99-07 Astoria Boulevard Rezoning
Borough of Queens, New York

1. Introduction

99-20 Realty Corp. (the "Applicant") proposes a zoning map amendment to map a C2-3 commercial overlay on an existing R3-2 zoning district on a portion of Block 1379 in the East Elmhurst neighborhood of Queens Community District 3. The proposed rezoning would facilitate the development of a proposed one-story and cellar retail building (the "Proposed Development") at 99-07 Astoria Boulevard/99-20 27th Avenue (Block 1379, Lots 14 and 23, the "Development Site").

2. Background

The proposed Rezoning Area, consisting of Block 1379, Lots 14, 15, 17 and 23 has been located in an R3-2 zoning district since the adoption of the Zoning Resolution on December 15, 1961. In connection with the East Elmhurst Rezoning (C 130344 ZMQ), effective October 30, 2013, a C1-3 overlay was introduced on the block immediately to the east of the Rezoning Area, and blocks to the south and west of the Rezoning Area along Astoria Boulevard were rezoned from R3-2/C1-2 to R6B/C1-3. The Rezoning Area was excluded from the East Elmhurst Rezoning.

3. Description of Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is mixed use, with commercial, residential, and community facility uses. Astoria Boulevard, a six-lane street running east and west in front of the Rezoning Area, is a commercial corridor with one- or two-story buildings, either entirely commercial or with residences above ground floor retail stores. The First Baptist Church and Trade Fair supermarket also occupy entire block frontages on the south side of Astoria Boulevard. Areas to the north of Astoria Boulevard are characterized by one- and two-family attached, semi-detached, or detached residences, and areas to the south of Astoria Boulevard are characterized by one- and two-family attached and semi-detached residences. The Q19 and Q49 buses run along Astoria Boulevard, with a stop at the intersection of Astoria Boulevard and 100th Street directly in front of the Rezoning Area.

There are R3-2, R6B, R3X, and R4 zoning districts, and a C1-3 commercial overlay mapped in the surrounding area.

R3-2

The Rezoning Area is within an R3-2 zoning district. R3-2 districts allow a variety of housing types, including low-rise attached houses, small multifamily apartment houses, and detached and semi-detached one- and two-family residences. Residential uses have a maximum FAR of 0.5, which may be increased to 0.6 by an attic allowance, and the perimeter wall may rise up to 21 feet before sloping or being set back to a maximum building height of 35 feet. R3-2 districts also permit a variety of community facility uses up to a maximum FAR of 1.0. One off street parking space is required for every dwelling unit.

R6B

An R6B zoning district is mapped along Astoria Boulevard to the south and west of the Rezoning Area. R6B districts allow all housing types and community facility uses at a maximum FAR of 2.0. R6B zoning districts have a minimum street wall height of 30 feet, a maximum street wall height of 40 feet, and a maximum building height of 50 feet. Parking is required for 50 percent of residential dwelling units, but is waived if 5 or fewer parking spaces are required. The Quality Housing program is mandatory for residential developments.

R3X

An R3X district is located to the east of the Rezoning Area. R3X districts allow one- and two-family detached residential buildings at an FAR of 0.5, which can be increased to 0.6 with an attic allowance. The maximum perimeter wall height is 21 feet, and the maximum building

height is 35 feet. One off-street parking space is required for each dwelling unit. Community facilities are allowed a maximum of 1.0 FAR.

R4

An R4 district is located to the south of the Rezoning Area, beyond 100 feet from Astoria Boulevard. R4 districts allow a variety of housing types, including low-rise attached houses, small multifamily apartment houses, and detached and semi-detached one- and two-family residences. Residential uses have a maximum FAR of 0.75, which may be increased to 0.9 by an attic allowance. In a predominately built up area, a maximum FAR of 1.35 is permitted through R4 infill provisions. The maximum perimeter wall height is 25 feet, and the maximum building height is 35 feet. One off-street parking space is required for each dwelling unit. Community facilities are allowed a maximum of 2.0 FAR.

C1-3 Overlay

A C1-3 commercial overlay is mapped along numerous block frontages on both the north and south sides of Astoria Boulevard in the surrounding area. C1-3 overlays allow commercial Use Groups 5 and 6, which include typical retail and service establishments frequently used by neighborhood residents. C1-3 overlays mapped within R1 through R5 districts permit a maximum commercial FAR of 1.0, and when mapped within R6 through R10 districts the maximum commercial FAR is 2.0. Most retail uses require one accessory parking spaces per 400 square feet of commercial floor spaces, though requirements may range between one space per 300 square feet and one space per 1,000 square feet.

4. Description of the Proposed Rezoning Area

The Rezoning Area is a triangular block bounded by Astoria Boulevard, 27th Avenue, and 100th Street. Astoria Boulevard is a wide street, approximately 130 feet in width, and 27th Avenue and 100th Street are narrow streets, approximately 70 feet in width. The Rezoning Area has approximately 160 feet of frontage on Astoria Boulevard, 168 feet of frontage on 27th Avenue, and 132 feet of frontage on 100th Street. The Rezoning Area consists of four tax lots. Lots 23 and 17 are vacant, lot 14 is improved with a semi-detached one-family home, and lot 15 is improved with a semi-detached two-family home. Lots 14 and 23 are owned by the applicant, and lots 15 and 17 are also in single ownership.

5. Description of Proposed Development Site

The proposed Development Site consists of two tax lots: lot 14 is improved with a semi-detached one-family building, and lot 23 is vacant. The Development Site has a lot area of approximately 6,093 square feet, with approximately 160 feet of frontage on Astoria Boulevard, 102 feet of frontage on 27th Avenue, and 26 feet of frontage on 100th Street. The existing building on lot 14 has an estimated 1,770 sq. ft. of floor area and is approximately 25 feet in height. No off-street parking is provided.

6. Description of Proposed Development

The Proposed Development is a new one-story and cellar retail building at the Development Site. The Proposed Development would have a gross floor area of approximately 11,339 sq. ft. and zoning floor area of approximately 5,573 sq. ft. (FAR 0.91). The Proposed Development would have multiple retail stores with entrances along Astoria Boulevard, and accessory storage in the cellar. The building would cover the entire zoning lot, with the exception of a five-foot wide strip along 27th Avenue that is mapped as a proposed street widening. Off-street parking requirements will be waived, and no parking will be provided.

7. Actions Necessary to Facilitate the Project

The action necessary to facilitate the Proposed Development is a zoning map amendment to introduce a C2-3 commercial overlay on the existing R3-2 zoning district at the Rezoning Area. The requested zoning map amendment would allow for the development of a commercial building with a wide variety of potential retail uses to serve the surrounding community and neighborhood. A C2-3 district would provide for a wider variety of retail and service uses than the C1-3 districts

already mapped in the surrounding area, which will provide greater flexibility for prospective occupants. Uses permitted in a C2-3 district but not in a C1-3 district include small medical labs, music or theater studios, print shops, appliance repair shops, bicycle sales and repair services, and physical culture or health establishments such as health clubs, gyms, and yoga studios, with a special permit from the Board of Standards and Appeals. All of the above-referenced uses are appropriate along this portion of Astoria Boulevard, a major thoroughfare that contains a wide variety of commercial uses. In addition, C2-3 overlays already exist in the surrounding area, along the south side of Astoria Boulevard between 103rd and 108th Streets and along Astoria Boulevard between 82nd and 85th Streets. A C2-3 district at the Rezoning Area would permit more retail and service uses to better serve the needs of the surrounding community without introducing additional negative impacts.

8. Conclusion

As discussed above, the Applicant proposes a zoning map amendment to map a C2-3 commercial overlay on an existing R3-2 district within the Rezoning Area. The requested zoning map amendment would facilitate the development of a retail building to serve the neighborhood along the commercial corridor on Astoria Boulevard in East Elmhurst.