

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential of the proposed 53 West 53rd Street project to affect historic resources. The proposed project's potential impacts are compared with those of the Previously Approved Project and Expanded Development Scenario, either of which could be developed in the absence of the proposed project.

As described in more detail in Chapter 1, "Project Description," to develop the project, the applicant is seeking a special permit pursuant to Zoning Resolution (ZR) Sections 74-79 and 81-212 to allow the transfer of floor area from the zoning lot containing the University Club to the project site for use on the development site. The special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-711 and 81-277 would permit the distribution of floor area on the development site without regard to zoning district boundaries, which would allow for all available development rights from St. Thomas Church to be utilized on the development site. In addition, the proposed project would require a special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-711 for modifications of use and bulk regulations.

Because the proposed project would require special permits pursuant to ZR Sections 74-79, 74-711, and 81-212, it is subject to the review and approval of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). In order for the project sponsor to meet the requirements of the special permits, LPC must issue a report to the New York City Planning Commission (CPC) supporting the project's application. LPC must find that the proposed bulk and use modifications would relate harmoniously to St. Thomas Church and the University Club, and that the proposed transfer of air rights would not adversely affect these designated New York City Landmarks (NYCLs). In addition, the special permits require that a Continuing Maintenance Plan be established for the University Club and St. Thomas Church that will be legally enforceable by LPC under the provisions of a restrictive declaration.

Historic resources include both archaeological and architectural resources. The study area for archaeological resources would be the area disturbed for project construction, the development site itself. In a letter dated February 2, 2007, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) concluded that the development site has no archaeological significance (see **Appendix B**). Therefore, this chapter only considers architectural resources.

In general, potential impacts to architectural resources can include both direct physical impacts and indirect, contextual impacts. Direct impacts include demolition of a resource and alterations to a resource that cause it to become a different visual entity. A resource could also be damaged from vibration (i.e., from construction blasting or pile driving) and additional damage from adjacent construction that could occur from falling objects, subsidence, collapse, or damage from construction machinery. Adjacent construction is defined as any construction activity that would occur within 90 feet of an architectural resource, as defined in the New York City

Department of Buildings (DOB) *Technical Policy and Procedure Notice* (TPPN) #10/88.¹ Contextual impacts can include the isolation of a property from its surrounding environment, or the introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with a property or that alter its setting. The study area for architectural resources is, therefore, larger than the archaeological study area to account for any potential impacts that may occur where proposed construction activities could physically alter architectural resources or be close enough to them to potentially cause physical damage or visual or contextual impacts. Although the proposed project would be tall, it would be located in a densely developed area and one building away from Sixth Avenue, limiting its visibility in general and its visibility on the avenue. Therefore, the study area for architectural resources is defined as 400 feet from the development site. Within the study area, historic resources that have been analyzed include National Historic Landmarks (NHLs); properties listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR-listed), or determined eligible for such listing (S/NR-eligible); NYCLs and Historic Districts (NYCHDs); and properties determined eligible for landmark status. Additionally, a survey was conducted to identify any previously undesignated properties in the study area that were then evaluated for their potential S/NR or NYCL eligibility.

As discussed in detail in this chapter, the proposed project would not result in any adverse physical, contextual, or visual impacts on those two historic resources or other architectural resources within the study area. Compared with either the Previously Approved Project or the Expanded Development Scenario, the proposed project would result in renovations to and continuing maintenance programs for both St. Thomas Church and the University Club, and would not have any adverse physical, contextual, or visual impacts on these two historic resources or other architectural resources within the study area. Along West 54th Street, the anticipated cladding materials (glass and steel), transparency, and modern, angular design of the proposed building would provide a strong contrast to the masonry structures on the north side of the street; however, the building would be consistent with the other modern buildings on the project block, including MoMA and the Financial Times Building, which also stand in contrast to the north side of the street. As part of the Restrictive Declaration, certain design elements, including cladding materials, will be required to be as shown on the ULURP drawings.

Like the Expanded Development Scenario building, the proposed building would create a new backdrop to views of the CBS Building from Sixth Avenue. However, the anticipated reflective materials and modern style of the proposed building and the Expanded Development Scenario building would be clearly different from those of the CBS Building, and thus would allow the CBS Building to retain its individual visual identity and essential character. The scale of this architectural resource would be lessened in these views; however, in comparison to the Expanded Development Scenario building, the somewhat greater height and different massing of the proposed building, would not significantly alter the context of surrounding views to the CBS Building.

As detailed below and in Chapter 6, “Shadows,” compared with the Previously Approved Project, the proposed project would result in a significant adverse shadow impact on one historic resource with sun-sensitive features—the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church—on the June 21 analysis day (see also Chapter 20, “Mitigation”). The proposed project would not result in any

¹ TPPN #10/88 was issued by DOB on June 6, 1988, to supplement Building Code regulations with regard to historic structures. TPPN #10/88 outlines procedures for the avoidance of damage to historic structures resulting from adjacent construction, defined as construction within a lateral distance of 90 feet from the historic resource.

significant adverse shadows impacts on historic resources with sun-sensitive features compared with the Expanded Development Scenario.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

DEVELOPMENT SITE

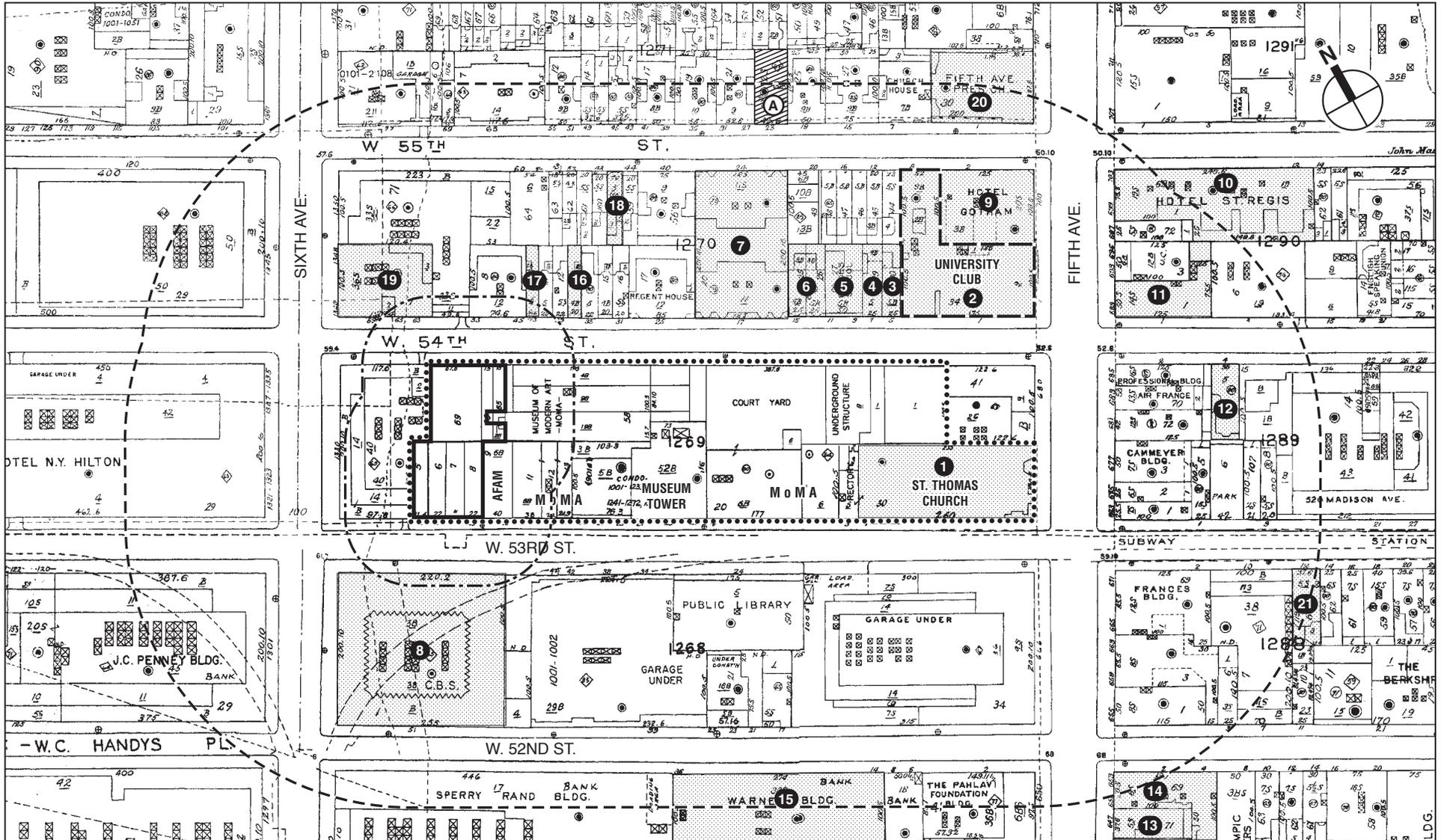
There are no known or potential architectural resources located on the development site as it is currently vacant and paved with asphalt. In recent years, the development site has seen several uses, ranging from a construction staging area, to storage of metal barricades, to queuing MoMA visitors for Friday evenings, to temporary shows of weather-resistant artworks, such as the Home Delivery Exhibit.

PROJECT SITE AND TRANSFER SITE

The project site contains **St. Thomas Church and Parish House (S/NR, NYCL)** constructed in 1906-13 to replace an earlier church at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and West 53rd Street that burned down in 1905 (see **Table 7-1** and **Figure 7-1**). The firm of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson is credited with the building's design. The initial plan for the church was devised by Ralph Adams Cram, but Bertram Goodhue apparently further developed the design, which combines features from English and French medieval architecture. St. Thomas Church is neo-Gothic in style and is clad in limestone, with an asymmetrically placed tower (see View 1 of **Figure 7-2**).

The Fifth Avenue facade of St. Thomas Church has a virtually equal division between its corner tower and the cavernous portal and rose window which express the nave. It is enriched by sculptural iconography around the portal and the rose window. The southern wall of the chantry forms the West 53rd Street facade of the church, and it is the only other exposed facade. Buttresses divide this facade into five bays, four of which are decorated with stained-glass windows; the fifth contains an entrance to the building. The wall of the south gallery, above the chantry, is also divided into five bays, and each contains a tripartite stained-glass window. Behind the south gallery wall and rising above it are nine great clerestory windows. The picturesque, octagonal parish house stair, with its lead roof, relieves the rigorous expression of plan, structure, and mass. The statement of significance for the building in the NR nomination form mentions the church's main portal, rose window, and sculptural decoration, which is rich in imagery and portraiture and which includes contemporary figures relating to social themes.

The interior of the church is praised in all publications about St. Thomas Church. While church interiors cannot be designated as NYCL Interior Landmarks, they are considered part of NR listings. The NR nomination form states that the interior of St. Thomas Church is notable for the variety and richness of its decoration. All but one of the vividly colored clerestory windows were made by Whitefriars of London. The NR nomination form also describes that the interior is notable for its richly detailed chancel and reredos.



- Development Site Boundary
- Study Area Boundary (400-Foot Perimeter)
- Project Site
- Transfer Site
- 1 Known Architectural Resources
- A Potential Architectural Resources
- Construction Protection Plan Area (90-Foot Perimeter)

0 200 FEET
SCALE



St. Thomas Church and Parish House 1



University Club 2

Architectural Resources within Project Site/Transfer Site
Figure 7-2

Table 7-1
Architectural Resources within the Project Site and Study Area

No.	Resource Name	Block/Lot	NYCL	S/NR	S/NR-Eligible	NYCL-Eligible
KNOWN RESOURCES						
Project Site and Transfer Site						
1	St. Thomas Church and Parish House	1269/30	X	X		
2	University Club	1270/34	X	X		
Study Area						
3	5 West 54th Street	1270/30				
4	7 West 54th Street	1270/29	X	X		
5	9-11 West 54th Street	1270/27	X	X		
6	13-15 West 54th Street	1270/25,26	X	X		
7	Rockefeller Apartments	1270/20	X			
8	CBS Building	1268/1	X			
9	Gotham Hotel	1270/38	X			
10	St. Regis Hotel	1290/67	X			
11	689-691 Fifth Avenue / 1 East 54th Street	1290/1	X			
12	William H. and Ada S. Moore House	1289/69	X	X		
13	George W. Vanderbilt House	1287/71	X	X		
14	Morton and Nellie Plant House / Edward and Frances Holbrook House	1287/69	X	X		
15	75 Rockefeller Plaza / 15 West 51st Street	1267/22	X			
16	35 West 54th Street	1270/14			X [†]	X*
17	41 West 54th Street	1270/111			X [†]	X*
18	46 West 55th Street	1270/60			X*	X*
19	Warwick Hotel	1270/1			X*	X*
20	Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church	1271/30			X*	X*
21	12 East 53rd Street	1288/63			X*	X*
POTENTIAL RESOURCES						
Study Area						
A	23-25 West 55th Street*	1271/23				
<p>Notes: See Figure 7-1 for reference.</p> <p>[†] Determinations made by LPC in a comment letter dated October 9, 2008 and reaffirmed in a comment letter dated January 20, 2009 (see Appendix B). These two resources also have been heard for designation by LPC, but no action has been taken to date.</p> <p>* Determinations made by LPC in a comment letter dated January 20, 2009.</p> <p>* <u>In a comment letter dated August 25, 2009, LPC determined that this building does not appear NYCL or S/NR eligible.</u></p> <p>NHL = National Historic Landmark NYCL = New York City Landmark S/NR = Listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places S/NR-eligible=Determined eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places</p>						

On the north side of West 54th Street from the MoMA portion of the project site, the **University Club (S/NR, NYCL)** is located at the corner of Fifth Avenue. The University Club was founded in 1865 for “the promotion of Literature and Art.” Charles Follen McKim, himself a club member, was hired to design the club’s second building, which was built between 1897 and 1900. The design of the building is in the spirit of Italian High Renaissance palazzi. The nine-story structure is faced with pink Milford granite and divided into three horizontal sections, each containing three stories and defined by the tall arched windows that light the clubhouse’s major rooms (see View 2 of **Figure 7-2**). The motifs on the cornice frieze and the balconies, which

have delicate cast-bronze balustrades, are derived from Italian Renaissance and Roman sources. The building also has panels of carved and inscribed marble that correspond to the 18 colleges and universities whose alumni made up the majority of the membership. The carvings were designed by Daniel Chester French, and the club seal was designed by Kenyon Cox. The building is wide enough so that the western end of its facade faces the new MoMA wing east of the garden. However, it has no relation stylistically to the MoMA buildings.

STUDY AREA

The 19 known architectural resources and one potential architectural resource in the study area are described below, starting to west of the University Club on West 54th Street and continuing on West 53rd Street, Fifth Avenue, east of Fifth Avenue, and West 52nd Street (see **Figure 7-1** and **Table 7-1**).

KNOWN ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

5 West 54th Street (S/NR, NYCL)

Originally the Moses Allen and Alice Dunning Starr House and later the Petrola House, **5 West 54th Street** was built in 1897-99. It was commissioned by Dr. Starr, a neurologist, at a time when many wealthy New Yorkers were building houses in the area. The five-story building was designed by R.H. Robertson in a Renaissance-inspired style, with a limestone base and upper floors clad in light-brown Roman brick trimmed with limestone (see View 3 of **Figure 7-3**). As with the other landmarked houses in this area, it is an example of the elegant residential architecture that characterized development during the post-Civil War period. The building is ornate and more stylistically related to the University Club than to the CBS Building (described below), the Rockefeller Apartments (described below), and other modern buildings in the area. The development site is visible from this building.

7 West 54th Street (S/NR, NYCL)

The former home of Philip and Carrie Lehman is a five-story, Beaux-Arts style townhouse at **7 West 54th Street**. Philip Lehman was a partner in the banking firm Lehman Brothers as well as a son of one of the founders. After his death in 1947, the house was occupied by his son Robert. Robert Lehman's art collection was later given to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where it is now installed along with interiors removed from the house. Designed by John H. Duncan, the house was built in 1899-1900. The limestone-fronted townhouse has a second-story balcony, cartouches above the second- and fourth-story windows, and a mansard roof with round windows (see View 4 of **Figure 7-3**). As with the other landmarked houses in this area, it is an example of the elegant residential architecture that characterized development during the post-Civil War period. The building is ornate and more stylistically related to the University Club than to the CBS Building, the Rockefeller Apartments, and other modern buildings in the area. The development site is visible from this building.

9-11 West 54th Street (S/NR, NYCL)

Designed by McKim, Mead & White—with Charles F. McKim and William Mead as partners in charge—and constructed in 1896-98, **9-11 West 54th Street** was originally the residence of James Junius and Josephine Goodwin and later offices for the U.S. Trust Company. James Goodwin was a wealthy businessman, a cousin and business partner of J.P. Morgan. This Colonial Revival-style building was modeled on Charles Bulfinch's Third Harrison Gray Otis



5 West 54th Street 3



7 West 54th Street 4

53 West 53rd Street

House in Boston. It was planned as a double house; the Goodwins resided in the larger unit at No. 11. The building is six stories in height and is clad in red brick with a limestone base (see View 5 of **Figure 7-4**). The building was restored and converted into a bank between 1980 and 1981 by the architects Haines, Lundberg, Waehler. As with the other landmarked houses in this area, it is an example of the elegant residential architecture that characterized development during the post-Civil War period. The building is ornate and more stylistically related to the University Club than to the CBS Building, the Rockefeller Apartments, and other modern buildings in the area. The development site is visible from this building.

13 and 15 West 54th Street (S/NR, NYCL)

The pair of houses at **13 and 15 West 54th Street** was built in 1896-97 as a speculative venture by businessman William Murray. They were designed by Henry J. Hardenbergh in a Renaissance-inspired style, with banded window enframements and tapered pilasters (see View 6 of **Figure 7-4**). In 1906, No. 13 was purchased by John D. Rockefeller; it was the home of his son, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., until about 1918. Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York later used the house as an office and died there in 1979. Nelson Rockefeller purchased No. 15 in 1955. For many years, it housed the Museum of Primitive Art, now the Michael Rockefeller Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Like the residential buildings described above, these houses are ornate and more stylistically related to the University Club than to the CBS Building, the adjacent Rockefeller Apartments, and other modern buildings in the area. The development site is visible from these houses.

Rockefeller Apartments, 17 West 54th Street and 24 West 55th Street (NYCL)

The **Rockefeller Apartments** were built between 1935 and 1937 and designed by the firm of Harrison & Foulhoux in the International Style. They were commissioned by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Nelson Rockefeller and represent architect Wallace K. Harrison's first independent venture after the death of his former partner, Raymond M. Hood. Thus, this building is related to MoMA through their common association with the Rockefeller family. Built to provide accommodations near Rockefeller Center for well-to-do executives and professionals, the through-block complex consists of two separate buildings linked by a landscaped courtyard designed to allow sunlight to reach all apartments. The street facades of the two buildings feature cylindrical bow windows (see View 7 of **Figure 7-5**). The bows differ in the number, height, and orientation from one facade to the other. In the bows, the steel casement windows are placed on the outer edge of the sill to create a continuous wall surface. The Rockefeller Apartments are considered to have changed the standards in New York City apartment house planning. The buildings were said to allow 15 percent more space for light and air than required by law and set a precedent of integrity and simple elegance in apartment design. The Rockefeller Apartments were restored in 1997 under the supervision of William Leggio Architects. The development site is visible from this apartment building.

CBS Building, 51 West 52nd Street (NYCL)

Built in 1965, the **CBS Building** is the only high-rise building designed by architect Eero Saarinen. Saarinen's stated goal was to create the simplest skyscraper in New York, and this 38-story tower clad in dark gray honed granite was a departure from the metal and glass curtain walls that dominated Park and Sixth Avenues after World War II (see View 8 of **Figure 7-5**). It is an elegant, striking, and somber understatement along Sixth Avenue. In addition, at the time it was constructed the building was an unusual departure from the standard post-and-beam

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9-11 West 54th Street 5



13-15 West 54th Street 6

53 West 53rd Street

Architectural Resources in Study Area
Figure 7-4



Rockefeller Apartments 7



CBS Building 8

framing; instead, its structural system consists of a central core and a dense grid of columns around its exterior. The development site is north of this building across West 53rd Street.

Gotham Hotel, 696-700 Fifth Avenue (NYCL)

The **Gotham Hotel**, now the Peninsula Hotel, was designed by the firm of Hiss & Weekes in an Italian Renaissance-inspired style. It was constructed in 1902-05. The 20-story limestone building was designed to harmonize with the adjacent University Club and to complement the St. Regis Hotel, begun one year earlier on a site across Fifth Avenue (see View 9 of **Figure 7-6**). The hotel is considered to be among the handsomest surviving early 20th-century luxury hotels in New York City. The University Club surrounds it on the south and west, and, therefore, the hotel has no visual relationship to the development site from a public perspective.

St. Regis Hotel, 699-703 Fifth Avenue (NYCL)

Planned by Colonel John Jacob Astor as New York's finest luxury hotel, the **St. Regis Hotel** was constructed in 1902-04. It was designed by the firm of Trowbridge & Livingston in the Beaux Arts style with ornate balconies and carvings and large decorated medallions. An extension designed by Sloan & Robertson that was constructed in 1927 is complementary to the original design (see View 10 of **Figure 7-6**). According to the *Guide to New York City Landmarks*, one critic commented on the hotel's opening that it "established a new standard of excellence ... superior to that of any hotel in this country, and probably over any hotel in the world." Its location at the southeast corner of 55th Street and Fifth Avenue precludes any publicly visible relationship between the hotel and the development site. However, it is across Fifth Avenue from the University Club.

689-691 Fifth Avenue / 1 East 54th Street (NYCL)

The former Aeolian Building at the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 54th Street, **689-691 Fifth Avenue** was designed by the firm of Warren & Wetmore and constructed in 1925-27 (see View 11 of **Figure 7-7**). During the first quarter of the 20th century, the Aeolian Company was a leading manufacturer of roll-operated musical instruments, including organs and pianos. This building was built to serve as its headquarters. Since 1930, the flagship Elizabeth Arden Red Door Salon has occupied the ground story of the building. The building is opposite the University Club on Fifth Avenue, and there is a view from this site on West 54th Street to the development site.

William H. and Ada S. Moore House, 4 East 54th Street (S/NR, NYCL)

The house at **4 East 54th Street** was originally commissioned by W.E.D. Stokes but was sold four months before its completion (in 1900) to Ada S. Moore. William H. Moore, Ada's husband, was a Chicago industrialist who was a founder of the United States Steel Corporation and was active in the American Can Company. The house, designed in the Italian Renaissance style, has simple, symmetrical fenestration with window moldings that differ at each level. The facade is enlivened by the rusticated first floor, quoins, and ornate detail. An elaborate dentiled entablature with a scallop-shell frieze is located above the fifth-floor windows, and the building is topped with a balustrade. The marble-fronted building is considered to be one of McKim, Mead & White's most beautiful Italian Renaissance-inspired townhouses (see View 12 of **Figure 7-7**). After Ada Moore's death in 1955, the house had a succession of philanthropic and commercial tenants, including the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. The building was renovated by the firm of Breger Terjesen Bermel in 1986. The development site is not visible



Gotham Hotel 9



St. Regis Hotel 10

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689-691 Fifth Avenue 11



4 East 54th Street 12

53 West 53rd Street

from this resource, as it is located across Fifth Avenue behind several 12- to 16-story buildings. The University Club is visible from this site.

George W. Vanderbilt House, 647 Fifth Avenue (S/NR, NYCL)

Located on the Fifth Avenue one building south of 52nd Street, the **George W. Vanderbilt House** is one of a pair known as the marble twins. It was commissioned by George W. Vanderbilt and sold to his brother William K. Vanderbilt before it was completed. It is the last survivor of a group of Vanderbilt residences built on this section of Fifth Avenue (see View 13 of **Figure 7-8**). The Louis XV-style house was designed by the sons of Richard Morris Hunt, the architect of George Vanderbilt's famous Biltmore estate in North Carolina. An addition to the building was designed by Charles L. Fraser and constructed in 1917. As 666 Fifth Avenue is between this resource and the development site, they have no visual connection. However, St. Thomas is visible to the northwest at Fifth Avenue and West 53rd Street.

Morton and Nellie Plant House, 651-653 Fifth Avenue / Edward and Frances Holbrook House, 4 East 52nd Street (S/NR, NYCL)

The **Morton and Nellie Plant House** and the **Edward and Frances Holbrook House** are two once-independent structures that were converted into a shop for the Cartier jewelry company by William Welles Bosworth around 1917 (see View 14 of **Figure 7-8**). The six-story Plant House was built in 1903-05 and designed by Robert W. Gibson for Morton F. Plant, a banker, yachtsman, and owner of two baseball teams; the Holbrook House was built in 1904-05 and designed by C.P.H. Gilbert. The Plant House was considered to be the finest surviving mansion on Fifth Avenue south of 59th Street. The Italian Renaissance-style building has a rusticated first floor, quoins, and is topped by a balustrade. The East 52nd Street facade is dominated by an ornately carved balcony supported by brackets at the second floor. Four pilasters rise two stories above the balcony and support a pediment. The fifth-floor attic windows are set in an elaborately decorated frieze. Views from this resource to the development site are blocked by the building at 666 Fifth Avenue. However, St. Thomas Church is visible.

75 Rockefeller Plaza / 15 West 51st Street (NYCL)

The former Esso Building—also known as the Warner Communications Building—at **75 Rockefeller Plaza** was designed by Carson & Lundin, Rockefeller Center's resident architects from 1939 to 1957. Carson & Lundin had worked earlier with the Associated Architects and Wallace K. Harrison. The building lies at the northern terminus of Rockefeller Plaza and was completed in 1947. The Esso Building reflects the style of earlier Rockefeller Center buildings through the emphasis of vertical massing and the use of limestone cladding (see View 15 of **Figure 7-9**). The development site is not visible from a public perspective at this resource, nor is it visible from either St. Thomas Church or the University Club.

35 West 54th Street (S/NR-eligible, NYCL-eligible)

The five-story building at **35 West 54th Street** was heard for potential NYCL designation by LPC in 1985. It was built in 1878 by the developer James Lynd and was redesigned in 1905 for Anne O'Neill Thomas, by the firm of Foster, Gode and Graham. The Beaux Arts-style front façade of the townhouse is faced in red brick and stone (see View 16 of **Figure 7-9**). The second- and third-story windows are grouped at the center of the front façade and defined by a stone surround; there also is a stone balcony below the second-story windows. The fourth floor is defined by a decorative metal balcony, supported by stone brackets; above the fourth floor is a

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647 Fifth Avenue 13



651-653 Fifth Avenue 14



Esso Building 15



35 West 54th Street 16

mansard roof with copper-clad dormers. There is a modern rooftop addition above the fifth floor, which is not in keeping with the design of the rest of the building.

41 West 54th Street (S/NR-eligible, NYCL-eligible)

This five-story building also was heard for potential NYCL designation by LPC in 1985. Like 35 West 54th Street, it was built in 1878 by James Lynd, as part of a set of five buildings. It was originally designed in the Neo-Grec style, but in 1909 was refaced in the Beaux Arts style by the firm of Foster, Gade and Graham. Currently under scaffolding, the façade of **41 West 54th Street** is faced in stone, with grouped windows at the second and third floors (see View 17 of **Figure 7-10**). The double-width entrance to the building is at ground level and is flanked by two small oval windows.

46 West 55th Street (S/NR-eligible, NYCL-eligible)

Like 41 West 54th Street, **46 West 55th Street** was originally built as part of a larger set of buildings, this time by the firm of John W. Stevens & Bro. The townhouse was built in 1869 and was originally designed by architect Thomas Thomas, a founder of the National Institute of Architecture; it was redesigned in the Beaux Arts style in 1903 by Edward Tilton. The façade is brick with a stone base and is slightly rounded, except at the fifth floor, which is set back behind a stone cornice (see View 18 of **Figure 7-10**). The wide entrance at the ground floor is capped by another stone cornice, supported by large stone brackets.

Warwick Hotel, 1340 Sixth Avenue (S/NR-eligible, NYCL-eligible)

The **Warwick Hotel** is a 36-story structure clad in light-brown brick and stone that was built in 1925-27, following the removal of the elevated train structure on Sixth Avenue from 53rd Street to 59th Street (see View 19 of **Figure 7-11**). Department of Building records note the owner of the site as the W. A. R. Realty Corp., Arthur Brisbane, President, but William Randolph Hearst is generally credited as the developer. The architects of the building were George B. Post & Sons, Emery Roth, associate. According to one source, Hearst built the Warwick Hotel “as a residential hotel with private apartments for his Hollywood friends. The grandeur of the Renaissance Revival structure reflects the \$5 million that Hearst spent, but the lobby itself was deliberately kept small to enhance the building’s residential atmosphere.”¹

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church (S/NR-eligible, NYCL-eligible)

The **Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church**, located at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and West 55th Street, was constructed in 1873. The main entrance is on Fifth Avenue (see View 20 of **Figure 7-11**). It was designed in the Gothic style by Carl Pfeiffer, who also designed the former Metropolitan Savings Bank at 59 Third Avenue. The current building represents the fourth home of the Fifth Avenue Church, which was established in 1808. The steeple, which is 286 feet in height, was at the time of its completion the tallest in New York City. The church is clad in stone and has stained-glass windows designed by John C. Spence. John C. Spence taught landscape and ornamental drawing at the Mechanics Institute of Montreal and was the son of a celebrated English sculptor. Possibly Montreal’s first stained glass decorator, his works in that city include three stained glass windows over the organ loft at the Church of St. John the Evangelist; and three windows over the altar at the Holy Trinity Church in Iron Hill.² The design

¹ <http://www.historichotels.org/hotel/109>. Accessed April 20, 2009.

² <http://www.atwaterlibrary.ca/en/node/708>. Accessed April 20, 2009.

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41 West 54th Street (under scaffolding) 17



46 West 55th Street 18



Warwick Hotel 19



Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church 20

of the windows at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church was inspired by the English Reform precepts of the 19th century; there were no Biblical figures of saints who could be worshipped apart from God.

The church's two-story annex on West 55th Street was replaced in 1925 by a ten-story Church House designed by James Gamble Rogers. The design of the chapel on the first floor of the Church House offers a direct contrast in design philosophy from that of the much larger Sanctuary. The planning is that of a small parish Gothic church. All is rigidly organized in a long and narrow rectangular space from back to front where there is a semi-circular apse with a raised pulpit off to one side and a lectern on the other. The Chapel uses stained glass to illustrate Bible stories.¹

12 East 53rd Street (S/NR-eligible, NYCL-eligible)

12 East 53rd Street is a Gothic-style five-story structure constructed in 1906 for Harvey E. Fisk (see View 21 of **Figure 7-12**). It was built by Charles T. Wills from plans by Raleigh C. Gildersleeve. The depth and width of the building's lot are unusually large (110.5 feet and 37.6 feet, respectively), allowing for the creation of extra deep rooms on the interior. The building was purchased in 1909 by William L. Harkness (one of the founders of Standard Oil) and after his death was used by the Automobile Club of America, the Symons Galleries, and the Labor Institute of Merchandising, among others.

POTENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

23-25 West 55th Street was built as a garage in 1965 for Wellington Associates, Inc., and designed by Saltzman Gleckman Associates (see View 22 of **Figure 7-12**). This firm designed another parking garage in 1965 for Wellington Associates, at 143-147 West 54th Street, and in 1966 William Gleckman designed a garage for the company at 141-151 East 48th Street. This 10-story building is faced in pre-fabricated concrete panels, each of which extends slightly outward from the façade to create a frame for a single-pane casement window and air conditioning vents, both of which are slightly recessed from this frame. The angle of the panels is reversed on each successive floor, forming a zig-zag pattern. In an comment letter dated August 25, 2009, LPC determined that this building does not appear NYCL or S/NR eligible.

C. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

As described in greater detail in Chapter 1, "Project Description," in the future without the proposed project the development site will be developed with one of two scenarios—the Previously Approved Project or the Expanded Development Scenario. In addition, as described below, other projects are expected to be completed in the study area.

DEVELOPMENT SITE

PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PROJECT

As described in more detail in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Previously Approved Project will be approximately 250,000 gsf in size and will contain museum-related, commercial office, and ground-floor retail space. It will be a glass-clad tower approximately 285 feet in

¹ <http://www.nyc-architecture.com/MID/MID041.htm>. Accessed April 20, 2009.



12 East 53rd Street 21



23-25 West 55th Street 22

height with entrances on both West 53rd and 54th Streets (see **Figures 7-13 and 7-14**). This project was evaluated in the *Museum of Modern Art Technical Memorandum* (CEQR No. 00DCP007M, ULURP Nos. C00649ZMN, N000650ZRM, March 23, 2007).

EXPANDED DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

As described in more detail in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the Expanded Development Scenario will be approximately 508,012 gsf in size and will contain museum-related, hotel, and residential space. It will be a glass-clad tower approximately 1,089 feet in height with entrances on both West 53rd and 54th Streets (see **Figures 7-15 and 7-16**). The tower of the Expanded Development Scenario building will set back at several stages, but it will maintain a mostly rectangular configuration.

Since the Expanded Development Scenario will not require any special permits pursuant to ZR Sections 74-79, 74-711, and 81-212, it will not be subject to the review and approval of LPC. Furthermore, in this scenario, the project sponsor will not be required to establish a continuing maintenance program for the University Club or St. Thomas Church. The Expanded Development Scenario building will alter the context of the known and potential architectural resources in the surrounding area. It will be the tallest structure within the surrounding area; however, there are already a number of tower structures in the study area, including the Museum Tower directly to the east (approximately 588 feet tall), the adjacent 40-story building facing Sixth Avenue (496-foot-tall), the landmarked CBS Building across West 53rd Street (approximately 491 feet tall), and the New York Hilton Hotel across Sixth Avenue (approximately 487 feet tall). Within this context, the height of the structure will not be readily apparent, particularly at street level. The anticipated cladding materials of the Expanded Development Scenario building (glass and steel) will be consistent with those of other, non-landmarked modern structures in the area, including the immediately adjacent building at 1330 Sixth Avenue. The Expanded Development Scenario building will not block any important views of any known or potential architectural resources.

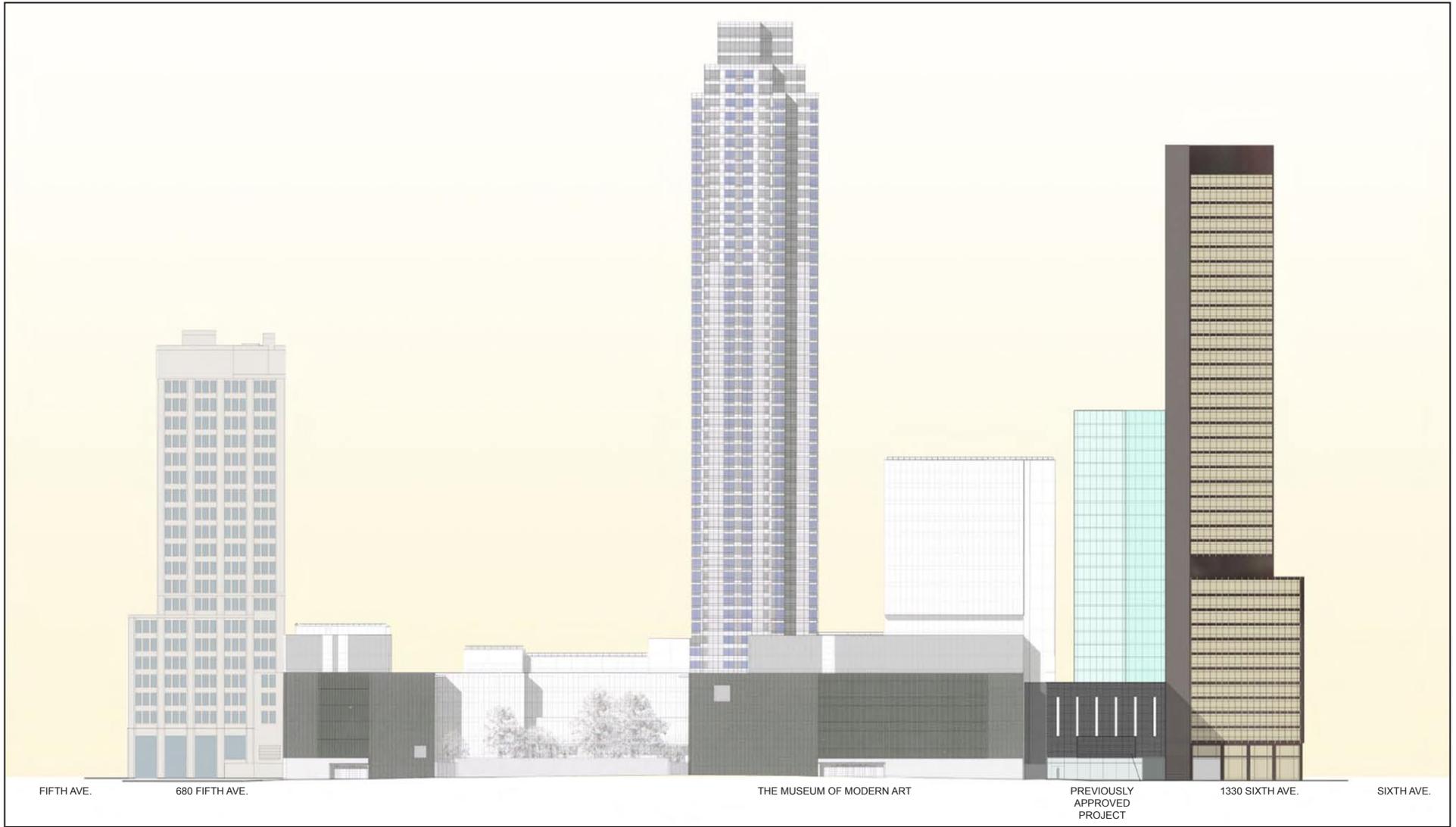
PROJECT SITE AND TRANSFER SITE

In the future without the proposed project, no changes are expected on either the project site or the transfer site.

STUDY AREA

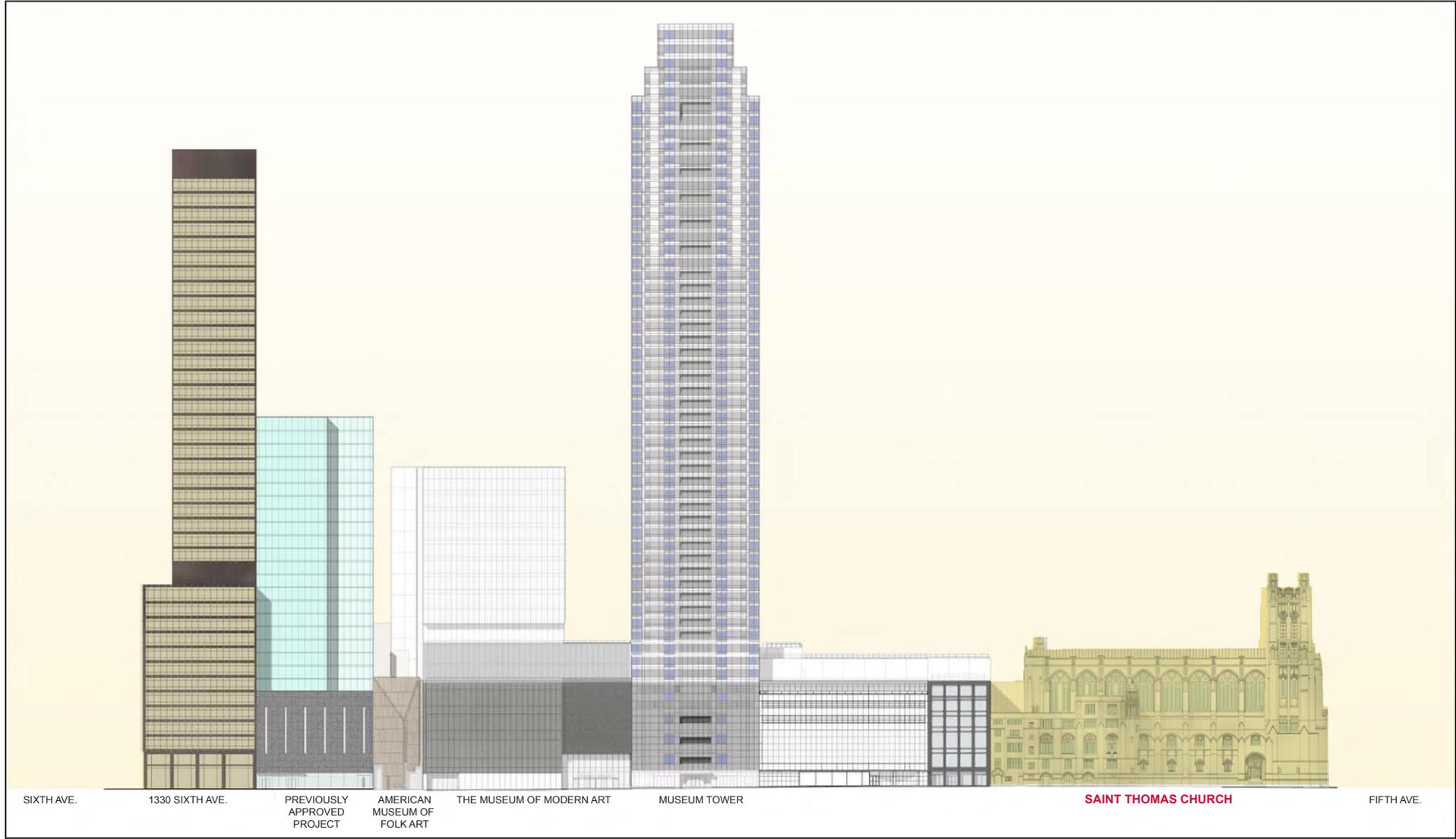
In the future without the proposed project, it is possible that some architectural resources in the study area could deteriorate while others could be restored. In addition, future projects in the area could affect the settings of architectural resources or could accidentally damage architectural resources through adjacent construction. The New York City Building Code provides some measures of protection for all properties against accidental damage from adjacent construction by requiring that all buildings, lots, and service facilities adjacent to foundation and earthwork areas be protected and supported. While these regulations serve to protect all structures adjacent to construction areas, they do not afford special consideration for historic structures.

There are three new developments under construction within the 400-foot study area. Southeast of the development site, an 11-story hotel building is under development on the site of the former Donnell Library. The building will connect to the 21 Club restaurant on West 52nd Street, and the library will occupy part of the new building’s first three levels. One block north



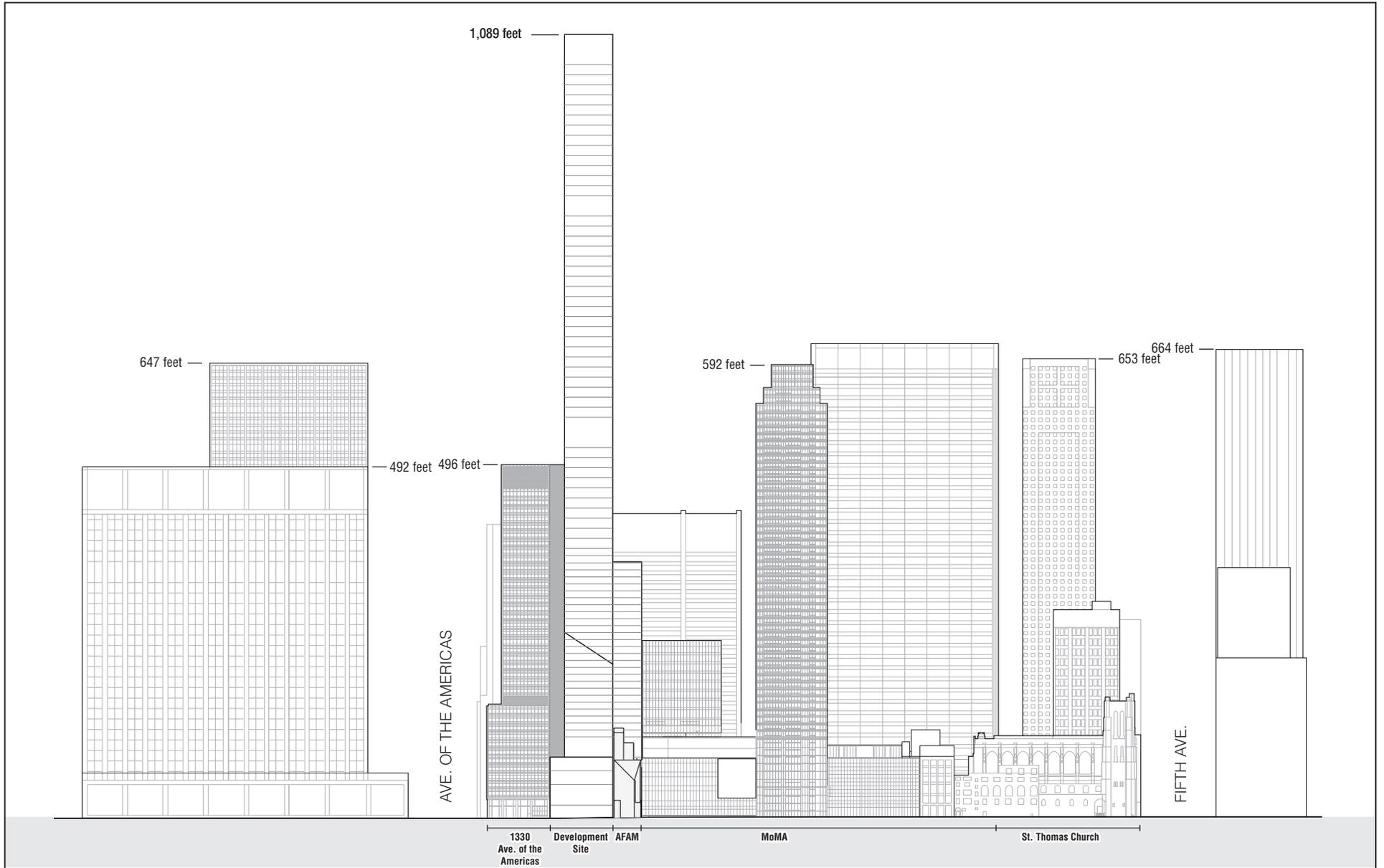
Future Without the Proposed Project:
Previously Approved Project
West 54th Street Elevation
Figure 7-13

SOURCE: KOHN PEDERSEN FOX ASSOCIATES P.C.

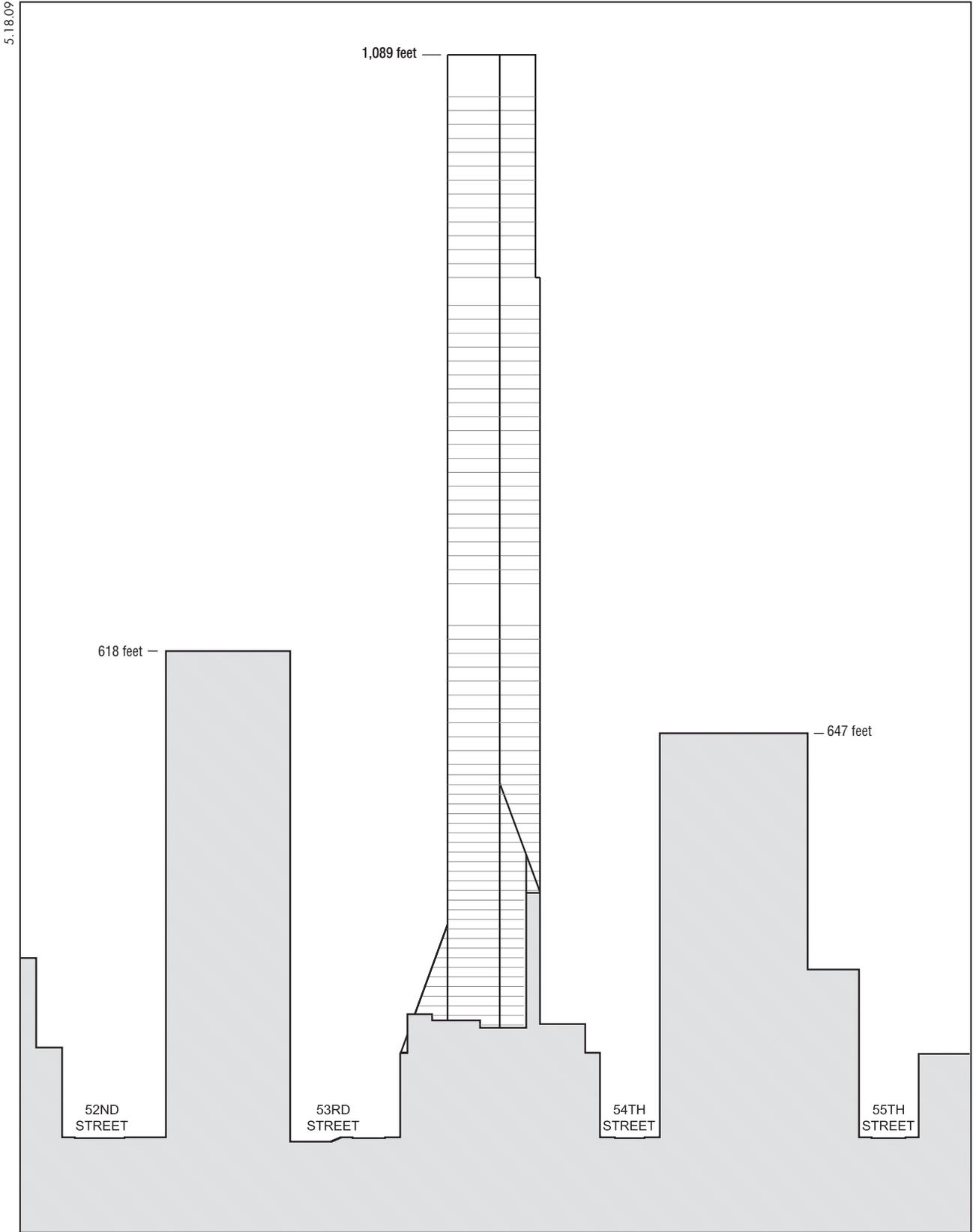


Historic Resources in the Study Area

Future Without the Proposed Project:
Previously Approved Project
West 53rd Street Elevation
Figure 7-14



Future Without the Proposed Project:
Expanded Development Scenario
South Elevation
Figure 7-15



Future Without the Proposed Project:
 Expanded Development Scenario
 East Elevation
 Figure 7-16

of the project site, a 22-story building with 54 dwelling units is under construction at 12 West 55th Street. A 30-story office building is under construction on East 53rd Street at Madison Avenue. The development at 12 West 55th Street is occurring within 90 feet of several historic resources; therefore, it is assumed that this project will take appropriate measures to protect these resources during construction, including adhering to New York City Department of Buildings controls governing the protection of adjacent properties from accidental construction damage.

In the future without the proposed project, it is also possible that one or more of the potential architectural resources within the study area identified above may be found eligible for listing on the Registers or designation as a NYCL and may be listed or designated in the future. Architectural resources that are listed on the National Register or that have been found eligible for listing are given a measure of protection from the effects of federally sponsored or assisted projects under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Although preservation is not mandated, federal agencies must attempt to avoid adverse impacts on such resources through a notice, review, and consultation process. Properties listed on the State Register are similarly protected against impacts resulting from state-sponsored or state-assisted projects under the State Historic Preservation Act. Private property owners using private funds can, however, alter or demolish their properties without such a review process. Privately owned sites that are NYCLs, within New York City Historic Districts, or pending designation, are protected under the New York City Landmarks Law, which requires LPC review and approval before any alteration or demolition can occur.

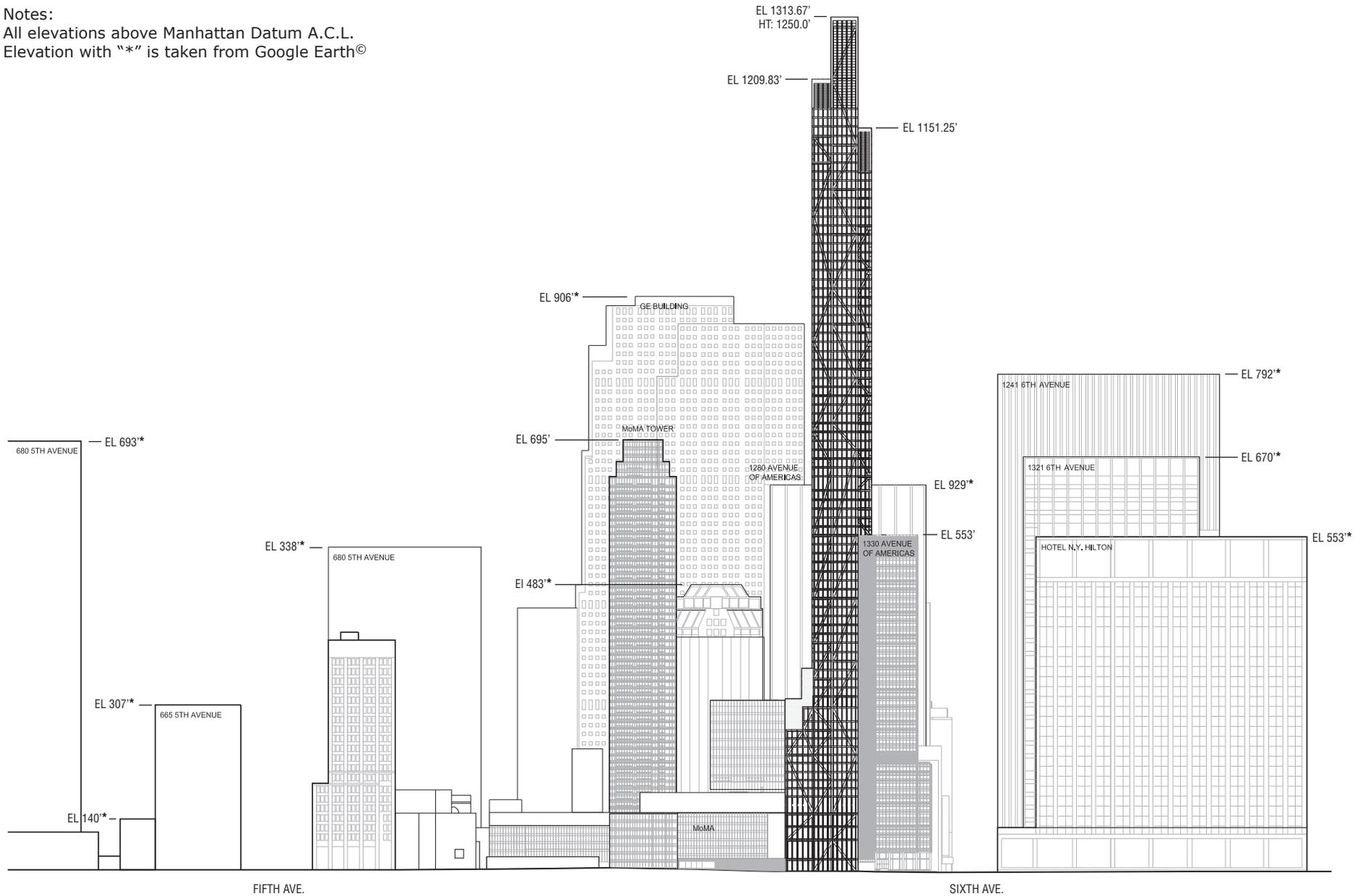
D. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

DEVELOPMENT, PROJECT, AND TRANSFER SITES

With the proposed project, the development site would be redeveloped with an approximately 786,562-square-foot mixed-use building with residential, hotel, and museum uses. The proposed building would rise to a height of approximately 1,250 feet, including a decorative spire. The building would have a faceted, tapered shape, resulting in smaller floor plates at the higher levels of the building (see **Figures 7-17 through 7-19**). The building's structural frame would be expressed on its façade in a pattern of crisscrossing beams; this system was developed because of the narrowness of the development site and the height of the building. The building would slope back on one side to yield views past the Museum Tower, and its northeast corner would be cut away to conform to zoning regulations. It is expected that the building would be clad with gray glass and aluminum mullions. The structural frame would be just behind the glass, and the intent of the design is that the transition between the glass skin and the structure would not be visible. The design of the building is by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel.

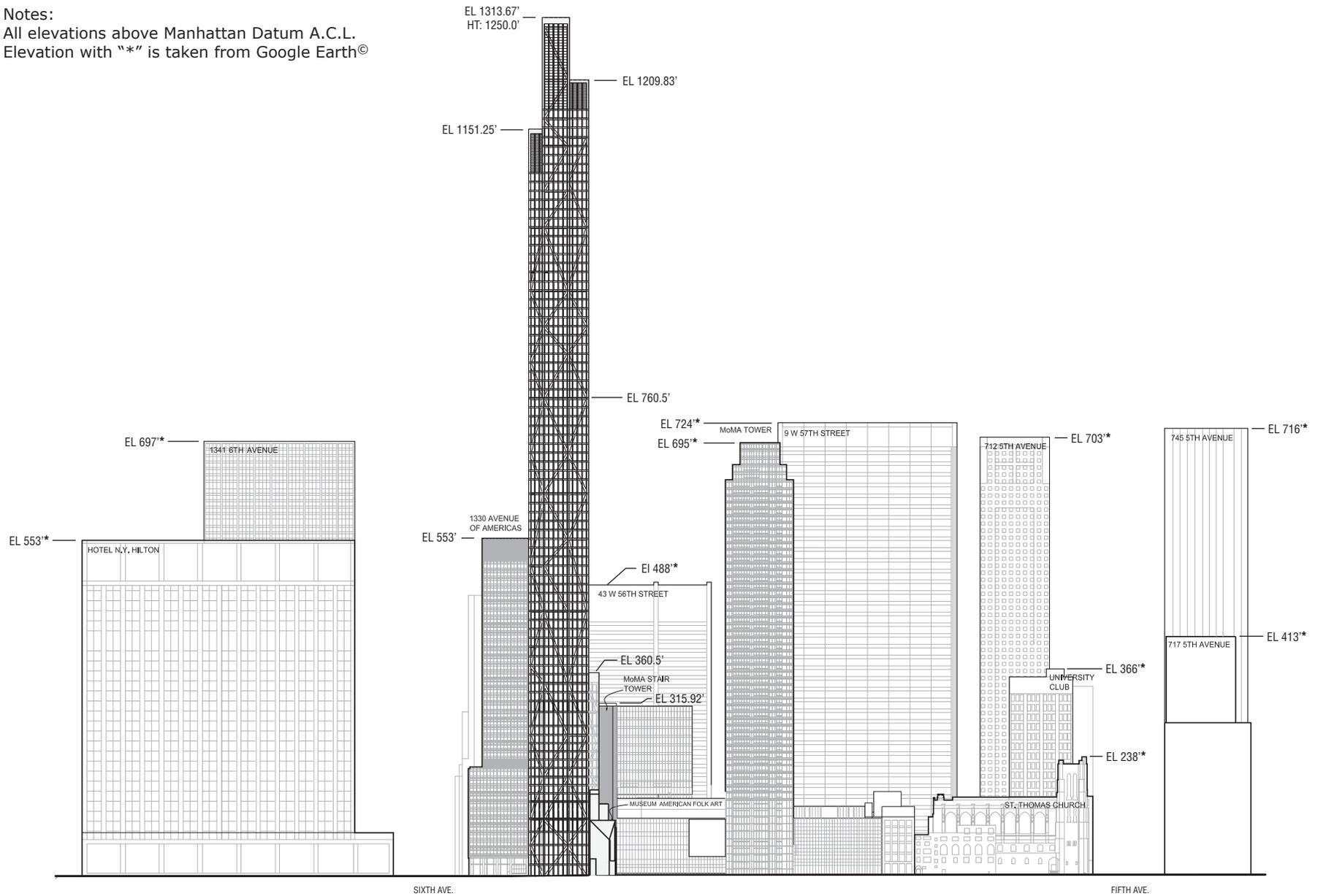
As described above, as part of the proposed special permits pursuant to ZR Sections 74-79 and 74-711, a report of the LPC regarding the proposed restoration work to St. Thomas Church and the University Club, and the relationship between the proposed building and these landmarks, is required. In connection with the 74-711 special permit, LPC must find that the proposed bulk and use modifications would relate harmoniously to St. Thomas Church. In addition, the special permits require that a Continuing Maintenance Plan be established for the University Club and St. Thomas Church that will be legally enforceable by LPC under the provisions of a restrictive declaration.

Notes:
All elevations above Manhattan Datum A.C.L.
Elevation with "*" is taken from Google Earth®

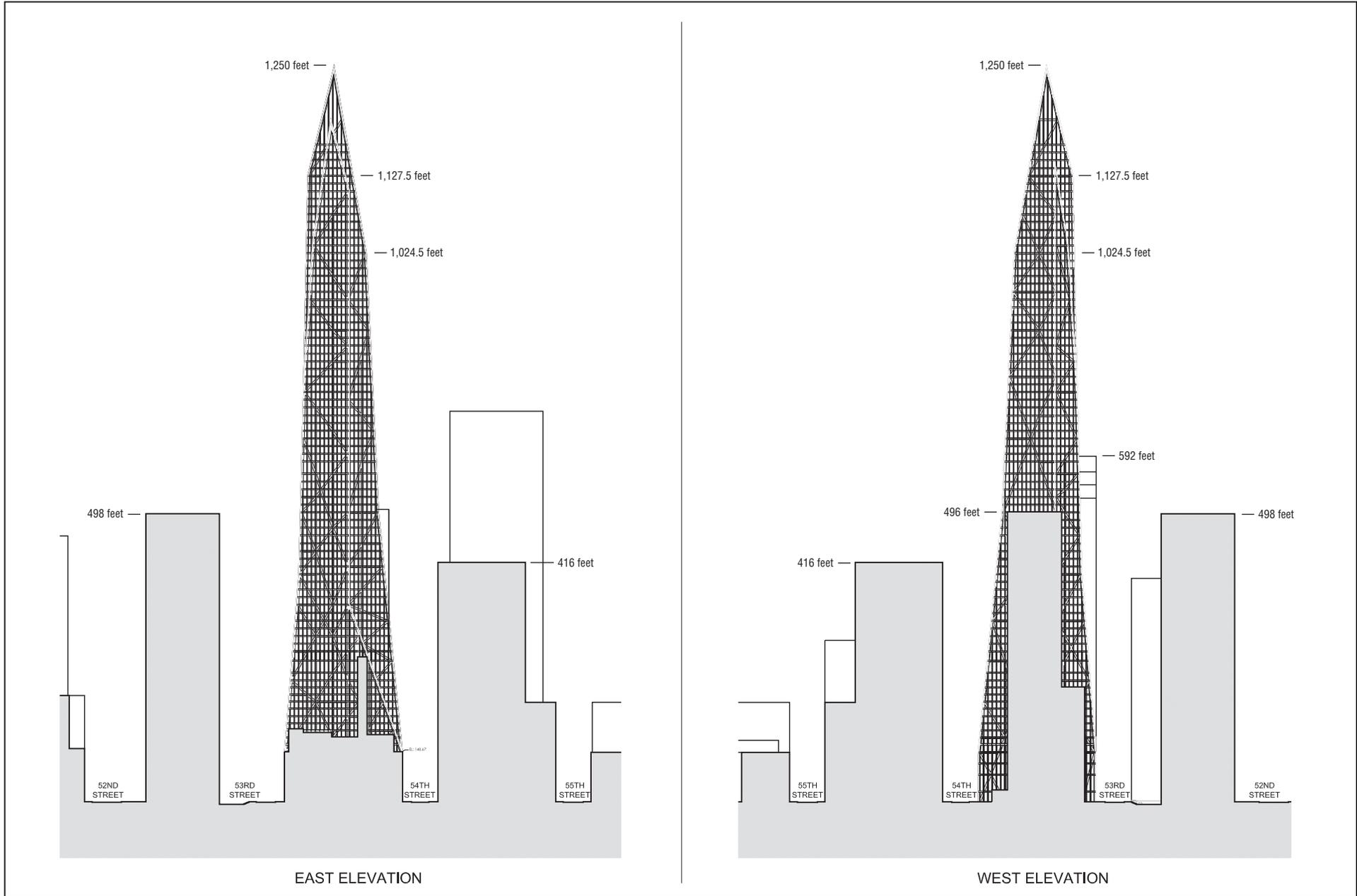


Source: SLICE Architects

Notes:
All elevations above Manhattan Datum A.C.L.
Elevation with "*" is taken from Google Earth®



Source: SLICE Architects



Building Materials shown for Illustrative Purposes Only

As part of the restrictive declaration, each building owner has agreed to put aside 5 percent of the proceeds from the sale of its development rights in a dedicated account to provide for the future maintenance of the buildings. Each owner would be required to conduct a facade inspection at least once every five years, and any work necessary to maintain the exterior elements of the building in a sound first-class condition would be required to be undertaken at the expense of the owner. LPC will also have the right to access the buildings to conduct inspections of its own, and will be empowered to undertake repairs (at the owner's expense) if the owner fails to maintain the building in sound first-class condition. These continuing maintenance plans would ensure that the landmark structures will be restored to a sound, first-class condition. The work at St. Thomas includes the largest stained-glass restoration project ever undertaken in the United States, and is also, in dollar terms, one of the largest restoration program ever associated with a 74-711 application. On October 6, 2008, LPC issued a Certificate of No Effect (CNE) for the exterior and interior repair and restoration of the limestone tracery at 18 stained glass windows and 3 chancel windows, as well as for the removal of two through-wall louvers and associated sleeves and mechanical equipment, and restoration of the openings. The Commission had previously issued a CNE for additional restorative work on the stained glass windows at St. Thomas. On November 28, 2008 LPC issued a CNE for restorative work and other general, non-restoration work at the University Club, including new windows at secondary facades; removal and/or replacement of mechanical equipment, fixtures, and their supports; sidewalk replacements; mortar work; and the modification of modern infill at the West 54th Street entrance to replace the large expanse of glazing above these doors.

On May 13, 2008, LPC voted to issue favorable reports regarding the continuing maintenance programs for the University Club and St. Thomas Church and regarding the relationship between the landmarks and the proposed project. In reports dated October 22, 2008 and November 28, 2008, LPC noted that in reaching its decision to issue a favorable report to CPC, the Commission found that the proposed restorative work would bring St. Thomas Church and the University Club up to sound first-class condition and aid in the buildings' long-term preservation, and that the implementation of a cyclical maintenance plan will ensure the continued maintenance of the buildings in a sound first-class condition (see Appendix B). Furthermore, LPC found that due to the distance between the development site and St. Thomas Church and the University Club, the proposed bulk waiver would have no effect on the relationship between the proposed building and the Church, or between the proposed building and the Club. Therefore, compared with either the Previously Approved Project or the Expanded Development Scenario, the proposed project would not have any adverse visual or contextual impacts on the University Club or St. Thomas Church.

As described above, direct architectural resource impacts include demolition of a resource and alterations to a resource that cause it to become a different visual entity. A resource also can be damaged by adjacent construction, either from vibrations (i.e., from construction blasting or pile driving) or from falling objects, subsidence, collapse, or damage from construction machinery. Adjacent construction, as defined in TPPN #10/88, is any construction activity that would occur within 90 feet of an architectural resource. Neither the University Club nor St. Thomas Church is located within 90 feet of the development site. Therefore, the proposed project would not have any adverse physical impacts on these resources.

STUDY AREA

Since the proposed project would require approval by LPC as being appropriate in relation to St. Thomas Church and the University Club, the project also would be considered compatible, in

terms of design, with the architectural resources located within the study area. The proposed building, like the previously approved building and the Expanded Development Scenario building, is expected to alter the context of the architectural resources in the surrounding area. Along West 54th Street, the anticipated cladding materials (glass and steel), transparency, and modern, angular design of the proposed building would provide a strong contrast to the historic masonry structures on the north side of the street, including the Rockefeller Apartments as well as several historic rowhouses. However, this contrast would clearly identify the proposed building (as well as the previously approved building and the Expanded Development Scenario building) as new, and the building would be consistent with the other modern buildings on the project block, including MoMA and the Financial Times Building, which also stand in contrast to the north side of the street. Furthermore, the proposed special permit to distribute floor area without regard to zoning district boundaries and to modify the alternative height and setback regulations, the requirements for pedestrian circulation space, and the rear yard equivalent requirements would allow the proposed building to move floor area away from the low-rise historic buildings on the north side of West 54th Street.

The proposed building would be considerably taller than the Previously Approved Project and approximately 161 feet taller than the Expanded Development Scenario building; however, there are already a number of tower structures in the study area, including the Museum Tower directly to the east, the adjacent 40-story building facing Sixth Avenue, the landmarked CBS Building across West 53rd Street, and the New York Hilton Hotel across Sixth Avenue. Within this context, the height of the tower structure—particularly in comparison to the Expanded Development Scenario building—would not be readily apparent, particularly at street level.

Like the Expanded Development Scenario building, the proposed building would create a new backdrop to views of the CBS Building from Sixth Avenue, particularly views from south of the building, looking north. However, the anticipated reflective materials and modern style of the proposed building and the Expanded Development Scenario building would be clearly different from those of the CBS Building, and thus would allow the CBS Building to retain its individual visual identity and essential character. The scale of this architectural resource would be lessened in these views; however, in comparison to the Expanded Development Scenario building, the somewhat greater height and different massing of the proposed building, would not significantly alter the context of surrounding views to the CBS Building.

The proposed building would minimize the visual impact on St. Thomas Church and the University Club by moving and utilizing their development rights on a site nearly 500 feet away. As described above, LPC has concluded that due to the distance between the development site and St. Thomas Church and the University Club, the proposed bulk waiver would have no effect on the relationship between the proposed building and the Church, or between the proposed building and the Club.

In comparison to the Expanded Development Scenario building's tower, which would set back at several stages but maintain a mostly rectangular configuration, the proposed building's tower would be faceted and would taper to a narrow point. The special permit for modification of the rear yard equivalent requirements would enable the tower to take this form. This tapering would lessen the tower's perceived height and bulk, particularly at the east and west elevations. As described above, the building would slope back on one side to yield views past the Museum Tower, and its northeast corner would be cut away to conform to zoning regulations.

The proposed building's anticipated cladding materials (glass and steel/aluminum) would be consistent with those of the Previously Approved Project and the Expanded Development

Scenario buildings, as well as of other modern structures in the area. The proposed project would not block any important views of any architectural resources.

Although the plaza of the CBS Building is located within 90 feet of the development site (the distance within which architectural resources have the potential to be affected, as described above), the tower itself is not. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to have any adverse physical impacts on this resource. The Warwick Hotel, at 1340 Sixth Avenue, is located within 90 feet of the development site, as is the CBS Building and 41 West 54th Street. As noted above, the CBS Building is a NYCL and LPC has determined that the Warwick Hotel and 41 West 54th Street appear S/NR- and NYCL-eligible; therefore, the project would avoid potential adverse physical impacts on these architectural resources through the implementation of a construction protection plan developed in consultation with LPC. None of the other architectural resources in the study area are close enough to be affected by ground-borne construction vibrations or other potential construction-related issues.

Compared with the Previously Approved Project, the proposed project would result in a significant adverse shadow impact on one historic resource with sun-sensitive features—the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church—on the June 21 analysis day (see Chapter 6, “Shadows” and Chapter 20, “Mitigation”). The proposed project would not result in any significant adverse shadows impacts on historic resources with sun-sensitive features compared with the Expanded Development Scenario.

In sum, compared with either the Previously Approved Project or the Expanded Development Scenario, the proposed project would not have any significant adverse impacts on architectural resources. *