

A. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the 2014 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, this chapter presents and analyzes alternatives to the proposed project. Alternatives selected for consideration in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are generally those which are feasible and have the potential to reduce, eliminate, or avoid adverse impacts of a proposed action while meeting some or all of the goals and objectives of the action.

In addition to a comparative impact analysis, the alternatives in this chapter are assessed to determine to what extent they would meet the goals and objectives of the proposed actions, as intended by the applicant, which are: to create a substantial number of new dwelling units within Manhattan CD 10, a portion of which would be designated as permanently affordable, thereby advancing a City-wide initiative to build and preserve 200,000 affordable units over 10 years in order to support New Yorkers with a range of incomes; achieve high quality urban design, architecture, community facility space, and open space elements; provide enhancements to the surrounding streetscape and enliven the pedestrian experience, through the creation of new buildings, landscaping, and open space on the proposed development site; add to the retail mix in the Central Harlem neighborhood; and strengthen the City's tax base by encouraging development and employment opportunities in the area.

This chapter considers two alternatives to the proposed project:

- A No Action Alternative, which is mandated by CEQR and SEQRA, and is intended to provide the lead and involved agencies with an assessment of the expected environmental impacts of no action on their part. The No Action Alternative assumes that in the future without the proposed actions, development in the rezoning area remains largely the same as in existing conditions, and
- A No Unmitigated Significant Adverse Impacts Alternative, which would eliminate the proposed project's unmitigated significant adverse impacts on open space, shadows, historic resources, pedestrians, and construction pedestrians and noise.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS*NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE*

The significant adverse impacts related to shadows, open space, historic resources, transportation, and construction-period noise would not occur under the No Action Alternative. As compared to the proposed actions, the applicant's intended public benefits associated with the proposed projects—the provision of a substantial amount of new permanently affordable housing, urban design improvements, including an enlivened streetscape with new retail spaces, and new private open space—would not occur in the No Action Alternative.

NO UNMITIGATED SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS ALTERNATIVE

As described in detail below, no reasonable alternative could be developed which eliminates the proposed projects' unmitigated significant adverse impacts on open space, shadows, historic resources, pedestrians, and construction-period pedestrians and noise without substantially compromising the applicant's proposed project's stated goals.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

ALTERNATIVE IDENTIFICATION

For the purposes of this EIS, it is assumed that in the future without the proposed project (the No Action condition), the proposed development site would continue in its current condition, with the exception that currently vacant retail space on the proposed development site could be re-tenanted depending upon market conditions. While it has been reported that the Metropolitan AME Church on the projected future development site could be redeveloped independent of the proposed actions, for the purposes of a conservative assessment of the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative assumes that no development would occur on this site (as well as the remainder of the rezoning area) by the 2026 analysis year.

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

Under the No Action Alternative, the rezoning area would continue in its current condition, with the exception that currently vacant retail space on the proposed development site could be re-tenanted depending upon market conditions. No new development is expected to occur within the rezoning area. Up to 1,711 residential units, including up to 514 permanently affordable units, would not be built, and thus this alternative would not support the Mayor's affordable housing programs. No new private open space would be created.

Outside the rezoning area, current land use trends and general development patterns would continue. Within the ¼-mile study area, 34 development projects are expected to be completed by 2026. These projects are expected to introduce substantial new residential, retail, and community facility uses, increasing the density of the study area.

Zoning and public policies affecting the study area are expected to remain largely unchanged from existing conditions. Additional development within the study area is expected to occur as a result of the East Harlem Rezoning, which was approved in 2017 and is intended to facilitate the development of affordable housing, preserve existing neighborhood character, improve the pedestrian experience, and create new commercial and manufacturing space to support job creation adjacent to existing and future transit nodes within the East Harlem neighborhood.

In summary, neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed actions would result in significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning or public policy.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed actions would result in significant adverse impacts due to changes in socioeconomic conditions. Under the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that the existing vacant retail storefronts located along Fifth Avenue could be re-tenanted. The following describes the effects of the No Action Alternative as compared with those anticipated to occur with the proposed actions for each CEQR area of socioeconomic concern.

DIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

Like the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not directly displace any residents from the existing Lenox Terrace buildings within the rezoning area, or from any other locations within the rezoning area.

DIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT

Unlike the proposed actions, with the No Action Alternative the 19 retail businesses located within the rezoning area and the estimated 234 workers associated with those businesses would not be directly displaced, and the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church would not be temporarily displaced. In addition, with the No Action Alternative it is assumed that approximately 17,820 gross square feet (gsf) of existing vacant retail space could be re-tenanted. Which would generate an estimated 54 new workers.

The No Action Alternative would avoid direct business displacement, but unlike the proposed actions, this alternative would not meet the applicant's goals and objectives of developing new community facility and retail uses that would improve the quality of ground-floor retail spaces, create a more defined streetwall along Lenox Avenue, and result in a net increase in employment opportunities. There are an estimated 288 retail jobs associated with the No Action Alternative, as compared to 407 retail jobs and 83 community facility and residential jobs with the proposed project.

INDIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

Based on upward trends in income and real estate values in the study area, it is likely that low-income households in unprotected units (at-risk households) would continue to experience indirect residential displacement pressures under the No Action Alternative. The proposed actions would result in the development of permanently affordable housing, which would not be realized under the No Action Alternative. Unlike the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not provide new affordable housing and thus would not further the City's goal of increasing affordable housing.

INDIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT

Similar to the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not introduce new economic activities that would substantially alter existing economic patterns within the study area, nor would it alter the land use character of the study area. The rezoning area and broader study area have well-established residential and retail markets such that neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would substantially alter commercial real estate trends in the area.

ADVERSE EFFECTS ON SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed actions would significantly affect the business conditions in any industry or any category of business within or outside the study area. The direct retail displacement resulting from the proposed actions would not result in the loss or substantial diminishment of a particularly important product or service within any specific industries.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts to elementary schools, intermediate schools, or high schools.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would result in a noticeable change in the delivery of library services.

PUBLICLY FUNDED CHILD CARE CENTERS

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed actions would have a significant adverse impact on publicly funded child care facilities.

OPEN SPACE

Neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would physically alter or displace publicly accessible open space resources. With the No Action Alternative the proposed actions' shadows impact on the Howard Bennett Playground, as well as the significant adverse indirect impact in the 2026 analysis year due to the reduction in open space ratios, would not occur.

While the open space ratios observed in the future with the proposed project would be quantitatively low, this condition currently exists and would persist in the No Action Alternative. The substantial improvements to on-site private open space would not be provided in the No Action Alternative.

SHADOWS

As it would not involve new construction, the No Action Alternative would not cast any incremental shadow on the sunlight-sensitive resources in the shadow study area. The No Action Alternative would therefore avoid the proposed actions' significant adverse shadows impact on the Howard Bennett Playground on the December 21 analysis day.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) has determined that it has no archaeological concerns for the rezoning area; therefore, neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would have potential effects on archaeological resources. The No Action Alternative would not involve the demolition of the retail buildings on the Lenox Terrace site, and thus unlike the proposed actions would not result in any direct effects to architectural resources.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The No Action Alternative would not add any new buildings to the rezoning area, with the exception of the replacement retail at the northwest corner of the proposed development site. Neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would eliminate any significant publicly accessible view corridors or completely block public views to any visual resources, result in any substantial changes to the built environment of a historic district, or result in an area-wide rezoning. The proposed project's improvements to the pedestrian experience of the urban design

characteristics of the proposed development site would not occur under the No Action alternative. Overall, similar to the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in any significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

In the No Action Alternative, no change in use is anticipated within the rezoning area (including within the proposed development site, the projected future development site, and the potential development site). The No Action Alternative would not require remediation pursuant to the hazardous materials (E) Designations placed on the proposed development site, projected future development site, and potential development site; however, legal requirements, such as those relating to petroleum storage tank maintenance and handling and disposal of ACM, LBP and PCBs, would continue to be applicable. In either case, significant impacts with respect to hazardous materials are not expected.

WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

The proposed action's incremental water demand of approximately 564,360 gallons per day (gpd) would not occur under the No Action alternative. In neither case would there be any significant adverse impacts to the City's water supply.

The proposed actions would generate approximately 619,896 gpd of sanitary sewage (approximately 0.3 percent of the average daily flow at the Wards Island Wastewater Treatment Plant [WWTP]); however, this increase in volume would not exceed the capacity of the Wards Island WWTP. Neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would result in a significant adverse impact on the City's sanitary sewage treatment system.

Absent the proposed actions' replacement of impervious surface parking with landscaped green space, as well as the selected stormwater source control best management practices (BMPs) that would be required as part of the site connection approval process, the peak stormwater runoff rates would be greater in the No Action Alternative than with the proposed actions.

SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION SERVICES

While the No Action Alternative would generate less demand on New York City's solid waste and sanitation services, neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would adversely affect solid waste and sanitation services or place a significant burden on the City's solid waste management system.

ENERGY

Similar to the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts with respect to the transmission or generation of energy. While the No Action Alternative would not generate increased demands on New York City's energy services, the proposed actions incremental energy demand would be negligible when compared to the overall demand within Consolidated Edison (Con Edison)'s New York City and Westchester County service area.

TRANSPORTATION

Unlike the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in any significant adverse impacts with respect to transportation. Unlike the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse traffic impacts to four, one, two, and two

intersections in the weekday AM, midday, PM, and Saturday peak hours, respectively in 2023. Similarly, the No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse traffic impacts to five, three, three, and four intersections in the weekday AM, midday, PM, and Saturday peak hours in 2026. Similar to the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse transit impacts. With respect to pedestrians, the proposed actions' significant adverse impact to one crosswalk during the weekday AM, midday, PM, and Saturday peak hours in both 2023 and 2026 would not occur under the No Action Alternative. The proposed project's increase in off-street parking utilization would also not occur under the No Action Alternative.

AIR QUALITY

The No Action Alternative would result in fewer vehicle trips and less mobile source emissions than the proposed actions. Since no significant adverse mobile source air quality impacts are predicted due to the proposed actions, neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would result in a significant adverse impact related to mobile sources.

Under the No Action Alternative, stationary sources of emissions would be lower than with the proposed actions. The restrictions on the type of fuel for heating and hot water systems, the height and location of exhaust stacks, and equipment technology that would be put in place through the mapping of an (E) Designation for air quality on the proposed development site, the projected future development site, and the potential development site in the future with the proposed actions would not be required with the No Action Alternative. In either case, there would not be significant impacts with respect to air quality.

CLIMATE CHANGE

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In comparison to the future with the proposed actions, in the No Action Alternative there would be a minimal increase in energy use within the rezoning area, as well as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Building and on-road energy use and the associated GHG emissions would remain largely unchanged from existing conditions, and may be reduced over time due to changes in the mix of fuel used to produce electricity provided to building, fuels and technologies used for heating, and vehicle technology and fuel.

RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

In the No Action Alternative, the project area would be subject to the same future potential flood risk as in the future with the proposed project. As with the proposed project, in the No Action Alternative any resiliency measures required by law could be added in later years for existing buildings, if determined to be necessary to supplement any flood-protection efforts undertaken by the City to protect the proposed action's coastal area. These could include enhancements such as the addition of temporary or built-in flood protection.

NOISE

In the No Action Alternative, traffic volumes would increase due to background growth and trips associated with new development that would occur independent of the proposed actions, but there would be no increases due to vehicular trips associated with the proposed actions. As with the proposed actions, there would be no significant adverse noise impacts in the No Action Alternative, as neither scenario would generate sufficient traffic to cause a significant mobile

source noise impact. Further, the proposed buildings' mechanical systems (i.e., heating, venting, and air conditioning [HVAC] systems) would be designed to meet all applicable noise regulations and to avoid producing levels that would result in any significant increase in ambient noise levels. Therefore, neither the proposed actions nor the No Action Alternative would result in any significant adverse noise impacts related to building mechanical equipment.

In the With Action condition, due to existing high levels of ambient noise in the area, building attenuation would be required to ensure that interior noise levels meet CEQR criteria at all new construction. In the No Action Alternative, there would be no need for Noise (E) Designations to be placed on the proposed development site and the projected future development site to codify the required levels of window/wall attenuation.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Similar to the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts associated with neighborhood character. As with the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts in the areas of land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; urban design and visual resources; and noise. Unlike the proposed actions, the No Action Alternative would not result in unmitigated significant adverse impacts with respect to shadows and historic resources; however, neither of these impacts would result in a significant change to one of the determining elements of neighborhood character. The No Action Alternative would not result in the applicant's intended potential benefits to neighborhood character, including improving urban design conditions with streetscape elements intended to enliven the surrounding area and strengthen the street walls along Lenox and Fifth Avenues.

CONSTRUCTION

As no construction would occur within the rezoning area in the No Action Alternative, unlike the proposed actions, there would not be the potential for temporary significant adverse construction traffic, pedestrians, and noise impacts. With the No Action Alternative, there would be no need for construction measures to minimize the effects of the proposed projects on the nearby community.

C. NO UNMITIGATED SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS ALTERNATIVE

ALTERNATIVE IDENTIFICATION

In order to identify a No Unmitigated Significant Adverse Impact Alternative, the full range of impacts identified for the proposed projects was considered to determine what avoidance measures would be required for the different types of impacts.

The proposed actions' identified significant adverse impacts on traffic could be fully mitigated, and the impacts on shadows, open space, and historic resources could be partially mitigated, with the measures identified in Chapter 21, "Mitigation." As detailed in Chapter 21, "Mitigation," because the reduction in the active open space ratio in the 2026 With Action condition is close to 5 percent and the open space ratios in the study area would continue to be quantitatively low in the No Action and With Action conditions, the reduction in the open space ratio would be considered a significant adverse indirect impact in the 2026 analysis year. ~~Potential m~~ Mitigation

Lenox Terrace

~~measures for the shadows impact and the open space impact were developed these impacts are being explored by the applicant in consultation with DCP and NYC Parks, and mitigation measures for the historic resources impact were developed in consultation with LPC. With the implementation of these mitigation measures, the shadows, open space, and historic resources impacts would be considered other responsible agencies, and if practicable will be refined between the DEIS and FEIS; however, if feasible mitigation measures are not identified for open space, shadows, and historic resources, the impacts would be considered unmitigated or partially mitigated. The potential for a direct significant adverse impact on the S/NR-eligible Lenox Terrace historic resource during construction of the projected future development site and the potential development site could not be avoided, as these sites are not under the control of the applicant. In addition, the proposed actions are anticipated to have significant adverse impacts that may not be mitigated in the areas of pedestrians and construction-period pedestrian and noise conditions. Therefore, these technical areas are considered below.~~

OPEN SPACE

~~In the event mitigation is not identified for the project's open space ratio impact, a reduction in the size of the project would be required to eliminate the impact. While an open space ratio impact was identified in the Phase 2 With Action condition (2026), an impact was not identified for the Phase 1 With Action condition (2023). As proposed, the project is assumed to provide approximately 1,711 dwelling units. In order to eliminate the bring the project's open space ratio impact incremental opens space ratio reduction to under 4 percent, the number of units would need to be reduced to the approximately 1,350 dwelling units Phase 1 (2023) level, to approximately 1,094 dwelling units.~~

PEDESTRIANS

The proposed project would have an unmitigated impact on the south crosswalk at the intersection of West 135th Street and Lenox Avenue. As the impact was unmitigated for both the Phase 1 and the Phase 2 conditions, the incremental trips at the south crosswalk would have to be reduced by 85 percent (i.e., the number of dwelling units would need to be reduced to approximately 120 dwelling units) in order to avoid this unmitigatable impact. Therefore, no reasonable alternative could be developed to avoid the crosswalk impact without substantially compromising the proposed project's stated goals.

CONSTRUCTION

PEDESTRIANS

During Phase 1 and Phase 2 construction, the project would similarly have an unmitigated impact on the south crosswalk at the intersection of West 135th Street and Lenox Avenue. During Phase 1 construction, the number of construction workers would have to be reduced by approximately 11 percent in order to avoid this unmitigatable impact. During Phase 2 construction, accounting for operational trips that would have materialized as a result of Phase 1 of the proposed project, the cumulative project generated increment of trips (combination of Phase 1 operational trips and Phase 2 construction worker trips) would have to be reduced by approximately 67 percent in order to avoid this unmitigatable impact. Therefore, no reasonable alternative could be developed to avoid the crosswalk impact during construction without substantially compromising the proposed project's stated goals.

NOISE

The detailed analysis of construction noise concluded that construction of the proposed project has the potential to result in noise levels that would exceed the *CEQR Technical Manual* impact criteria for an extended period of time at existing residential buildings within the rezoning area (i.e., 470 Lenox Avenue, 40 West 135th Street, 10 West 135th Street, 2186 Fifth Avenue, 25 West 132nd Street, and 45 West 132nd Street), Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, Harlem Hospital Center, 2235 Fifth Avenue, 2120 and 2140 Madison Avenue, 485 Malcolm X Boulevard, Receptors along the South Side of West 132nd Street between Lenox Avenue and 45 West 132nd Street, and Receptors along the South Side of West 132nd Street between 25 West 132nd Street and Fifth Avenue. Construction noise levels of this magnitude and duration would constitute a significant adverse impact. Based on field observations, some of these buildings have insulated glass windows and alternate means of ventilation (i.e., air conditioning). Even with these measures, buildings with these constructions would be expected to experience interior $L_{10(1)}$ values greater than the 45 dBA guideline recommended for residential and community spaces according to CEQR noise exposure guidelines. Older buildings that do not include insulated windows and alternate means of ventilation would be expected to experience higher interior noise levels. Source or path controls beyond those already identified for the construction of the proposed project would not be effective in reducing the level of construction noise at the receptors that have the potential to experience significant adverse construction noise impacts.

Therefore, no reasonable alternative could be developed to avoid temporary construction noise impacts without substantially compromising the proposed project's stated goals. *