



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING  
CITY OF NEW YORK

BROOKLYN OFFICE

Amanda M Burden, FAICP, *Director*  
Department of City Planning

December 5, 2012

The Honorable Councilmember Letitia James  
New York City Council, District 35  
250 Broadway  
Suite 1792  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Councilmember James,

This letter is in follow up to your recent inquiries about potential modifications to the Downtown Brooklyn Parking Text Amendment.

As you know, the Downtown Brooklyn Parking Text Amendment seeks to better reflect the low car ownership and demand for parking by reducing the required parking from 40% of housing units to 20% of housing units for new and existing residential buildings.

You have inquired regarding the possibility of redeploying existing parking garage space for beneficial uses. We share your goal of seeing these spaces brought into productive use. However, while new buildings can design their ground floors with the new lower requirements in mind, many of the existing buildings face a challenge in redeploying their built parking spaces, which are not counted as floor area, to other uses such as residential, commercial, retail or community facility, which are counted as floor area. We are committed to working with any developer that would be interested in creatively deploying their unneeded garage space, and would work with them and your office to determine the need for any zoning amendments required achieve a more activated and vital street experience in Downtown Brooklyn.

You have also inquired about the potential for expanding the areas of applicability of the Inclusionary Housing Program within Downtown Brooklyn. Today, the inclusionary program is applicable in 10FAR zoning districts, but is not mapped in small lower density zones of C61, C61A, C62, R71/C24, and R8A/C24, covering portions of a dozen blocks around Tillary street, Myrtle Avenue, Schermerhorn Street, the intersection of Flatbush and Atlantic, and Metrotech (see attached zoning map). For the most part, these areas were mapped with lower density residential FAR in order to provide a transition to the adjacent brownstone residential neighborhoods. In some of these districts, the commercial zoning also gives a strong preference to commercial development (for instance, the C61 districts provide 6 FAR for

Purnima Kapur, *Director*  
Winston R. Von Engel, AICP, *Deputy Director*  
16 Court Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11241-0103 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
TEL. (718) 780-8280  
FAX (718) 596-2609  
[nyc.gov/planning](http://nyc.gov/planning)

commercial use but only 3.44 FAR for residential). In limited cases where zoning actions may be needed to accommodate a project including affordable housing, or where actions would be needed to facilitate inclusion of a school or other such uses may be appropriate, we would work with the developer and your office on a project basis should any new applications for development in these areas be brought to City Planning for review.

As always I thank you for your partnership in planning for Downtown Brooklyn's future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Purnima Kapur', with a stylized, cursive script.

Purnima Kapur  
Brooklyn Director  
Department of City Planning

CC: Councilmember Stephen Levin  
Gail Benjamin

