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RESOLUTION

Date: November 23, 2015

Committee of Origin: Executive

Full Board Vote: 29 In Favor, 2 Opposed, 1 Absentions, 0 Present/Not Voting

Resolution on the Proposed Zoning for Quality and Affordability Plan

WHEREAS, the development of new and preservation of existing affordable housing is one of the foremost concerns for East Harlem and New York City (“NYC”) at-large;

WHEREAS, the cost of living in NYC has been increasing, the demand for housing has outpaced the supply of housing and the growth and desire for luxury development has posed immense hardships for many NYC—and specifically East Harlem—residents who desperately wish to remain members of their community;

WHEREAS, affordable senior housing is a particularly grave concern as East Harlem’s and NYC’s senior population require both improved and increased affordable housing dedicated to their population;

WHEREAS, Community Board 11 of Manhattan (“CB11”), on behalf of the East Harlem community, has persistently advocated to local, state and federal officials that affordable housing must be both expanded and preserved;

WHEREAS, governmental and political leaders desire to address the lack of affordable housing by promoting increased development of affordable housing units through changes to the NYC Zoning Resolution as well as through other initiatives that comprise “Housing New York,” NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio’s housing plan;

WHEREAS, the NYC Department of City Planning has proposed the implementation of the Zoning for Quality and Affordability Plan (“ZQA”) to improve and modernize the Zoning Resolution, specifically to promote the development affordable senior housing and related care facilities as well as to improve the quality of residential and commercial development that reflect current development practices and improve the urban environment;

WHEREAS, CB11 has consulted with various stakeholders, including representatives of DCP and other NYC agencies, and has evaluated the proposal in consultation with members of the public, including residents, neighbors and friends of East Harlem;

WHEREAS, a public hearing on this matter was held on November 9, 2015, where CB11 heard from other members of the public and their views of ZQA;

WHEREAS, CB11 has recognized the benefits ZQA offers to the East Harlem community but has also identified a number of deficiencies in ZQA that, if addressed and corrected, would substantially improve the purpose of and anticipated result of ZQA and further benefit the East Harlem community;

THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that ZQA’s proposal to permit the removal of existing parking in a “transit zone” that meets the parking requirements for all housing units should be subject to review by the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals so as to ensure a standardized process for the removal of all types of existing parking requirements, as well as to require community board input on such decisions;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that affordable senior residences outside Mandatory Inclusionary Housing areas developed using ZQA’s floor area bonus should have permanent affordability as is provided to affordable housing that created under the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing program.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that ZQA’s reliance on transit zones should be reevaluated to further consider the appropriateness of including northern Manhattan, including East Harlem, within the same transit zone definition as the outer boroughs; northern Manhattan, including East Harlem, is generally higher density with better access to, and use of, transit and a finer grained approach to the goals of the transit zones is appropriate in East Harlem, especially as it relates to parking requirements for market-rate housing;

FURTHER RESOLVED, the minimum unit dwelling size of 400 square feet should be restored, and no smaller minimum unit dwelling size should be proposed under ZQA.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that ZQA’s proposed revision to the Zoning Resolution to reduce the required spacing between residential buildings –on the same zoning lot should not extend to zoning lots currently owned and/or operated by NYC agencies, including developments owned and/or operated by the New York City Housing Authority, and, instead, any such revisions to the Zoning Resolution should be addressed separately as part of a broader community-driven plan specific to such zoning lots; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CB11, on behalf of the East Harlem community and upon extensive consideration of ZQA’s potential effects on East Harlem, does not support or express approval of ZQA, unless the articulated concerns in the foregoing resolutions are met.
