Project Description (LR Item 3)
Project ID: 2022Q0449

**63-02 Fresh Pond Road**

**October 2025**

## 1. Introduction

63-02 Fresh Pond Realty LLC (the "Applicant") seeks a series of actions to facilitate a new mixed-use development in the Ridgewood section of Queens Community District #5. The Applicant seeks a zoning map amendment to amend R5B/C1-4 and R5B districts to R6A/C2-4, that would affect Queens Block 3522, Lots 20, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31, and Block 3521, Lots 45, 46, 47, 49, and portions of ("p/o") Lots 19 and 37 (the "Rezoning Area")

In addition, a zoning text amendment to Appendix F of the Zoning Resolution ("ZR") is required that would make the R6A portions of the Rezoning Area applicable as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area with Options 1 and 2 mapped (the "Proposed Actions").

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the redevelopment of the Development Site (Block 3522, Lot 19, 20, 23, 26, and 27) with a new 7-story (73') mixed-used building with 51,300 zoning square feet (zsf) or 3.55 FAR. This would include 7,000 square feet of commercial use (0.47 FAR) and 46,100 square feet of residential use (3.09 FAR) with 54 dwelling units. There would be 19 accessory parking spaces provided in the building's cellar. There will be one new curb cut on Bleeker St. 13-16 of the proposed 54 dwelling units would be affordable under MIH (Options 1 or 2).

## 2. Background

The Rezoning Area was initially zoned R5 with C1-1 and C2-2 commercial overlays along Fresh Pond Road when the 1961 Zoning Resolution was adopted. That designation remained for almost 40 years until the Ridgewood Rezoning was approved by the CPC in November of 2000 (C 000639 ZMQ).

The Ridgewood Rezoning in 2000 (C 000639 ZMQ) affected 250 blocks in Queens Community District 5, generally bounded by Troutman and Starr streets, Metropolitan and Traffic avenues, 65th Place, the New York Connecting Railroad and the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) Bay Ridge line, and the Brooklyn/Queens boundary along Irving, Wyckoff, St. Nicholas, and Cypress avenues. The Ridgewood Rezoning amended R4, R5, R6, C4-3 and M1-1 districts to R5B, R6B,

C4-3A, MI-I, M1-4, and M1-4D districts. It also replaced C1-2 and C2-2 districts with C1-4 and C2-4 districts and established C1-4 and C2-4 districts on where overlays did not exist at that time. Specifically, the Rezoning Area was addend from R5 and R5/C1-1 to R5B and R6B/C2-4, with the latter district generally mapped at a depth of 100 feet along Fresh Pond Road and R5B mapped in the interior blocks.

Subsequently in 2009, the area immediately to the north of Metropolitan Avenue was amended under the Maspeth Rezoning (C 090382 ZMQ). That rezoning encompassed 300 blocks in three neighborhoods in west-central Queens - Middle Village, Glendale, and Maspeth in Community District 5. These neighborhoods are generally bounded by the Queens-Midtown Expressway, Woodhaven Boulevard, Forest Park, Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Cypress Hills Cemetery, Fresh Pond Road, and 59th Street. The Maspeth Rezoning amended R3-2, R4, R4B, R5, M1-1and M1-4D districts to R3A, R4A, R4B, R4-1, R5B, and R5D.The Maspeth Rezoning intended to update outdated zoning regulations in the affected areas and to manage development pressures and preserve neighborhood character. It proposed lower-density residential zoning (R3A, R4A, R4B, R4-1) to align with the predominant one- and two-family housing types. In areas with existing multifamily housing, new R5B and R5D districts were mapped to ensure future development is appropriately scaled. Light manufacturing zones (M1-1, M1-4D) were rezoned to residential districts, bringing existing residential uses into compliance. Additionally, a section of Middle Village was amended from R4B to R4A to better reflect its detached housing character.

To the southwest of the Rezoning Area, the Ridgewood Historic District was designated by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) on December 9, 2010. The district encompasses a significant portion of the neighborhood, recognized for its distinctive early 20th-century row houses built primarily between 1906 and 1914. These houses feature brick and stone in styles influenced by Renaissance Revival and other architectural movements. The Ridgewood Historic District contains multiple areas with the closest area bound by Woodward Avenue to the north, Catalpa Avenue to the east, Seneca Avenue to the south and Woodbine Street to the west. Overall, the Ridgewood Historic District covers approximately 40 blocks in the Ridgewood neighborhood and over 2,980 buildings. It is one of the largest historic districts designated by LPC.

Within close proximity to Rezoning Area, several variances and special permits have been approved by the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA). In 2003, an approval was granted by the BSA, contrary to General City Law (GCL) Section 35, which enabled the construction of a commercial building in the bed of a mapped street at 62-66 Fresh Pond Road, to the immediate north of the Rezoning Area. A special permit for a physical culture establishment (PCE) was granted for 63-03 Fresh Pond Road, immediately adjacent the Rezoning Area to the east in 2009 (9-09-BZ). That same special permit was also granted by the BSA in 2011 for 65-06 Fresh Pond Road (173-10-BZ). Most recently in 2022, a similar GCL 35 waiver was approved by the BSA to

permit the construction of a three-story three-family building in the bed of a mapped street at 61-10 Menahan Street, to the immediate west of the Rezoning Area.

Most recently, the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity (CHO*)* text amendments were approved in December of 2024 (N 240290 ZRY). The text changes aim to facilitate the development of more housing across the city by creating floor area incentives and removing development barriers. As a result of this text amendment, Development Site was added to a new Outer Transit Zone (OTZ), which is part of a larger Greater Transit Zone. The OTZ reduces parking requirements in proximity to transit and waives qualifying affordable units. In addition, certain mid-rise districts, such as the proposed R6A district, were enhanced to permit additional floor area and height with the inclusion of qualifying affordable units, either under the Universal Affordable Program (UAP) or under MIH.

No other land use or zoning approvals have occurred within 1,000 feet of the Rezoning Area in the last 20 years.

**3. Description of the Surrounding Area**

The Rezoning Area is located along west side of Fresh Pond Road, immediately south of Metropolitan Avenue and extending to Menahan Street. Fresh Pond Road (80 feet wide) and Metropolitan Avenue (100 feet wide) are mixed-use neighborhood arterials, with Metropolitan Avenue serving as the transition area between Ridgewood and Maspeth – and the roadway extends approximately 13 miles between the waterfront in Brooklyn and points east in Queens. It is a key connector between the two boroughs and serves both as a commercial hub and a residential street, reflecting the diverse character of the neighborhoods it traverses. The intersection of Fresh Pond Road and Metropolitan Avenue is heavily trafficked and serves as a truck route, with a mix of uses present, including residential, commercial, mixed-use (residential-commercial), some community facility uses, and industrial/warehouses uses. The right-of-way (ROW) of the Long Island Railroad (Montauk Division) and New York Connecting Railroad diagonally traverses the intersection of Metropolitan Avenue and Fresh Pond Road and defines some uses parallel to this ROW. Accordingly, the areas north and south of the intersection are predominantly residential and mixed-use along Fresh Pond Road, while the uses lining the ROW are predominantly heavier commercial uses, light industrial/warehouse and automotive-related uses.

As noted above, the areas north and south of Metropolitan along Fresh Pond Road are predominantly residential or mixed-use buildings with ground-floor retail and residential uses above. Beyond 100 feet of Fresh Pond Road the uses are predominantly residential, with attached and demi-detached homes generally rising between 2- and 3-stories and including one- and two-family homes, as well as smaller multifamily buildings. Fresh Pond Road itself is mixed in use, as noted above, with single-story commercial buildings and mixed-use buildings (ground-floor commercial with residences above) generally rising between 2- and 5-stories. The heavier

commercial and light industrial uses lining the ROW are generally single-story buildings. Metropolitan Avenue to the west of Fresh Pond Road also contains mixed-use and residential buildings generally rising to 2-stories. Further west of Fresh Pond Road at Bleecker Street and 60th Place is a cluster of community facility uses with a house of worship (Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Roman Catholic Church) and religious school present (Notre Dame Catholic Academy) in a series of buildings ranging from 1- to 5-stories.

In terms of open space in proximity, there are several Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) facilities. The nearest and most prominent is Benninger Playground, a 0.66-acre park located along Madison Street between 60th Place and Fresh Pond Road. This neighborhood park features playground equipment and basketball courts. Just southeast lies Reiff Playground, spanning 1.08 acres along 59th Drive, which also offers play areas and basketball facilities. To the southwest is Joseph F. Mafera Park, covering 5.28 acres with amenities for baseball, basketball, handball, and roller hockey, adjacent to the Fresh Pond Yard. Additionally, Luke J. Lang Square, a 0.07-acre green space, is located at the intersection of Fresh Pond Road, 59th Road, and 61st Street.

The Rezoning Area and surrounding area located in an R5B/C1-4 and R5B districts. In the surrounding area are M1-1, R4-1 and R6B/C2-4 districts. A majority of the surrounding area is also located in the OTZ, which is part of the Greater Transit Zone.

The R5B district permits detached and semi-detached residential buildings but is primarily a three-story rowhouse district. The maximum FAR is 1.50, which is increased to 2.0 for Qualifying Residential Sites, which are sites with 5,000 square feet or more in lot area and frontage along a wide roadway (75 feet or greater in width) or along the short side of a block. A maximum height of 35 is permitted for standard sites and 55 feet for Qualifying Residential Sites. The front yard must be at least five feet deep, and it must be at least as deep as one adjacent front yard and no deeper than the other, but it need not exceed a depth of 20 feet. Attached rowhouses do not require side yards but there must be at least eight feet between the end buildings in a row and buildings on adjacent zoning lots. Curb cuts are prohibited on zoning lot frontages less than 40 feet. R5B/C1-4 districts permit up to 2.0 FAR with commercial uses (Use Groups VI and VII). In the OTZ, parking is generally waived for mixed-use developments on lots with 10,000 square feet in lot area or less. Otherwise, the residential requirement is 25% with qualifying affordable units waived and the requirement is generally waived on Qualifying Residential Sites, or where the requirement is 10 or less.

R4-1 districts permit one- and two-family detached and semi-detached residences at a maximum FAR of 1.0 FAR - and all types of residences at 1.5 FAR on Qualifying Residential Sites. A max height of 35 feet is permitted, which can be increased to 45 feet on Qualifying Residential Sites. Parking is required for 50% of residences in the OTZ, qualifying affordable units are waived and the entire requirement is generally waived on Qualifying Residential Sites.

R6B/C2-4 is a contextual residential zoning district that predominantly produces four- and five-story buildings, generally with ground-floor commercial use. Many of these are brownstone buildings are set back from the street and have small front yards. The R6B zoning district allows for a maximum FAR of 2.0 for residential, commercial and community facility uses and 2.4 FAR with qualifying affordable units under UAP. A minimum base height of 30 feet is required, with a maximum base height of 45 feet and a maximum height of 55 feet. With qualifying affordable units under UAP, the maximum height can be increased to 65 feet. Parking is required for 25% of dwelling units in the OTZ, affordable units are waived. and the overall requirement is waived under 15 spaces. In the OTZ, parking is generally waived for mixed-use developments on lots with 10,000 square feet in lot area or less.

The area is well served by public transit. closest subway access is the Fresh Pond Road station on the M train, located approximately 500 feet south of the Rezoning Area. This station offers service through central Queens and into Manhattan via Midtown. The area is also served by several MTA bus routes, including the Q58, which runs along Fresh Pond Road with stops within one block of the Rezoning Area and provides connections between Flushing and Ridgewood. The B13 and B20 buses operate nearby as well, offering additional service to adjacent neighborhoods in Queens and Brooklyn. Approximately 0.5 miles to the northwest, the Myrtle–Wyckoff Avenues station offers access to both the L and M trains, further expanding travel options across the city.

## 4. Description of the Proposed Project Area

The Proposed Project Area (also known as the "Rezoning Area") comprises Queens Block 3522, Lots 20, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31, and Block 3521, Lots 45, 46, 47, 49, and portions of ("p/o") Lots 19 and 37. The Development Site comprises Block 3522, Lot 19, 20, 23, 26 and 27, which is described in greater detail below.

Block 3522, Lot 28 (63-12 Fresh Pond Road) is a two-story 2,750 square-foot residential building on a 2,481 square foot lot. The total FAR is 1.11. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

Block 3522, Lot 29 (63-14 Fresh Pond Road) is a two-story 2,750 gsf residential building on a 2,481 square foot lot. The total FAR is 1.11. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

Block 3522, Lot 30 (63-16 Fresh Pond Road) is aa two-story 2,750 square-foot residential building on a 2,481 square-foot lot. The total FAR is 1.11. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

Block 3522, Lot 31 (63-18 Fresh Pond Road) is a two-story 2,910 square-foot mixed residential and commercial retail building. The ground floor has a laundromat. The parcel has 2,488 square feet of lot area. The total FAR is 1.17. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

Block 3521, Lot 37 (62-68 Fresh Pond Road) contains a single-story 3,669 square foot commercial building (a bank) on a 17,066 square foot lot. The total FAR is 0.21. Only the portion currently zoned R5B/C1-4 is part of the Rezoning Area.

Block 3521, Lot 45 (62-70 Fresh Pond Road) is a single-story 200 gsf commercial building on a 2,466 square-foot lot. The total FAR is 0.08. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

Block 3521, Lot 46 (62-72 Fresh Pond Road) is a two-story 2,200 square-foot mixed residential and commercial building on a 2,464 square-foot lot. The ground-floor contains a real estate office. The total FAR is 0.89. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

Block 3521, Lot 47 (62-74 Fresh Pond Road) is a two-story 1,424 square-foot residential building on a 2,465 square-foot lot. The total FAR is 0.58. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

Block 3521, Lot 49 (62-76 Fresh Pond Road) is a two-story 4,550 square foot mixed residential and commercial building on a 2,475 square foot lot. The ground floor currently contains a deli. The total FAR is 1.84. This lot is zoned R5B/C1-4.

The buildings on Block 3522, Lots 28, 29, 30, and 31 and Block 3521, Lots 46 and 47 were built between 1910 and 1930. Block 3521, Lot 49 was built in the early 20th century and altered in 1997. Block 3521, Lots 37 and 45 were both built in 2004.

## 5. Description of the Proposed Development Site

The Development Site (63-02 Fresh Pond Road) consists of five contiguous vacant lots (Block 3522, Lots 19, 20, 23, 26, and 27) forming a rectangular assemblage at the southwest corner of Fresh Pond Road and Bleecker Street. Lot 23 was previously improved with a 2,000-square-foot building formerly used as a dry-cleaning establishment. The assemblage has a lot area of approximately 14,919 square feet and measures 100 feet along Fresh Pond Road (80 feet at the rear) and 149.05 feet deep along Bleecker Street (50 feet at the rear). The site is located within an R5B/C1-4 zoning district mapped along the west side of Fresh Pond Road, extending from Menahan Street to just south of Metropolitan Avenue, where an R6B/C2-4 district begins. The rear 24-feet of the property are zoned R5B.

## 6. Description of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Actions would facilitate a new 7-story, mixed-use building totaling approximately 53,100 zoning square feet (3.55 FAR) on a 14,919-square-foot corner lot. The building will contain 54 residential units located on floors two through seven, with a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units. A majority of the property would be zoned R6A/C2-4, with the remaining 24-feet to remain as R5B. The building would rise to a base height of 53 at the sixth floor and set back 10

feet along Fresh Pond Road before rising to a maximum height of 73 feet at the top of the seventh floor. The Proposed Development is subject to transition rules between the proposed R6A/C2-4 and R5B district, with a transition height maximum of 65 feet within 15 feet of the district line and 85 feet within 25 feet. Terrace spaces would be provided at the 4th and 5th floors. The rooftop would contain recreational space, as well as green rooftop areas.

The ground-floor space will include approximately 7,000 square feet of commercial use fronting Fresh Pond Road, as well as the residential lobby area fronting Bleecker Street. A 12-foot curb would be provided in the rear of the property, accessible along Bleecker Street, in the R5B portion of the property, which would provide access to 19 voluntary parking spaces. Based on the location in the OTZ, off-street parking for residential uses is waived and the proposed commercial space also waives out of parking requirements due to the size (less than 40,000 square feet). No loading berth is required for the commercial use.

Pursuant to the MIH, approximately 13-16 of the proposed 54 dwelling units would income-restricted, depending on the ultimate MIH compliance (Options 1 or 2).

## 7. Actions Necessary to Facilitate the Project

The Proposed Actions include a zoning map amendment to rezone the Rezoning Area from R5B/C1-4 to R6A/C2-4. The new R6A/C2-4 district would extend 125 feet in depth along the northeastern portion of Block 3522 to encompass the majority of the Development Site. The remainder of the Rezoning Area would be mapped to a depth of 100 feet, covering the rest of the Fresh Pond Road frontage on Block 3522 and the eastern 100 feet of Block 3521, extending north to a point approximately 100 feet south of Metropolitan Avenue. This new R6A/C2-4 district would align with an existing R6B/C2-4 district on Block 3521 and connect to an R6B/C1-4 district located immediately south of the Rezoning Area, effectively bridging the two contextual zoning districts

In connection with the proposed zoning map amendment, the proposed Rezoning Area would also be made applicable to MIH through a text amendment to Appendix F of the ZR under Options 1 and 2 (the "Proposed Actions").

Under MIH, residential uses are permitted at 3.9 FAR (with a base of 3.0 FAR) and community facility uses are permitted at 3.0 FAR. Under MIH, a maximum street wall height of 65 feet is permitted before a setback of 10 or 15 feet is required, and the maximum building height is 95 feet. A max lot coverage of 80% is permitted for interior lots and corner lots permit 100% lot coverage. In the OTZ, parking is required for 25% of dwelling units, qualifying affordable units are waived, and the requirement is waived below 15 spaces. The R6A/C2-4 district permits

commercial use at 2.0 FAR and one space is generally required per 1,000 square feet of non-residential space, with the overall requirement waived below 40 spaces.

The proposed zoning text amendment, pursuant to *Appendix F* of the Zoning Resolution, would make the Rezoning Area a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) area and would be mapped as Options 1 and 2. All residential developments, enlargements, and conversions within this MIH area must comply with the program by providing 25 percent of residential floor area as income-restricted dwelling units for residents with incomes averaging 60 percent AMI and below (Option 1) or 30 percent of residential floor area as income-restricted dwelling units for residents with incomes averaging 80 percent AMI and below (Option 2). 30 percent of residential floor area as income-restricted dwelling units for residents with incomes averaging 80 percent AMI and below (Option 2).

In order to comply with MIH, the Proposed Development would provide between 13-16 out of 54 total dwelling units to comply with MIH, depending on the option.

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the redevelopment of 63-02 Fresh Pond Road, which is a vacant and underutilized lot with a contextual, mixed-use development that reinforces the character and vitality of the Fresh Pond Road corridor with a new mid-rise development. The Development Site comprises five vacant lots at the southwest corner of Fresh Pond Road and Bleecker Street and is currently zoned R5B/C1-4, a low-density designation that does not reflect the established land use patterns along this segment of Fresh Pond Road, nor does it incentivize new development. While the corridor to the north features a continuous street wall and active commercial uses typical of a vibrant neighborhood shopping street, the zoning around the Site has encouraged lower-density and non-contextual conditions, with minimal new development despite proximity to transit and major intersections at Eliot Avenue and Metropolitan Avenue, the latter of which is a regional mixed-use corridor.

The proposed R6A/C2-4 district would allow for a modest increase in density (from 1.5-2.0 FAR to 3.9 FAR), enabling redevelopment with a mid-rise, mixed-use building that includes ground-floor retail and permanently affordable housing. The R6A designation maintains predictable massing and height controls consistent with contextual zoning, while the C2-4 overlay permits a broader range of neighborhood retail and service uses (Use Groups VI to X) with reduced parking requirements (generally waived below 40,000 square feet) better supporting commercial viability along this portion of Fresh Pond Road.

In addition to advancing new housing capacity, the new R6A/C2-4 district would bridge the existing R6B/C2-4 zoning to the north with an R6B/C1-4 district to the south. The proposed R6A/C2-4 district would be mapped to a depth of 125 feet over the core development site and to 100 feet on surrounding frontages. Overall, the Proposed Actions aim to rectify outdated zoning,

promote appropriate infill, and strengthen the continuity of a key neighborhood corridor in Ridgewood.

## 8. Conclusion

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the redevelopment of a prominent corner site at 63-02 Fresh Pond Road with a mid-rise, mixed-use building that delivers new housing—both market-rate and income-restricted, and active ground-floor commercial use in a contextually appropriate form. The Proposed Actions respond to longstanding underutilization of the site and surrounding lots, which are currently constrained by low-density R5B/C1-4 zoning that no longer reflects the built character or development potential of the Fresh Pond Road corridor. The proposed R6A/C2-4 district introduces a moderate increase in density while maintaining predictable massing through contextual zoning controls. It enables a mixed-use building of 3.55 FAR with 54 residential units, including 13 to 16 affordable units through Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH), and 7,000 square feet of active commercial retail use along Fresh Pond Road.

Moreover, the proposed R6A/C2-4 zoning would bridge two existing contextual districts, an R6B/C2-4 district to the north and an R6B/C1-4 district to the south, establishing a consistent mid-rise framework along a major mixed-use corridor. This alignment addresses a legacy of fragmented and outdated zoning and complements recent citywide policy initiatives such as the *City of Yes for Housing Opportunity*, which encourages new housing near transit in well-served locations like Ridgewood. With its location near the M train, multiple bus routes, and key intersections at Metropolitan Avenue and Eliot Avenue, the Development Site is well-situated to support transit-oriented growth. The Proposed Actions would help complete a logical zoning transition and catalyze reinvestment in a dynamic and accessible portion of Queens Community District 5.