

Boerum Hill Bulletin

THE BOERUM HILL ASSOCIATION IS A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OF RESIDENTS OF BOERUM HILL. WE SEEK TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE UNIQUE QUALITIES OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD THROUGH ADVOCACY, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY BUILDING. VISIT US ON THE WEB AT WWW.BOERUMHILLASSOCIATION.ORG

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD:

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 Daughtry Carstarphen
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 (*non-board member)

Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month from September through June at 7:00pm in the Mugavero Center.

REZONING PLAN IS READY

At our winter General Meeting the Boerum Hill Association and the City Planning office presented a plan that will go a long way to preserve the low-rise brownstone character of our neighborhood. Turn to page 2 to see the existing zoning map and the proposed zoning map.

The plan strives for the most contextual zoning possible for Boerum Hill based on the current heights and bulks of the existing buildings on each block. Over 65% of the area, would receive the R6B classification which is the best way to preserve the 4-story brownstone look of Boerum Hill. Several more blocks would receive R6A which allows for one additional floor over the R6B height limit. (See the chart below for information about these categories).

The staff from the Brooklyn City Planning office walked with several board members to examine the area between Third and Fourth Avenues which has a more mixed character due to its 1990 R7B designation. As a result City Planning has agreed to recommend R6B protection to both sides of St. Mark's Place, an unbroken block of 4-story brownstones, as well as parts of Pacific Street and Dean Street near Fourth Avenue.

We have agreed to recommend R7A for Third Avenue to encourage future development and increase street activity. This designation allows another small bulk and height increase that will encourage modest growth in an effort to integrate more street life that might include ground floor stores.

The certification process continues with a presentation to CB 2 in either March or April, then the proposal goes to the Borough President's office. *(continued on page 8)*

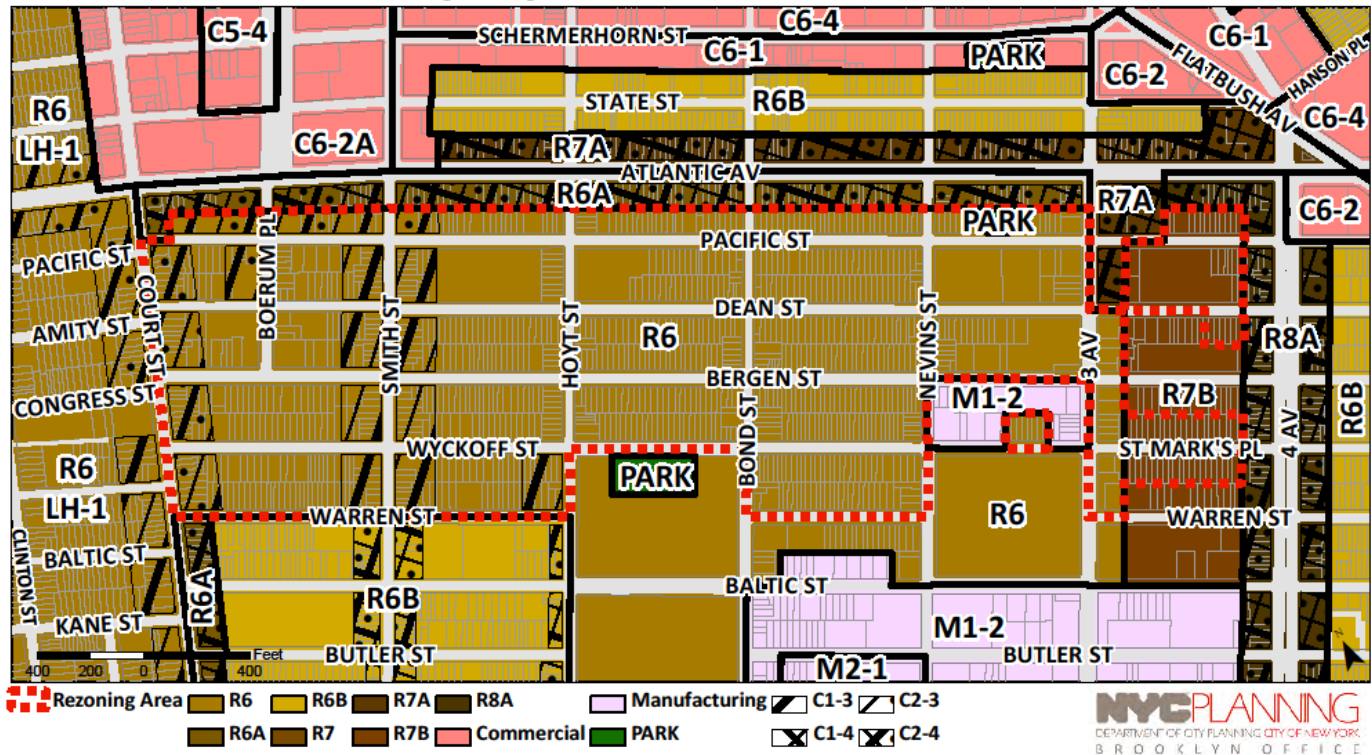
Boerum Hill would be more specifically rezoned as R6A, R6B, R7A or R7B, depending on the block. These categories define height and bulk restrictions as follows:

Category	R6A	R6B	R7A	R7B
Max FAR*	3.0	2.0	4.0	3.0
Min/Max				
Base Height	40'/60'	30'/40'	40'/65'	40'/60'
Max Height				
After setback	70'	50'	80'	75'

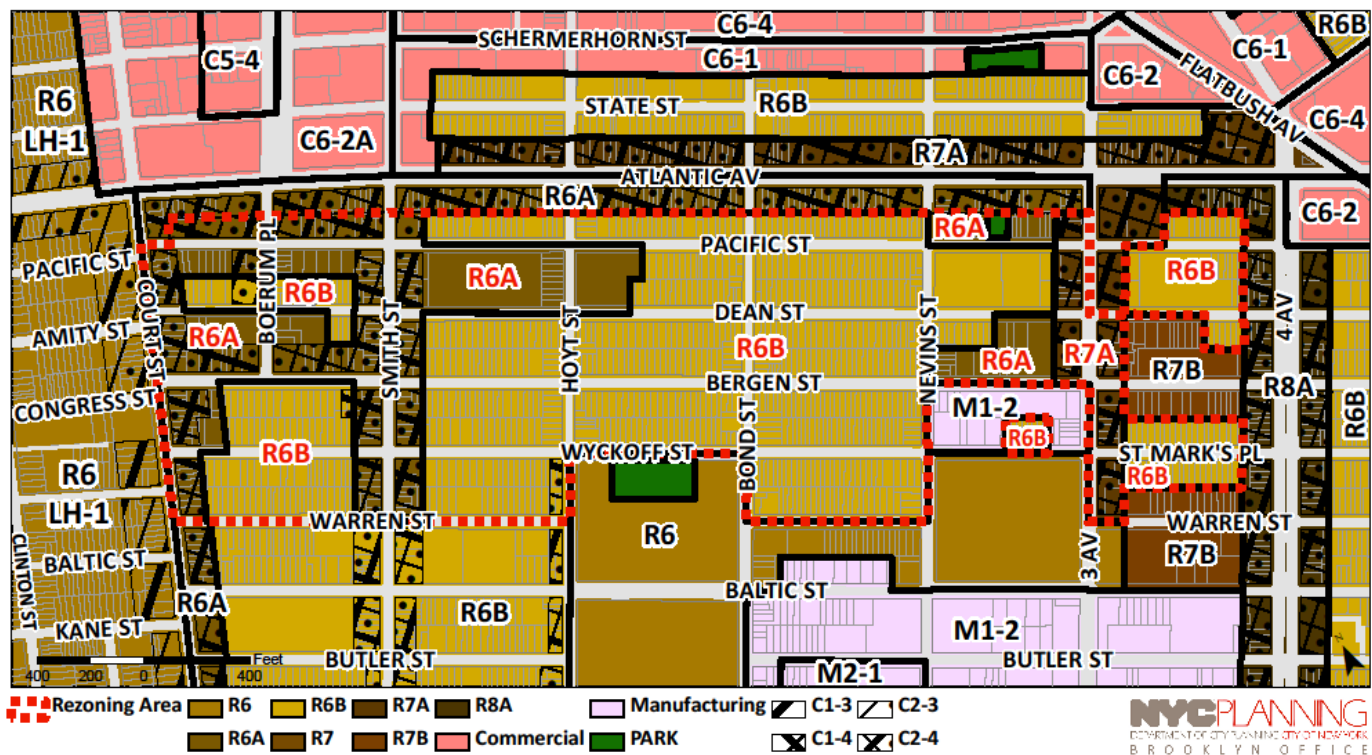
*FAR means floor area ratio. The R6A and R7B categories are identical except for the higher setback allowed under R7B.

ZONING

BOERUM HILL ZONING STUDY: Existing Zoning



BOERUM HILL ZONING STUDY: DRAFT Zoning Proposal, December 2010



OUR SUPPORTERS

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Smith Hanten Properties
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Donna Da Vine
Bar Tabac

Ticket Outlets

Exit 9, 127 Smith Street
Sterling Place, 363 Atlantic Avenue
Annie's Blue Ribbon General Store, 365 State Street
Gumbo. 493 Atlantic Avenue

Floral Arrangements

GRDN
Opalia
QuartreCoeur

Sponsor Brunch

Mile End

SAVE THE DATE!

The Annual Hoyt Street Association Plant Sale will take place on
April 30th and May 1st at the 110 Hoyt St. garage, just west of Hoyt Street

WE NEED YOU TO JOIN THE BHA FOR 2011

USE THE FORM ON THE
OPPOSITE PAGE TO
JOIN OR RENEW
YOUR MEMBERSHIP

TRAFFIC TASK FORCE

The BHA asked Councilman Levin's office to take a look at a multitude of traffic and transportation issues in our neighborhood. As a result the first Task Force meeting was held on February 2nd chaired by Hope Reichbach from the Councilman's office. The meeting was open to other residents of the Councilman's district.

The Boerum Hill issues discussed included:

- Speeding on Third, Fourth and Atlantic Avenues and the need for calming measures as well as enforcement
- Red light cameras, pedestrian countdown lights and LPIs (leading pedestrian intervals, a 4 way red light delay of traffic that allows pedestrians time to cross).
- Experimenting with a 20mph speed limit on the residential streets.
- Speed cameras, a new tool which would need Albany's approval.
- Speed humps or raised intersections to reduce speed.
- Illegal truck traffic on residential streets.

Other issues discussed included:

- Returning to two way tolls on the Verrazano Bridge.
- Year round ferry service from Atlantic Avenue (now only summer weekends).
- Trolley service in Red Hook.
- Bike accidents at the Tillary Street approach to the Brooklyn Bridge.
- Residential Parking Permits.
- City parking permit abuses.
- Bike lane issues, rules and enforcement.
- Bike sharing programs.
- Creating commercial loading zones to reduce double parking.



The Boerum Hill Traffic Task Force adopted several resolutions at the conclusion of the meeting:

- Support red light cameras, countdown lights, and LPIs on Atlantic Avenue.
- Support the elimination of the 4pm - 7pm No Standing Zone on the south side of Atlantic Avenue.
- Support the implementation on speed cameras on Atlantic Ave.
- Support the return of the two way toll on the Verrazano Bridge.
- Support a year-round ferry from Atlantic Avenue to 34th Street, with a stop in Downtown Manhattan.
- Conditionally support the implementation of a 20 MPH speed zone in Boerum Hill.
- Support the implementation of a Bike Sharing program in Brooklyn.
- Support the expansion of the bike/pedestrian path on the Brooklyn Bridge to Atlantic Avenue.

Of all the items mentioned above the press focused on the 20mph speed limit. While this is modeled on a successful program in London, the local subtext was a very New York, "Yeah, right...do you think anyone would do that?" The Brooklyn Paper, the Daily News, NY1 and WCBS TV all ran stories. The BHA would like to try this tactic to

reduce the "cut-through" speeders who are avoiding Atlantic Avenue or other major routes. The BHA would also like to see actions that eliminate truck traffic on Hoyt Street and Nevins Street for trucks and buses that should be on Third Avenue.

The next meeting will be at the Mugavero Center at Hoyt and Pacific Streets, beginning at 6:30pm. A DOT representative will be there to discuss all topics. Neighbors are encouraged to attend and to speak up.

B E C O M E A M E M B E R O F T H E B O E R U M H I L L A S S O C I A T I O N

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Your contact info will never be shared or sold, and you may opt out of any communications at any time.

Yearly Membership (open to all residents of Boerum Hill)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 – Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 – Individual Senior/Student/Low-income |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 – Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 – Family* Senior/Student/Low-income |

Business Supporters (listed on BHA website, newsletters, and other publications)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 – Business Donor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 – Business Sponsor |
|---|---|

Contributions (Not a resident or business owner? Or checked a box above but still want to do more? Contributions of any size are always welcome and help support the important work of the BHA)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> + \$100 “Good Neighbor | <input type="checkbox"/> + \$250 “Neighborhood Hero!” | <input type="checkbox"/> + \$_____ Other |
|---|---|--|

The BHA membership year is from January 1 to December 31. Members in good standing as of June 1 may vote in the June board election. All others, including business supporters, may not vote but are welcome at all BHA events and activities.

* Family memberships (2+ adults in the same household), are entitled to two votes. Individual members receive one vote.

Contribute Your Talent and Energy

Join your neighbors who volunteer to work on BHA activities and community priorities. Identify your areas of interest.

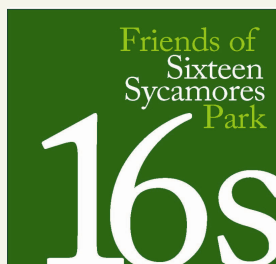
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic Yards
<input type="checkbox"/> Block Captain (help distribute BHA notices on your block)
<input type="checkbox"/> Boerum Hill History
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Events (meetings, holiday party, house tour)
<input type="checkbox"/> Greening & Neighborhood Beautification
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use (development, zoning, building noise)
<input type="checkbox"/> Land marking
<input type="checkbox"/> Membership (recruitment, member services)
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations and Communication (neighborhood calendar, block associations, press releases, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Parks and Playgrounds (improving Douglass/Greene Park)
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Life (public safety, sanitation, recycling, noise)
<input type="checkbox"/> Technology (website, email, online tools)
<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic and Transportation (transit, parking, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring (homework help to neighborhood youth)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
|--|--|

Make your check payable to the **Boerum Hill Association**.

Mail this form and the check to the:

Boerum Hill Association, P.O. Box 020583, Brooklyn, NY 11202

16 SYCAMORES WORK BEGINS



We're thrilled that a fence has gone up to signal the start of renovation on this playground. Thanks to Borough President Mary Markowitz, former Councilman David Yassky and current Councilman Steve Levin as well as the Parks

Department for the funds and the passionate support of our request to put this small park back on the path to a better life.

The scope of work for this year is extensive. The roof and exterior walls will be cleaned, repaired and painted. Door and windows will be replaced. The common room which had been used for storage will have a new floor, refurbished tiles and a fresh coat of paint. The bathrooms will be brand new with baby changing stations provided. And the mechanical room will get a new gas furnace if the gas lines are still in operation.

More work will come in 2012 to improve the playground equipment and sprinklers.

To bring visibility to this wonderful playground, the BHA will sponsor several movie nights this year so make sure to make June 25th on your calendar for the first movie of this season. Over 75 parents and children attended our last movie! Free refreshments are provided and a great time is had by all.

Again, thanks to board member Daughy Carstarphen for her continued focus on movie night and the park work now going on.



BROOKLYN BEET CSA BY BETTY FEIBUSCH

It's the time of year that the postman, having delivered the last of the holiday cards, is bending under the weight of seed catalogues and other harbingers of spring. This year's promise of spring for me came in the way of this year's application to rejoin the **Brooklyn Beet Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** group.

CSA's allow city residents to purchase a "share" of vegetables from a regional farmer. Generally we pay upfront, which allows our farmer to plan for the season, buy equipment and seeds. As a member of Brooklyn Beet, I can purchase a vegetables, fruit, eggs, pasta and other items, and pick them up at our distribution site at the YWCA (Atlantic and Third Avenue) on Tuesday's from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Shares usually include 7 - 8 types of vegetables and herbs, with a wide seasonal variety from mid-June through late October.

Our vegetable farmer, Ana, farms the "black dirt" of Goshen, NY, using sustainable farming practices. Our fruit

farmer, Amy Hepworth, has orchards in the Hudson Valley near New Paltz, bringing us a varied sweet harvest of berries, stone fruit, apples and pears.

Our CSA group is run by members; we each take turns at the distribution site, writing the newsletter, or coordinating events such as our popular farm trip, cooking demonstrations and harvest dinner.

Last year's full weekly vegetable share cost \$470, with every other week at \$235 and low cost at \$350 and \$175 respectively.

Our CSA feels strongly about encouraging all of our neighbors to participate; we accept food stamps and also have a sliding scale for low-income participants. We are committed to supporting local farms, promoting sustainable and organic growers, advancing food justice and growing a sense of community around the food we eat. To find out more, write to brooklynbeetcsa@gmail.com.

The 84th Police Precinct Community Council Meetings take place on the third Tuesday of every month from September through June. The next meeting will be **March 15th, 7:00pm at Ballet Theater, 200 Schermerhorn Street**. Hear Precinct crime statistics and speak directly with the 84th Precinct Captain Mark DiPaolo. Refreshments are served!

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Neighbors,

The Board is thrilled with the progress of the rezoning proposal and we thank the lively crowd that came to the Belarusian Church on February 10th. The questions and comments were a welcome part of the process. We will keep moving this proposal along this year.

A big "thank you" to Councilman Levin and Hope Reichbach for working with

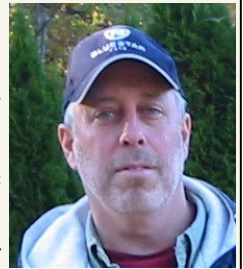
us on traffic and transportation. There is much to do in the months ahead and we're off to a good start.

And we can't wait to open the doors of the comfort station at 16 Sycamores Playground. The sound of a flushing toilet will be almost as good as an opera at BAM!

We have a great board and the actions I've mentioned come from a small

group of motivated residents. We can always use a few more concerned and energetic board members. Please join our efforts as we continue to make this a great place to live.

In Community, Howard Kolins



THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE BY ERIK FORTMEYER

Very few people know today that there was once a Grand Opera House in Brooklyn just off the northern edge of Boerum Hill which is now the site of the current 600-car parking garage across from Macy's.

It was built with high plans for bringing quality theater to Brooklyn in 1881 and evolved over time into "The People's Opera House" before it was closed down forever in 1919.

Around 1848, Elm Place, east of Hoyt Street, was laid out as Brooklyn began to expand east of Borough Hall. Elm trees had been planted in the area giving the new street its name.

A brownstone church was completed in 1864 for the Elm Place Congregational Church. However it burned in 1880 so the site was sold in early 1881 to a local politician and insurance agent along with two popular stage variety actors. They spent \$105,000 to construct the new 2,200 person capacity brick theater standing 65 feet wide, 140 feet deep, and 80 feet high. A large rose window with stained glass of Shakespearean characters and 14 decorated columns highlighted the building's front portico while the entrance was composed of a ticket box

on the left and an attractive ladies parlor and toilet room on the right. It was a modern building: An engine supplied the electric lights and a steam boiler in the basement provided the heat. Fire safety was a high priority inside including wall flues to vent off excess heat from the stage floodlights. The stage itself was 71 feet wide and 42 feet deep with appliances for moving scenery and a vertical lift for the curtain which was decorated with a painting of the Yellowstone Park mountains. Tickets were very reasonably priced for the time ranging from 15 to 50 cents.

The theater changed hands shortly after opening, but was run successfully for many years providing light opera, ballet, and popular theater plays. It was well liked due to good ventilation and cool interior temperatures.

The declining fate of the Grand Opera House began in 1890 when A.I. Namm started building his department store behind on the corner of Hoyt and Fulton. Namm's grew and relentlessly expanded until finally purchasing the theater in 1919. It was demolished



The Grand Opera House about 1907. *Bertha, The Sewing Machine Girl* was a popular melodrama later made into a 1926 movie. From the *Brooklyn Eagle* postcard series, 1905-07

and the site incorporated into a new Namm's six-story extension. Namm's and Loeser's merged in 1952 and left for the suburbs in 1957 selling the old building to A&S, now Macy's, which demolished the southern portion the next year to build the current 600-car parking garage.



Boerum Hill

Association
P.O. Box 020583
Brooklyn, NY 11202-0583
www.boerumhillassociation.org

Growing a better Boerum Hill

Z O N I N G

(continued from page 1)

From the Borough President's office, its on to the Planning Commission for review. Next the City Council holds public meetings at the Sub-Committee level. They make a recommendation to the Land Use Committee which forwards it to the City Council for the final vote. The entire process will be completed as early as July or as late as October depending on the reactions and comments.

Overall the BHA board believes that the proposal is balanced and overwhelming positive so we think it can move quickly through the approval process.

At our General Meeting, the response from our neighbors was positive and well regarded.

If you were not able to attend the General Meeting, take a look at the maps on page 2 and look for the information about public hearings which will be on our website and also on the Boerum Hill Yahoo group.

Thanks to Board Vice President Dwight Smith for getting the ball rolling last year with his presentation to CB 2 and for his guidance during the entire process to date.

C H E C K I T O U T

"Sorry for Blocking Your Car"

Placards are available on the **BHA website**. Although double parking for street cleaning is clearly illegal, the Police do look the other way if we behave. The placard is intended for use during alternate side parking periods to balance the competing problems of street sanitation and the shortage of available parking places. You just put your phone number in the windshield and make sure to move your car when called. Go to **www.boerumhillbassociation.org** and print out the form.

JOIN THE BHA

Help us be advocates for Boerum Hill by becoming a member. Join us on the web at www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org