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MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND COMMISSIONER LIMANDRI ANNOUNCE ONLINE DIAGRAMS OF PROPOSED BUILDINGS AND A NEW DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE PROCESS

Fulfills State of the City Commitment - Increasing Transparency, Compliance and Certainty about Neighborhood Development Projects

First City in the Nation to put Development Diagrams Online

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor for Operations Edward Skyler and Department of Buildings (DOB) Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri today announced reforms to the development process that will give New Yorkers a stronger voice in the development of neighborhoods, create greater transparency, and clarify the process for the public and for developers. New York City will become the first city in the nation to put diagrams of proposed new buildings or major enlargements online so the public can view the size and scale of a proposed building. A new 30-day formal public challenge period will be implemented to give the public a greater voice in the development process and provide clarity for developers about when and how a project can move forward. The Mayor was joined at the announcement by Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Robert Lieber. The new measures, which fulfill a commitment the Mayor made in his State of the City address last month, will go into effect starting Monday, March 9th.

"The reforms we are detailing today will inject a much-needed dose of transparency and accountability into a critical area of construction and development - zoning compliance," said Mayor Bloomberg. "The reforms center on the public's right to challenge any approved development if they think it violates local zoning regulations. For too long, this process has been too onerous for most New Yorkers. The reforms will make sure people have a stronger voice in the development that's taking place in their neighborhoods, while also giving developers more certainty about their projects."

"Until now, knowledge of development approvals has been limited to a small group of insiders with expert knowledge. This puts the public at a disadvantage and creates uncertainty for developers, who could be subject to a challenge long after a building is out of the ground," said Commissioner LiMandri. "This new process will give the public a chance to see what a building will look like before the first shovel hits the ground and developers certainty that once the public has had an opportunity to comment and any compliance issues have been resolved, their project can move forward. These reforms increase transparency and raise accountability across the board."

Architects and engineers filing applications for new buildings and major enlargements will be required to submit diagrams, which will be available at www.nyc.gov. The diagrams will detail critical information that can be used by the public to determine whether a project is in compliance with required zoning regulations. The diagrams will include the size of the project, drawn to scale, and where a building will sit in relation to the street.

The 30-day public-challenge process establishes a defined and organized means for the public to challenge zoning decisions by DOB that they believe are incorrect, and will provide clarity and certainty for developers about when a project can move forward, and when changes to a proposed development need to be made. The current process, which has no formal timeframe, produces confusion and unnecessary and unintended costs for development in New York City.

The online diagrams and new challenge process will streamline the review of the thousands of challenges DOB receives each year - at no additional cost to the City.

New Formal Public Challenge Process

- **Initial Public Challenge Period:** When DOB approves plans for any new building or major enlargement, the building diagrams, called ZD1 forms, and other associated documents will be uploaded to the DOB website. In addition, once a permit is issued builders will be required to post the permit at the location within three days so the public is aware of the proposed development. New Yorkers will have 30 calendar days to review and challenge the development approval.
- **Initial Zoning Challenge Review:** After the initial public challenge period ends, the DOB Borough Commissioner will address every challenge by conducting a full review of the construction plans and rendering decisions that will be posted online. If a challenge is determined to be valid, appropriate enforcement action will be taken, including issuing Stop Work Orders, revoking of permits, and requiring redesigns of the proposed construction.
- **Community Appeals Period:** If the Borough Commissioner determines that a challenge is invalid, the public will be given an additional 15 calendar days to appeal to the First Deputy Commissioner.
- **Final Zoning Challenge Review:** Once the First Deputy Commissioner issues a determination, the decision may be appealed to the Board of Standards and Appeals for a final determination.

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