



Morrisania Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!**

Introduction

In Brief

The Department of City Planning proposes to rezone all or portions of 13 blocks in the Morrisania section of Community District 3 in The Bronx. The rezoning would encourage new residential and economic development; bring existing residential uses into conformance with zoning; and stabilize the mixed-use character of an area that has experienced disinvestment in past decades. In the Mayor's Plan for *New York City's 21st Century Neighborhoods*, Morrisania was highlighted as one of the neighborhoods where rezoning would be a catalyst for increased housing development and economic vitality.

The area to be rezoned is generally bounded by East 168th Street to the north, East 163rd Street to the south, Washington Avenue to the west and Third Avenue to the east. This area is currently zoned for light manufacturing uses (M1-1), except for one blockfront on Third Avenue now zoned for residential and local commercial uses (R6/C2-4). The zoning in the entire area would be changed to MX (M1-1/R7-2), a special mixed use zoning district permitting both light industry and moderate-density housing as well as neighborhood retail and community facility uses. A text amendment to the Zoning Resolution (section 123-90) is also proposed to establish a Special Mixed Use District in Morrisania.

Over the past year, the Department has worked with Community Board 3, local development groups, and the Bronx Borough President's office on this proposal which may fulfill a major goal – increased housing production – of Community Board 3's adopted 197-a plan.

Public Review Process

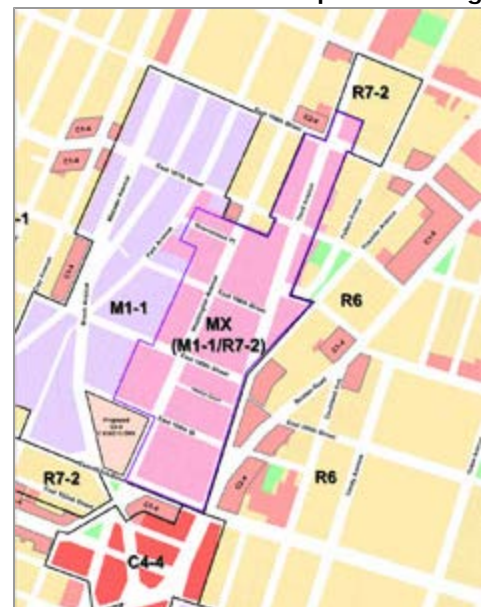
The Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application for the proposed zoning map amendments (C 030333 ZMX) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on March 3, 2003. The non-ULURP text amendment (N 030334 ZRX) were concurrently referred to Community Board 3. Community Board 3 held a public hearing and voted to approve the rezoning proposal without conditions on April 29, 2003 by a vote of 21 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining. The Borough President of The Bronx held a public hearing on May 29, 2003, and subsequently submitted his recommendation to the City Planning Commission approving the proposal. The City Planning Commission held a public hearing on the applications on June 18, 2003 and unanimously approved both applications on July 23, 2003 (read the CPC Reports: [zoning map change](#), [zoning text change](#)). City Council adopted the proposal on August 19, 2003. See the full explanation of the [ULURP review process](#).

For more information on the Morrisania Area Rezoning proposal, contact the Department of City Planning, Bronx Office at (718) 220-8500.

Existing Zoning



Proposed Zoning



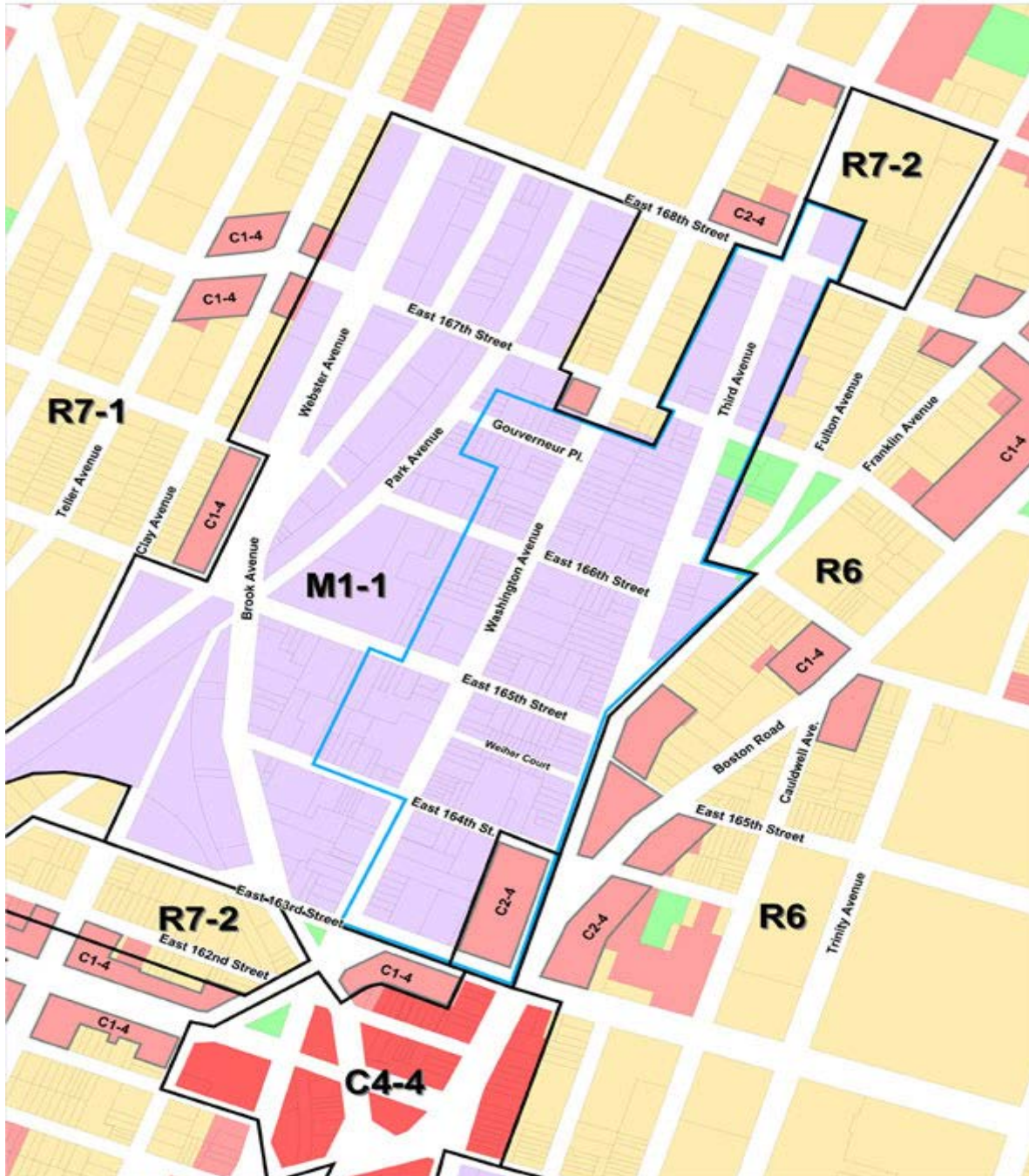
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Existing Zoning

Morrisania Area Rezoning Existing Zoning






Brox Office, Department of City Planning, City of New York, February 2003



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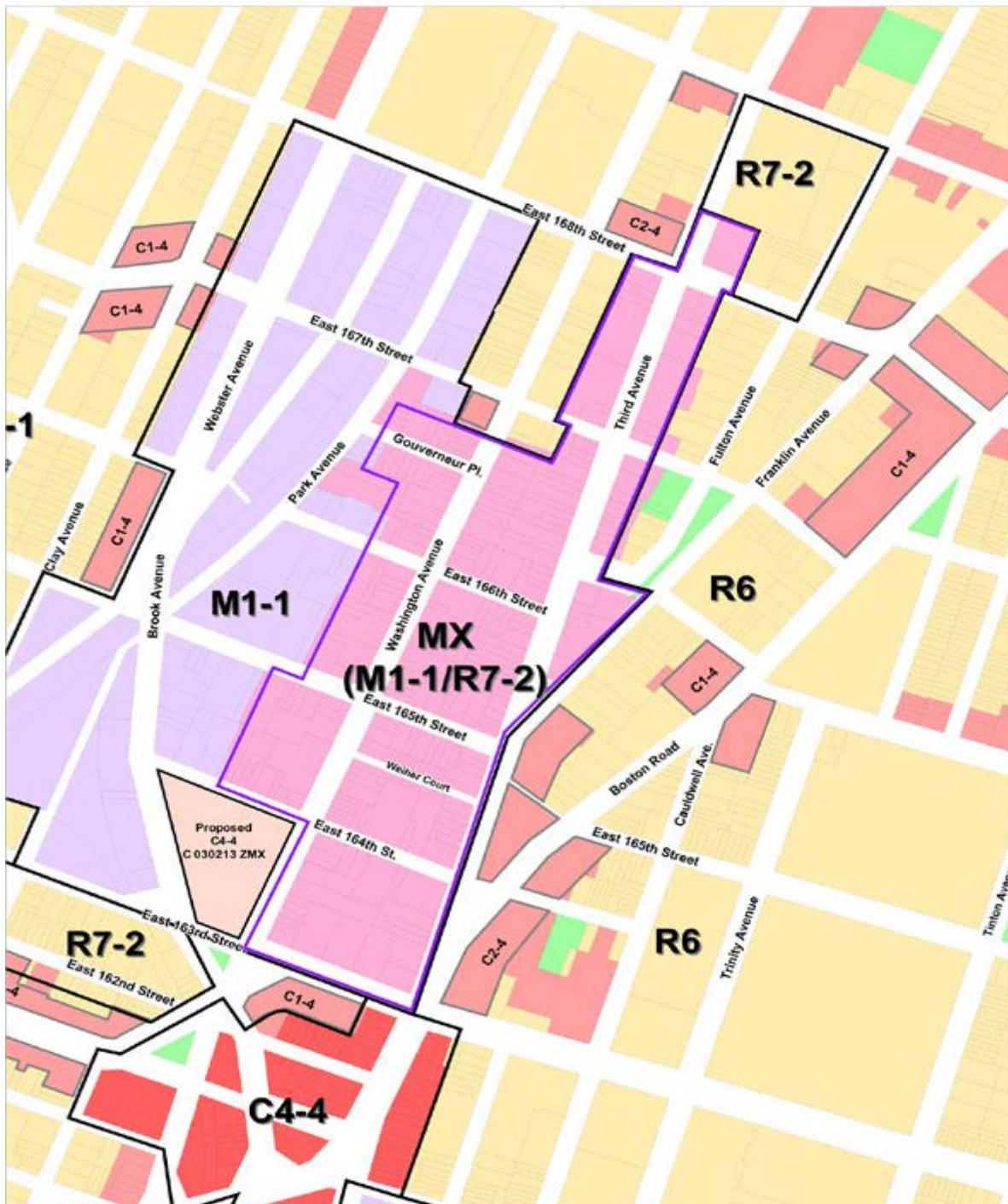
Proposed Zoning

Morrisania Area Rezoning Proposed Zoning

Legend	
	Proposed Mixed-Use Zoning
	Commercial Overlay
	Proposed C4-4 Zoning



Bronx Office, Department of City Planning, City of New York, February 2005



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Background and Context

Background

Morrisania was once a vibrant manufacturing center. From the mid-19th century until World War II, this area was home to a variety of industries ranging from breweries to piano manufacturers. Tenements, rowhouses, and old frame dwellings within the community offered accessible living quarters to factory workers. Railroads and elevated lines provided rapid links to other parts of the borough and to Manhattan. However, by the 1950's, both the manufacturing and residential components of the community entered a long decline. Local Penn Central Railroad (Metro-North) service was discontinued in the early 1970's, and rail service on the Third Avenue elevated line terminated in 1973. By the 1980's, many of the manufacturing and residential buildings in the area had been abandoned or demolished. A significant population decline resulted, leaving the area desolate and blighted.

Existing Land Use

The area proposed for rezoning includes a mix of land uses, predominantly parking lots, vacant land and vacant commercial or residential buildings. Commercial developments tend to be smaller businesses located along Third Avenue which serves as a commercial corridor in the borough. Residential uses include single- and two-family frame buildings, brick rowhouses and larger apartment buildings. Residential uses are scattered throughout the study area but are found primarily north of East 165th Street along Washington Avenue. Community facilities, spread throughout the rezoning area, are mainly small storefront houses of worship. There is also a long history of mixed-use buildings in Morrisania (residential units above a first floor commercial or community facility use).



Vacant two-story warehouse located at Third Avenue and East 168th Street



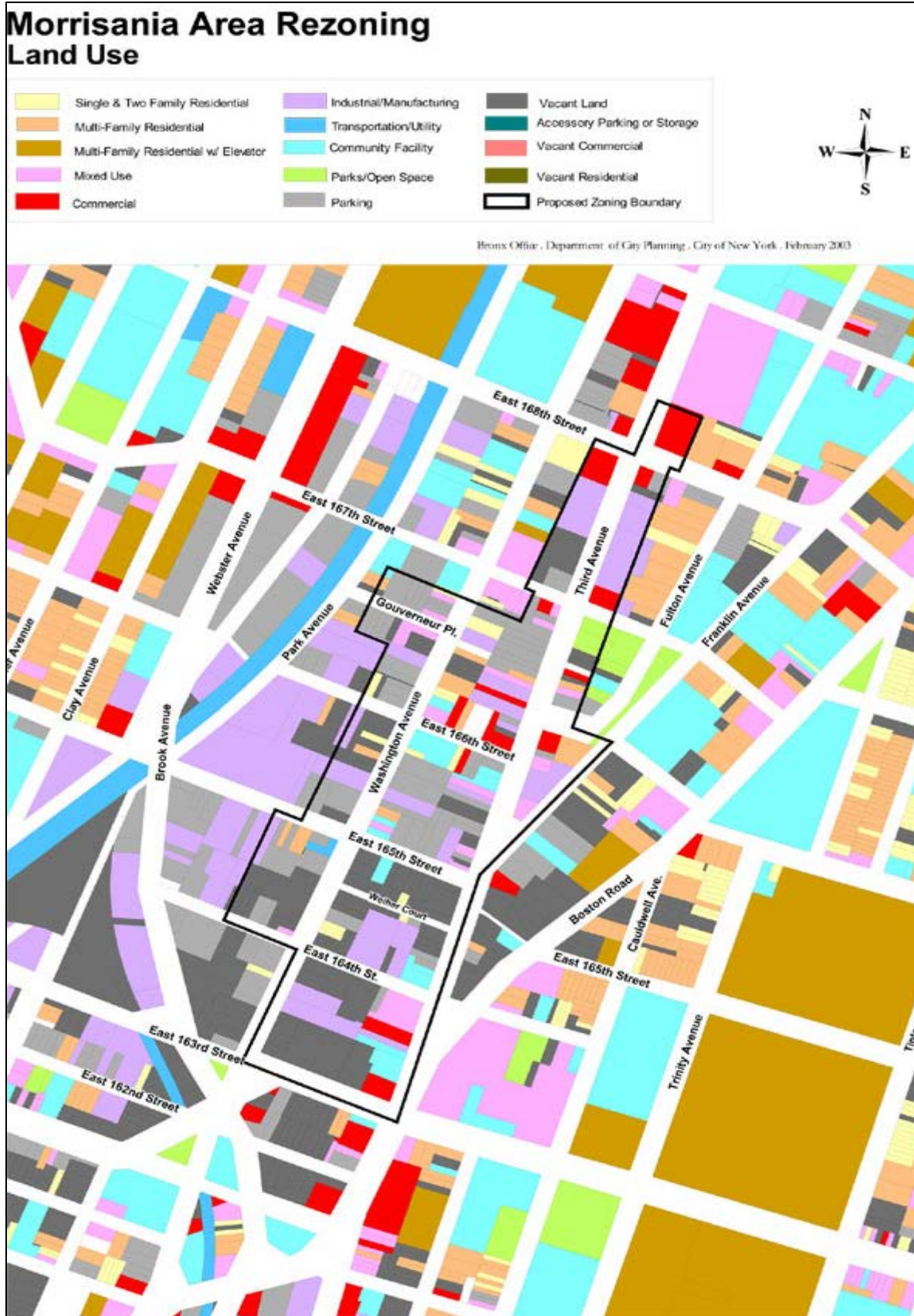
Vacant five-story multi-family building at East 166th Street between Third and Washington Avenues

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Aerial View



Morrisania Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!** Land Use



Morrisania Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!** Background and Context

Recent Development Activities

Considerable public and private investment has recently occurred in and near the rezoning area. The New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has issued several Requests for Proposals to promote development of city-owned sites. As a result of one RFP, a 15,000-square-foot gas station and mini-mart has been constructed at the corner of Washington Avenue and East 163rd Street. This site is also expected to be developed with an additional 5,000 square feet of local retail. With EDC assistance, a bus company located on the east side of Washington Avenue between East 165th and East 166th Streets recently expanded its parking facility by 12,200 square feet. In response to another EDC Request for Proposals, a door manufacturer is expected to locate in the rezoning area. In addition, an existing metal works company will be expanding its facility by 50,000 square feet.



Gas station and Mini-Market located at East 163rd Street and Washington Avenue

A residential building of 105,000 square feet, with 105 units and 18,400 square feet of ground floor retail is currently under construction at Washington Avenue and East 164th Street. This project received a variance from the Board of Standards and Appeals to permit a residential use in an M1-1 district. Once the proposed rezoning actions are adopted, this type of development will be permitted as-of-right.



Taino Plaza: An affordable housing redevelopment project sponsored by SOBRO (Curtis + Ginsberg Architects LLP)

Just outside the rezoning area, at Brook and Washington Avenues and East 164th Street, a supermarket and retail development is proposed. An application to facilitate this development by rezoning a block from M1-1 to C4-4 (ULURP # C 030213ZMX) was certified by the Department of City Planning on February 18, 2003.

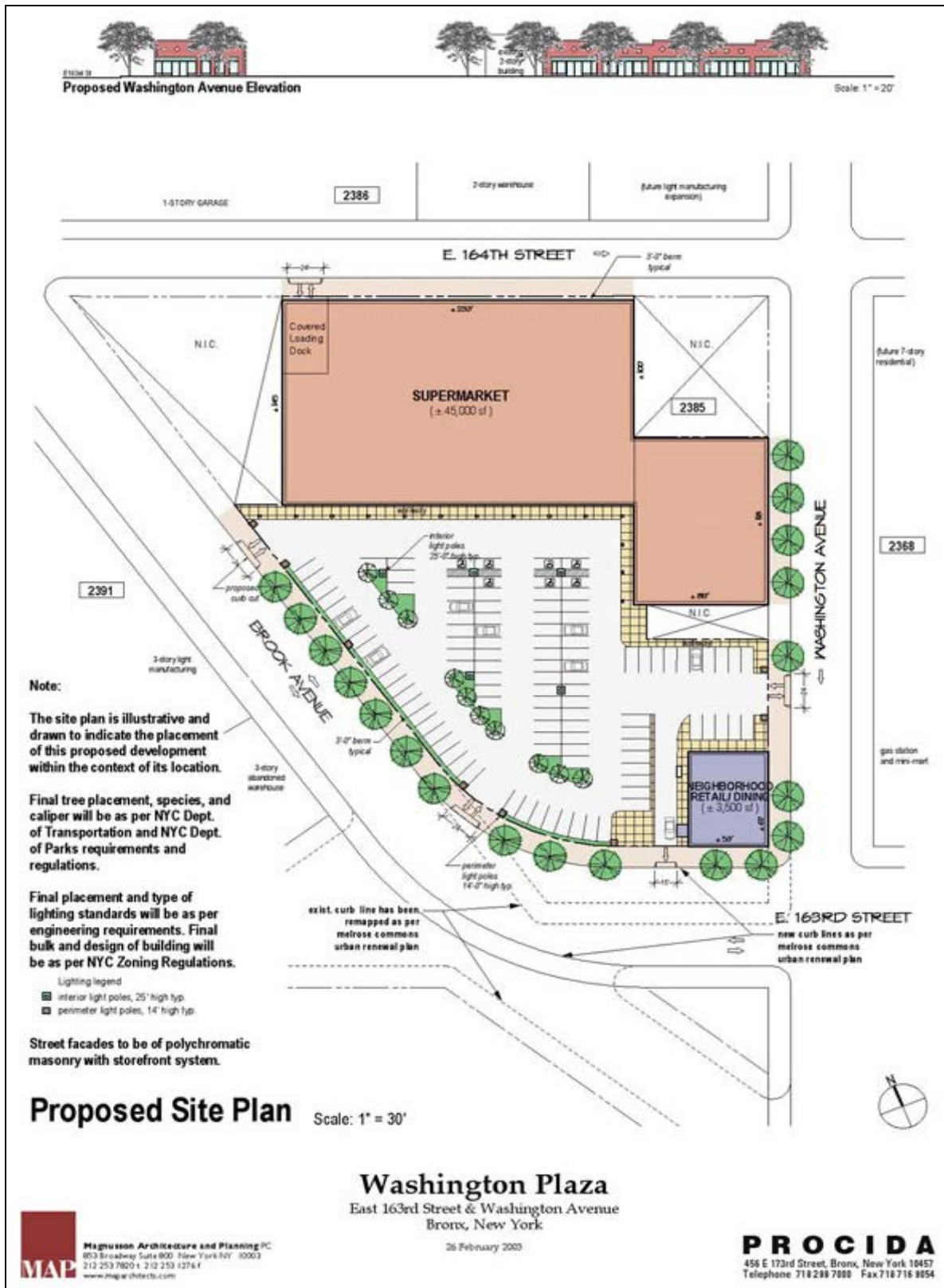
Washington Plaza



(Magnusson Architecture and Planning, PC)

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Washington Plaza Proposed Site Plan



Morrisania Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!** Background and Context

Morrisania, Third Avenue & Civic Center

The Morrisania rezoning is an important component in revitalizing Third Avenue as a residential and commercial corridor. Morrisania is located immediately north of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area. The Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan calls for the development of 1,500 low- and moderate-income housing units, commercial/office and community facility space, and new parks and open space. Approximately 376 housing units have been built or are in the construction process. The HUB, the commercial downtown of the Bronx, is just south of Melrose Commons along Third Avenue. City Planning is working with EDC to realize commercial and residential development on several City-owned parcels in the HUB, along with streetscape and plaza improvements.

Morrisania is also just west of the Borough's civic center along East 161st Street. This area is experiencing major investments by the Federal, State, and City governments. A major project, the Bronx Criminal Court is currently under construction. The 1.2 million square foot Court Complex is located on a three-block site on East 161st Street near the Grand Concourse. The project consists of 62 courtrooms for the Supreme and Criminal Court and office space for the Department of Corrections, the Department of Probation, the Bronx District Attorney's Office, New York City Police Department, and contract agencies. Parking for four hundred cars is provided. Other major public investments planned or underway include streetscape and sidewalk improvements related to the new Court Complex along E. 161st Street (between the Grand Concourse and Park Avenue) and along the Grand Concourse to 164th Street. Related to the planned streetscape improvements, is a proposal to improve Lou Gehrig Plaza (located in front of the land marked Bronx County Courthouse), which is currently used for Bronx Criminal Court Parking which will be turned into a public plaza/meeting place with extensive greenery.

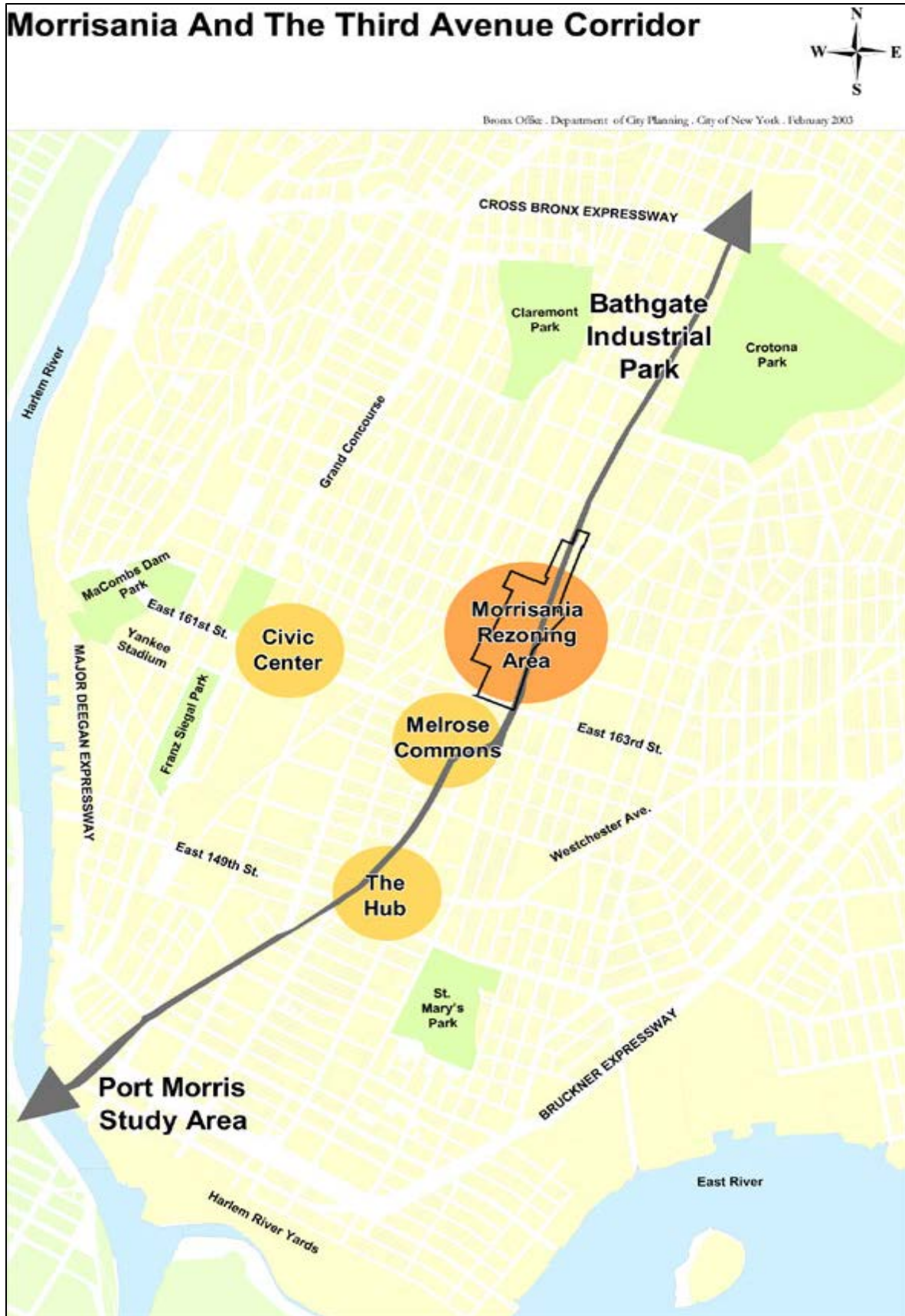
A new public high school focusing on law and justice (located at East 163rd Street between Grant and Sherman avenues) is currently under construction and is due to open in September 2003. The Bronx Museum, located on the Grand Concourse between East 165th and East 166th Streets, is expanding its facility to allow for additional gallery space, public programming, administrative space and outdoor terrace and a sculpture garden. The project is expected to service the anticipated 50,000 visitors per year and to be completed by 2004. Finally, a new bridge is to be constructed on East 153rd Street between the Grand Concourse and Morris Avenue. The bridge will have four lanes for traffic, a bike lane and pedestrian walkway and will be constructed to replace a two-lane bridge demolished in 1992. It is expected to be completed by 2007.

Context Map



Morrisania Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!**

Morrisania and the Third Avenue Corridor



Morrisania Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!** Existing and Proposed Zoning

Zoning Map Amendments (ULURP # 030333 ZMX)

Most of the Morrisania rezoning area is currently zoned M1-1, except for one blockfront on Third Avenue between East 163rd and East 164th streets which is zoned R6/C2-4. The proposal would rezone the entire area to a mixed use MX(M1-1/R7-2) district.



Zoning Text Amendment (ULURP # N 030334 ZRX)

A zoning text amendment to Section 123-90 (Special Mixed Use Districts) of the Zoning Resolution is proposed in order to establish a Special Mixed Use Zoning District (MX-6) within the rezoning area. The Special Mixed-Use District permits, in general, uses allowed in residential and manufacturing districts.

The existing M1-1 zoning district permits light manufacturing uses and a range of commercial and community facility uses. General services and manufacturing uses such as warehousing, printing plants and wholesale establishments are permitted. Although the permitted maximum *floor area ratio (FAR)* for commercial uses is 1.0, supermarkets and certain other large retail uses are limited to 10,000 square feet. Residential uses are not permitted in M1-1 districts.



Auto parts distributor and auto-repair shop; typical commercial businesses located within the rezoning area at East 169th Street and Third Avenue.



Occupied two-family homes found along Washington Avenue between East 166th and East 167th streets.

The proposed MX(M1-1/R7-2) mixed-use district would permit manufacturing, commercial, residential and community facility uses. It allows for new residential development, while allowing existing manufacturing and commercial uses to remain and grow. It will also bring existing residential uses into conformance with zoning. No existing business would be displaced or become a non-conforming use as a result of the rezoning.

In the proposed MX(M1-1/R7-2) mixed-use district, residential uses would generally be governed by R7-2 residence district regulations which allows a maximum residential FAR of 3.44. A typical residential development would be a six-story building with ground floor commercial. Manufacturing uses would also be permitted on the ground floor.

Manufacturing and commercial uses would generally be subject to M1-1 manufacturing district regulations which allows a maximum FAR of 1.0. This generally results in a one-story manufacturing or commercial building. Community facility uses would be governed by a combination of residential and manufacturing bulk regulations. The maximum FAR for community facilities would be determined by the underlying R7-2 residential zoning district to a maximum permitted FAR of 6.5. Community facilities would be subject to the underlying M1-1 zoning district bulk and parking regulations.




Six-story multi-family building with storefront house of worship.



Five-story multi-family building at Gouverneur Place and Washington Avenue.

Related Notes

-  Items accompanied by this symbol require the [free Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).
- Brief explanations of terms in *green italics* can be viewed by [visiting glossary page](#). Words and phrases followed by an asterisk (*) are defined terms in the Zoning Resolution, primarily in Section 12-10. Consult the Zoning Resolution for the official and legally binding definitions of these words and phrases.