Zoning Resolution

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Zohran K. Mamdani, Mayor

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Sideya Sherman, Chair

105-944 - Special Fort Totten Natural Area District-4

File generated by https://zr.planning.nyc.gov on 11/25/2026

105-944 - Special Fort Totten Natural Area District-4

LAST AMENDED
12/5/2024

(a) General purposes

The "Special Fort Totten Natural Area District"-4 (hereinafter referred to as the Special District), established in this Resolution, is designed to promote and protect public health, safety, general welfare and amenity. These general goals include, among others, the following general purposes:

(1) to preserve, protect and enhance the combination of historically significant buildings and other structures, public open spaces, outstanding scenic views and pedestrian and vehicular circulation system which by their siting create a unique balance between buildings and open spaces and which, together with the harmonious scale of development and landscaping, add to the quality of life in the area;

(2) to protect aquatic, biologic, geologic, topographic and other natural features having ecological and conservation values and functions;

(3) to improve the quality of new development in the area by fostering the provision of specified public amenities and recreational facilities in appropriate locations and by making these facilities directly accessible to the public; and

(4) to promote the desirable use of land improvements in accordance with the District Plan and in conformance with the character of the Fort Totten area and thus conserve the value of land and buildings and thereby protect the City's tax revenue.

(b) Definitions

(1) Designated open space

The "designated open space" is an #open space# as shown on the District Plan.

(2) Street

For the purpose of this Section, a "street" is a way existing within the #Special Fort Totten Natural Area District#-4 as shown on the District Plan (Appendix A) complying with the definition of #street# in Section 12-10, except that the #street# width shall be limited to existing dimensions. No modification of existing dimensions shall be permitted without prior certification of the City Planning Commission.

(c) General requirements

(1) Requirements for applications

An application to the Commission for any #development# within the Special District shall be subject to the requirements of Section 105-021 (Actions not requiring special review). In addition, an application for #development# within Area B shall include the existing and proposed site plan showing the location and the scale of the existing and proposed #buildings or other structures#, the location of all vehicular entrances and exits and off-street parking facilities, the changes that will be made in the location and size of the #open space#, and such other information as may be required by the Commission. The submission shall include a landscaping plan, #building# sections and elevation and an appropriate model of the planned community.

The Commission shall require, where relevant, a subdivision plan and, in the case of a site plan providing for common #open space# or common parking areas, a maintenance plan for such space or areas and surety for continued availability of such space or areas to the people they are intended to serve.

(2) Pier #development#

The Commission may permit, by special permit, pier #development#, only upon finding that the proposed #development# shall have no significant adverse impact on the Special District or surrounding environment. The Commission may prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards to minimize possible adverse effects on the surrounding area.

(d) Special regulations

(1) Demolition

Except in Area E, no demolition permit or alteration permit for alterations which may affect the character or design of the facade of a #building or other structure# shall be issued by the Department of Buildings, except as permitted by the Commission, unless it is an unsafe #building or other structure# and demolition or alteration is required pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 26, Title C, Part I, Article 8, or its successor, of the New York City Administrative Code. An applicant for any such permit shall notify the Landmarks Preservation Commission of the application.

The Commission, by special permit, may allow:

(i) the alteration of such #building or other structure#, provided that such alteration treatment of the facade relates harmoniously to the character and materials of the original facade and to the adjoining #buildings or other structures#; or

(ii) the demolition of such #buildings or other structures#, other than those deemed unsafe as defined by the Department of Buildings, provided that the Commission finds that the existing #building or other structures# are not suitable for rehabilitation.

Where a #building or other structure# has been demolished pursuant to this Section, the Commission may, by special permit, allow the replacement of the demolished structure provided that the design of the new structure in terms of scale, #lot coverage#, #building# height and exterior treatment of the facade shall replicate as nearly as possible the design and site plan of the original #building#.

(2) Special height regulations

In order to preserve the unique character of the Special District and to protect the views of and to the water within the Special District, Section 23-42 (Height and Setback Requirements in R1 Through R5 Districts) shall apply except that the maximum height for any #development# or #enlargement# shall be 32 feet or three #stories#, whichever is less.

(3) Location of zoning district boundaries at the shore line

Zoning district boundary lines shall coincide with the shore line lawfully existing on April 28, 1983, or any natural or lawful alteration thereof.

A zoning district boundary line which intersects the shore line lawfully existing on April 28, 1983 shall be prolongated, in a straight line, to such naturally or lawfully altered shore line. Lawfully approved piers or other lawfully approved structural extensions of the shore line, as may be so altered, shall not generate development rights.

(4) Designated open space

Any #development# or #site alteration# on a #zoning lot# which contains #designated open space# as shown on the District Plan, shall require certification by the Commission that such #designated open space# shall not be reduced in size or altered

in shape and shall be preserved in its natural state by the owner of the #zoning lot#.

Planting, landscaping or provision of footpaths or sitting areas are permitted in any part of #designated open space#, provided that such improvements do not involve removal of trees or alteration of existing topography, and do not obstruct pedestrian movement within the public pedestrian ways.

#Designated open space# may be used for active recreational facilities provided that the Commission certifies that such #uses# have minimal impact on tree removal, topographic alteration or drainage conditions.

All #designated open spaces# shall be directly accessible to the public from public rights-of-way between dawn and dusk. A prominent plaque or other permanent #sign# shall be displayed on all #designated open spaces# in a prominent location, designated by the Commission, visible from the adjacent public right-of-way. Such plaque or permanent #sign# shall have a #surface area# of not less than three nor more than six square feet, and shall contain the following statement:

"This area is open to the public between sunrise and sunset."

(5) District plan

The District Map for the #Special Fort Totten Natural Area District#-4 identifies specific areas comprising the District Plan in which special zoning regulations carry out the general purposes of the #Special Fort Totten Natural Area District#-4. The District Plan is set forth in Appendix A and is made an integral part hereof. These areas and the specific paragraphs of this Section which contain regulations pertaining thereto are as follows:

Area A - Historic Fort Area, paragraph (d)(6)

Area B - Planned Community Area, paragraph (d)(7)

Area C – Water Related Area, paragraph (d)(8)

Area D - Bay Area, paragraph (d)(9)

Area E - Development Area, paragraph (d)(10)

(6) Historic Fort Area (Area A)

Within Area A (Fort Area) there shall be no #development# nor #enlargement# of existing #buildings or other structures# except that the Commission may authorize necessary renovation to protect existing structures. In all cases the Commission shall refer all applications to the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Department of Parks and Recreation or other City agencies with primary responsibilities in the conservation area, for its report thereon.

(7) Planned Community Area (Area B)

In order to protect the unique scale, character and design relationships between the existing #buildings# and public #open spaces# and parade grounds, no #development#, #enlargement# nor alteration of landscaping or topography shall be permitted, except as set forth herein and as provided by paragraph (d)(1) of this

Section.

(i) Special permit

For any #development#, #enlargement# or alteration of landscaping or topography, the Commission may, by special permit, allow:

(a) the unused total #floor area#, #dwelling units# or #rooming units# permitted by the applicable district regulations for all #zoning lots# within the development to be distributed without regard for #zoning# #lot lines#;

(b) the total #open space# or #lot coverage# required by the applicable district regulations for any #zoning lot# within the development to be distributed without regard for #zoning# #lot lines#;

(c) minor variations in the #yard# and #court# regulations required by the applicable district regulations;

(d) minor variations in the height and setback regulations required by the applicable district regulations;

(e) modifications of the minimum spacing requirements consistent with the intent of the provisions of Section 23-371 (Standard minimum distance between buildings);

(f) permitted or required #accessory# off-street parking spaces to be located anywhere within the #development# without regard to #zoning# #lot lines#, or the provisions of Sections 25-621 (Location of parking spaces in certain districts) and 25-631 (Location and width of curb cuts in certain districts), subject to findings of Section 78-41 (Location of Accessory Parking Spaces), or where such requirement

substantially injures the functioning of the existing area, authorize waiver of all or part of the required parking.

(ii) Findings

As a condition precedent to the granting of a special permit under the provisions of paragraph (d)(7)(i) of this Section, the Commission shall make the following findings:

(a) that the #development#, #enlargement# or said alteration is related to the existing #buildings or other structures# in the Planned Community Area (Area B) in scale and design, and that the #development# will not seriously alter the scenic amenity and the environmental quality of the area;

(b) that the #development# or #enlargement# be sited in such a manner as to preserve the greatest amount of #open space# and landscaping that presently exists, consistent with the scale and design of the existing #buildings# and the landscaping surrounding the new landscaping arrangement and conditions of the community;

(c) that the #development# or #enlargement# is sited such that it will not require at the same time, or in the foreseeable future, new access roads or exits, off-street parking or public parking facilities that will disrupt or eliminate major portions of #open space# and landscaping or will generate large volumes of traffic which will diminish the environmental quality of the community;

(d) that minimal landscaping is to be removed during construction and such areas will be fully restored upon completion of construction.

The Commission may prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards, including covenants running with the land which shall permit public or private enforcement reflecting terms, conditions, and limitations of any special permit hereunder to minimize adverse effects on the character and quality of the community.

(iii) Parade ground

Unless ownership is retained in a governmental agency, the parade ground #designated open space# shall be commonly owned with a #zoning lot# within Area B or Area E and the maintenance of the parade ground shall be the collective responsibility of said owner or owners. The parade ground shall be used for open recreational #uses# and may contain minor #accessory# structures to said #use#. The parade ground shall be directly accessible from the adjoining #streets# along its entire perimeter. There shall be no fences nor walls around or within the parade ground.

(8) Water Related Area (Area C)

In order to protect the unique aquatic and botanic characteristics of the area, there shall be no #development# in Area C except as provided by paragraph (d)(1) of this Section.

(9) Bay area (Area D)

In order to promote waterfront related activities, the permitted #uses# in a C3 District shall be modified as follows in Area D:

(i) #residential uses#, which #uses# are permitted only above the ground floor of those #buildings# existing prior to April 28, 1983;

(ii) all #uses# listed under Use Group VI shall be permitted as applicable in C2 Districts, except #uses# listed in Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealer.

(10) Development area (Area E)

Any #zoning lot# #developed# predominantly for #residential uses# may be considered a #large-scale residential development#, and authorizations or special permits for such #zoning lot# may be granted in accordance with the provisions of Article VII, Chapter 8, except that the #accessory# #uses# of Section 78-22 (Accessory Uses in Large-Scale Residential Developments) shall not apply.

Any #zoning lot# #developed# predominantly for #community facility uses# may be treated as a #large-scale community facility development#, and authorizations or special permits for such #zoning lot# may be granted in accordance with the provisions of Article VII, Chapter 9.

In Area E, the Commission may authorize clustering of #single-family# and #two-family residences# and a modification of housing types in order to maximize the preservation of existing #natural features# in the area, and to provide adequate view protection, and to relate these new structures with the existing structures in the general vicinity. Clustering shall be limited to a maximum #street wall# of 100 feet.

Any and all bonuses permitted in Sections 78-32 through 78-353, inclusive, shall not apply to #development# in Area E.