The proposed zoning text amendment would establish an MIH Area contiguous with the Rezoning Area. Within MIH Areas, all housing developments, enlargements, and conversions that meet the criteria set forth in the MIH program must comply with the requirements of MIH Option 1, Option 2, or Option 3 described below.

- Option 1: 25 percent of the residential floor area shall be provided as housing affordable to households at an average of 60 percent of the Income Index (AMI), with no unit targeted at a level exceeding 130 percent of AMI.
- Option 2: 30 percent of the residential floor area shall be provided as housing affordable to households at an average of 80 percent of the Income Index (AMI), with no unit targeted at a level exceeding 130 percent of AMI.
- Option 3: 20 percent of the total residential floor area must be for housing units for residents with incomes averaging 40 percent of AMI and no direct subsidies could be used for these units except where needed to support more affordable housing.

In addition to options above, the City Council may elect to map Option 4 (except in Manhattan Community Districts 1-8), which requires that 30 percent of the total residential floor area must be for housing units for residents with incomes averaging 115 percent of AMI, with no units above 135 percent AMI; and no direct subsidies.

The Applicant proposes to map the Rezoning Area with MIH Option 1. As such, 25 percent of residential floor area would be set aside for permanently affordable housing at an average of 60 percent of AMI with no unit at a level exceeding 130 percent of AMI. The MIH requirement ensures that a 25 percent of residential floor area in the proposed development and in any future development within the Rezoning Area is permanently affordable.

Land Use Rationale

The proposed zoning map amendment would allow for the production of new multi-family housing in Queens Community District 7 on an underutilized site on a wide street with access to transit. While the Rezoning Area's existing R5B zoning designation permits multi-family housing, it has a low maximum residential FAR of 2.0 that limits the potential for new housing development. The proposed rezoning would facilitate new residential development, with the provision of permanently affordable housing, and ground floor commercial use along Northern Boulevard.

The proposed actions are appropriate because the Rezoning Area is located on a wide street with access to mass transit. The Rezoning Area is located on Northern Boulevard, a 100-foot wide street and commercial corridor through Queens. The Rezoning Area is well served by mass transit, including the Q12 and Q28 bus lines that provide connections to other public transportation options and the Broadway LIRR station, which is approximately 0.3 miles from the Rezoning Area.

The proposed zoning text amendment to designate the Rezoning Area as an MIH Area is consistent with the policy goals of the City's *Housing New York: A Five-Borough, Ten-Year Plan* and *Housing New York 2.0*, which set a goal for the preservation and/or creation of 300,000

income-restricted housing units by 2026.[3] There are only limited provisions near the Rezoning Area to promote the development of income-restricted housing. The proposed residential development would provide much-needed affordable residential units in an area with a growing population and corresponding increase in demand for housing. According to the Department of City Planning's 2006 report *New York City Population Projections by Age/Sex & Borough*, the population of Queens is anticipated to increase by an estimated 15.1 percent in the 30-year projection period. The population will increase from 2.29 million in 2000 to 2.56 million in 2030.[4] As population in Queens is expected to experience substantial and steady growth, additional housing is necessary to ensure adequate supply.

Moreover, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 56.7 percent of households in Queens Community District 7 are rent burdened, spending 35 percent or more of their income on rent.[5] Community District 7 has the largest rent-burdened population in Queens and the third highest in New York City. The proposed actions would facilitate the creation of approximately 76 dwelling units including approximately 19 permanently affordable units per MIH Option 1 on an underutilized property in an area of Queens with high demand for housing.

8. Conclusion

The proposed zoning map amendment and zoning text amendment are consistent with existing land uses and built context within the area surrounding the Rezoning Area, and further the objectives of the City's *Housing New York: A Five-Borough, Ten-Year Plan* and *Housing New York 2.0*. The existing R5B and R2 zoning designations within the Rezoning Area preclude the development of any substantive amount of new multi-family housing. The proposed rezoning reflects sound planning principles by replacing these districts with R7A/C2-4 and R7A zoning districts to permit increased density in an appropriate, underutilized area located on a wide street with access to mass transit. The proposed actions would facilitate the development of a new mixed-use building with approximately 76 dwelling units, of which approximately 19 units would be permanently affordable pursuant to MIH, as well as new local retail use.

[3] The housing plans set a goal for the preservation and/or creation of 300,000 income-restricted housing units by 2026.
[4] New York City Population Projections by Age/Sex & Borough, 2000–2030, NYC Department of City Planning, December 2006.
[5] Based on American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-Year Estimates for PUMA 4103, which is an approximation of Queens Community District 7, approximately 56.7 percent of households are rent burdened. Source: https://communityprofiles.planning.nyc.gov/queens/7.