

3.11 WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

New York City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) was approved by the New York City Council in October 1999, and by the New York State Department of State and the United States Secretary of Commerce in the summer of 2002. This new LWRP replaces the 56 City and State policies, approved in 1982, with ten policies aimed at simplifying and clarifying the consistency review process. The ten policies of the new LWRP are designed to more effectively realize the City's waterfront planning goals, addressing the following issues and policy goals: (1) residential and commercial redevelopment; (2) water-dependent and industrial uses; (3) commercial and recreational boating; (4) coastal ecological systems; (5) water quality; (6) flooding and erosion; (7) solid waste and hazardous substances; (8) public access; (9) scenic resources; and (10) historical and cultural resources. The new policies simplify and clarify the consistency review process without eliminating any policy element required by state and federal law.

Proposed actions subject to CEQR that are situated within the designated boundaries of the New York City Coastal Zone must be assessed for their consistency with the city's LWRP. The proposed East 125th Street Development project site does not fall within New York City's designated Coastal Zone. As such, the proposed action is not subject to review for consistency with the City's LWRP (see Figure 3.11-1, Coastal Zone Boundary).

However, as shown in Figure 3.11-1, there are several blocks of the waterside portion of the ¼-mile study area that are located within New York City's coastal zone boundary as defined by the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP). The following portions of the study area fall within the coastal zone boundary:

- North of the project site, from East 131st Street to East 128th Street between the Harlem River Drive and Park Avenue,
- East of the project site, from the Harlem River Drive to East 126th Street between First Avenue and Second Avenue. This area includes the adjacent MTA Bus Depot block and Harlem River Park blocks; and,
- East and south of the project site, from East 126th Street to approximately East 120th Street between the Harlem River Drive and First Avenue.

As outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the portions of the study area that fall within the Coastal Zone are considered relative to the City's LWRP. The study area includes portions of the Harlem River that are designated for Fishing under the New York Harbor Water Quality Goals, as indicated on page 3K-9 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*.¹ However, the study area is not in the Significant Coastal Fish/Wildlife Habitat Designations; Wetlands; Erosion Hazard

¹ New York City Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination New York City Department of City Planning, *CEQR Technical Manual*, October 2001.

Areas; or the Significant Maritime/Industrial areas. Therefore, the study area falls within none of the major LWRP categories.

The study area overlaps with the comprehensive waterfront planning Reach 5 for Northern Manhattan, described in DCP's *NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan* (see page 200). Reach 5 recommendations include developing street-end access, compatible with industrial uses, in the area of the Harlem River waterfront.²

Page 121 of the Reach 5 section of DCP's *Plan for the Manhattan Waterfront* states the following:

“from 145th Street to 125th Street, the City is implementing the Manhattan Borough President's proposal for “Harlem Beach Park,” which would use mapped parkland and other shorefront property as an urban beach with a continuous pedestrian and bicycle path. Joining this project with the East River Esplanade at 125th Street would provide seamless shorefront access to 63rd Street, and eventually to the southern tip of Manhattan.”³

In addition, Reach 5 recommendations include reviewing the potential for restoring wetlands along the Harlem River. Page 117 of the *Plan for the Manhattan Waterfront* states the following:

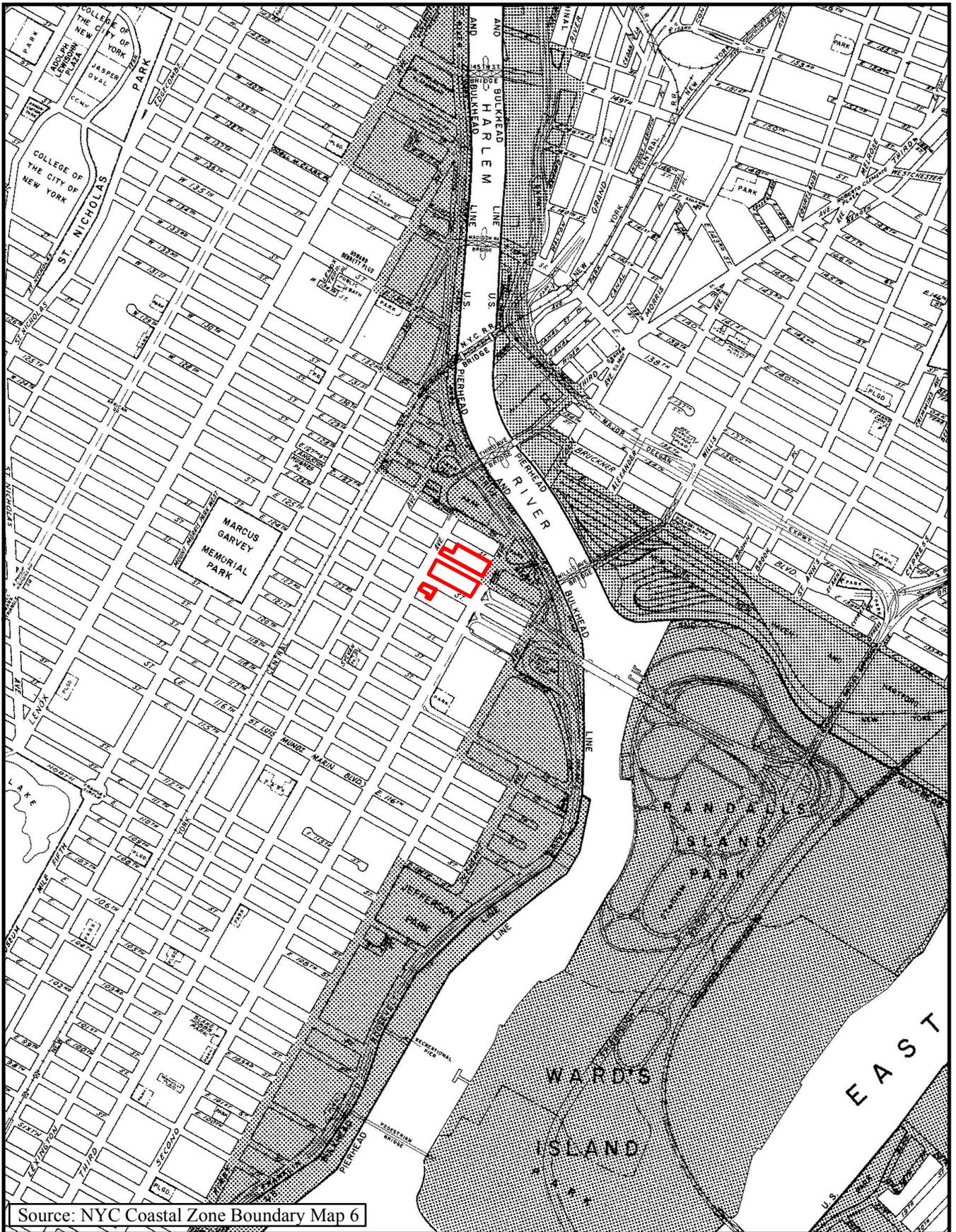
“restoring emerging wetlands along both sides of the Harlem River would help to improve the river's water quality; its length and tidal characteristics do not allow it to flush on every tidal cycle. The Department of Environmental Protection, in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Conservation, should identify areas where sedimentation and bulkhead deterioration have allowed vegetated wetlands to emerge, and coordinate a task force to evaluate their potential for restoration.”⁴

Because the project site falls outside of the Coastal Zone, no further evaluation of its consistency with LWRP policies is necessary. The East 125th Street Development project would not be incompatible with the Coastal Policies affecting the adjacent uses. The Under future conditions without the proposed action, the creation of additional parkland associated with the East River Esplanade that is expected to occur irrespective of the proposed action would advance the goals of the *Plan for the Manhattan Waterfront*. Also under the No-Build condition, the replacement of an office building with mid-rise residential construction on the Park Avenue Site, located within the Coastal Zone at the edge of the study area to the east of Park Avenue between East 131st Street and East 132nd Street, would not increase impervious surface area of that already fully developed site, and would not impact access to, or significant views of, the Harlem River, which is located to the east of that site, separated by the Harlem River Drive.

² New York City Department of City Planning, *NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan*, Summer, 1992, p.121.

³ New York City Department of City Planning, *Plan for the Manhattan Waterfront*, Winter, 1993, p.117.

⁴ Ibid.



Legend

- Project Site
- Coastal Zone Boundary



Figure 3.11-1 - Coastal Zone Boundary