

Chapter 22: Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the potential impacts of the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project on the loss of environmental resources, both in the immediate future and in the long term, and identifies whether the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project forecloses future options or involve trade-offs between short- or long-term environmental gains and losses.¹ According to the 2020 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, environmental resources include human-made and natural resources.

As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project would result in the development of an up to approximately 680,500-gsf mixed-use building containing market-rate and affordable housing, retail, office, and community facility spaces as well as parking on the Development Site (Block 98, Lot 1; the Development Site), as well as facilitate the restoration, reopening, and potential expansion of the South Street Seaport Museum (the Museum) at 89-93 South Street, 2-4 Fulton Street, and 167-175 John Street (Block 74, a portion of Lot 1; the Museum Site), resulting in 86,691 gsf of museum space with the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project. The ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project would additionally include operational changes to facilitate passenger drop off on the Pier 17 access drive as well as minor improvements to the Pier 17 access drive area and building, and may also include streetscape, open space, or other improvements (e.g., planters) under the Proposed Actions within the Project Area.

B. ASSESSMENT

Resources, both natural and built, would be expended in the construction and operation of the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project buildings on the Development Site and the Museum Site. These resources include the materials used in construction; energy in the form of fuel and electricity consumed during construction and operation of the projects; and the human effort (i.e., time and labor) required to develop, construct, and operate various components of the projects. Similar resources would be expended to develop the No Action project, though of lesser amounts.

The resources are considered irretrievably committed because their reuse for some purpose other than the construction of the buildings under the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project would be highly unlikely. The ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project constitute an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the vacant John Street Lot at the corner of John Street and South Street, the site of the potential Museum expansion, as a land resource, thereby rendering

¹ Since the publication of the DEIS, the Applicant has withdrawn the application for the previously proposed project and submitted a modified application (Application Number C 210438(A) ZSM; the “A-Application”) with proposed changes to the project—this modified version of the project is described and considered in this FEIS as the Reduced Impact Alternative, as outlined in Chapter 18, “Alternatives.”

land use for other purposes infeasible, at least in the near term. The Development Site would be irreversible and irretrievably committed to the development of new building with or without the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project, however, the transfer and distribution of development rights to the Development Site and their use to develop the proposed building would only be irreversible and irretrievably committed with the ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project.

These commitments of land resources and materials are weighed against the benefits of the Proposed Actions. The ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project would result in development that would be compatible with and enhance the surrounding area, which already includes similar uses, and the proposed building on the Development Site would be of a comparable scale to other buildings in the area while being respectful of smaller-scale buildings nearby. The continued operation and potential expansion of the Museum in the With Action condition would be of great benefit to the neighborhood, City, and region. The ~~Proposed Project~~previously proposed project would also allow for the replacement of the parking lot on the Development Site with quality ground-floor retail and community facility uses, in the opinion of the Applicant activating the pedestrian street experience and improving the site's engagement with the neighborhood, consistent with more modern quality-of-life standards. *