DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW DIVISION

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

May 31, 2013

Robert Kulikowski
Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
100 Gold Street - 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10038

NOTICE OF LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION AND REVIEW

Re: **East Elmhurst Rezoning**
CEQR No. 13DCP138Q
ULURP No. 130344ZMQ
Queens, Community District 3 and 4
SEQR Classification: Unlisted

The above-referenced application involves a discretionary action subject to City Planning Commission approval. This action is subject to review under the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR), Executive Order No. 91, and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), 6 NYCRR 617.

Pursuant to Sections 5.03 and 5.05 of the Rules of Procedure for City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) as adopted June 26, 1991, the Department of City Planning, acting on behalf of the City Planning Commission, is assuming lead agency status for this application and is initiating the CEQR review.

The applicant, The New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), is proposing zoning map amendments on all or portions of approximately 141 blocks in the neighborhoods of East Elmhurst and Corona, Queens Community Districts 3 and 4. The rezoning area within the East Elmhurst neighborhood is generally bounded by the Grand Central Parkway (GCP) to the north and east, 32nd Avenue to the south and to the west, by a line beginning at 91st Street and moving northwesterly to 80th Street where it meets Astoria Boulevard. The rezoning area within the Corona neighborhood is generally bounded by Elmhurst Avenue and 114th Street along the south side of Roosevelt Avenue.

Robert Dobruskin, AICP, *Director*
Celeste Evans, *Deputy Director*
22 Reade Street, New York, N.Y. 10007-1216 Room 4E (212) 720-3321
FAX (212) 720-3495
C_Evans@planning.nyc.gov

The proposed action includes:

- Lower-density/Contextual Zoning: Rezone all or portions of approximately 128 blocks within the area bounded by the Grand Central Parkway, 32nd Avenue and a stepped line from 91st Street where it intersects with 32nd Avenue north to where it meets the GCP at 82nd Street from R3-2 and R4 to lower-density contextual districts R2A, R3-1, R3A, R3X and R4B to reflect existing lower-density contexts. Additionally, rezone all or portions of 26 blocks located between 32nd Avenue and Astoria Boulevard currently zoned R3-2 to R4 and R4-1 to reflect the existing built context.

- Medium-density Contextual Zoning: Rezone all or portions of approximately 32 blocks on Astoria Boulevard (includes a portion of 25th Avenue) between 87th and 99th streets and on the south side of Astoria Boulevard between 99th and 108th streets from R3-2 /R4 to R6B to encourage new residential development and mixed-use on lots with commercial overlays.

- Commercial Overlay modifications: Elimination of some, addition of others and reduce the depth from 150 feet to 100 feet on overlays to prevent commercial intrusion onto residential lots. Introduce new C1-3 and C2-3 overlays for East Elmhurst and C1-4 and C2-4 overlays for Roosevelt Avenue to reflect current land uses and reinforce the character of the two major thoroughfares.

The proposed action seeks to reinforce the lower density character of the East Elmhurst neighborhood while ensuring that future development is consistent with the neighborhood's building and land use patterns. The proposed action would reinforce neighborhood character and established building patterns by updating existing zoning with new lower density and contextual zones while directing new residential and mixed-use development opportunities to the areas major corridors. Additionally, the proposed action would allow for some modest growth along Astoria Boulevard, upgrade commercial zoning to reflect the existing retail character and prevent commercial intrusion into residential side streets by tailoring commercial overlays to reflect existing land uses. By establishing updated commercial overlays, the proposed action seeks to reinforce the commercial character of Roosevelt Avenue, which was part of an earlier rezoning in 2003 that mapped a contextual residential district.

In order to assess the impacts associated with the proposed action, a Reasonable Worst Case Development Scenario was established. Eight projected development sites were identified as most likely to be developed in the future with the proposed action. As a result of the proposed action, it is anticipated that new development on those sites would consist of a net increase of 34 dwelling units, 42,080 gross square feet (gsf) of local retail space, and a decrease of 17,090 gsf of community facility space. Absent the proposed actions, the study area would continue to be developed in the same general patterns found under existing conditions as-of-right. This includes 52 dwelling units, 9,202 square feet of commercial space and 30,722 square feet of community facility space. The build year is 2023.

An Environmental Assessment Statement is attached. Please contact Jonathan Keller of the Department of City Planning at (212) 720-3419 if you have any questions regarding the application.

Sincerely,

Celeste Evans

Celeste Evans, Deputy Director
Environmental Assessment and Review Division
New York City Department of City Planning

cc:

Robert Dobruskin	John Young	Frederick Lee
Jonathan Keller	Susan Wong	Hye-Kyung Yang
Deborah Carney	Pat Bussey	Thomas Smith