

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential adverse impacts of the Proposed Project on urban design and visual resources. As described in greater detail in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the Proposed Project is a commercial center with associated parking, open space, and street and infrastructure improvements.

As defined in the *2014 City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, urban design is the totality of components that may affect a pedestrian’s experience of public space. These components include streets, buildings, visual resources, open spaces, natural resources, and wind. The *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines call for a preliminary assessment of physical alterations that may be visible from the pedestrian perspective when a urban design related approvals are required (e.g., modifications of yard, height, and setback requirements, or increases in built floor area above what is otherwise as-of-right) Since the Proposed Project requires zoning actions including a modification of height and a special permit for the proposed retail center bulk in an M1 district, a preliminary assessment of potential impacts related to urban design and visual character is provided below.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS*INTRODUCTION*

As described in greater detail below, the conclusion of this preliminary urban design and visual resources assessment is that the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources or the pedestrian experience of the built and natural environment. Therefore, no further analysis of urban design and visual resources impacts is warranted.

*URBAN DESIGN**Project Site*

The Proposed Project would be constructed on a waterfront site that is mostly vacant and wooded or previously disturbed and generally slopes down to the Arthur Kill. The Proposed Project includes a single building with both individual and interconnected commercial spaces that would be constructed above a common below-grade garage and behind existing development that fronts Arthur Kill Road. The proposed above-grade commercial spaces would be oriented along the westward extension of Richmond Valley Road and the proposed internal private drives. The tallest element of the Proposed Project is proposed in the center of the tax block and would be about 96 feet above grade. All of the proposed exterior walls are proposed to be finished with glass and wood cladding panels and an undulating roof is also proposed.

With the Proposed Project, Richmond Valley Road would be extended westward as a public street from Arthur Kill Road to the waterfront thereby providing new visual and pedestrian access to the water. Pedestrian access into the Proposed Project and the waterfront would also be provided with new sidewalks along Arthur Kill Road and the internal private drives. Waterfront open space, including a publicly accessible walkway, is proposed along the Arthur Kill waterfront that would open up new waterfront views. A natural area is to be provided on the northern portion of the Project Site. Shorelines along both the Arthur Kill and Mill Creek would be landscaped with wetland restoration.

Study Area

The Proposed Project does not require the closure of any streets; rather, a new public street and private drives are proposed that would create new public view corridors across the Project Site to the waterfront.

The proposed above-grade commercial spaces would not be inconsistent with the existing commercial building footprints in the study area, or the larger commercial and industrial developments along Arthur Kill Road and Richmond Valley Road. Thus, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the current visual context and street experience along these corridors.

While much of the building would be about 57 feet above grade (slightly taller than the existing approximately 32-foot-tall, 2½-story Cole House), the proposed maximum height of the development, at 96 feet, would be taller than most of the existing buildings in the study area; however, it would also be setback about 300 feet from Arthur Kill Road with intervening off-site structures that would reduce the perceived height of the proposed taller structural elements in views along Arthur Kill Road and from the surrounding area.

Since much of the Proposed Project would be located behind existing commercial and light industrial buildings fronting Arthur Kill Road, its visual presence in existing view corridors would be limited and the Proposed Project would not conflict with the urban scale of the study area. The Proposed Project has also been designed in consideration of its waterfront setting, with longer and low-rise commercial spaces along the east/west street corridors towards the water and green roofs with an undulating design that references the nearby coastal landscape.

Public sidewalks into the site would also open new pedestrian connections from Arthur Kill Road to the waterfront in an area that currently has few pedestrian amenities.

For the above reasons, it is concluded that the Proposed Project would not result in any adverse impacts on urban design. Rather, the new pedestrian walkways through the Proposed Project, including those to and along the waterfront, would provide new public access to the waterfront.

VISUAL RESOURCES AND VIEW CORRIDORS

Project Site

Given the site topography and setback of the tallest elements of the Proposed Project from Arthur Kill Road, it is concluded that the Proposed Project would not adversely impact views from the pedestrian perspective along Arthur Kill Road. Although the setting of the Cole House would change from wooded to developed, the Cole House, with its front lawn, stone retaining wall, and large tree, would remain in views along Arthur Kill Road and integrated to the Proposed Project.

Currently, there are currently no public views of the waterfront from Arthur Kill or Richmond Valley Roads, or from the Project Site; however, the Proposed Project would create a new public view corridor along Richmond Valley Road, with waterfront views provided from multiple site locations, including the proposed waterfront publicly accessible walkway. The Proposed Project waterfront open spaces would therefore provide new public waterfront access locations to enjoy panoramic views of the Arthur Kill waterway and the Outerbridge Crossing, both of which are significant visual resources. Presently there are no such public views of these resources from the Project Site.

Study Area

Currently, views to the Outerbridge Crossing from around the Proposed Project site are largely obstructed due to existing buildings and vegetation along the west side of Arthur Kill Road. As stated above, the Proposed Project's waterfront open space, including the publicly accessible walkway, would provide new and public views to the Outerbridge Crossing and the Arthur Kill waterway. A partially obstructed view of the Outerbridge Crossing currently available from Arthur Kill Road may be somewhat obstructed by the Proposed Project buildings; however, this particular view is currently limited and is not a significant publicly accessible view. Views of the Outerbridge Crossing from other locations in the study area would also not be altered.

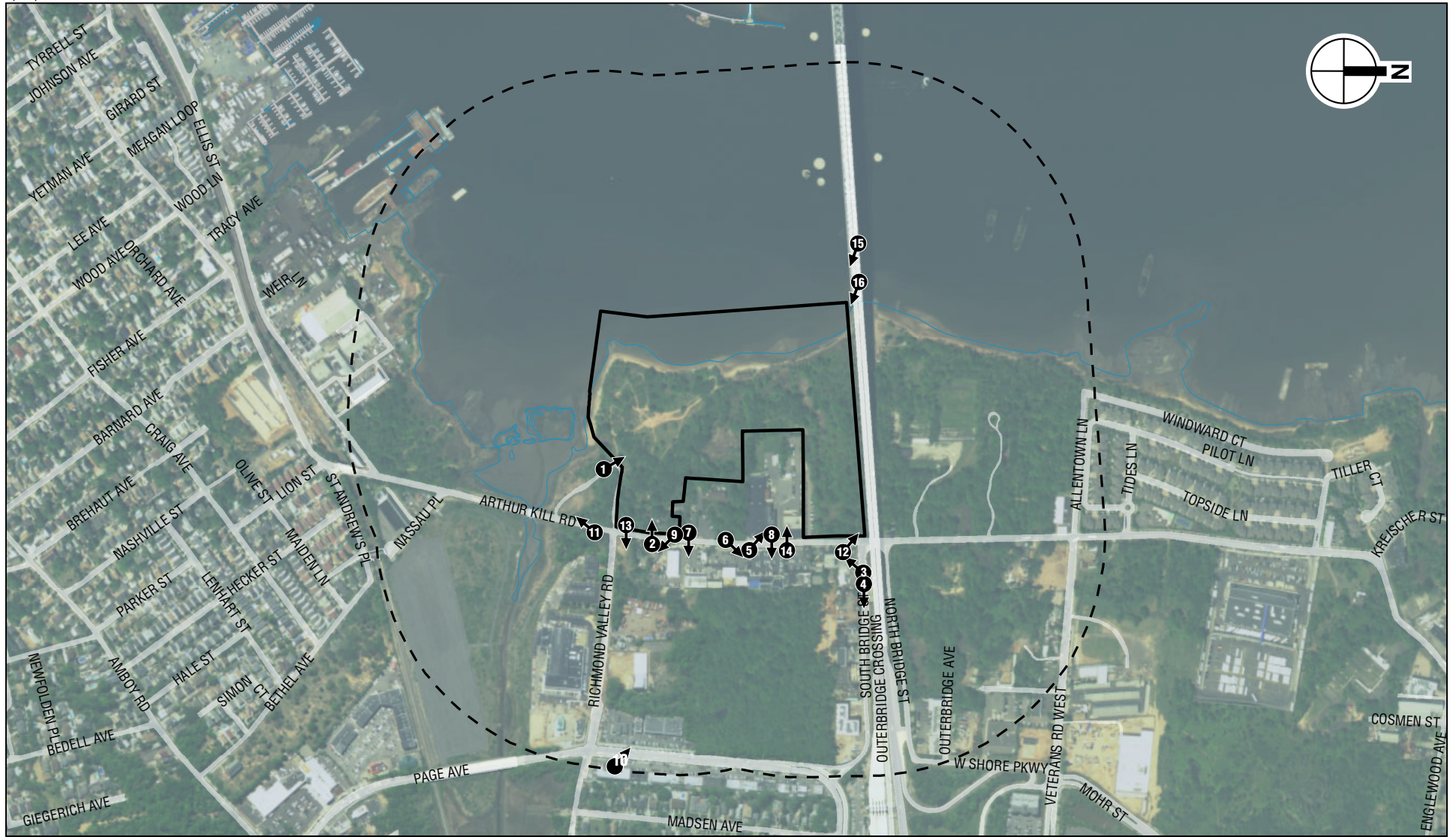
In sum, the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts on urban design or visual character, including both the built and natural environment or the pedestrian experience.




B. METHODOLOGY

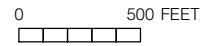
According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning. Examples include projects that permit the modification of yard, height, and setback requirements, and projects that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed as-of-right or in the future without the Proposed Project. As the Proposed Project would require bulk modifications on a waterfront site and height waivers, the Proposed Project meets the threshold for a preliminary assessment of potential impacts to urban design and visual resources.

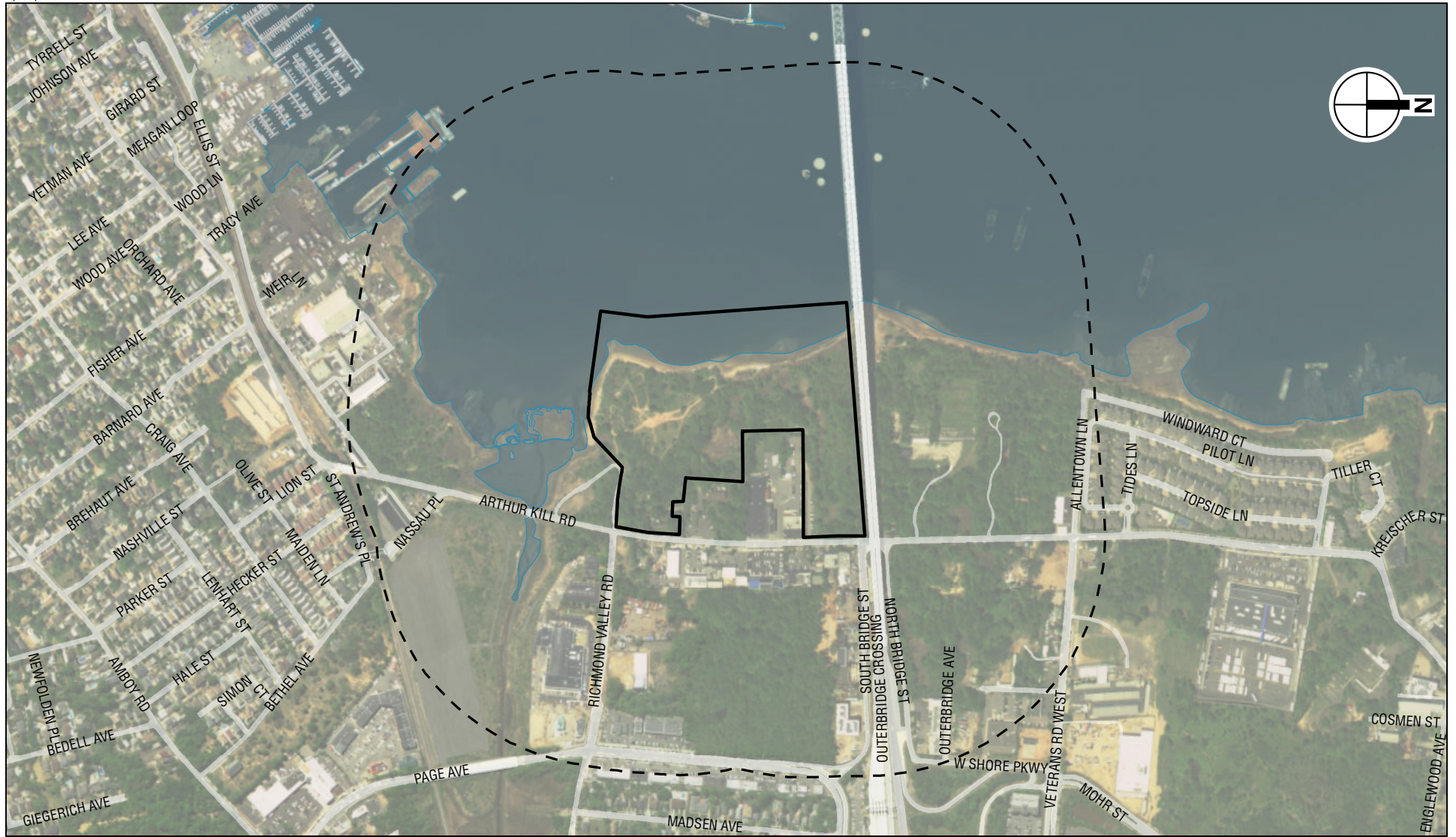
According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the study area for urban design is the area where the project may influence land use patterns and the built environment, and is generally consistent with that used for the land use, zoning, and public policy analysis. Therefore, the study area for this urban design and visual resources analysis has been defined as a ¼-mile radius around the Project Site (see **Figures 7-1 and 7-2**).

The *CEQR Technical Manual* recommends an analysis of pedestrian wind conditions for projects that would result in the construction of large buildings at locations that experience high wind conditions (such as along the waterfront, or other locations where winds from the waterfront are not attenuated by buildings or natural features), which may result in an exacerbation of wind conditions due to "channelization" or "downwash" effects that may affect pedestrian safety. The Proposed Project would not result in the construction of tall buildings on the waterfront that would affect wind conditions; therefore, a pedestrian wind condition analysis is not warranted.

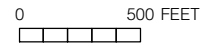


-  Proposed Development Site
-  Study Area (1/4-Mile boundary)
-  Photograph View Direction and Reference Number





- Proposed Development Site
- Study Area (1/4-Mile boundary)



C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

URBAN DESIGN

PROJECT SITE

The proposed Project Site is generally bounded by the Outerbridge Crossing to the north, Arthur Kill Road to the east, Richmond Valley Road and the shoreline of Mill Creek to the south, and the Arthur Kill waterway to the west. With the exception of the one- to two-and-a-half-story (approximately 32 feet tall), single-family frame Cole House, the Project Site is vacant and wooded with some evidence of urban debris. The topography is generally flat with a gentle slope towards the Arthur Kill (see views 1 and 2 of **Figure 7-3**). The Cole House fronts on Arthur Kill Road, and is set back from the street behind a front lawn with trees, with a stone retaining wall near the street.

Except for approximately 350 feet of frontage immediately north of Richmond Valley Road, the Project Site is set back from Arthur Kill Road. Currently, the Project Site is inaccessible from Arthur Kill Road.

STUDY AREA

The study area street network is defined by three corridors that converge in the northern portion of the study area (see Figures 7-1 and 7-2). Arthur Kill Road is a north-south street located in the central portion of the study area; Page Avenue, a north-south street located in the eastern portion of the study area, and the ramp of the Outerbridge Crossing is an east-west corridor located in the northern portion of the study area. The majority of the blocks in the study area west of Arthur Kill Road are irregularly shaped due to the jagged shoreline of the Arthur Kill waterway; the blocks in the study area east of Arthur Kill Road are somewhat more regularly shaped but not strictly rectangular, and are influenced by the angle of surrounding roadways. The topography of the study area slopes slightly downward from north to south. The southward slope combined with the western curve of Arthur Kill Road south of Richmond Valley Road limits some views north of the Project Site.

Overall, the urban design character of the study area is characterized by commercial, light industrial, and residential uses in a setting that is heavily vegetated in many places and very low in density, with significant amounts of vacant land. These commercial and light industrial uses are housed predominantly in one- to four-story, more recently built, buildings that cover roughly one-quarter to one-half of their lots located on Arthur Kill Road and South Bridge Street. These buildings are strip mall and shopping center developments containing free standing or attached buildings of different sizes and clad in a variety of materials including brick, glass, and concrete. The buildings mostly have flat roofs. They are set back from Arthur Kill Road and South Bridge Street at varying distances, typically fronted or surrounded by paved parking lots. There are also a few older two-and-a-half-story, vinyl-clad residences in the southeastern portion of the study area. At the northwestern corner of the study area is a newer, gated community of semi-attached 2-story houses.

The commercial buildings located in the study area on the south side of South Bridge Street primarily consist of rectangular, one-story, masonry-clad buildings set back from the street behind chain-link fencing and surface parking (see view 3 of **Figure 7-4**). The north side of South Bridge Street is dominated by the elevated ramp and bridge supports of the Outerbridge



View northwest of the project site from the portion of Richmond Valley Road located adjacent to the project site

1



View west of the residence at 4927 Arthur Kill Road located on the Project Site

2



View southwest of the buildings on South Bridge Street 3



View east of the elevated ramp of the Outerbridge Crossing on South Bridge Street 4

Crossing (see view 4 of **Figure 7-4**). Overall, the lack of street trees and lack of a contiguous sidewalk, the chain-link fencing, and the elevated ramp do not create an inviting pedestrian experience on the portion of South Bridge Street located in the study area.

Similar to South Bridge Street, the buildings located on Arthur Kill Road are generally rectangular, one- to four-story commercial buildings set back from the street behind fencing, some limited landscaping, and surface parking (see views 5 and 6 of **Figure 7-5**). These buildings are set back at irregular distances from Arthur Kill Road, clad in a variety of materials including concrete, brick, and glass, and generally present a hodgepodge of designs and architectural treatments. The pedestrian walkability of the area is limited, as sidewalks are also sporadic and inconsistent on Arthur Kill Road.

The portion of the study area immediately adjacent to the Project Site (located along Arthur Kill Road between the Outerbridge Crossing and Richmond Valley Road) contains commercial and light industrial uses. These include a veterinary hospital, a medical imaging facility, and a beverage warehouse and distribution facility, that are surrounded by paved parking lots and some landscaped areas (see view 5 of **Figure 7-5**). The beverage warehouse and distribution facility has a large rectangular footprint, and is oriented with its short (east) end fronting on Arthur Kill Road.

The east side of Arthur Kill Road is developed primarily with shopping centers that contain retail uses, small eateries, and commercial offices. These buildings are typically connected to one another, forming a long strip of connecting structures with a long and varied footprint. The buildings include a small shopping center comprised of one-story, white cinderblock buildings with blue awnings and dark-glazed floor to ceiling windows situated around a central parking area is located on the east side of Arthur Kill Road north of Richmond Valley Road (see view 7 of **Figure 7-6**). In addition, a recently constructed four-story commercial building with a contemporary glazed facade set back behind a large paved parking lot is also located on the east side of Arthur Kill Road (see view 8 of **Figure 7-6**).

Two two-and-a-half-story older, vinyl-clad residences with peaked roofs are located on the east side of Arthur Kill Road immediately north of Richmond Valley Road (see view 9 of **Figure 7-7**). The residences are set back from the road behind grassy lawns or fences. As the buildings along Arthur Kill Road are set back at varying distances and include free-standing structures, they do not form a continuous streetwall. Small street trees line portions of both sides of the road (see views 5 and 6 of **Figure 7-5**). On the south side of Richmond Valley Road east of Arthur Kill Road, there is a roller rink, in a one-story, very large footprint building set back from the street and surrounded by a large surface parking lot.

Page Avenue north of Richmond Valley Road is developed primarily with retail uses in a long, narrow strip of connecting structures on the east side of the roadway. The structures are set back from the avenue behind surface parking areas (see view 10 of **Figure 7-7**). South of Richmond Valley Road, there is little development on either side of the avenue.

The interior of the large block bounded by South Bridge Street, Page Avenue, Richmond Valley Road and Arthur Kill Road is undeveloped, as is the majority of the block roughly bounded by Veterans Road West, West Shore Parkway, North Bridge Street, and Arthur Kill Road. South of Richmond Valley Road, there is no development on the west side of Arthur Kill Avenue until past its intersection with Ellis Street (see view 11 of **Figure 7-8**). Between Arthur Kill Road and Page Avenue, south of Mill Creek is a large, vacant parcel of land with a very large asphalt-paved area, and at the far southwestern corner of the study area there is a large area used for



View northwest of the one-story, masonry-clad buildings on Arthur Kill Road 5



View northeast of the one- and two-story buildings set back from Arthur Kill Road behind fencing and surface parking 6



View east of the small shopping center on Arthur Kill Road 7



View west of the new, contemporary building located on the east side of Arthur Kill Road 8



View southeast of the residence at 4924 Arthur Kill Road 9



Page Avenue, west side, looking northwest from near Richmond Valley Road 10



Arthur Kill Road, view to Mill Creek south of Richmond Valley Road 11



Outerbridge Crossing and transportation signage, view north from Arthur Kill Road 12

surface parking, to the rear of several commercial and industrial buildings with large footprints, set back from the lot line along Ellis Street. The Staten Island Railroad rail line runs through mid-blocks at the southern edge of the study area, just south of Ellis Street, and the Nassau rail station is located at the eastern terminus of Nassau Place, east of Arthur Kill Road. The Nassau station is a utilitarian structure of corrugated metal, which spans the rail line to provide access to areas both north and south.

Few of the roadways in the study area have sidewalks, and thus there is little existing opportunity for a pedestrian experience. Power lines extend above and parallel to most of the roadways in the study area, and the roadways closest to the Outerbridge Crossing have standard large, green transportation signage above them on gantries (see view 12 of **Figure 7-8**). As few buildings in the study area are built to the street line, there are almost no streetwalls in the study area.

The Arthur Kill waterway is a natural resource in the study area. There are no public parks in the study area. However, greenery in the study area includes grassy lawns around the few residences in the study area, street trees, and tree-filled, heavily vegetated vacant lots (see view 9 of **Figure 7-7** and view 13 of **Figure 7-9**).

VISUAL RESOURCES AND VIEW CORRIDORS

PROJECT SITE

As defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, “a visual resource is the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings, or natural resources (p. 10-1).” The shoreline frontage of the Project Site along the Arthur Kill could provide expansive views of the waterway, the Outerbridge Crossing, and the New Jersey shoreline. However, this land is not currently publicly accessible.

STUDY AREA

The Outerbridge Crossing, a historic resource, is considered a visual resource in the study area as it crosses the Arthur Kill (see Chapter 5, “Historic and Cultural Resources,” for a detailed description of this resource). Views of the Outerbridge Crossing from within the study area are primarily limited to the landside portions of the structure, which include the ramp and bridge supports (see views 4 and 5 of **Figures 7-4** and **7-5**). Due to the buildings and vegetation along Arthur Kill Road, public views of the cantilever steel truss of the Outerbridge Crossing as it spans over the Arthur Kill are brief and limited. These consist of partial views of the structure that are available from the portion of Arthur Kill Road approximately 425 feet south of South Bridge Street, viewed in context with the commercial buildings on Arthur Kill Road (see view 14 of **Figure 7-9**). More distant views of the cantilever steel truss are available from the elevated portion of Page Avenue, as it passes over Mill Creek and the Staten Island Railway at the southeastern edge of the study area.

Although the Arthur Kill waterway is a visual resource in the study area, views to the waterway are mostly limited, due to the buildings and vegetation along Arthur Kill Road. There are some views to the waterway—as well as the Outerbridge Crossing span—where Arthur Kill Road crosses over the point where the Arthur Kill and Mill Creek converge, and at the western terminus of Allentown Lane, at the northwestern edge of the study area. Views of the waterway from the portion of the Outerbridge Crossing located within the study area are mostly obscured



View east of the vacant lot located on the northeast corner of Arthur Kill Road and Richmond Valley Road 13



View west of the truss of the Outerbridge Crossing from Arthur Kill Road 14

by the metal railings along the base of the truss and the concrete wall along the edge of the bridge (see views 15 and 16 of **Figure 7-10**).

D. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

PROJECT SITE

In the No Action condition, it is assumed that the Project Site would not be altered and conditions would remain unchanged.

STUDY AREA

As discussed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy,” there are nine planned development projects in and just outside the ¼-mile study area that are expected to be built by the 2019 analysis year. These are almost exclusively commercial, and include the construction of a three-story, 14,674-square-foot retail extension to the rear of an existing two-story building at 4830 Arthur Kill Road, on the west side of the street, and the construction of a one-story 11,707-square-foot retail building on a vacant lot located at 4885-4895 Arthur Kill Road, just south of South Bridge Street. The proposed developments are anticipated to be consistent with the commercial character and scale of buildings in the study area.

E. THE FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT

URBAN DESIGN

PROJECT SITE

As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the Proposed Project would result in the construction of a commercial center containing destination and smaller scale retail, supermarket, restaurant, cinema, and small office use as well as 1,721 accessory parking spaces (see Chapter 1, “Project Description,” and **Figures 7-11 through 7-13**). The Proposed Project would consist of a single building with individual and interconnected buildings that would largely be constructed behind the existing development on Arthur Kill Road, on land that slopes down to the water from Arthur Kill Road, further obscuring it from pedestrian view. The proposed commercial spaces would have large, long, and relatively narrow floorplates that would be oriented north-south on the Project Site, with the exception of two commercial spaces that would be arranged in an east–west configuration at the south end of the Project Site.

Approximately 90 linear feet of the southern wing of the Proposed Project would front Arthur Kill Road at the south end of the Project Site. This part of the Proposed Project would be set back approximately 40 feet south and 30 to 47 feet west of the Cole House, which would remain as part of the Proposed Project (see **Figures 7-14 through 7-16**). The area south of the Cole House would provide public sidewalks along Richmond Valley Road that would lead into the commercial center and to the waterfront, with an entry plaza at Arthur Kill Road. The rectangular south wing would extend west to the rear portion of the property. The cinema located in the interior portion of the tax block would be approximately 96 feet tall. The Proposed Project’s walls would be primarily glass and wood cladding panels with undulating green roofs.

Richmond Valley Road would be extended from Arthur Kill Road to the waterfront. The newly built section of Richmond Valley Road would be a public street that would connect to an



15



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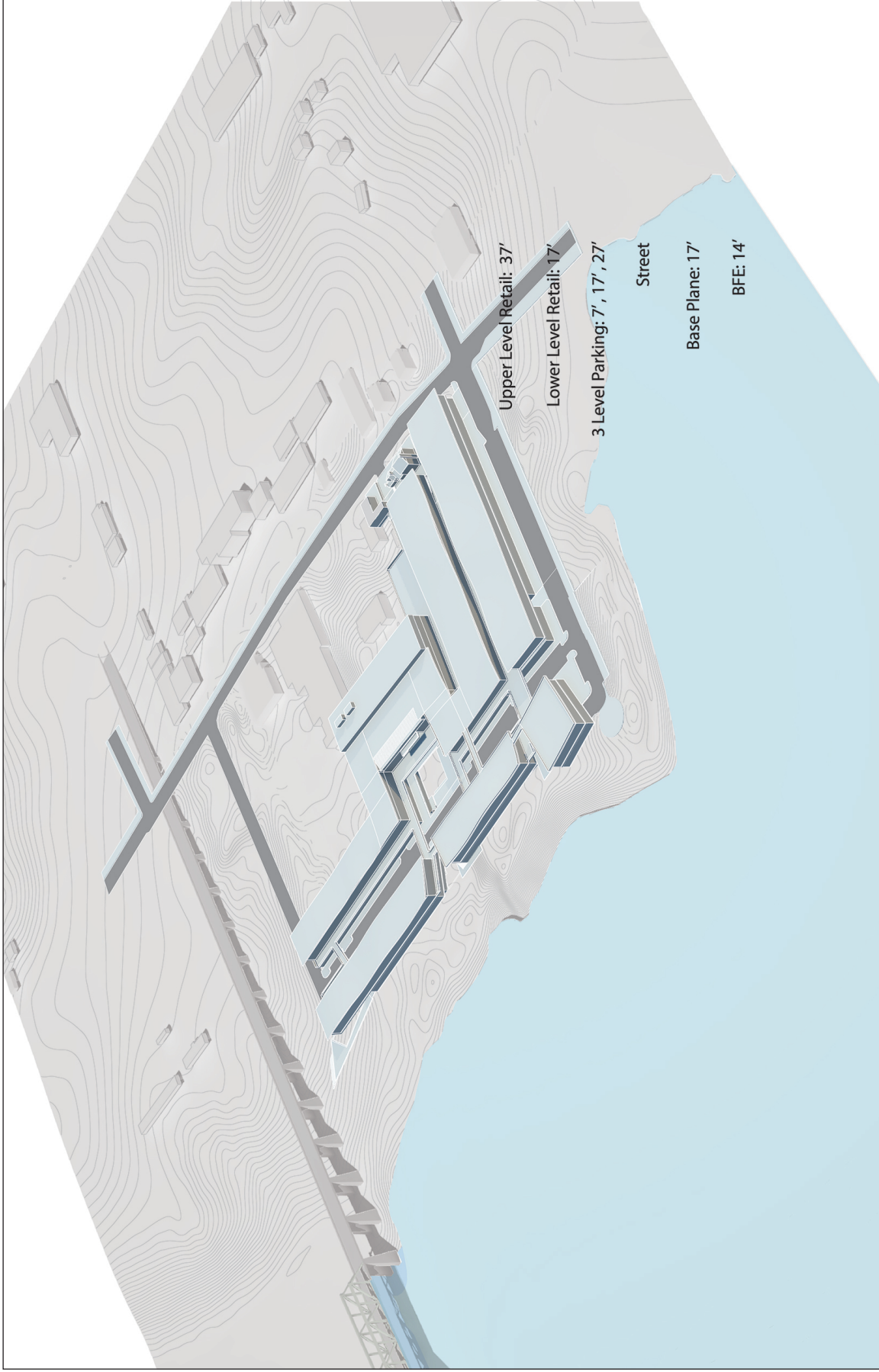
Urban Design and Visual Resources
Study Area - View southeast of the Project Site from
the Outerbridge Crossing

Figure 7-10



Illustrative Site Plan

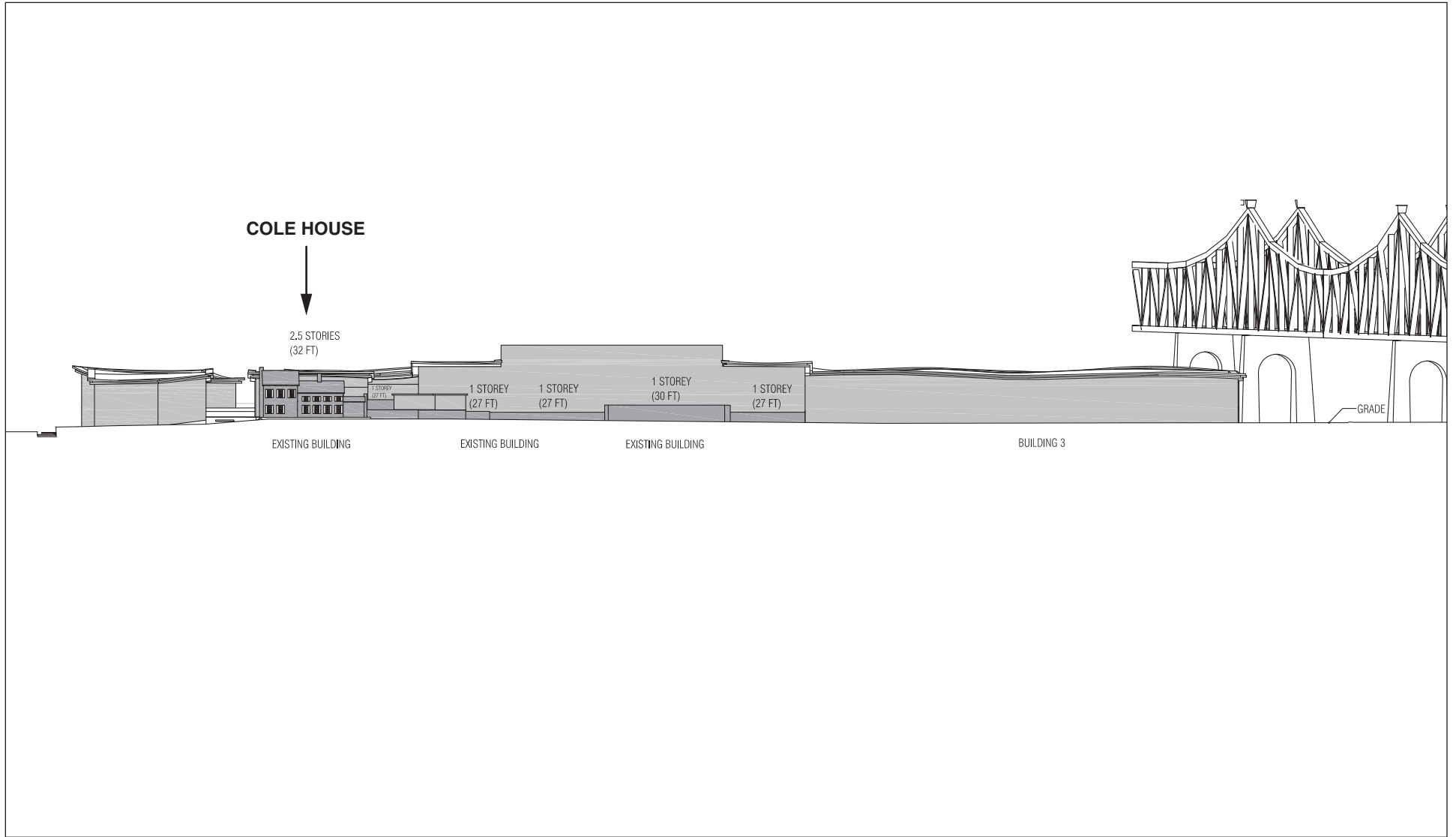
Figure 7-11



Illustrative Massing
Figure 7-12



Aerial Rendering, View from South
Figure 7-13





Existing and Proposed View **A**



NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Proposed View **B**

Existing and Proposed
View West at Intersection of
Arthur Kill Road and Richmond Valley Road
Figure 7-15



Existing/No Action Condition 1



NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Illustrative Rendering, Proposed Project 2



Existing/No Action Condition 1



NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Illustrative Rendering, Proposed Project 2

internal north-south private drive that would extend to the northern development limit, where it would turn at a 45 degree angle to the east and terminate at the proposed signalized intersection with Arthur Kill Road at the northern boundary of the Project Site. A two-story wing and the taller cinema would be located on the east side of the north-south access road and three two-story commercial spaces would be located on the west side of the north-south access road.

Pedestrian access into the Proposed Project would be provided with new sidewalks along Arthur Kill Road and Richmond Valley Road and also along the proposed private drives that are internal to the Project Site. Pedestrian access would be provided from these sidewalks to the proposed waterfront publicly accessible walkway. Approximately 6.84 acres of the Project Site would be preserved as part of the Proposed Project, which would also provide approximately 3.75 acres of waterfront open space along the Arthur Kill waterfront. The proposed waterfront open space would include a publicly accessible walkway extending the north-south length of the Arthur Kill waterfront from the northern edge of the Proposed Project to the Mill Creek waterfront (see **Figure 7-17**). This area would also include landscaping improvements and wetlands improvements along the shore line. That portion of the Mill Creek waterfront within the Applicant's control would also include landscaping improvements and wetland enhancements along the shore line. The proposed waterfront open space would complement the Proposed Project and would provide a new public amenity on the Project Site.

STUDY AREA

The Proposed Project would be located on existing blocks and would not result in the removal of existing streets in the study area. Richmond Valley Road would be extended west of Arthur Kill Road, with a new private drive constructed through the development connecting Richmond Valley Road and Arthur Kill Road. The new private drives and build-out of Richmond Valley Road would not substantially affect the street grid or orientation and arrangement of the existing streets in the study area.

As described above, while the Proposed Project would replace wooded parcels with a number of commercial spaces containing primarily retail and restaurant uses, the proposed land uses would be consistent with those found within the study area, which includes numerous retail and shopping centers. Though the proposed building would have a large footprint, the size of existing building footprints vary considerably in the study area, from the single-family and semi-attached housing to the large shopping center developments and other commercial and industrial uses on Arthur Kill Road, on the south side of Richmond Valley Road and at the southwest corner of the study area. Therefore, the size of the building would not be expected to adversely impact the urban design character of the area, or the experience of the pedestrian.

While most of the Proposed Project would be about 57 feet above grade, the proposed maximum height of the development, at 96 feet for the central building containing the supermarket and cinema, would be taller than the height of the existing buildings in the study area; however, as has been described above, the slope downward within the Project Site from east to west and the set back from Arthur Kill Road and with intervening structures would limit the perceived height of the proposed taller structural elements from the pedestrian perspective along Arthur Kill Road and from the surrounding area.

The proposed entry plaza and the pedestrian walkway to be constructed from Arthur Kill Road to the waterfront south of the Cole House, as well as the new sidewalks on Arthur Kill Road and Richmond Valley Road, would provide a new positive urban design feature for the study area. As described above, the study area has few pedestrian amenities and the construction of

consistent and complete sidewalks and a walkway providing a linkage to the waterfront would result in a positive impact on the pedestrian experience.

As much of the Proposed Project would be located behind existing commercial and light industrial buildings on Arthur Kill Road, the visual presence of this development within the study area would be minimized, and the Proposed Project would not noticeably change the scale of buildings from the perspective of the pedestrian. The Proposed Project has also been designed to respect the waterfront setting, consisting of longer and lower commercial spaces, instead of smaller floorplates but greater heights, and with green roofs that have an undulating design that reference the surrounding landscape and waterfront location.

Per CEQR guidelines, the Proposed Project would not result in substantial changes to the built environment of a historic district or to the components of the historic building that contribute to the resource's historic significance. The Proposed Project would not involve an area-wide rezoning or a general large scale development.

Therefore, it is concluded that the Proposed Project would not be anticipated to significantly adversely affect the urban design features of the study area, and would not adversely impact the pedestrian experience.

VISUAL RESOURCES AND VIEW CORRIDORS

PROJECT SITE

The Proposed Project would create new visual corridor along Richmond Valley Road and along the private drive on the northern portion of the proposed development area. In addition, the Proposed Project would also provide a publicly accessible waterfront walkway and multiple elevated walkways that would provide multiple locations from which the Arthur Kill, New Jersey waterfront, and the Outerbridge Crossing would be seen from the Project Site. Literal compliance with all of the view corridor and waterfront access requirements of the NYC Zoning Resolution would not be possible given the physical shape and configuration of the Project Site, including the presence of outparcels between the Project Site and Arthur Kill Road. However, even with the minor waivers that would be sought, the Proposed Project would create very substantial increases in the opportunity for the public to view Arthur Kill, the New Jersey waterfront, and the Outerbridge Crossing.

The two-story southern wing of the proposed building, which would front Arthur Kill Road at the south end of the Project Site would be approximately 57 feet tall. Given the downward slope of Arthur Kill Road to the south, this proposed 57-foot-high project element would appear to be about the same height as the approximately 32-foot-high, 2½-story Cole House. In addition, the 96-foot-tall portion of the new development would be set back approximately 300 feet west of Arthur Kill Road. Therefore, given the site topography and set back of the tallest elements of the Proposed Project from Arthur Kill Road, it is concluded that the Proposed Project would not adversely impact views from the pedestrian perspective along Arthur Kill Road (see Figure 7-15). Although the backdrop to the Cole House would change from a wooded to a developed setting, the Cole House would remain, with its front lawn, stone retaining wall, preserved tree, and its relationship with Arthur Kill Road would be maintained (see Figures 7-11 and 7-15).

As described above, the Proposed Project would result in new open space, including a publicly accessible walkway along the waterfront. The proposed open space would provide new locations for panoramic views to the Arthur Kill, New Jersey shore line, and the Outerbridge Crossing,

significant visual resources where presently no such public views are available on the Project Site (see Figure 7-16). The proposed open space would provide a significant visual amenity on the Project Site that would have a positive impact on visual resources.

STUDY AREA

As described above, views to the Outerbridge Crossing as it crosses the Arthur Kill are largely obstructed in the study area due to existing buildings and vegetation along the west side of Arthur Kill Road. It is anticipated that the brief and partially obstructed views of the Outerbridge Crossing truss available between two structures on Arthur Kill Road may be further obstructed by the Proposed Project; however, this particular view is limited, sporadic, and not a significant publicly-accessible view. The views of the Outerbridge Crossing from the elevated portion of Page Avenue at the southeastern corner of the study area, and of the Outerbridge Crossing and the Arthur Kill waterway from Allentown Lane at the northwestern corner of the study area, would not be altered.

As has been described above, the proposed waterfront open space, including the publicly accessible walkway, would provide new and expansive views to the Outerbridge Crossing as well as to the Arthur Kill. Views of the Arthur Kill waterway from the Outerbridge Crossing would not be negatively affected by the Proposed Project. These partially obstructed views of the waterway would remain available, in context with the Proposed Project located to the east. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have significant adverse impacts on visual resources in the study area.

In sum, this preliminary assessment concludes that the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts on urban design or visual resources, or the pedestrian experience of these characteristics of the built and natural environment, and therefore no further analysis is warranted. *