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GREEN ZONING
INITIATIVE NYC



NYCPLANNING
text amendment

Zone Green

In coordination with PlaNYC and other sustainable initiatives across New York, the Department of City Planning proposed the following amendments be made to the NYC Zoning Resolution. These amendments were proposed to facilitate the design of more sustainable buildings and remove zoning impediments.

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Energy-efficient building walls:

Current zoning calculations include the thickness of exterior walls in area calculations. This penalizes more energy efficient buildings because they require thicker walls.

The Proposal

Allow **existing buildings** to add external insulation within the property line, while exempting it from floor area calculations and yard and open space regulations.

For **new buildings** whose walls are substantially more efficient than required by New York City Energy Conservation Code (NYCECC), up to eight inches of additional wall thickness (beyond eight inches) could be exempted from *floor area*.



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Sun Control Devices:

These horizontal or vertical projections can help reduce air-conditioning needs and lighting bills by providing glare-free natural light, while adding interest to the building façade. Zoning today often does not allow sun control devices to project over required open areas.

The Proposal

Above the ground floor, allow ***sun control devices and awnings*** to project 2'-6" over required open areas.



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Solar Energy:

Today, zoning does not allow solar installations above the maximum permitted building height.

The Proposal

Allow **solar panels** on flat roofs anywhere below the parapet. On sloping roofs, panels would be allowed to be flat-mounted (less than 18" high)



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Zoning districts with contextual height limits restrict the space available for rooftop stormwater systems, recreation space and renewable energy systems, as well as, boilers and cogeneration systems, which can be safer and more efficient when located on roofs.

The Proposal

Allow **green roofs**, recreational **decks**, other **stormwater detention systems** and **skylights** anywhere below the parapet, regardless of building height. Greater volume, similar to what is already allowed in many Special Districts, would be allowed above the maximum building height to accommodate **bulkheads**.



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Rooftop greenhouses can enable year-round local food production and provide valuable educational opportunities. Unfortunately, limitations on floor area or building height have constrained opportunities for these facilities.

The Proposal

Allow a **greenhouse** to be exempt from floor area and height limits, provided that it is located on top of a building that does not contain residences or sleeping accommodations. These greenhouses must not exceed 25 feet in height, must set back six feet from the roof edge, and must include practical measures to limit water consumption.



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Wind Energy:

Wind energy generation makes the most sense where winds are consistent – on taller buildings and near the waterfront. Today, small wind turbines are allowed if they do not exceed a building height limit.

The Proposal

On buildings taller than 100 feet, a *wind turbine* assembly may rise up to 55' above the rooftop, provided it is set back at least 10 feet from any property line. On waterfront blocks all buildings could install rooftop turbines up to half the height of the building or 55 feet, whichever is less. Free-standing turbines would be allowed in commercial and manufacturing areas on waterfront blocks.



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