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CHPC TESTIMONY

Kew Gardens Hills Rezoning (C 190299 ZMQ & N 190301 ZRQ)

NYC Council Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises

September 4th, 2019

Good morning Chair Moya and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Sheena Kang and I am a policy analyst at the Citizens Housing and Planning Council. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

CHPC is a non-profit research and education organization that has helped to shape public policy in New York since our founding in 1937. CHPC is committed to the advancement of policies that enable the City’s housing stock to better meet the diverse and changing needs of its population.

We commend the Kew Gardens Hills community for seeking the land use changes before us today, which will better allow the local housing stock to meet the needs of growing resident families. Yet the details of the proposed actions should be carefully considered. Cities across the U.S. are banning single-family zoning to try to combat shortage of housing supply, an issue that is all too familiar here in New York. In this context, zoning changes to a single-family area that would not allow for additional density need to be thoroughly evaluated to ensure that their outcomes are optimal.

CHPC is eager to see that the changes sought would reduce the minimum rear yard depth from 30 to 20 feet, an allowance that is unique to R2X districts. This would allow for additional FAR with minimal impacts to neighborhood character or resident exposure to light and air. We commend the applicants

and City Planning for pursuing this particular change and would be enthusiastic to see the City explore options for incorporating this allowance into other low-density residential zoning districts.

While recognizing the desire to maintain built character, CHPC also urges the consideration of two-family zoning or single-family zoning with allowance for Accessory Dwelling Units. Today, families in Kew Gardens Hills are growing and, as a result, encountering the need for larger homes. In the future, many of these same residents may wish to age in place. A secondary unit could allow for a caretaker to live on-site or provide a fixed-income homeowner with supplemental income through rent. These are needs that CHPC has frequently encountered through our work on basement apartment conversions and which are well-worth anticipating ahead of time.

In sum, housing needs in New York City are constantly fluctuating. It is crucial to maintain flexibility in the housing stock, so it can react to our most pressing needs. We are happy to answer questions you may have about these suggestions and appreciate your time. Thank you.

Project Area A Details

Project Area: R2 Zoning District bounded by 72nd Avenue, Main Street, 77th Avenue, and Park Drive East

Average Lot Area: 4,543 sq ft

Total Lot Area: 1,279,928 sq ft

Average Floor Area: 2,227 sq ft

Total Floor Area: 574,184 sq ft

Total One- and Two- Family Homes: 276

Total Multi-Unit Residences: 3

Total Cultural Institutions: 2

Total Vacant Properties: 2

Zoning: R2

Average Floor Area Ratio: 0.5

Max. FAR: 0.5 (res.) / 1.0 (comm. fac.)

Project Area B Details

Project Area: R2 Zoning District bounded by 78th Avenue, Park Drive East, Union Turnpike, and Vleigh Place

Average Lot Area: 5,760 sq ft

Total Lot Area: 541,403 sq ft

Average Floor Area: 2,691.5 sq ft

Total Floor Area: 229,768 sq ft

Total One- and Two- Family Homes: 91

Total Multi-Unit Residences: 2

Total Cultural Institutions: 1

Zoning: R2

Average Floor Area Ratio: 0.47

Max. FAR: 0.5 (res.) / 1.0 (comm. fac.)

Neighborhood Details

Borough: Queens

Neighborhood: Kew Gardens Hills

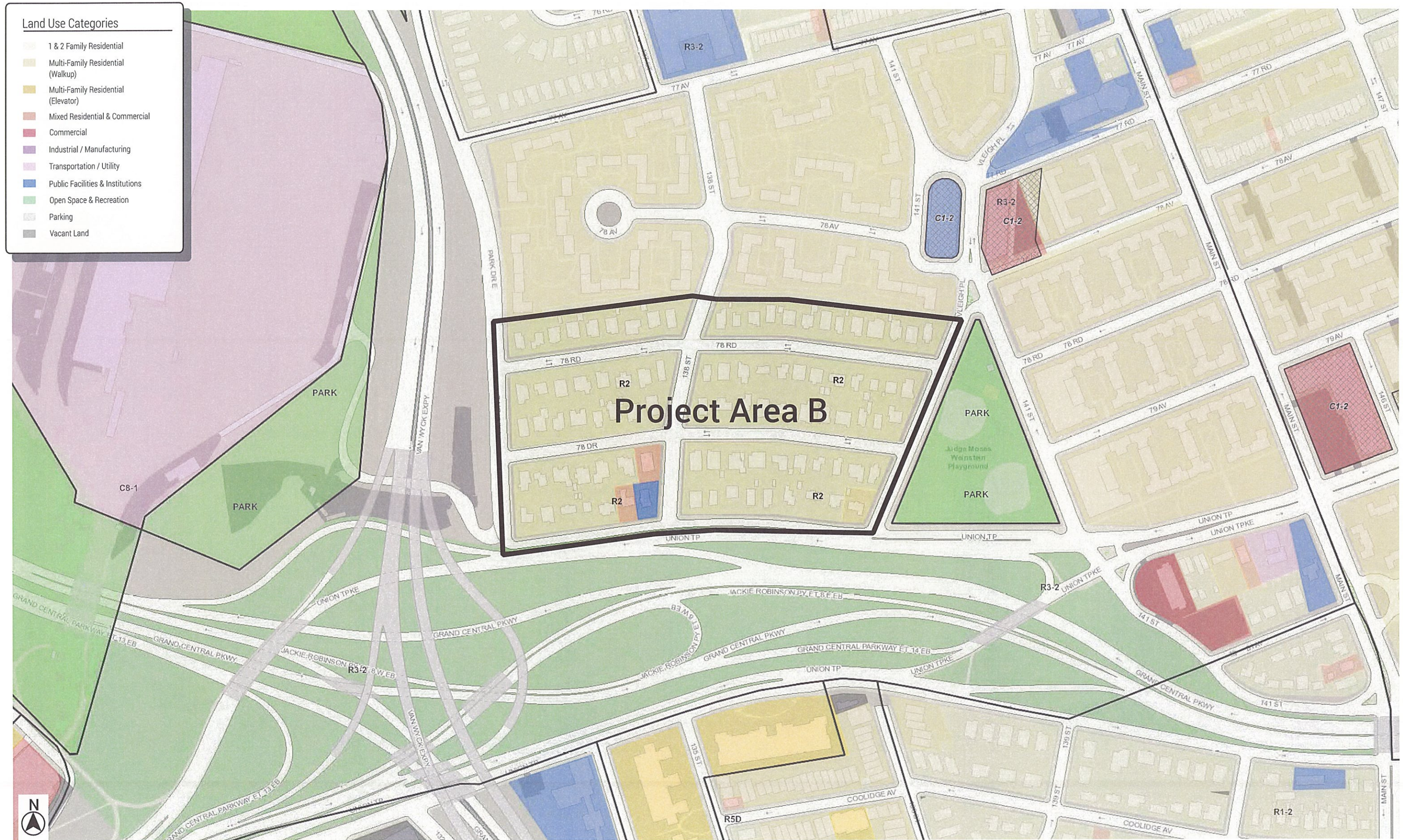
Community District: 8, Marie Adam-Ovide, District Manager

City Council: 24, Rory Lancman

Borough President: Melinda Katz





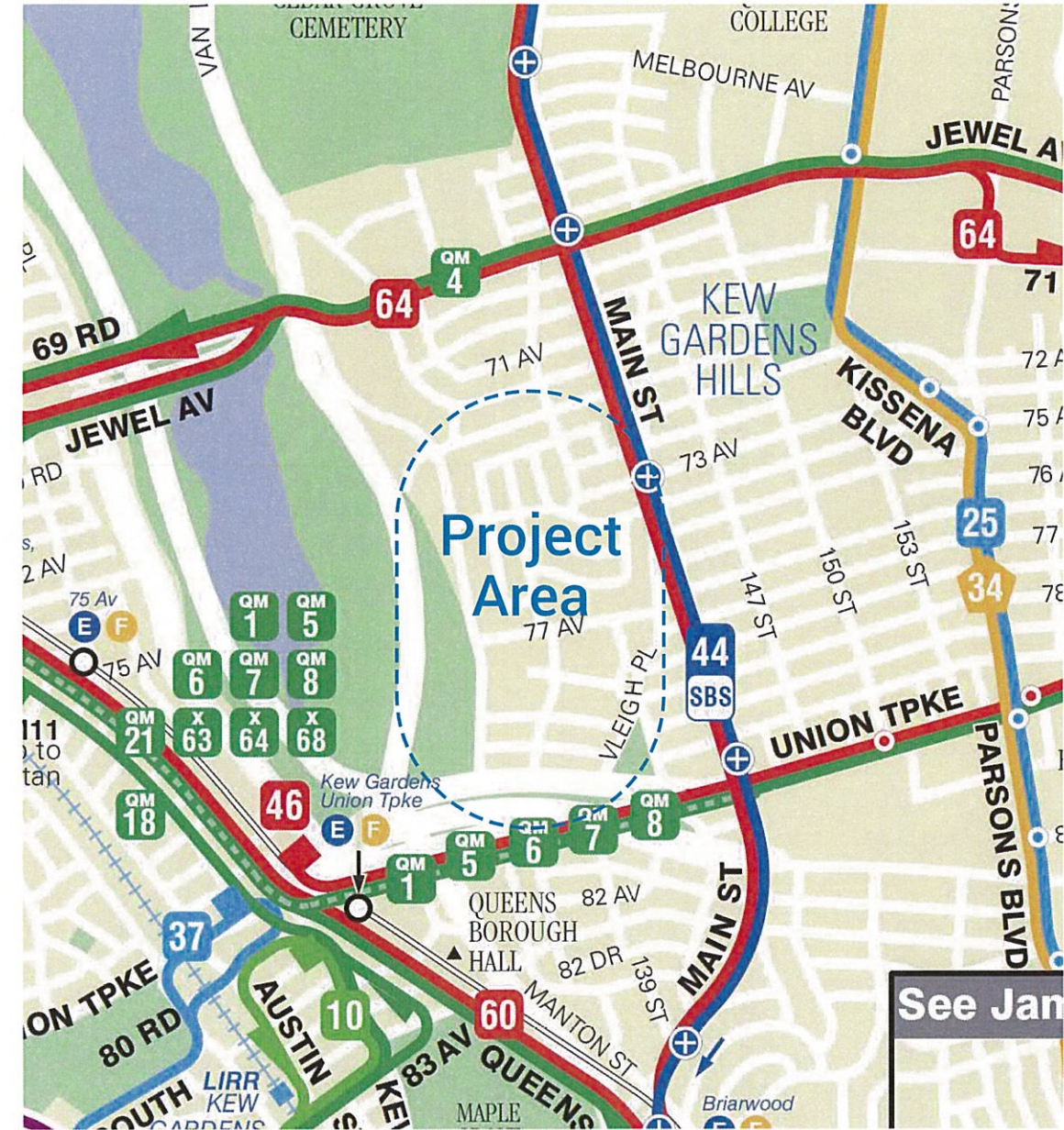


Subway Lines



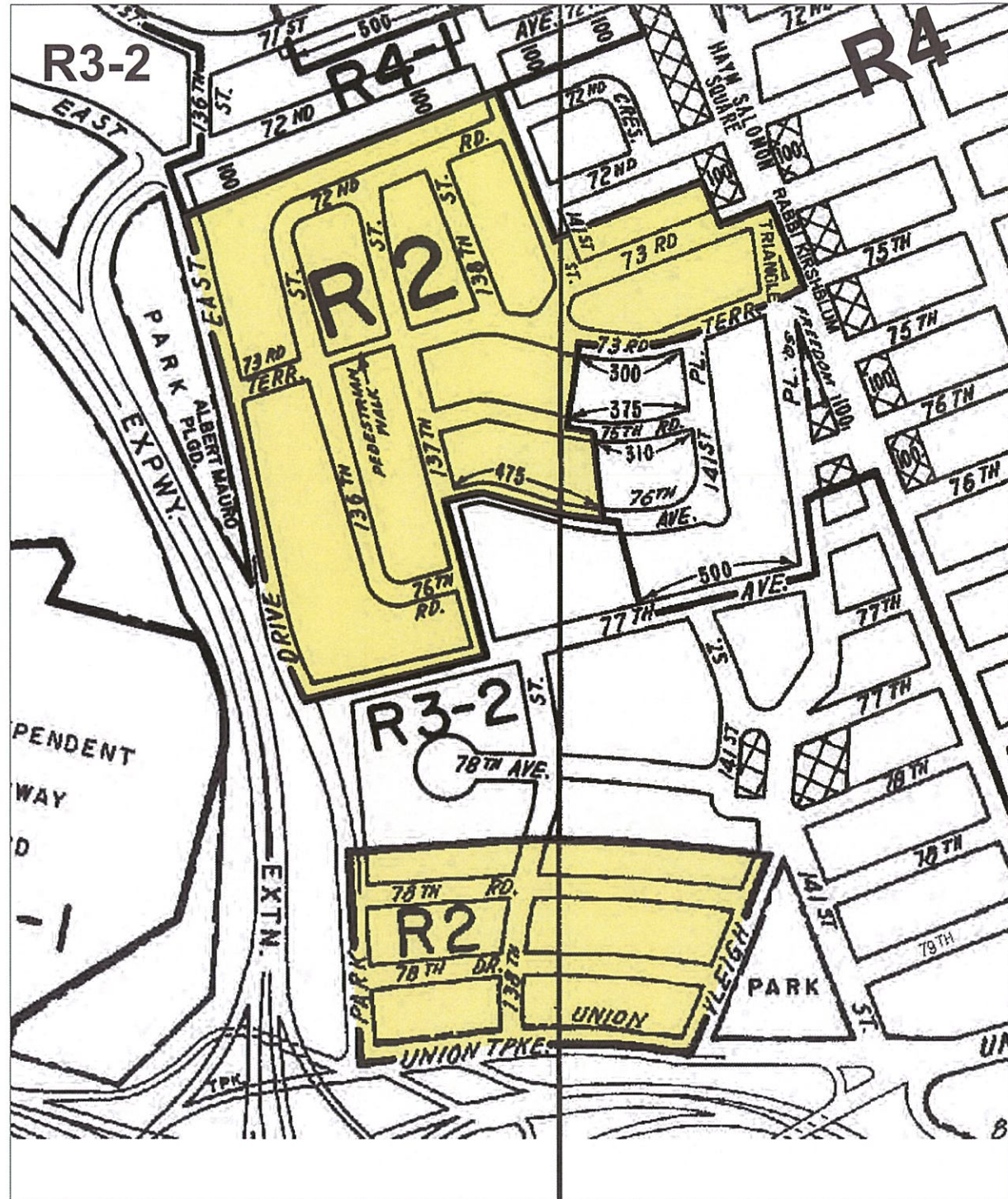
The Project Areas are located between 1/3 and 1 mile northeast of the NYCT Subway Station at Kew Gardens/Union Turnpike with E/F train service.

Bus Routes

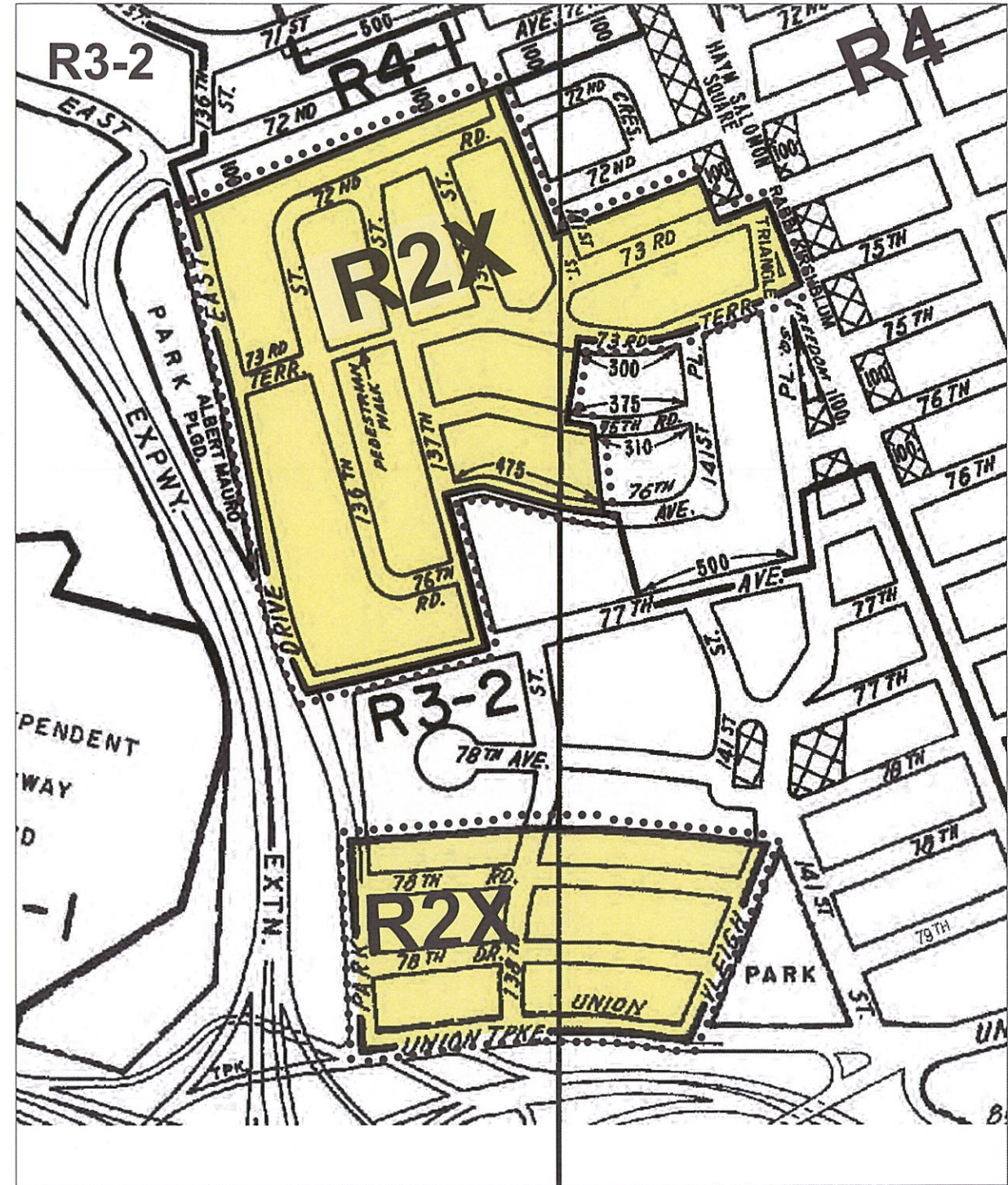


The neighborhood is also well served by NYCT bus lines. The Q44 Select Bus runs north along Main Street through Flushing to the Bronx Zoo and south to Jamaica. Additionally, the Q20A and Q20B run along Main Street towards College Point to the north and Jamaica to the south.

Existing Zoning

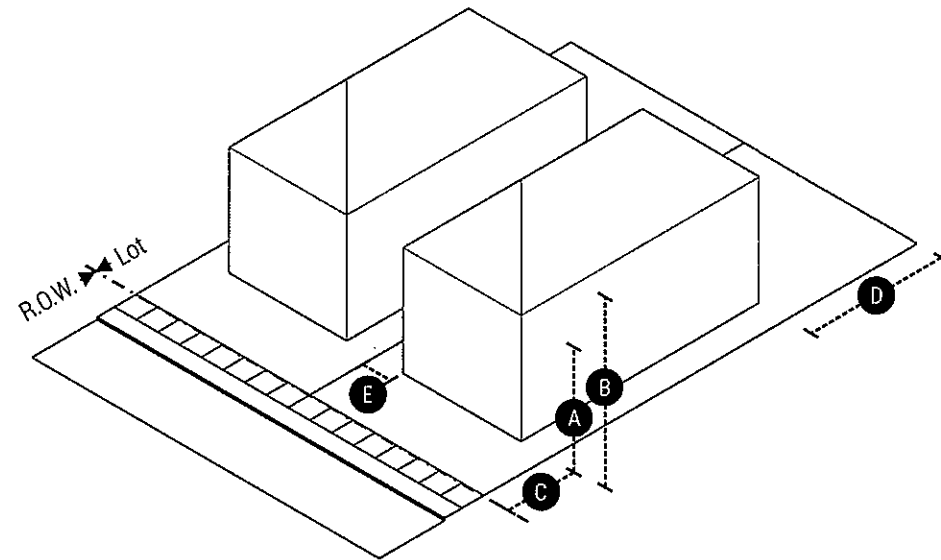


Proposed Zoning

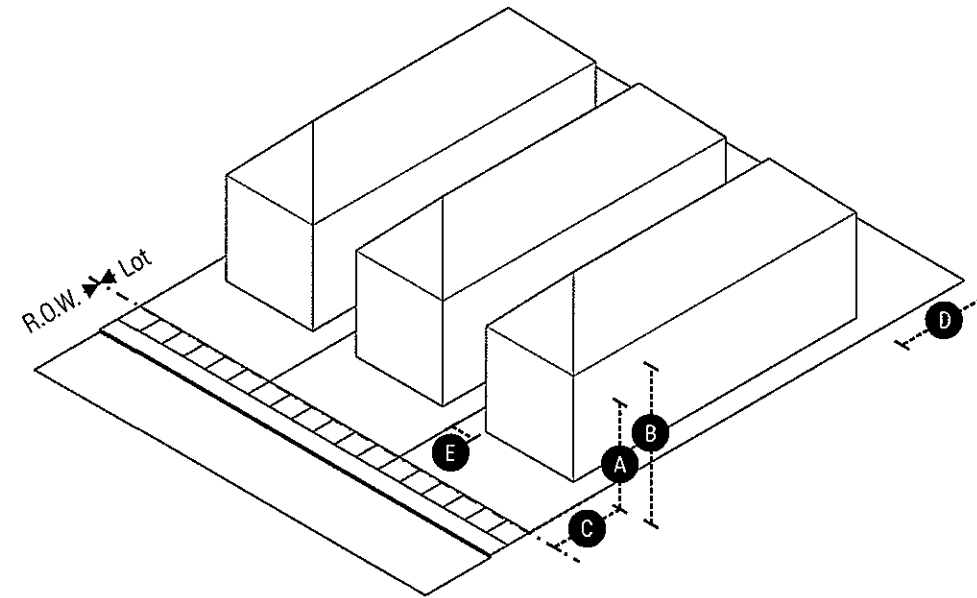


The proposed rezoning would change the existing R2 district to an R2X district, bringing a number of properties into compliance and enabling buildings to be constructed up to 0.85 FAR (1.02 FAR using an attic allowance).

Existing R2



Proposed R2X



	Permitted/Required	Permitted/Required	
Use Groups	UG 1,3,4	UG 1,3,4	No Change
Floor Area Ratio (Max.)	0.5 (residential) FAR / 0.5 (comm. fac.) FAR	0.85 (residential) FAR / 0.5 (comm. fac.) FAR	
Residential FAR (Max.)	0.5 FAR	0.85 FAR (1.02 with Attic Allowance)	
Community Facility FAR (Max.)	0.5 FAR (1.0 with Special Permit)	0.5 FAR (1.0 with Special Permit)	No Change
A Perimeter Wall Height (Max.)	—	21 Feet	
B Building Height (Max.)	s.e.p. Starting at 25 Feet	35 Feet	
C Front Yard (Min.)	15 Feet	15 Feet	No Change
D Rear Yard (Min.)	30 Feet	20 Feet	
E Side Yard (Min.)	2 required / 5 Feet Each / 13 Feet Total	2 required / 2 Feet Each / 10 Feet Total	
Off-Street Parking (Min.)	1 per DU	1 per DU	No Change









**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 5080 509

in favor in opposition

Date: 9/4/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Adam Sokol

Address: 72-15 136th St., Queens

I represent: Applicant

Address: KGH

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 5080 509

in favor in opposition

Date: 9/4/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jacob Shaffarz

Address: 137-15 72nd Rd., Queens

I represent: Applicant

Address: KGH

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 5080 509

in favor in opposition

Date: 9/4/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jay Goldstein

Address: 136 Cedarhurst Ave., #17, Cedarhurst

I represent: Applicant

Address: KGH

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

T2019-4991

Date:

9/4/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name:

FRANK ST. JACQUES

Address:

AKERMAN LLP 666 5TH AVE NYC 10103

I represent:

LEEMILT'S PETROLEUM

Address:

3513 ATLANTIC AVE BROOKLYN

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date:

9-4-19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name:

Sheena Kang

Address:

42 Broadway Ste 2010

I represent:

Citizens Housing + Planning Council

Address:

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms