

Quality Housing Program 1987 Excerpts and TOC

Quality Housing Program <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/about/cpc/870197a.pdf>

June 17, 1987 Calendar No. 78 N 870197(A) ZRY N 870385(A) ZRY

IN THE MATTER OF amendments, pursuant to Section 200 the New York City Charter, of the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York submitted by the Department of City Planning, pertaining to the establishment of new zoning districts; establishment of the **Quality Housing Program**; elimination of the special permit for Housing Quality Developments and modification of street wall and height regulations in certain contextual districts. (**emphasis added**)

BACKGROUND

In July 1983, the Department of City Planning began a comprehensive review of the zoning regulations affecting medium to high density residential development. The review was prompted by a long-term dearth of housing production, particularly in medium density R6, R7, and R8 zoning districts; increasing community opposition to out-of-character residential development; and concerns about the effectiveness of the existing Housing Quality special permit.

Zoning and Housing Production

Between 1977 and 1986 new housing completions in New York City averaged only 9,029 units yearly. Of these, about 5,500 units were "market rate". During the latter half of this period, subsidized new construction dropped precipitously because of Federal budget cuts, from 6,684 units in 1980 to 2,290 in 1985. By comparison, in the 1950s, housing production averaged about 37,000 units annually. Between 1962 and 1965, when development still proceeded under the pre-1961 zoning, production reached a post war average high of 52,000 units yearly.

Even during the 1967-1976 decade, when the City's population and economic base were declining, housing production averaged 22,300 units per year. The turnaround in the City's economy since 1978 and the increase in population have compounded problems of reduced housing development. The housing vacancy rate, which stood at a high of 3.19% in 1965, has declined from 2.95% in 1978 to 2.13% in 1981 and 2.04% in 1984.

The Department of City Planning's review concluded that while the principal causes of the decline in housing production were economic, the Zoning Resolution adopted in 1961 exacerbated the problem. The 1961 multi-family residential bulk controls were designed to encourage development of tall buildings surrounded by large open spaces in the medium to high density zoning districts.

For example, in an R6 district a three-story building could have a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.62. If more of the land were left open (65 to 81 percent) and developments built taller, the FAR increases to 2.12 at six stories and up to 2.43 at 13 stories. On large sites, (over 30,000 sq. ft.), these regulations result in a generally efficient building with a reasonable number of apartments per floor and a reasonable ratio of apartments to common area at the maximum FAR. On small sites, however, these regulations can significantly raise building costs for heights above four stories. **The tall, slender buildings necessary on small lots to achieve the maximum FAR have fewer apartments to share the costs of the common areas.** This raises, the construction and maintenance costs per apartment. Where the housing market is very strong this is not an impediment to development. In other areas, it discourages development.

Quality Housing Program 1987 Excerpts and TOC

BACKGROUND

| | |
|--|----|
| Zoning and Housing Production | 1 |
| Zoning and Special Districts | 3 |
| Housing Quality | 4 |
| Contextual Zoning | 5 |
| Quality Housing | 6 |
| Neighborhood Character | 8 |
| Floor Area Ratios | 8 |
| Other Bulk Controls | 9 |
| Zoning Lot Mergers and Transfer of Bulk Across District Boundaries | 10 |
| Quality Housing Program Elements | 11 |
| Quality Housing Applicability | 13 |
| Modification of Contextual Zoning Regulations | 14 |

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW 15

LAND USE REVIEW PROCEDURE 17

| | |
|--|----|
| Community Board Public Hearings and Review | 18 |
|--|----|

CITY PLANNING PUBLIC HEARINGS 25

CONSIDERATION 30

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Bulk Regulations | 32 |
|------------------|----|

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS 44

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Resolution followed by text | 45 |
|-----------------------------|----|