

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential of the Proposed Actions to impact the urban design characteristics and visual resources of the Project Area and surrounding study area. The completion of the Academic Mixed-Use Development in Subdistrict A would result in development that differs in use, height, bulk, form, materials, and arrangement from that currently existing in the Project Area. The proposed rezoning of Subdistricts B, C, and the Other Areas is also expected to result in new and different development—albeit generally at a smaller scale. Therefore, an urban design and visual resources analysis is appropriate.

This chapter has been prepared in accordance with City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), which require that City and State agencies, respectively, consider the effects of their actions on urban design and visual resources. The technical analysis follows the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*. As defined in the manual, urban design components and visual resources determine the “look” of a neighborhood—its physical appearance, including the street pattern, the size and shape of buildings, their arrangement on blocks, streetscape features, natural resources, and noteworthy views that may give an area a distinctive character. The following analysis addresses each of these characteristics for existing conditions and the future without and with the Proposed Actions for two analysis years, 2015 and 2030.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

In sum, the Proposed Actions would not have significant adverse impacts on the urban design and visual resources of the Project Area and study area.

URBAN DESIGN

The Proposed Actions would positively affect the Project Area’s urban design in both the 2015 and 2030 analysis years. Urban design controls of the Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District would promote a consistent design for the Academic Mixed-Use Development through a coordinated development plan that would include mandatory widened sidewalks, controls on maximum building heights, mandatory streetwall requirements, and pedestrian improvements in the Project Area. The pedestrian improvements include widened sidewalks with permitted landscaping, north–south midblock open areas and other publicly accessible open spaces, including a large through-block landscaped area (the Square) between West 130th and West 131st Streets, an open space on the north side of West 129th Street (the Small Square), and an east–west midblock open area at West 132nd Street between Broadway and Old Broadway. Required active ground-floor uses and glazed, transparent storefronts required under the proposed zoning would provide street-level visual interest, pedestrian activity, and neighborhood amenities along Twelfth Avenue, Broadway, and West 125th Street. With the Proposed Actions, there would also be mandatory streetwalls, maximum buildings heights, and required active

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ground-floor uses for projected development in Subdistrict B.¹ Throughout the Project Area the streets would become inviting to pedestrians, thereby establishing connections through the Project Area to the waterfront.

The proposed Special District would preserve the existing street pattern, and all projected development would occur on existing blocks. Minimal re-grading is expected, and the reasonable worst-case development scenario of maximum building heights would reflect the valley topography of the Project Area, with building heights stepping up the slope to West 133rd Street. Therefore, there would be no adverse impacts on the topography, natural features, street pattern and hierarchy, and block shapes of the Project Area and study area in either the 2015 or 2030 analysis years. The construction of multiple buildings with large footprints on large zoning lots would alter the existing building arrangements in the Academic Mixed-Use Area, but this considerable change would not be a significant adverse impact, as there are multiple examples of freestanding buildings with large footprints throughout the study area, and the buildings would be developed through a coordinated plan.

Under the proposed zoning, the Project Area streetscape in Subdistricts A, B, and the Other Area east of Broadway would be improved in both the 2015 and 2030 analysis years, and there would be no significant adverse impacts. On Broadway, West 125th Street, and Twelfth Avenue, buildings with required active ground-floor uses in glazed storefronts would replace gas stations, low-rise and nondescript brick garages, auto repair shops, and other industrial buildings in Subdistricts A and B. Along West 125th Street in Subdistrict A (the Academic Mixed-Use Area), buildings would contain ground-floor uses such as retail, galleries, and community centers under the Illustrative Plan for the Academic Mixed-Use Development. The buildings in Subdistrict B would likely have ground-floor retail spaces. In the 2015 analysis year, redevelopment would occur in Subdistrict A on Blocks 1995 and 1996 (located between West 125th and West 130th Streets), and on the western end of Block 1997 (located between West 130th and West 131st Streets); and in Subdistrict B on most of the blocks between St. Clair Place and West 135th Street. There would also be development in the Other Area east of Broadway. In the 2030 analysis year, redevelopment in Subdistrict A would move north from West 130th Street and occur on Blocks 1997, 1998, 1999, 1986, and 1987.

In Subdistrict A, the Academic Mixed-Use Development would create widened sidewalks with permitted landscaping on the narrow cross streets and on Twelfth Avenue as required by the proposed zoning in both the 2015 and 2030 analysis years. In the 2015 analysis year, two publicly accessible open spaces, the Small Square and the Grove, would be created at the intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets. In the 2030 analysis year, publicly accessible open spaces would include a large open space, the Square, on Block 1997 (located between West 130th and West 131st Streets), three midblock north-south open areas between West 130th and West 133rd Streets, and one midblock east-west open area between Broadway and Old Broadway at West 132nd Street. The widened sidewalks and connected system of publicly accessible open spaces would result in a visually interesting streetscape, greater and livelier

¹ CPC is contemplating certain modifications to Subdistrict B. The proposed modifications would rezone Subdistrict B to a modified M1-2 light manufacturing district to support light manufacturing and retail uses. It is anticipated that this modification would not result in any projected development sites in Subdistrict B. The proposed modifications are more fully described in Chapter 29, "Modifications to the Proposed Actions." Chapter 29 also analyzes the potential environmental impacts that could result from the proposed modifications.

street-level activity, greenery, and enhanced westward views to the Hudson River, making the Project Area more welcoming to pedestrians. Further, the new streetscape features would contribute in the 2015 analysis year to an improved pedestrian corridor along West 125th Street to the West Harlem Waterfront park, a New York City-sponsored project. In both the 2015 and 2030 analysis years, the mandated active ground-floor uses along West 125th Street, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue would link Subdistricts A and B with the West 125th Street commercial corridor east of Broadway and the residential neighborhoods north and south of the Project Area.

Pursuant to the proposed zoning, the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario for the Academic Mixed-Use Development for this analysis would create a collection of buildings in Subdistrict A ranging in maximum height from 60 feet to 260 feet (80 to 320 feet with mechanical space) to replace a range of primarily low-rise nondescript brick buildings devoted to auto-related and storage uses. This reasonable worst-case development scenario assumes that each building in Subdistrict A is constructed to the allowable maximum building height specified by the proposed zoning. It should be noted that the reasonable worst-case development scenario assuming the maximum building height for all buildings in Subdistrict A could never be achieved within the floor area ratio (FAR) requirements of the proposed Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District. In the 2015 analysis year, five proposed buildings ranging in maximum height from 120 to 190 feet (160 to 230 with mechanical space) would be located on the blocks between West 125th and 131st Streets. These buildings would be organized around two publicly accessible open spaces, the Small Square and the Grove. In the 2030 analysis year, six or seven new academic buildings ranging in maximum height from 160 to 260 feet (220 to 320 with mechanical space) would be constructed on the blocks between West 130th and West 133rd Streets, along with the publicly accessible Square and midblock open areas. A small retail building would also be constructed on the triangular block bounded by West 125th Street, Twelfth Avenue, and St. Clair Place. By the 2030 analysis year, five of the proposed buildings and one existing building would have rooftop exhaust stacks, but these stacks would have small diameters and they would be set back to minimize views. The Academic Mixed-Use Development buildings would be taller and bulkier than the existing buildings that make up the Project Area, but the transformation of the largely industrial area into an area with academic and retail uses and significant open spaces is not expected to be a significant adverse impact to building bulk, use, and type.

In Subdistrict B pursuant to the proposed zoning, one- to two-story commercial buildings are projected to be developed along the west side of Twelfth Avenue (except for the southernmost block between St. Clair Place and West 125th Street, Marginal Street, and Twelfth Avenue, which would have a height limitation of 130 feet) in the 2015 analysis year. The low-rise scale of the projected buildings would preserve light and air under the Riverside Drive viaduct, and although the projected buildings would have a different use and type—office and retail—from the existing garage and industrial buildings, they would be similar in bulk and height. In the Other Area east of Broadway, two lots between West 134th and West 135th Streets are projected development sites for community facility and residential uses. New buildings and enlarged existing buildings on these lots would be in keeping with surrounding buildings. Overall, there would be no significant adverse impacts to building bulk, use, and type in Subdistrict B and the Other Area east of Broadway.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions would have largely beneficial effects on visual resources in both the 2015 and 2030 analysis years. Views west through the Project Area to the Hudson River would be

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enhanced by widened view corridors with landscaped streets. Buildings with active-ground-floor uses on West 125th Street, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue would create additional pedestrian activity and new viewers of the area's visual resources. Views of the Manhattan Valley IRT and Riverside Drive viaducts would not be blocked in either analysis year. There would only be a slight visual relationship between the Academic Mixed-Use Development and the northern end of Riverside Park at St. Clair Place, and no visual relationship to St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church on West 126th Street.

Eastward views of the Studebaker Building on West 131st and 132nd Streets would be blocked by new development in the 2030 analysis year. However, the large publicly accessible Square that would be constructed in the 2030 analysis year to the south across West 131st Street would improve that visual resource's setting, while providing vantage points for new views. In addition, new development would not abut the west façade of the Studebaker Building, and a 50-foot-wide, publicly accessible north-south open area would be immediately adjacent to it, thereby enhancing the Studebaker Building's setting. The Square and the adjacent midblock open area would create a new northward view corridor to the Studebaker Building from the Small Square that would be constructed in the 2015 analysis year. From West 125th and West 129th Streets, there would be views to the Studebaker Building through the Academic Mixed-Use Development, and along that same view corridor, there would be views south from the Square to Prentis Hall on West 125th Street. By the 2030 analysis year, the publicly accessible Square would also provide views to the Riverside Drive viaduct and toward the waterfront.

B. METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this analysis considers the effects of the Proposed Actions on the following elements that collectively form an area's urban design:

- *Block form and street pattern*—This urban design feature refers to the shape and arrangement of blocks and surrounding streets, such as a grid pattern with regularly sized, rectangular blocks. These features set street views, define the flow of activity through an area, and create the basic format on which building arrangements can be organized.
- *Building arrangement*—This term refers to the way that buildings are placed on zoning lots and blocks. The buildings can have small or large footprints, be attached or detached and separated by open uses, and varied in their site plans. This urban design feature helps to convey a sense of the overall form and design of a block or a larger area.
- *Building bulk, use, and type*—Buildings are usually described by these characteristics. A building's bulk is created from an amalgam of characteristics that include its height, length, and width; lot coverage and density; and shape and use of setbacks and other massing elements. The general use of a building (e.g., residential, manufacturing, commercial office) gives an impression of its appearance and helps to understand its visual and urban design character. Building type refers to a distinctive class of buildings and suggests distinguishing features of a particular building. Examples of building type include: industrial loft, church, gas station, walk-up tenement.
- *Streetscape elements*—Streetscape elements are the distinctive physical features that make up a streetscape, such as streetwalls, building entrances, parking lots, fences, street trees, street furniture, curb cuts, and parking ribbons. These features help define the immediate visual experience of pedestrians.

- *Street hierarchy*—Streets may be classified as expressways, arterials, boulevards, collector/distributor streets, or local streets, and they may be defined by their width, type of access, and the presence or absence of at-grade pedestrian crossings. Street hierarchy helps convey a sense of the overall form and activity level of a neighborhood.
- *Topography and natural features*—Topographic and natural features help define the overall visual character of an area and may include varied ground elevation, rock outcroppings and steep slopes, vegetation, and aquatic features.

This analysis also considers the effects of the Proposed Actions on the area’s visual resources, which the *CEQR Technical Manual* defines as unique or important public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features. Visual resources can include waterfront views, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or natural features, such as a river or geologic formations.

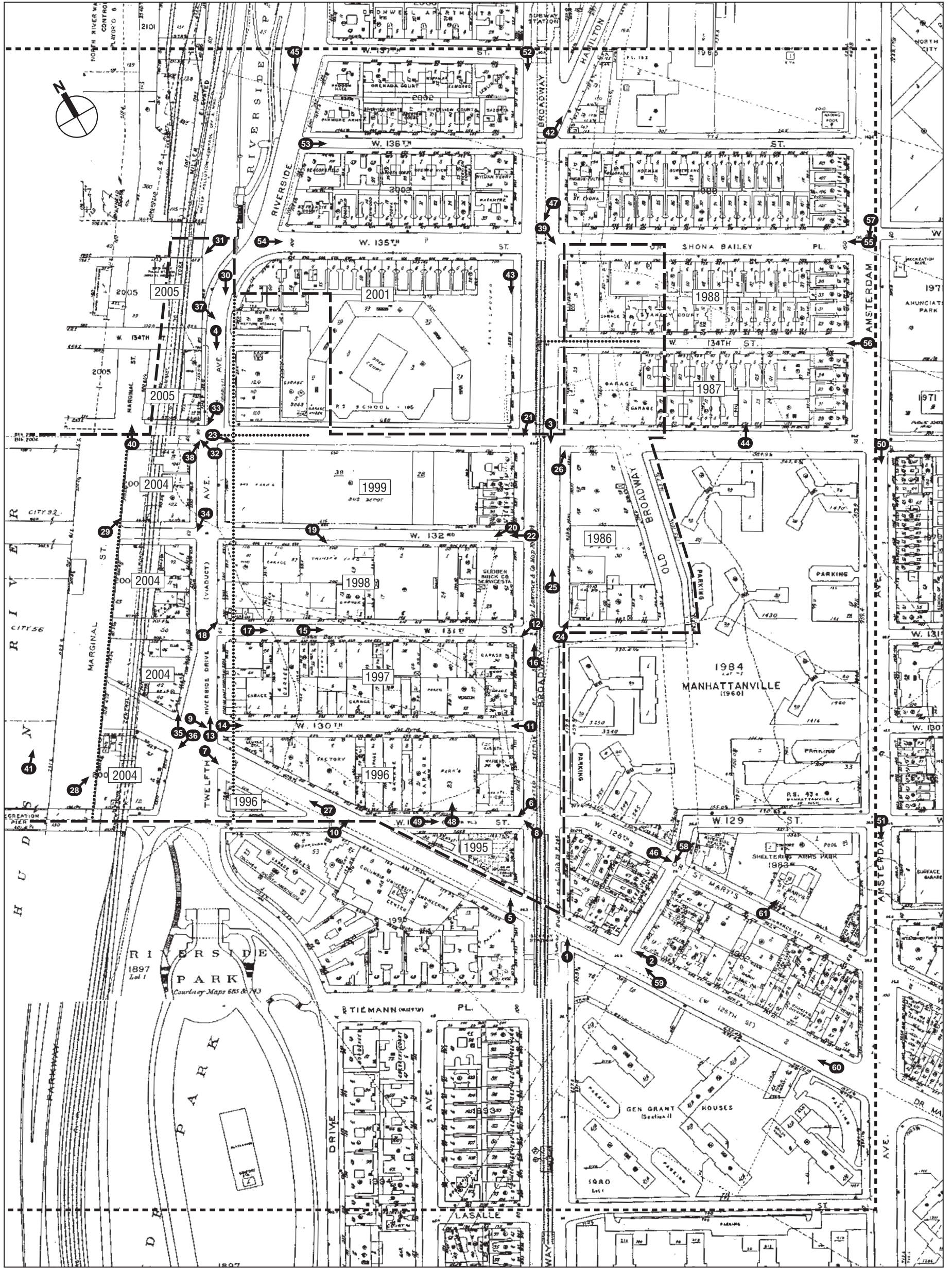
As recommended by the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this technical analysis evaluates impacts in two areas—the Project Area and a surrounding study area (see Figure 9-1). As more fully described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the Project Area is roughly bounded by West 135th and West 133rd Streets on the north, Broadway and Old Broadway on the east, West 125th Street and St. Clair Place on the south, and the Hudson River on the west. The Project Area includes five subdistricts: Subdistrict A (the Academic Mixed-Use Area), which encompasses the main portion of the Project Area; Subdistrict B along Twelfth Avenue; Subdistrict C at the northwest corner of the Project Area; and the two Other Areas, which include the northeast corner of the Project Area and the waterfront.

The study area is defined to encompass a portion of Manhattanville that is bordered by West 137th Street to the north, Amsterdam Avenue to the east, and Lasalle Street to the south. Beyond this area, there are no, or only extremely limited, views of the Project Area due to intervening buildings and structures and to distance. The analysis of the study area also includes views of the Project Area from Riverside Park, the Manhattan Valley IRT subway viaduct, and the Riverside Drive viaduct, as well as from the Henry Hudson Parkway and Amtrak rail line viaducts.

This analysis considers a reasonable worst-case development scenario for the Academic Mixed-Use Development, in which each development site in the Academic Mixed-Use Area would be developed with a building that reaches the maximum building heights that would be allowed by the proposed zoning. It should be noted that the reasonable worst-case development scenario assuming the maximum building height for all buildings in Subdistrict A could never be achieved within the FAR requirements of the proposed Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District. This urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario assumes the location and uses of the Illustrative Plan but with the maximum building heights (the Illustrative Plan does not achieve the maximum building heights). A development scenario that includes the tallest building permitted on each site would have the greatest potential for urban design impacts. Since the maximum building heights for each site is based on location and not use, there is not a reasonable worst-case development scenario for the assessment of urban design impacts that considers different uses from those proposed in the Illustrative Plan. The views, renderings, and sections shown in figures in this chapter reflect the Illustrative Plan.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Manhattanville neighborhood of West Harlem is a waterfront area lying in a valley with bluffs to the north and south and a hill to the east. Four viaducts running north–south—those of the IRT No. 1 subway line to the east and Riverside Drive, the Henry Hudson Parkway, and the



- Project Area Boundary
- - - Study Area Boundary
- ➔ Photo View Direction and Reference Number
- 1999 Block Number

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Amtrak rail line to the west—lend a unique visual character to the area. The viaducts and natural topography form distinct physical and visual boundaries to the area between Broadway and Twelfth Avenue that cut the Project Area off from the heart of Harlem. The subway and Riverside Drive viaducts overshadow the streets below—Broadway and Twelfth Avenue, respectively.

Generally developed in a street grid, and as shown in Figure 9-2, the urban design study area consists of a primarily low-rise industrial district, which roughly corresponds to the Project Area, with residential districts of Hamilton Heights to the north, Manhattanville to the east, and Morningside Heights to the south. The majority of buildings, both industrial and residential, are one to six stories and clad in brick. Taller buildings include a few storage structures and high-rise residential towers—those of the Riverside Park Community, the Manhattanville Houses, the General Grant Houses, and the Columbia University housing at 560 Riverside Drive. The discussion below focuses first on the study area’s urban design (its basic layout and structures) and then describes its visual resources.

URBAN DESIGN

Since the Project Area and study area share the same topography, natural features, street pattern, block shapes, and building arrangements, those urban design features are discussed in general for the entire area. Building bulk, use, and type and streetscape features are discussed separately and in more detail for the Project Area and the study area.

TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL FEATURES

Situated in a valley, the Project Area and urban design study area have a distinct topographical character that has not been substantially altered by development. The valley runs roughly east–west, sloping downward to the Hudson River with the valley bluffs to the north and south. Riverside Park and the extension north of West 135th Street run along portions of these high bluffs and overlook the river. The valley’s low point is roughly situated at West 125th Street, which has a gentle slope down to the waterfront. To the north where the ground is higher, the downward slope to the riverfront is more dramatic, as noticeably seen in the West 131st and West 132nd Street view corridors, and on West 137th Street where Amsterdam Avenue is significantly elevated above Broadway. Cutting through the valley, Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue rise sharply uphill to the north and south from the valley base.

Although Manhattanville is located on the Hudson River, the study area’s relationship to that natural feature is largely a tenuous visual one. Through most parts of the area, the Amtrak and Henry Hudson Parkway viaducts create physical and visual barriers to the river, and the industrial character of the Project Area is a deterrent to pedestrians. Where there is direct pedestrian access to the river’s edge—between West 125th and West 133rd Streets—access consists of a paved area with a few concrete benches, and low fences allow fishing. From the heights of Riverside Park, there are expansive views of the Hudson River, and the park’s extensive greenery, hilly topography, and landscaping provide natural relief to the largely industrial area. Additional greenery is found on the grounds of the high-rise housing developments of the Manhattanville Houses and General Grant Houses.

STREET PATTERN AND HIERARCHY

The Project Area and study area are partially developed in the typical Manhattan grid pattern with wide avenues running north–south and narrow streets running east–west, with the exception of

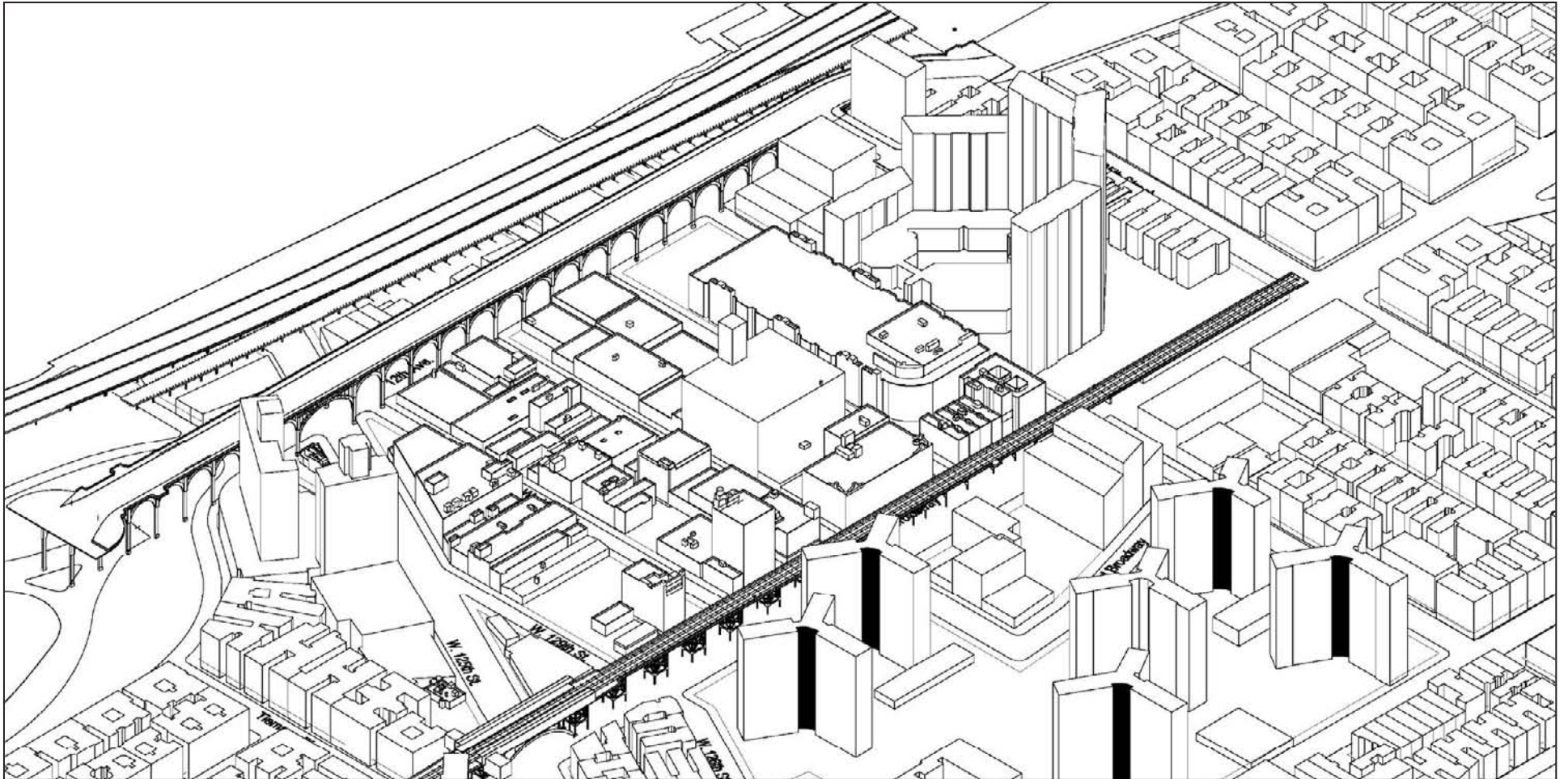


Figure 9-2
Existing Conditions:
Northwest Aerial View

West 125th and West 126th Streets, which cut through the grid at a northwest angle (see Figure 9-1). The street grid is also broken by Riverside Park, three superblocks containing the Riverside Park Community development, the Manhattanville Houses, and the General Grant Houses, and by two non-contiguous segments of Old Broadway—a remnant of a previous orientation of Bloomingdale Road—that run north–south between West 125th and West 133rd Streets and Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue. An unusual feature of the street pattern is Riverside Drive, which runs above Twelfth Avenue on a viaduct between West 129th Street and West 135th Street. At West 135th Street, Riverside Drive continues north at street elevation, while Twelfth Avenue extends along the base of the northern segment of Riverside Park as a minor street.

Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, which are wide streets, are the major north–south thoroughfares through the study area. Twelfth Avenue is a wide street carrying north–south traffic, but it only extends through a small section of the study area and mostly carries vehicles to and from the Henry Hudson Parkway. Marginal Street, another north–south street, extends along the waterfront between West 129th and West 134th Streets, where there are ramps to the Henry Hudson Parkway. Although this north–south, limited-access elevated parkway carries a high volume of traffic, it is cut off from the neighborhood running above its western edge. The major east–west streets through the area are the four-lane West 125th Street and West 135th Street.

BLOCK SHAPES AND BUILDING ARRANGEMENTS

The irregular street pattern creates blocks of varying sizes and shapes. Blocks are typically large and rectangular where the street pattern conforms to the standard Manhattan grid—in the central portion of the Project Area between West 130th and West 133rd Streets and Broadway and Twelfth Avenue, and on the residential blocks of the study area east of Broadway and north of West 133rd Street. Cutting through the grid, West 125th Street creates irregularly shaped blocks and two small triangular ones at the bow-tie intersection where it crosses West 129th Street. Following an earlier street pattern, the two blocks east of Broadway between West 125th and West 126th Streets are irregularly shaped and set at an angle to the blocks west of Broadway that follow the more typical grid pattern.

The two remaining sections of Old Broadway create irregularly shaped blocks, and the curve of Riverside Drive angles the western ends of the otherwise rectangular blocks north of West 135th Street. Similarly, the western edge of the block bounded by Riverside Drive, West 125th Street, Broadway, and Tiemann Place follows the curve of the drive, as the northern edge follows the angle of West 125th Street. Between the closely set Twelfth Avenue and Marginal Street, the blocks are narrow and angled along their western edges. The study area’s urban design is further characterized by the presence of the three superblocks that contain the Riverside Park Community, I.S. 195, the Manhattanville Houses, and the General Grant Houses.

For the most part, buildings are regularly arranged on rectangular lots. In the Project Area, there are numerous parking lots and driveways that break up the arrangement of attached buildings and structures that occupy through-block lots and/or lots with wide street frontages. On the residential blocks of the study area, the majority of apartment buildings have central courts or light courts fronting on the street. Unusual buildings arrangements include the five-sided, U-shaped high-rise, residential Riverside Park Community building located in the center of a superblock and wrapped around the low-rise I.S. 195; the six freestanding, Y-shaped towers of the Manhattanville Houses development; and the five freestanding, high-rise rectangular buildings of the General Grant Houses.

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STREETSCAPE AND BUILDING BULK, USE, AND TYPE

Project Area

Academic Mixed-Use Area (Subdistrict A)

Streetscape Elements. The streetscape of the Academic Mixed-Use Area is urban in character and largely defined by auto-related uses that include gas stations, garages, parking lots, car washes, and auto parts and repair facilities. Other industrial buildings contain storage and warehouse facilities, some meat wholesaling operations, and machine shops. The majority of these structures have blank masonry ground floors whose only openings tend to be vehicular entrances and loadings docks covered with roll-down metal gates. Where the industrial structures have windows on the ground floor, they are often infilled with masonry or wood boards.

Some ground-floor retail storefronts are along West 125th Street and on Broadway between West 133rd and West 135th Streets. Awnings and projecting signs mark most of the storefronts. In addition, a row of residential buildings on Broadway between West 132nd and West 133rd Streets break with the industrial and auto-related streetscape of the Academic Mixed-Use Area. The streetscape lacks cohesiveness with blank ground floors in most buildings in the study area—as well as vacant buildings or buildings that appear vacant because of infilled windows, two weedy lots at the southwest corner of West 131st Street and Broadway and at 655 West 131st Street just east of Twelfth Avenue, and multiple parking lots of various sizes.

The parking lots, vacant parcels, paved loading entrances to buildings set back from the street, and gas stations break the streetwall throughout the area that is otherwise maintained by the majority of buildings. In addition, a bus storage lot is on the western end of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Manhattanville Bus Depot block (Block 1999), and a Con Ed cooling station is across West 132nd Street south of the bus depot block. Surrounded by tall chain-link fences capped with barbed wire, the Con Ed parcel contains large, boxy pieces of mechanical equipment. Low brick walls topped by metal fencing border the municipal bus lot. Chain-link fencing, frequently capped with barbed wire, borders many of the area's parking lots and paved loading entrances.

Additional streetscape features of the Academic Mixed-Use Area include a varied array of awnings and signs on the area's industrial and commercial ground-floor businesses, especially along West 125th Street; parking ribbons; curb cuts for loadings docks and parking lots; and narrow sidewalks on the side streets. The side street parking ribbons typically experience double-parked trucks. Typical street furniture includes fire hydrants, modern metal streetlights, trash cans, and metal bollards framing garage entrances and loading docks. At the southwest corner of Broadway and West 131st Street, there is a small food kiosk abutting the corner building. Most of the area is without street trees. Removable bins containing consumer goods are located on the sidewalks along the east side of Broadway and the north side of West 134th Street adjacent to the retail building at 3300 Broadway on Block 1987. Located in the adjacent Other Area east of Broadway are two buildings with ground-floor retail at 3320 and 3338 Broadway.

Along Broadway, the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct is a defining feature of the streetscape. The metal structure is located in the center of Broadway, and beneath it are turning lanes and parking areas. At West 125th Street, the viaduct has a maximum height of 54 feet and is supported on a large parabolic arch (see Figure 9-3). As it runs north, it declines on a trestle supported by towers spanned with relatively thin girder systems and then to an open cut between West 134th and West 135th Streets, where it then moves below ground (see view 1 in Figure 9-3 and view 3



Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct. View north on Broadway from 125th Street 1



Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct. View west on 125th Street 2

Figure 9-3

**Urban Design and Visual Resources
Manhattan Valley IRT Viaduct**

in Figure 9-4). Where the subway line passes in the cut, it is bordered by paneled concrete walls. Since the structure (including the platform carrying the tracks) is relatively light and open and Broadway is wide, the viaduct does not significantly darken the street or sidewalks. In addition, because the viaduct is narrower than Broadway, the traffic lanes on either side are not covered by the structure. In comparison, the Riverside Drive viaduct darkens Twelfth Avenue, since it covers the width of the avenue, contributing to its industrial character. This effect also results from the viaduct's solid road surface despite the fact that the viaduct is approximately 80 feet tall. Further, the viaduct footings are mostly located on the avenue sidewalks, narrowing the distance between the viaduct and adjacent buildings and creating a sense of containment along the avenue (see view 4 in Figure 9-4). Underneath the viaduct, the avenue has the appearance of a long, arched tunnel.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type. The majority of buildings in the Academic Mixed-Use Area are one- to six-story boxy brick garages, warehouses, and industrial buildings. Other building types include gas stations, brick apartment buildings, and a former brick saloon that now houses a church. Most of the buildings in the area are nondescript utilitarian structures, although there are a few, such as the Studebaker Building on West 131st Street, and a storage facility at 3229 Broadway that have Classical stone and terra-cotta ornamentation. The following detailed description of building bulk, use, and type is organized by block.

The portion of Block 1995 within the Project Area is a triangular block formed by the bow-tie intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets. Two one-story commercial buildings occupy the eastern portion of the block. At the southeast corner of the block is a nondescript boxy structure that previously housed a fast food restaurant and a paint supply store with brightly colored storefronts and awnings (see view 5 in Figure 9-5). At the northeast corner of the block is a brick restaurant with a metal and glass storefront on Broadway (see view 6 in Figure 9-5). Above a projecting awning that wraps around the east and north façades is a parapet with stepped gables and decorative brickwork. A gas station with a freestanding roof over the pump area occupies the western end of the block.

A small, triangular portion of Block 1996 forms the western half of the bow-tie intersection, and the two-story masonry Cotton Club (named for an earlier renowned club at a different location) occupies a small footprint on the northern point. It is windowless and has a vaguely Art Deco massing of a roughly triangular base with rounded corners and a set-back second floor (see view 7 in Figure 9-6). A projecting awning supported on posts extends above the entrance on West 125th Street, a freestanding round sign with 1930s' Moderne lettering is located on the eastern end, and the club name is applied along the north façade. Concrete planters line the north sidewalk.

The main portion of Block 1996 is bordered by West 125th, West 129th, and West 130th Streets, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue. Two gas stations are located on the block—at the southeast corner of the block and on the slim western point formed by the intersection of West 130th and West 125th Streets. The nondescript boxy gas station at the southeast corner of the block is freestanding in a paved lot that rises upward so the western end is several feet above grade (see view 8 in Figure 9-6). Chain-link fencing borders the raised portion of the property, and a roof supported on columns covers the service area. At the western tip of the block, the combination gas station and car wash is a one-story sliver of a building attached to the larger warehouse on its east side (see view 9 in Figure 9-7). Several signs indicate the presence of the gas station and car wash, and there is no roof over the pump area. Boxy brick garages, warehouses, and factory buildings of one to six stories occupy the remainder of the block, and most of them are through-



Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct. View south on Broadway from 133rd Street 3



Riverside Drive viaduct. View south on Twelfth Avenue from 134th Street 4

Figure 9-4



Block 1995. View northwest from 125th Street 5



Block 1995. View southwest on Broadway from 129th Street 6

Figure 9-5



Cotton Club. View southeast on 125th Street from Twelfth Avenue 7



Block 196. View northwest from Broadway and 129th Street 8

Figure 9-6



Block 1996. View east on 130th Street from Twelfth Avenue 9



Block 1996. View east on 129th Street from 125th Street 10

Figure 9-7

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block structures. The majority have altered ground floors marked by large loading and vehicular entrances with roll-down metal gates (see view 10 in Figure 9-7), and the large warehouse at 659 West 125th Street, adjacent to the gas station and car wash, prominently has all of its windows infilled (see view 9 in Figure 9-7). Although utilitarian in design, most of the industrial buildings have decorative brick features, such as brick cornices, corbelling, panels, string courses, and piers. Two buildings—the three-story garage at 629 West 129th Street and the four-story factory at 638 West 125th Street—have arched windows, and the buildings on the western end of the block have angled footprints that follow the diagonal of West 125th Street. An architecturally detailed building on the block is the six-story former stable at 3229 Broadway. Now used for storage, it is a brick and terra-cotta Italianate structure with rusticated piers, brick panels, and a modillioned cornice (see view 8 in Figure 9-6). Also located on the block are a vacant one-story, nondescript brick gas station set in a weedy lot bordered by chain-link fencing at the northeast corner of the block and a large through-block parking lot at 603 West 129th Street that is bordered by chain-link fencing (see view 11 in Figure 9-8). The parking lot contains a small metal trailer and slopes uphill to the north.

Bordered by Broadway, Twelfth Avenue, and West 130th and West 131st Streets, Block 1997 contains the largest concentration of buildings in the Academic Mixed-Use Area. The buildings include storage facilities, garages, auto body repair shops, and meat wholesaling establishments that range in height from one to 10 stories. Three buildings form the Broadway block frontage: a two-story, Italianate brick former saloon (now a church) at 3241 Broadway that has been altered with new windows and the removal of the original storefronts, but that retains some original decorative details, including an arched entrance porch, stone window pediments and lintels, a projecting cornice, and a rounded corner on the second floor; a 10-story rectilinear brick storage building at 3243 Broadway that is simply ornamented with rusticated piers framing three columns of narrow windows, and that has windowless side and rear façades covered with large painted signs that are visible for long distances; and a five-story brick garage at 3255 Broadway articulated with arched windows (many of which have been infilled with brick). The garage has a paneled brick parapet and a modernized ground-floor storefront covered with a profusion of signage (see view 12 in Figure 9-8).

Six one- and two-story brick meat wholesaling buildings front on the Twelfth Avenue end of Block 1997. The five one-story buildings are all small and nondescript, mostly windowless boxes (see view 13 in Figure 9-9). The two-story corner building at 2293 Twelfth Avenue is a former meat wholesaling building that has been converted into an architecture studio with a ground-floor restaurant. It has large first- and second-floor window openings filled with new windows, stone sill courses and lintels, a decorative parapet, and a three-story stair tower at the eastern end of the north façade. The frame of a projecting canopy remains over the ground floor. The interior of Block 1997 contains an array of small, one- to five-story boxy brick garage and storage buildings, a few of which are windowless (see view 14 in Figure 9-9 and view 15 in Figure 9-10). The varying heights of these buildings, even between the one-story structures, create jagged cornice lines along the street frontages. The taller buildings tend to have simple decorative features, such as stone window lintels and sills, brick cornices and panels, and arched windows, while the one-story buildings are nondescript boxes with vehicular openings. However, the one-story through-block garage at 641 West 130th Street has a projecting metal cornice (see view 14 in Figure 9-9). As throughout the study area, most of the buildings along West 130th and West 131st Streets have roll-down metal gates securing their pedestrian and vehicular entrances. The blank west façade of the five-story garage at 614-618 West 131st Street



Block 1996. View west on 130th Street from Broadway 11



Block 1997. View southwest on Broadway from 131st Street 12



Block 1997. View northeast on Twelfth Avenue from 130th Street 13



Block 1997. View east on 130th Street from Twelfth Avenue 14

Figure 9-9



Block 1997. View southeast on 131st Street 15



Block 1998. View north on Broadway from 131st Street 16

Figure 9-10

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sports a large painted advertisement. Two narrow parking areas with chain-link gates break the streetwalls at 623 West 130th Street and 634 West 131st Street.

Two large, bulky brick structures dominate Block 1998 between West 131st and West 132nd Streets, which otherwise consists of a few one-story garage buildings, the former West Market Diner, a Con Ed cooling station, and a six-story tenement. Anchoring the east end of the block is a four-story storage building (originally an automotive service station). The ground floor contains large loading entrances, and the upper floors are articulated by wide piers framing large, square window openings infilled with brick (see view 16 in Figure 9-10). Recessed panels decorate the window spandrels, and a corbelled, gabled cornice ornaments the roofline. Painted advertising for the storage facility covers the façades. Located approximately in the center of the block is the Studebaker Building at 615 West 131st Street. Occupying a 175-foot wide, though-block lot, it is a six-story reinforced concrete building, clad in brick and terra-cotta, and designed in the Moderne style with a tall tower at the western end (see view 17 in Figure 9-11). Terra-cotta facing accentuates the roofline and ground floor, the Studebaker logo is visible on the parapet at the southwest corner, and it has large, multi-paned industrial windows. The rest of the buildings fronting on West 131st Street are nondescript one- and two-story boxy brick garages (see view 17 in Figure 9-11). Toward the southwest corner of the block is an overgrown vacant lot, and the one-story brick former West Market Diner, with a curved roof, occupies the corner lot. The doors and windows of the diner are currently sealed with roll-down metal gates. Two nondescript two-story brick warehouses occupy the rest of the Twelfth Avenue blockfront (see view 18 in Figure 9-11). The building at the northwest corner of the block has large second-story windows, a decorative stepped parapet, and a ground-floor auto repair business. On West 132nd Street, the Con Ed cooling station occupies the center of the block adjacent to the Studebaker Building. Bordered by tall chain-link fencing capped by barbed wire, it contains prefabricated metal sheds and mechanical equipment (see view 19 in Figure 9-12). The tenement located at 602 West 132nd Street at the eastern end of the block, adjacent to the large storage building, is incongruous for the block, but it is located across the street from a row of similar tenements on the Broadway frontage of Block 1999. The six-story, brick Queen Anne-style tenement has a rusticated stone base, quoins on the upper floors, second-story windows with recessed, arched tympanums, and stone window sills and lintels (see view 20 in Figure 9-12). It has lost its cornice.

Industrial and residential buildings define Block 1999. As mentioned above, a row of six tenements—five of which are five stories tall and one of which is six stories tall—occupy the eastern end of the block (see view 21 in Figure 9-13). The five five-story brick tenements at 3281–3289 Broadway occupy standard 25-foot-wide lots. Similarly designed in the Italianate style, the buildings have stone banding on the ground floor, windows with stone keystones and voussoirs on the middle stories, windows with stone architraves on the upper floor, and projecting metal cornices. Two of these tenement buildings are currently being restored: 3283 Broadway and the corner building at 3281 Broadway, which has a storefront with large shop windows on Broadway (see view 22 in Figure 9-13). Built into the slope of the valley, the corner building's first floor on Broadway is the second floor as seen from West 132nd Street, where a stoop has been removed, leaving a floating door with a stone architrave and bracketed cornice. The six-story tenement at the northeast corner of the block at 3291-3295 Broadway occupies a much larger lot, compared with the other five buildings. On Broadway, it has three modern ground-floor storefronts with awnings and upper floor windows with stone keystones and voussoirs. The parapet is blank where the cornice has been removed.



Block 1998. View east on 131st Street 17



Block 1998. View northeast on Twelfth Avenue from 131st Street 18

Figure 9-11



Block 1998. View south on 132nd Street 19



Block 1998. View west on 132nd Street from Broadway 20

Figure 9-12



Block 1999. View southwest on Broadway from 133rd Street 21



Block 1999. View west on 132nd Street from Broadway 22

Figure 9-13

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Contrasting with the six residential buildings, the MTA Manhattanville Bus Depot occupies the remainder of Block 1999. It consists of a large two- and three-story modern building with a paved lot on its east and west sides. The depot building is a bulky, largely windowless structure massed as a series of narrow pavilions of varying heights. On West 132nd Street, the façade is curvy with the pavilions having rounded corners (see view 22 in Figure 9-13). On West 133rd Street, the pavilions are squared with recesses between them. Instead of having windows, the building contains large grilled openings. However, there are two windows on the north façade where the administrative entrance is located. Situated between the depot building and the tenements, the eastern paved lot is bordered on the north by a metal fence and kiosk and on the south by a large gate with a truss support. The paved western lot occupies the entire Twelfth Avenue frontage of the block, and it is bordered on the side streets by brick walls capped with metal fences and by the same sort of truss gate on Twelfth Avenue, where there are also Jersey barriers (see view 23 in Figure 9-14). Overlooking the western lot, the windowless façade of the depot building is clad with colorful metal panels that create an abstract, geometric mural.

The remainder of the Academic Mixed-Use Area consists of two blocks east of Broadway: the irregularly shaped Block 1986 (bordered by Broadway, Old Broadway, and West 131st and West 133rd Streets), and the western end of Block 1987 to the north. Block 1986 contains a nondescript one-story auto repair, shed-like structure at the southeast corner of the block; a four-story heavy brick storage building on West 131st Street with decorative piers, spandrels, and parapet panels; a nondescript boxy gas station at the southwest corner with a freestanding roof over the service area (see view 24 in Figure 9-14); a one-story masonry U-Haul rental center in the middle of the block; and the former Warren Nash Service Station building on the block's northern half. The U-Haul property consists of a small box of a building located within a large paved lot that rises in elevation toward the east and Old Broadway (see view 25 in Figure 9-15). A retaining wall is in the middle of the property, and chain-link fences border the Broadway and Old Broadway frontages. Chain-link fences also cap the U-Haul building. The former Warren Nash Service Station building is a bulky six-story concrete Art Deco structure (see view 25 in Figure 9-15). Originally built as an automobile service station, the building's Broadway and Old Broadway façades are articulated with slightly raised piers, large squarish windows, spandrels with recessed panels, and a roofline marked by the caps of the façade piers, panels, and a raised central peak.

The portion of Block 1987 within the Academic Mixed-Use Area contains a former automobile service building on Broadway, a two-story garage on West 133rd Street, and a one-story garage on West 134th Street. Somewhat altered and rundown in appearance, the three-story brick service building on Broadway is distinctive, with large metal industrial windows and a central tower with large glazed openings (see view 26 in Figure 9-15). Now containing retail businesses, it has altered ground-floor storefronts on the avenue. The ground-floor openings on West 133rd Street have been sealed, as has a second-floor window on Broadway. The two garages on Block 1987 are nondescript brick boxes, typical for the area.

Subdistrict B

Streetscape Elements. The Riverside Drive viaduct is the defining streetscape feature of Subdistrict B. As described above, it gives Twelfth Avenue an enclosed, vaulted appearance. Located in the avenue sidewalk, the heavy footings of the viaduct support thick arches parallel to the roadbed and arches spanning Twelfth Avenue (see view 27 in Figure 9-16). The spandrels of both arch systems contain smaller arches.



Block 1999. View southeast from Twelfth Avenue and 133rd Street 23



Block 1986. View northeast from Broadway and 131st Street 24

Figure 9-14

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Block 1986. View north on Broadway from 131st Street 25



Block 1987. View north on Broadway from 133rd Street 26

Figure 9-15

**Urban Design and Visual Resources
Academic Mixed-Use Area**



Riverside Drive viaduct. View west on 125th Street from St. Clair Place 27



Henry Hudson Parkway. View northeast from Marginal Street at St. Clair Place 28

The transportation character of the area's streetscape is further defined by the Amtrak rail line and the Henry Hudson Parkway viaducts and exit/entrance ramps to the parkway at West 133rd Street. Running above the blocks between Twelfth Avenue and Marginal Street, the rail line and parkway viaducts are lower to the ground than the Riverside Drive viaduct, and the westerly footings of the parkway viaduct are located in the east sidewalk of Marginal Street (see view 28 in Figure 9-16). The lots underneath the parkway viaduct are dark and enclosed. Similarly, the side streets that run under the rail line and parkway viaducts seem dark and derelict.

The blocks in Subdistrict B are characterized by low-rise, brick industrial buildings fronting on Twelfth Avenue and paved parking lots located on both Twelfth Avenue and Marginal Street. A few nondescript brick infill buildings are located underneath the rail line and parkway viaducts at West 135th and West 125th Streets. Most of the area buildings along Twelfth Avenue have largely blank ground-floors characterized by loading entrances covered with roll-down metal gates. However, the brick building between West 125th Street and St. Clair Place has a corner storefront with an awning at West 125th Street and a large projecting canopy above the remainder of the avenue ground floor. A small, two-story boxy brick restaurant with a gabled roof and outdoor seating area was recently constructed at the northwest corner of West 133rd Street and Twelfth Avenue. The lower floor is stuccoed while the upper floor is faced in brick. On Marginal Street between West 132nd and West 133rd Streets, the Fairway Market has a lively street presence with a glass storefront, and flowers and other grocery goods located on the sidewalk (see view 29 in Figure 9-17). Other than the market, the streetscape along the east side of Marginal Street is characterized by paved parking lots overshadowed by the parkway viaduct.

Other features of the area streetscape include parking ribbons, modern metal streetlights and traffic signage, chain-link fencing around parking lots and a former New York Central Railroad substation on Twelfth Avenue between West 133rd and West 134th Streets, exposed paving stones and trolley tracks at West 125th Street, the metal posts of tall billboards along Twelfth Avenue, and numerous billboards located on the roofs of the low-rise buildings fronting on the avenue. These billboards are primarily clustered at West 125th and West 133rd Streets, and they are visible from both street level and from above on the Henry Hudson Parkway and Riverside Drive. On Riverside Drive, there are wide sidewalks bordered by tubular metal railings and tall chain-link fences, metal streetlights and traffic signs, and several visible billboards, one of which is an electronic display (see view 30 in Figure 9-17). Two tall storage buildings located in Subdistrict C (described below) rise above the viaduct road surface at West 134th Street.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type. Located at the base of the Riverside Drive viaduct and partially beneath the Henry Hudson Parkway and Amtrak rail line viaducts, the small, irregularly shaped blocks of Subdistrict B are sparsely developed along Twelfth Avenue with one- and two-story brick industrial buildings. Along Twelfth Avenue, Subdistrict B is mostly characterized by parking lots. The only buildings on the portion of Block 2005 between West 135th and West 134th Streets are two freestanding, nondescript one-story brick buildings, one of which is underneath the rail line viaduct. Paved surfaces, chain-link fencing, and a tall billboard occupy the rest of the block (see view 31 in Figure 9-18). Located between West 134th and West 133rd Streets, the southern portion of Block 2005 contains a tall one-story former railroad substation and a two-story restaurant building currently under construction (see view 32 in Figure 9-18). Although it fronts on Twelfth Avenue, the former New York Central Railroad Substation No. 11 faces north. The vacant brick substation has Art Deco details in the form of full height pilasters that flank the center bay, decorative stone coping, and tall, narrow windows on the front façade, which are boarded up. A chain-link fence borders the substation property.



Fairway supermarket. View northeast on Marginal Street from 132nd Street 29



Riverside Drive viaduct. View south from 135th Street 30

Figure 9-17



Block 2005. View south on Twelfth Avenue from 135th Street 31



Block 2005. View northwest on Twelfth Avenue from 133rd Street 32

Figure 9-18

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The northern portion of Block 2004 between West 133rd and West 132nd Streets contains four one-story attached brick warehouse buildings currently used by Fairway Market. The three buildings fronting on Twelfth Avenue are one to three stories, nondescript, and largely windowless (see view 33 in Figure 9-19). They have large ground-floor loading entrances, and chain-link fencing and mechanical equipment is found on the roof of the middle building. Located under the Henry Hudson Parkway viaduct, the fourth building contains the retail portion of the market and has a typical glass-fronted façade facing Marginal Street. A tall billboard is also located on the block.

The central portion of Block 2004 between West 132nd and West 130th Streets is sparsely developed with standing structures. West 131st Street does not extend west of Twelfth Avenue, and the center of the block contains an expansive paved parking lot. Two attached, boxy brick buildings are located on the northeast corner of the block. Fronting on Twelfth Avenue, they are a two-story warehouse with infilled windows and a large billboard on the roof, and a narrow one-story garage (see view 34 in Figure 9-19). Two attached buildings and a billboard are located at the southeast corner of the block. The two-story corner brick building with a roughly triangular footprint was once used as a hotel. The entrance is at the angled corner facing the intersection of West 125th and West 130th Streets, and the building is detailed with angled brick joints framing the corner, stone window sills and lintels, and a corbelled cornice (see view 35 in Figure 9-20). Many of the windows have been infilled with brick, a piece of the cornice is missing, and the ground floor has been altered with new openings and infilled windows. Adjacent to the north, the two-story former meat wholesaling building at 2284 Twelfth Avenue is a Romanesque Revival-style structure. On the second floor, it is ornately designed with round-arched windows, a decorative brick lintel course linking the round-arched and rectangular windows, and a heavy corbelled cornice with piers, decorative panels, niches, and gables. The cast iron ground floor contains four large loading entrances and two small side entrances framed by thin columns. Parking lots occupy the block's Twelfth Avenue frontage.

A two-story, former meat wholesaling building on Twelfth Avenue occupies the southern portion of Block 2004 between West 125th Street and St. Clair Place. Fronting on the avenue and side streets, it is a boxy structure surmounted by a profusion of billboards (see view 36 in Figure 9-20). There are numerous windows on the second floor, a ground-floor storefront with a projecting awning at the northeast corner, and loading docks at the southeast portion of the avenue façade. A metal canopy projects above the loading docks. At the northeast corner of the block, three nondescript infill buildings are located underneath the Henry Hudson Parkway viaducts. Fronting on West 130th Street, they are small brick structures housing a diner and auto repair shops. A paved parking lot occupies the southwest portion of the block.

Subdistrict C

Streetscape Elements. Comprising the western 200 feet of Block 2001 between West 134th and West 133rd Streets, Subdistrict C has an unusual bi-level streetscape. On Twelfth Avenue, the Riverside Drive viaduct looms over the street and the former roadbed of West 134th Street, which exists at this level as a cavernous dead end (see view 37 in Figure 9-21). Bordering the dead end are the bases of two tall storage buildings (571 Riverside Drive and 2341 Twelfth Avenue) that present primary façades to Riverside Drive above. On Twelfth Avenue, the base of each storage building is faced in unadorned brick and contains infilled windows. The streetscape at the southwest corner of the block is less forbidding and dark, because the two low-rise buildings at that location have active ground-floor uses, with the corner building containing a storefront covered in signage for a beer and soda distributor (see view 38 in Figure 9-21).



Block 2004. View southwest on Twelfth Avenue from 133rd Street 33



Block 2004. View southwest on Twelfth Avenue from 132nd Street 34

Figure 9-19



Block 2004. View west at Twelfth Avenue and 125th Street 35



Block 2004. View southwest at 125th Street and Twelfth Avenue 36

Figure 9-20



View southeast on Twelfth Avenue from the vicinity of 134th Street 37



View northeast from Twelfth Avenue and 133rd Street 38

At the viaduct level, the two storage buildings flanking West 134th Street front on Riverside Drive, although there is a wide gap between their façades and the viaduct road surface. Bordering that gap are tubular steel barriers and chain-link fencing. Access to the buildings is from the elevated portion of West 134th Street that leads to the garage of the Riverside Park Community. On West 134th Street, the storage buildings have loading entrances. A billboard surmounts each building. There are parking ribbons on the elevated West 134th Street dead end.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type. As described above, Subdistrict C contains four buildings fronting on the bi-level streetscape of Twelfth Avenue and Riverside Drive. The two three-story brick warehouses at 2331 and 2337 Twelfth Avenue have typical boxy forms but are detailed with stone window lintels and sills (see view 38 in Figure 9-21). The corner building at 2331 Twelfth Avenue is more ornamental, with stone window keystones and a parapet with decorative brickwork. The ground floor of each building has been altered with new storefronts and openings.

Located on each side of the West 134th Street dead end, the two storage buildings at 2341 Twelfth Avenue and 571 Riverside Drive rise above the Riverside Drive viaduct to front on the drive and the elevated dead end above the West 134th Street roadbed. The lower portion of each building beneath the viaduct is nondescript, derelict in appearance, and characterized by infilled windows (see view 37 in Figure 9-21). Although the upper portion of the seven-story concrete warehouse at 2341 Twelfth Avenue is also characterized by infilled windows, it has an active ground floor of loading docks fronting on the elevated dead end, a stepped parapet on the north façade, and two tower forms. A billboard rises from the roof. The 14-story former Lee Brothers Storage Building at 571 Riverside Drive has an ornate neoclassical temple front facing Riverside Drive. Clad in terra-cotta, the temple front is raised one story above Riverside Drive and is finely detailed with pilasters and half-columns supporting an entablature and pediment. The south façade is faced in brick, largely windowless, and partially covered in signage. The building entrance is located on the dead end, a large billboard surmounts the roof, and a sign covers the north façade.

Other Areas

Located north of Block 1987, the Other Area east of Broadway comprises the western end of Block 1988 between West 134th and West 135th Streets. It includes three three-story buildings—two warehouses and the former Claremont Theater building (see view 39 in Figure 9-22). The brick furniture warehouse at 529 West 134th Street is nondescript except for a gabled parapet. Windows have been replaced, and there is an awning above the ground floor that contains large loading entrances. Despite having an altered ground floor that contains a grocery store, the brick warehouse at 3320 Broadway is distinctive, with original multi-paned metal industrial windows on the upper floors, double-arched windows in the center of the second-floor façade, and a central tower with double arched openings. The Claremont Theater building at 3338 Broadway is an ornate, brick and terra-cotta Italian Renaissance-style building. The northwest corner of the building is angled and contains the main entrance. Terra-cotta ornamentation includes a combination of shields, swags, finials, pilasters, and moldings. A movie camera detail is depicted in a shield at the cornice. The upper-story fenestration includes palazzo-inspired groupings of arched window openings with slender columns. The building currently contains a furniture store.

The Other Area west of Marginal Street includes Marginal Street and the Hudson River waterfront between St. Clair Place and West 133rd Street. The streetscape in this area is defined by openness and a construction site. Sidewalks run on both sides of Marginal Street, and a metal



Block 1988. View southeast on Broadway from 135th Street 39

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traffic barricade borders the inside of the western sidewalk so that pedestrians are protected from vehicular traffic. At West 133rd Street, there is a small concrete traffic island and an exit ramp from the Henry Hudson Parkway (see view 40 in Figure 9-23). The parcels along the waterfront between West 133rd Street and St. Clair Place are an active construction site for the new West Harlem Waterfront park (see view 41 in Figure 9-23). Metal fencing runs along the waterfront.

Study Area

The study area—bounded by West 137th Street to the north, Amsterdam Avenue to the east, and Lasalle Street to the south—encompasses residential portions of Manhattanville and Morningside Heights (see Figure 9-1). Since the neighborhood sections that fall within the study area are similar, they are discussed together below.

Streetscape Features

The streetscape features of the study area are typical of those found in residential areas of Manhattan. The study area is made up of several distinctive sections, which also share similar features. The streetscape features of these sections—which include the Broadway corridor, the residential side streets and Amsterdam Avenue, Riverside Drive, West 125th Street, and the area bounded by West 125th and West 129th Streets, Broadway, and Amsterdam Avenue—are described below.

Broadway Corridor. As described above, the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct is a defining feature of the streetscape. It traverses West 125th Street on a parabolic arch, runs north as a trestle supported on towers, and enters a cut around West 134th Street before finally passing below grade at West 135th Street. Stairs and escalators to the IRT 125th Street Subway Station are located at the southwest and southeast corners of the intersection with Broadway.

North of West 135th Street, a wide median is located in the center of the Broadway roadbed. The median has low concrete walls and benches at the side street crossings and is planted with trees and grass. Additional green spaces on Broadway include the grounds of the Manhattanville Houses between West 126th and West 131st Streets, the grounds of the General Grant Houses between West 125th and Lasalle Streets, and the small Montefiore Park at the intersection of Broadway and Hamilton Place at the northern edge of the study area.

Ground-floor storefronts and one-story commercial buildings marked by a jumble of signs and awnings characterize the Broadway streetscape north of West 135th Street and south of West 126th Street (see view 42 in Figure 9-24). An unusual feature is the Riverside Park Community site on the west side of Broadway between West 133rd and West 135th Streets. The massive apartment building is set into the interior of the superblock behind an expansive paved playground area that breaks the consistent streetwalls along Broadway (see view 43 in Figure 9-24). The northeast corner of the site is at a higher elevation and contains a small playground with benches and playground equipment that is partially surrounded by concrete walls. A staircase leads down to the much lower southern portion of the site, which is bordered by a metal fence. Street furniture along Broadway includes bus shelters, standard metal streetlights, mailboxes, fire hydrants, and subway stairs at West 137th Street.

Residential Side Streets and Amsterdam Avenue. Primarily consisting of five- and six-story, brick and stone apartment buildings and tenements, the residential side streets of the study area—West 133rd to West 137th Streets, Tiemann Place, and Lasalle Street—are similar in character and present cohesive streetscapes. With the exception of the wide West 135th Street between Broadway and Riverside Drive, all of the residential side streets have at least some



Henry Hudson Parkway exit ramp at 133rd Street. View north on Marginal Street 40



Waterfront. View north along Marginal Street from St. Clair Place 41

Figure 9-23



View northeast from Broadway and Hamilton Place 42



View south on Broadway from 135th Street 43

Figure 9-24

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street trees. Streetscape features common to the residential streets include building entrance porches, an occasional stoop, light courts, metal fences around basement areaways, parking ribbons, and standard street furniture. North of West 133rd Street, a few ground-floor storefronts are found just west of Amsterdam Avenue. Streetwalls are only broken by an occasional vacant lot in the northeast portion of the study area. A grassy vacant lot at 527 West 133rd Street reveals an interesting view of the area; the buildings on the north side of the block—those fronting on West 134th Street—are built at an elevation at least 30 feet higher than those on the south side of the block, with a rubble stone retaining wall between the lots (see view 44 in Figure 9-25). Another rubble stone retaining wall borders the north side of West 136th Street between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue along the site of P.S. 192 and the adjacent playground.

Developed with five- and six-story tenement buildings, the streetscape along the west side of Amsterdam Avenue between West 133rd and West 136th Streets is similar to that of the residential side streets. However, the majority of buildings in this area contain ground-floor storefronts marked by various signs and awnings. Between West 133rd and West 129th Streets, trees and grassy lawns of the Manhattanville Houses complex contribute to the Amsterdam Avenue streetscape.

Riverside Drive. Where the viaduct ends at West 135th Street, Riverside Drive assumes a residential character. A thin median planted with trees is located in the center of the street, which is lined on the east by six-story brick and stone apartment buildings. These apartment buildings have either small stoops or entrance porches (see view 45 in Figure 9-25). Riverside Park resumes at West 135th Street, where there is a Beaux Arts stone wall and overlook with square posts and urns that indicate the beginning of the park and end of the viaduct and the presence of a staircase that leads down to Twelfth Avenue. Historic lampposts run down the outer edge of the stair.

Riverside Park is narrow in the northwest corner of the study area, but it has grassy lawns, decorative metal fences, extensive tree coverage, benches, and winding paths. The park slopes downward to the Hudson River, but between it and the river are the northern terminus of Marginal Street, the Amtrak rail line, Henry Hudson Parkway, and the outer shell of a brick building that now serves as the enclosure for a tall billboard.

West 125th Street Corridor. The streetscape of the wide West 125th Street corridor is lively and dominated by the parabolic arch truss supporting the IRT subway line over the street. East of Broadway, a variety of nondescript ground-floor storefronts, one-story commercial buildings, and a church with show windows and large, brightly colored signs and awnings characterize the streetscape (see view 2 in Figure 9-3). Streetwalls are consistent, except bordering the General Grant Houses. The landscaped grounds of that housing complex and the stone ground floor of an elegant Georgian Revival-style branch of the New York Public Library enhance the streetscape. Street furniture is a typical assortment of traffic signs, modern metal streetlights, bus shelters, and fire hydrants. West of Broadway, the streetscape of West 125th Street across from the Project Area is less lively and interesting, as it lacks street-level activity, except at the stairs to the 125th Street IRT Subway Station and in the parking lot for a McDonald's restaurant, which is set back from the intersection with Broadway. Most of the buildings to the west of the McDonald's have largely windowless ground floors.

Study Area's Southeastern Segment. The southeast portion of the study area is developed with one- to six-story masonry tenements and apartment buildings, commercial structures, and institutional buildings that include a church, synagogue, police station, community health center,



Vacant lot at 527 West 133rd Street. View north 44



Riverside Drive. View south from 137th Street 45

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school, and public swimming pool facility. Most of the buildings on Old Broadway and West 126th Street to the west of Old Broadway have ground-floor storefronts with large windows underneath awnings. Roll-down metal gates are common. There are no ground-floor storefronts along West 126th Street east of Old Broadway (see view 46 in Figure 9-26). Street activity on the block is largely associated with St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church and the police station across the street at 532 West 126th Street. Street parking on West 126th Street is perpendicular, visually overwhelming the street with automobiles, especially in the vicinity of St. Mary's Church. The streetwalls on the north side of West 126th Street and on West 129th Street are broken by the open grounds of the Manhattanville Houses, the health center building that is partially set back from the street at the northeast corner of the intersection of West 126th Street and Old Broadway, the St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church complex on West 126th Street, and Sheltering Arms Park. Although St. Mary's Church is built to the lot line, the parish house is set back from the street behind a tree-filled yard enclosed with a brick fence.

Occupying most of the block bounded by Old Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, and West 126th and West 129th Streets, Sheltering Arms Park consists of a paved playground with play equipment and benches, a swimming pool, and a one-story building set back from West 129th Street behind flower beds. Tall chain-link fences along Amsterdam Avenue and West 126th Street enclose the park. Chain-link fences are also found bordering the grounds of the Manhattanville Houses along West 129th and West 126th Streets and on Amsterdam Avenue behind P.S. 43. A tall, metal post fence borders the school, which is set back slightly from the street. The grounds of Sheltering Arms Park, the Manhattanville Houses, and St. Mary's Church complex contain numerous trees. Street furniture is the same as that found in the rest of the study area.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type

Primarily clad in brick, the majority of buildings in the study area are one- to three-story commercial and institutional structures and five- and six-story apartment buildings and tenements. However, there are several examples of tall residential buildings of 25 to 30 stories. All of these tall buildings are freestanding and utilize slab-like massing with no setbacks.

Overlooking the northern boundary of the Project Area and visible for long distances in most directions, the large Riverside Park Community building occupies the central portion of a superblock bounded by Broadway, Riverside Drive, and West 133rd and West 134th Streets. With a five-sided, U-shaped plan that wraps around a low-rise school on West 133rd Street, this tall modern residential structure is massed as five connected components of 11, 20, 29, 35, and 29 stories (described from west to east). As mentioned above, the eastern component is set far back from Broadway within a paved playground. The site varies dramatically in topography, and the two western components front on the elevated dead-end that turns off the Riverside Drive viaduct above the West 134th Street roadbed. The angled plan creates varying perspectives from different vantage points, and slightly projecting bays relieve the wide, flat expanses of brick wall surface (see view 47 in Figure 9-26, view 48 in Figure 9-27, and view 13 in Figure 9-9). Numerous, closely spaced windows articulate the façades, which are tied together by concrete courses marking each floor. A tall brick stack and mechanical bulkhead are located on the roof of the building (see view 18 in Figure 9-11). The three-story I.S. 195 school building fills the interior of the U-plan and has a similar brick and concrete modern design.

Occupying a superblock bounded by Broadway, Old Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, and West 133rd and West 129th Streets, the Manhattanville Houses complex consists of six 20-story (172-foot-tall) Y-plan residential towers widely spaced across a landscaped site of grassy lawns, trees,



View southeast on 126th Street from Old Broadway 46



Riverside Park Community. View southwest on Broadway from 135th Street 47



Riverside Park Community. View north from 129th Street 48



Manhattanville Houses. View east on 129th Street 49

Figure 9-27

and paths. Located along the site's perimeter fronting on the surrounding streets, the six towers occupy space that would form standard City blocks if West 130th to West 132nd Streets ran through the site. Orienting the towers to the old Manhattanville street grid preserves views between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue through the Manhattanville Houses complex along the side street view corridors. The Y-plan towers are massed as thin, dark brick wings radiating outward from a narrow central core clad in blue brick (see view 49 in Figure 9-27 and view 50 in Figure 9-28). Each tower is oriented in the same direction with one branch pointing to the northwest, and the southeast face of each core consists of exterior corridors with parapets of multi-colored metal panels. The brick residential wings are simply articulated with windows. The towers' footprints, massing with thin wings, and placement on the site's perimeter tie them into the surrounding neighborhoods and give them a street presence while reducing their bulk. However, chain-link fencing around most of the site somewhat negates the architectural intent of integrating the development into the neighborhood. Several paved parking lots and a one-story grocery store that fronts on Amsterdam Avenue are also on the site.

Located in the southeast portion of the study area, the General Grant Houses occupy a superblock bounded by West 125th Street, Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, and Lasalle Street. (A second superblock of the housing complex is located just outside the study area across Amsterdam Avenue.) The development consists of five 21-story freestanding brick towers spread across a site with paved and grassy areas. The towers have a narrow rectangular massing, and four are set at a northwest-southeast angle (see view 51 in Figure 9-28). The fifth tower is set at an opposing northeast-southwest angle. Each tower is placed somewhat back from the adjacent streets, removing them slightly from the surrounding street life. The bulky, modernist buildings are simply designed with flat wall surfaces, given some expression with buff panels and wide, recessed bays. These towers are more imposing than those of the Manhattanville Houses, because their long rectangular forms appear to occupy more space and are more obstructive of views.

Two additional modern residential towers are located in the study area. The freestanding 25- and 26-story (approximately 276 feet tall) Columbia University housing buildings at 560 Riverside Drive occupy the northwest end of the block bounded by Broadway, West 125th Street, St. Clair Place, Riverside Drive, and Tiemann Place (see view 7 in Figure 9-6). The building on West 125th Street consists of a narrow 26-story concrete tower with a four-story base. The tower façades are composed of columns of windows deeply set within angled concrete openings. The four-story base has a similar design, and it curves to follow the intersection of West 125th Street and St. Clair Place. As described above, the ground floor is largely blank, with narrow windows raised to the top of the floor. Facing Riverside Drive, the 25-story tower of the other brick building rises above a five-story base that houses a garage. From the study area and Project Area, the unornamented side and rear façades are visually prominent over the adjacent low-rise buildings on West 125th Street. To the Project Area, the building presents a blank service core and flanking light courts.

The bulk of buildings in the study area consist of five- and six-story, brick and stone apartment buildings and tenements designed in styles such as Beaux Arts and Renaissance Revival. Clustered in the northern and southern sections of the study area, these residential structures create unified streetscapes along West 135th to West 137th Streets between Broadway and Riverside Drive, West 133rd to West 136th Streets between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, along Riverside Drive, Broadway, and Amsterdam Avenue generally north of West 133rd Street, and on Tiemann Place, Claremont Avenue, and Lasalle Street. Exhibiting similar massing and design, they occupy lots of 25 to 100 feet wide, have entrance porches or small stoops over



Manhattanville Houses. View south on Amsterdam Avenue from 133rd Street 50



General Grant Houses. View southwest from Amsterdam Avenue at 129th Street 51

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basement areaways, have internal or street-facing light courts, and contain ornamental details like rusticated basements, columns and pilasters, elaborate window lintels, and projecting roof cornices (see Figures 9-29 to 9-32). On Riverside Drive and Broadway, the apartment buildings occupy the larger sized lots.

In addition to containing similar Renaissance Revival and Italianate tenements and apartment buildings, the southeast portion of the study area includes one- to four-story commercial and institutional buildings. Located along West 125th Street, the commercial buildings tend to be one- and two-story, nondescript storefront structures with large awnings and signs (see view 59 in Figure 9-32, view 60 in Figure 9-33, and view 2 in Figure 9-3). A freestanding McDonald's restaurant is located within a parking lot at the southwest corner of the intersection of West 125th Street and Broadway. With a trademark red hipped roof, drive-through, and parking lot, this building has a suburban form and appearance. Distinctive low-rise buildings in the southern portion of the study area include St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church complex, the police station at 528 West 126th Street, the Old Broadway Synagogue at 15 Old Broadway, the New York Public Library branch at 520 West 125th Street, and Prentis Hall at 632 West 125th Street.

The St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church complex consists of a church building, parish house, and Sunday school building. The neo-Gothic church building resembles an English country parish church and is clad in brick with a central gothic leaden-glass window and a gabled roof with dormers and bellcote (see view 61 in Figure 9-33). The original wood frame clapboard parish house is set behind a garden on the west side of the church, and the Sunday school is a two-story brick building located behind the church. Across the street, the police station is a boxy, two-story concrete modernist building with a central entrance court and metal strip windows. Designed in a vernacular style similar to that found on Lower East Side synagogues, the two-story, brick Old Broadway Synagogue has a double-height Roman arch encompassing the entrance door and a stained glass window above, two rectangular stained glass windows on either side of the arch, and a stepped parapet with a blind arcade (see view 58 in Figure 9-32). The George Bruce Branch of the New York Public Library is a freestanding, three-story brick and stone Georgian Revival-style structure. Stylistic features of the library, which are typical of the Georgian Revival style, include an arched entrance with a fanlight detail, a stone base, windows with stone keystones, and a stone cornice with a balustrade. Located south of the Project Area, Prentis Hall is an ornate, five-story terra-cotta structure with applied Classical ornament. Used as an academic hall by Columbia University, this former dairy building has tall, arched windows and entrances, cornices, an attic story of windows with keystones, and a crenellated parapet.

VISUAL RESOURCES

PROJECT AREA

As described above, visual resources are unique or important public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features that can include waterfront views, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or natural features. Applying that definition from the *CEQR Technical Manual*, there are five visual resources in the Project Area, with the two most prominent ones being the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct and the Riverside Drive viaduct. The subway viaduct spans West 125th Street on large parabolic arches that are visible for long distances along West 125th Street. Centered above the arch, the 125th Street Subway Station structure is constructed of steel beams and wooden sheathing. A wooden canopy supported on street trusses overhangs the platforms. In the Broadway view corridor, the viaduct is visible for long distances to the north and south.



View south on Broadway from 137th Street 52



View east on 136th Street from Riverside Drive 53

Figure 9-29

Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area



View east on 135th Street from Riverside Drive 54



View west on 135th Street from Amsterdam Avenue 55



View west on 134th Street from Amsterdam Avenue 56



View southwest on Amsterdam from 135th Street 57

Figure 9-31

**Urban Design and Visual Resources
Study Area**



View south on Old Broadway from 126th Street 58



View northwest on 125th Street from Old Broadway 59



View west on 125th Street from Amsterdam Avenue 60



St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church Complex. View north 61

Figure 9-33

**Urban Design and Visual Resources
Study Area**

From west of Broadway, it is also visible for long distances in the side street view corridors, including on West 125th Street, where there is a prominent view of the viaduct arch that spans over this street. From east of Broadway, it is not visible in the side street view corridors, except along West 125th, West 126th, and West 133rd Streets. The General Grant Houses and Manhattanville Houses block views from the east, and, north of West 134th Street, the viaduct runs lower to the street grade and then enters an open cut.

Running high above Twelfth Avenue, the Riverside Drive viaduct frames the Twelfth Avenue view corridor and creates long vault-covered perspectives. Its repeating arches create visual rhythm and nicely framed westward views of the Hudson River. On the side streets, the viaduct is visible from as far east as Broadway. From Marginal Street, the viaduct is not as visually prominent due to the intervening Henry Hudson Parkway and Amtrak rail line viaducts. On the elevated Riverside Drive road surface, the viaduct itself is not visually interesting, but it allows expansive views in all directions. There are views across the Hudson River, south to Riverside Park, and east across and into the Project Area. These views suffer somewhat from the mass of billboards located along Twelfth Avenue.

The Hudson River is a visual resource for the Project Area, although it is mostly inaccessible to pedestrians. From where it is accessible on Marginal Street, the waterfront is an uninviting paved lot adjacent to a wide street and the Henry Hudson Parkway viaduct, which is not a visually interesting viaduct. Further, the West 125th Street corridor to the riverfront is unwelcoming as it runs through a low-rise industrial area, experiences Henry Hudson Parkway access traffic, and has a wide, confusing intersection with Twelfth Avenue. From within the Project Area, the side streets provide some views to the Hudson River through the arches of the Riverside Drive viaduct.

Two buildings within the Project Area are visual resources. Although it is only visible in its immediate vicinity, the temple-front façade of the former Lee Brothers Storage Building at 571 Riverside Drive is a prominent and distinguished feature in northward views on Riverside Drive (see Chapter 8, “Historic Resources”). Although it is also visible from the Henry Hudson Parkway, views are fleeting and automobile passengers would have to look up to see the structure. From north on Riverside Drive, a billboard on the building’s north façade obscures views of the neoclassical façade.

The Studebaker Building, with its unusual brick and terra-cotta tower, is a visual resource. Due to intervening buildings, it is not especially visible from the east in the West 131st and West 132nd Street view corridors. In any case, the east façade of the building is a blank party wall. The Studebaker Building is visually prominent from the west, and the west façade carries out the brick and terra-cotta design and fenestration of the street-facing façades. The elevated position of the building relative to the lower topography around Twelfth Avenue and the presence of intervening low-rise buildings allow clear views on West 131st and West 132nd Streets. The Studebaker Building is also prominent from the Riverside Drive viaduct, but it is not visible from Marginal Street due to the intervening Henry Hudson Parkway and Amtrak viaducts.

Views of the Project Area are numerous due to its large area and sloping topography. There are clear and extensive views of the Academic Mixed-Use Area along the Broadway and Twelfth Avenue view corridors, as well as the side street view corridors that run through it. Expansive and unobstructed views of the entire area are available from the Riverside Drive viaduct. From the western edge of Subdistrict B and the Other Area west of Marginal Street, views of the Academic Mixed-Use Area are partially obscured by the Henry Hudson Parkway, Amtrak rail line, and Riverside Drive viaducts. Twelfth Avenue and the side streets provide views of

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Subdistrict B. From the eastern edge of the Project Area, the Other Area west of Marginal Street is visible, but the Riverside Drive viaduct frames all of the views west on the side streets. The smaller Subdistrict C area is only visible in its immediate vicinity.

From the study area, views of the Project Area are variable. From the east side of Broadway and the side streets to the east, the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct partially blocks views west and north of the buildings comprising the main portion of the Academic Mixed-Use Area. The section of the Academic Mixed-Use Area on the east side of Broadway and the Other Area east of Broadway are visible from the immediately surrounding streets. In views south on Broadway from the northern portion of the study area, the section of the Academic Mixed-Use Area on the east side of Broadway is highly visible. In comparison, only the Broadway frontages of the blocks within the main body of the Academic Mixed-Use Area are clearly visible in the southward Broadway view corridor, because the Riverside Park Community building partially blocks views from the north. In addition, the buildings on Blocks 1999 and 1998 (located between West 131st and West 133rd Streets) of the Academic Mixed-Use Area itself—which are somewhat visible from the northern portion of the study area—block views from Broadway into the main body of the area.

From the southern portion of the study area, views of the Project Area are only obtainable from Broadway and the view corridors along West 125th and West 126th Streets. Fronting on West 125th Street and Broadway, Blocks 1995 and 1996 are prominent in views west on West 125th Street and from that street's wide intersection with Broadway. There are no views of the Project Area from Tiemann Place, Claremont Avenue, Lasalle Street, and Riverside Park and Drive south of West 125th Street due to intervening buildings. Similarly, there are no views of the Project Area from Riverside Drive and the side streets north of West 135th Street due to intervening buildings. There are views of the Project Area from the Manhattan Valley IRT, Henry Hudson Parkway, and Amtrak rail line viaducts, but passing views from the subway trains, cars on the parkway, and the railroad are of brief duration.

STUDY AREA

Several visual resources are located in the study area. These are the two sections of Riverside Park that abut the Project Area on its southern and northern edges, the views of the Hudson River and the New Jersey shoreline, and St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church on West 126th Street. In addition, publicly accessible views from within the study area of Riverside Church, which is located south of the study area at West 122nd Street and Riverside Drive, are also considered visual resources. Constructed on bluffs overlooking the Hudson River, the two sections of Riverside Park are designed with grassy lawns, landscaped paths with benches, decorative fencing and stone walls, flower beds, and extensive tree coverage. The north end of the southern portion of the park contains a playground and the tomb of General Ulysses S. Grant at West 122nd Street. From within the Project Area, there are only limited views of the southern portion of the park from St. Clair Place and of the southern tip of the northern portion of the park at West 135th Street. From St. Clair Place and Twelfth Avenue, views are of the base of the tree-covered hill forming the northern end of the park that extends south to West 72nd Street. From Twelfth Avenue in the vicinity of West 134th Street, there are views of the ornamental staircase leading from the avenue up to the northern portion of the section of Riverside Park, some trees, and the stone retaining wall where the Riverside Drive viaduct ends. From Riverside Drive on the viaduct, there are views of the park at St. Clair Place, which include views of Grant's Tomb. The tall residential Columbia University buildings at 560 Riverside Drive block most views of Riverside Church from the viaduct. However, there are some views of the upper portion of the

Riverside Church tower from within the Project Area, such as from West 129th Street and Broadway.

The Hudson River and New Jersey vista is a visual resource that is visible from within the Project Area and study area. It is visible in most of the narrow side street view corridors, although views are variably blocked by the Manhattan Valley IRT, Riverside Drive, Amtrak, and Henry Hudson Parkway viaducts. Further, the jumble of nondescript industrial buildings and parking ribbons in the Academic Mixed-Use Area detract from these river views west through the Project Area. There are unobstructed views of the Hudson River vista from Marginal Street in the Project Area, but the publicly accessible paved lot along the river is not particularly inviting for pedestrians, as described above. In the study area, the section of Riverside Park south of St. Clair Place affords expansive views of the river vista.

The picturesque St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church complex is a visual resource of the study area, but it is only visible in the immediate vicinity on West 126th Street. It is not visible from within the Project Area.

D. 2015 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

PROJECT AREA

As described in Chapter 3, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," there are several projects in the Project Area that are planned for development or under construction with completion dates by the 2015 analysis year. The West Harlem Waterfront park, a project sponsored by New York City, is currently under construction between St. Clair Place and West 133rd Street in the Other Area west of Marginal Street, and construction is expected to be completed in 2008. The former paved lots along the waterfront will be replaced with approximately 88,000 sf of landscaped areas, walking and bike paths, an excursion pier with docking capabilities for ferries and excursion boats, a recreational pier, a small multi-purpose building, and an ecological platform. As described above, the existing waterfront in this area is derelict and uninviting for visitors, and the park will transform the paved river's edge of Manhattanville into a landscaped open space that will allow direct and active connections to the Hudson River and multiple vantage points for passive viewing of the river vista. It will also provide a partial connection between the two sections of Riverside Park. To encourage pedestrian access to the new waterfront open space, the anticipated streetscape improvements along West 125th Street may include widened sidewalks, plantings, and new street lighting and furniture. These improvements will make the street's intersections with West 129th Street and Twelfth Avenue safer and more inviting for pedestrians.

In the Project Area, Columbia University is planning several projects for completion in the future without the Proposed Actions. Two projects involve the renovation of existing buildings. Columbia is currently renovating the Studebaker Building for conversion to administrative offices. In addition to interior alterations, the renovation program involves replacing the building's deteriorated windows and creating a new entrance on West 131st Street. This project will change the use of the Studebaker Building but will have minimal effects on the building's form and overall appearance. By the 2015 analysis year, Columbia would also occupy the existing former Warren Nash Service Station building on the east side of Broadway between West 132nd and West 133rd Streets for University administrative offices. Exterior changes to this building are expected to be minor.

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Columbia University will also collaborate with the City on the creation of a new public secondary school that would also house administrative space for Columbia University. Although the location of the school is not yet final, it is anticipated that the school would be located in the Project Area on the east side of Broadway between West 131st and West 132nd Streets (on Block 1986) if the Proposed Actions were not approved and the Academic Mixed-Use Development did not go forward. Located to the south of the former Warren Nash Service Station building, the new school will replace a gas station, an auto repair building, a storage building, and a U-Haul rental center, and improve the streetscape along Broadway within the Project Area.

In addition, a separate applicant has submitted several rezoning applications for five parcels within the Project Area. These five sites include a three-story garage on Block 1996 at the intersection of West 129th and West 125th Streets (see Figure 2-1, Site 5a), a five-story garage on the West 131st Street frontage of Block 1997 (Site 5b), a four-story former automobile service building on the Broadway frontage of Block 1998 (Site 5c), a three-story former automobile service building on the Broadway frontage of Block 1987 (Site 5d), and a three-story building containing the former Claremont Theater on the Broadway frontage of Block 1988 (site 5e). A development scenario has been developed by the applicant for each site, which would involve enlarging the existing building, retaining the existing commercial uses, and adding residential space.

On Site 5a, the existing three-story garage building would be enlarged by 18 stories for 66 residential units. On Site 5b, the existing five-story garage building would be enlarged by three stories, for 18 residential units. On Site 5c, the existing four-story former automobile service building would be enlarged by six stories, for 59 residential units. On Site 5d, the existing three-story former automobile service building would be enlarged by 18 stories, for 107 residential units. On Site 5e, the former Claremont Theater portion of the building (the northern portion of the building) would remain. The existing three-story warehouse portion of the building would be enlarged by 12 stories, for 69 residential units. Through the construction of building enlargements, each development scenario is expected to alter the Project Area's streetscape and building bulk character. The residential development is expected to lessen the Project Area's primarily industrial character through the construction of new residential buildings with ground-floor retail or community facility spaces. Those new ground-floor uses would enliven the streetscape.

A rezoning application has also been submitted for one other site in the Project Area—3229 Broadway on Block 1996—by Hudson North American. This site is also proposed to be rezoned from the existing M1-2 to C6-2. The EAS for this application was submitted in July 2007. A reasonable worst-case development scenario is identified by the applicant in the EAS in which the existing building would be converted to residential and retail uses and new residential development would be constructed above, with the addition of four floors.

STUDY AREA

Two projects are planned by Columbia University and one additional project is planned by others (not Columbia) for development in the study area by the 2015 analysis year.

Columbia University will alter the ground floor of 560 Riverside Drive along West 125th Street to create a new entrance and lobby. As described above, this residential building's existing ground floor on West 125th Street is largely blank, inactive, and uninteresting. By renovating the base of the building, this project will improve the streetscape along West 125th Street south of

the Project Area. Making the blockfront more pedestrian friendly, it will also be in keeping with the West Harlem Master Plan's goal of enhancing the West 125th Street corridor to the new West Harlem Waterfront park.

In addition, Columbia University will construct an approximately 250,840-gsf academic building (approximately 210 feet tall) at the southwest corner of Broadway and West 125th Street. This project will improve the streetscape of the block by replacing the McDonald's restaurant building and parking lot and the nondescript industrial building adjacent to Prentiss Hall, although a McDonald's restaurant may be retained in the base of the new building. The academic building will be in keeping with the use and bulk of buildings in the area. Located on an existing block and lot, it will not obscure views west along West 125th Street of the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct, the Riverside Drive viaduct, or the West Harlem Waterfront park.

There is one additional project within the study area. A two-story brick, former industrial building is being renovated at the northwest corner of the intersection of Twelfth Avenue and West 135th Street. Renovation and commercial reuse of this previously vacant and dilapidated building will bring activity to this section of Twelfth Avenue at the base of the stairs leading to the northern segment of Riverside Park.

E. 2015 FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION

It is anticipated that the Proposed Actions would be in place by 2015, and that, as a result, some development permitted under those actions would have begun. By changing allowable bulk and uses throughout the Project Area, the rezoning would enable the primarily low-rise and industrial Project Area to be developed with higher-density academic buildings and open space in the Academic Mixed-Use Area (Subdistrict A), allow for development of commercial and retail uses in Subdistrict B,¹ and allow for development of residential and academic uses in the Other Area east of Broadway. The proposed zoning district would also continue to permit a range of industrial uses. The proposed zoning would also protect the low scale along the west side of Twelfth Avenue (Subdistrict B) and would ensure new development compatible with adjacent development in Subdistrict C and the Other Area east of Broadway.

By 2015, development pursuant to the first phase of the Academic Mixed-Use Development would be clustered around the intersection of West 125th and 129th Streets. Also by 2015, construction for Phase 2 would have started. On the West 130th to West 131st Street block, the area east of Site 7 would be under construction, with excavation and below-grade construction completed and above-grade construction under way on the buildings on Sites 6 and 6b, and on the central open space on that block. Also in 2015, additional properties would be cleared for use to support construction activities for the Phase 2 development on Block 1998 between West 131st and West 132nd Streets to provide land for staging of construction materials and equipment and other construction support.

¹ As described earlier, CPC is contemplating certain modifications to Subdistrict B that would not result in any projected development sites in Subdistrict B. The proposed modifications are more fully described in Chapter 29, "Modifications to the Proposed Actions."

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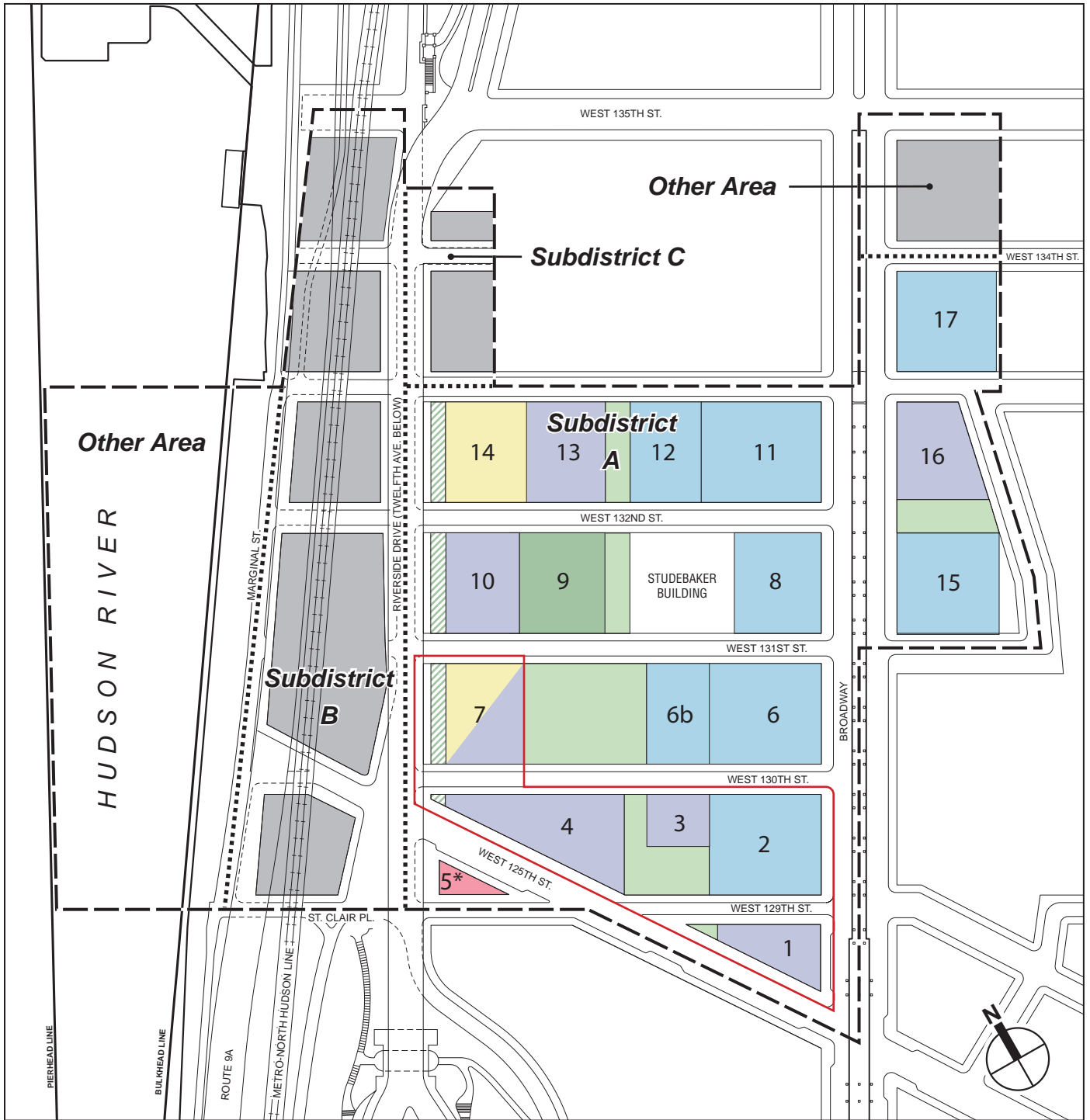
To encourage appropriate redevelopment along the Manhattanville waterfront, while enhancing pedestrian access to it, the Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District would have special urban design requirements for widened sidewalks in Subdistrict A (except on Broadway, West 125th Street, the south side of West 129th Street, and the block between West 131st and West 132nd Streets); maximum building heights and mandatory streetwalls throughout the zoning district; designation of Twelfth Avenue, West 125th Street, and Broadway within Subdistricts A and B for Special Ground-Floor Uses; transparency requirements within Subdistricts A and B; and open area design controls in Subdistrict A. These urban design requirements would enliven the streets through the proposed zoning district, widen views toward the waterfront from Broadway, and provide light and air on the side streets and beneath the Riverside Drive viaduct. They would also ensure a coordinated design for the Academic Mixed-Use Development through building height controls and streetwall requirements. The open area design controls would ensure the quality of and public access to privately owned, publicly accessible open spaces within Subdistrict A that would include a north-south midblock open area between West 129th and West 130th Streets, an open space area on the north side of West 129th Street (the Small Square), and an open area at the western tip of the block bounded by Broadway and West 125th and 129th Streets (the Grove).

In addition, the General Project Plan (GPP) would include requirements for Subdistrict A that would affect the urban design of the Academic Mixed-Use Development. The GPP would mandate the preservation of the architecturally and historically significant former Warren Nash Service Station building, limit the range of permitted uses on development sites, and set forth minimum and maximum floor areas for each proposed land use component.

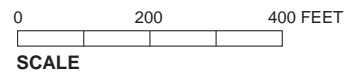
Following the requirements of the Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District and the GPP, the Academic Mixed-Use Development would preserve the existing former Warren Nash Service Station building; provide active ground-floor uses along West 125th Street, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue; keep the streets through the area open and create widened, landscaped sidewalks on the narrow side streets and Twelfth Avenue to enhance views and make the area pedestrian-friendly; create visually open and accessible space at the bases of the buildings to improve the streetscape and generate street-level activity; locate parking and building services below grade to minimize disruption; and use a coordinated system of building heights and massing to create an overall design for the Academic Mixed-Use Development that reflects the topography of the valley and the heights of certain surrounding buildings and the two viaducts. Overall, the design approach of the Academic Mixed-Use Development aims to create a lively, welcoming urban environment for students, faculty, other employees, and the community that would connect the Academic Mixed-Use Development to the surrounding residential neighborhoods and draw views and pedestrians through the Project Area to the West Harlem Waterfront park. Constructed within the existing street pattern and block arrangement, the Academic Mixed-Use Development would be integrated into the Project Area without campus gates or walls, and the arrangement of proposed open spaces would further link the development to the surrounding area.

PROJECT AREA

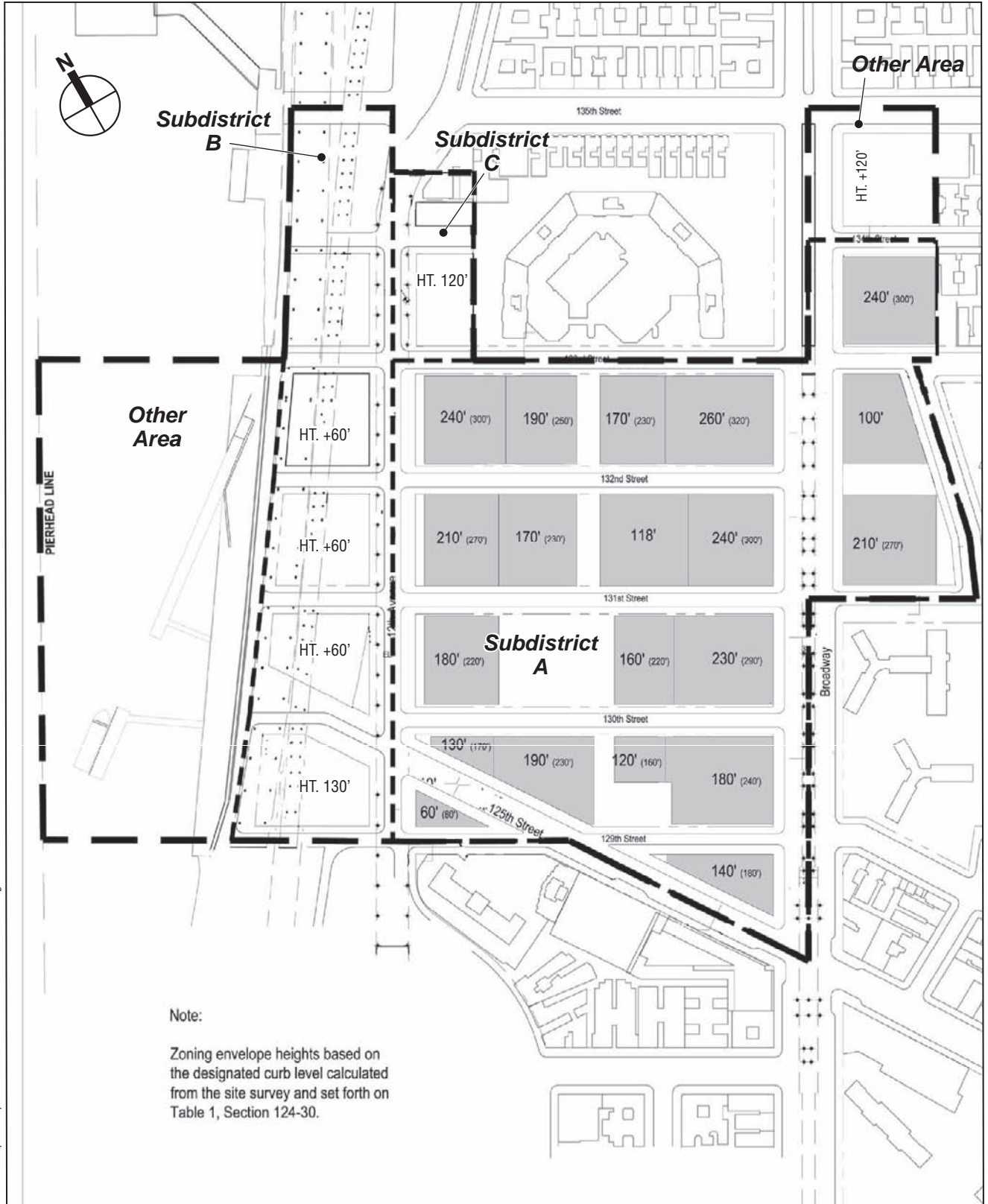
The analysis below considers the effects of the 2015 urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario and the proposed rezoning of Subdistricts A, B, C, and the Other Areas on the urban design and visual resources of the Project Area and study area. See Figure 9-34 for the Illustrative Plan development sites, and Figures 9-35 and 9-36 for the maximum building heights permitted for each site by the proposed zoning.



- - - - - Project and Rezoning Area Boundary
- Subdistrict Boundary
- 2015 Development
- Academic Research
- Academic
- Housing for Graduate Students, Faculty, and Other Employees
- Streetfront/Retail
- Recreation Facility
- Open Space
- Twelfth Avenue 30-foot Widened Sidewalk with Open Market Area
- Subdistricts B,C, and the Other Areas
- 1 Development Site



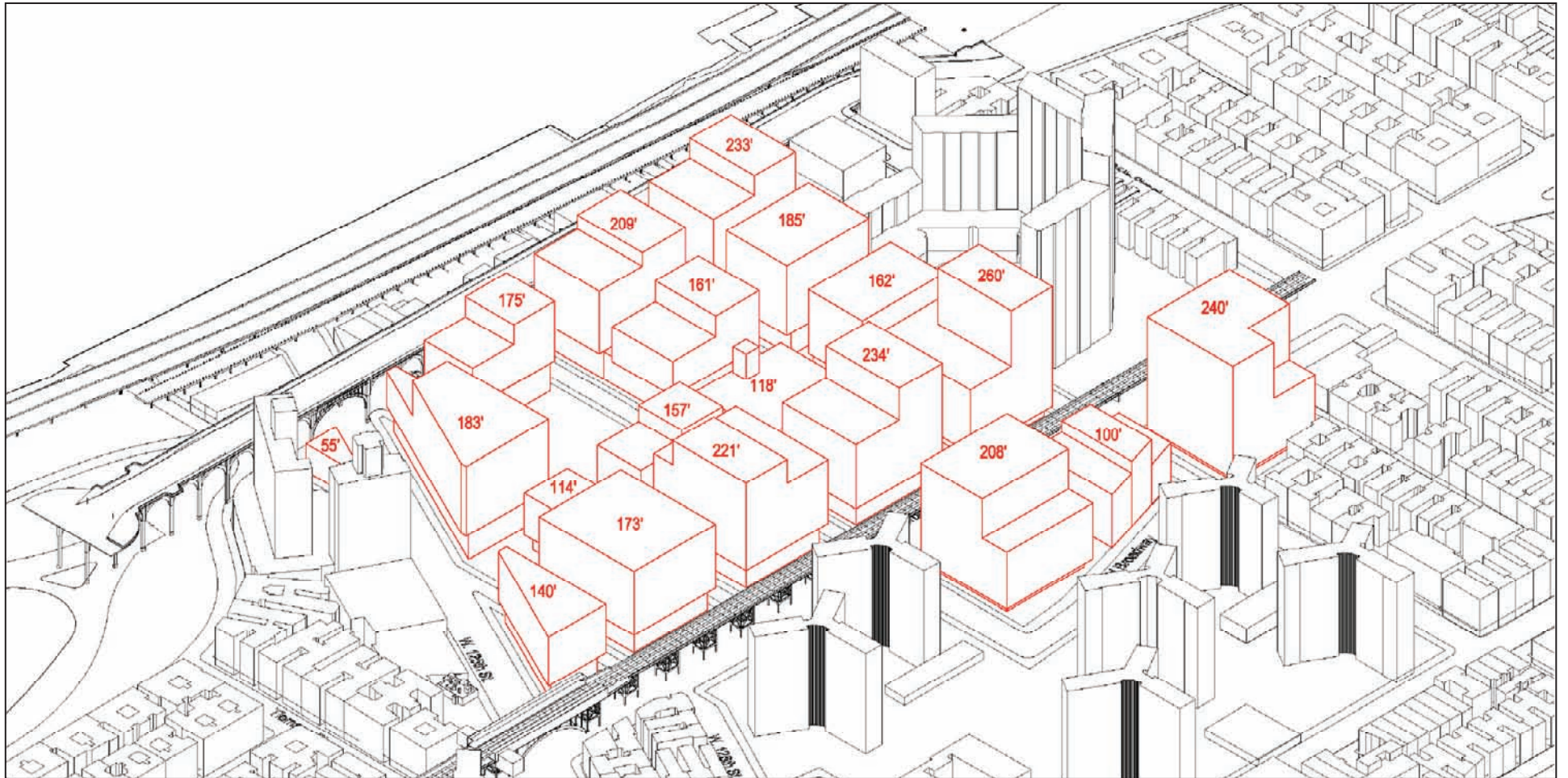
* NOTE: Public Open Space to be developed as partial open space mitigation (see Chapter 23)



Source: Proposed Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use District Zoning Text

- Project and Rezoning Area Boundary
- - -** Subdistrict Boundary
- 120'** Maximum Building Height not including mechanical
- (160')** Maximum Building Height with mechanical

NOT TO SCALE



FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY
NOTE: Stacks not included

Generally, baseline conditions in the future with the Proposed Actions include all of the “No Build” projects as background conditions, except those proposed for sites in the Project Area. In this case, the public secondary school for science, math, and engineering would likely not be built in the Project Area, and so it would be located on the south side of West 125th Street west of Broadway on a site controlled by Columbia University. The Columbia building planned for that site in the future without the Proposed Actions would be modified to include the school in its base.

URBAN DESIGN

Topography and Natural Features, Street Pattern and Hierarchy, Block Shapes, and Building Arrangements

The proposed zoning would preserve the Project Area street pattern, and all projected development would be laid out within the existing grid and constructed on existing blocks with minimal re-grading expected. The new development would replace gas stations, warehouses, garages, other types of light industrial buildings, and parking lots. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not alter the topography, natural features, street pattern and hierarchy, and block shapes of the Project Area.

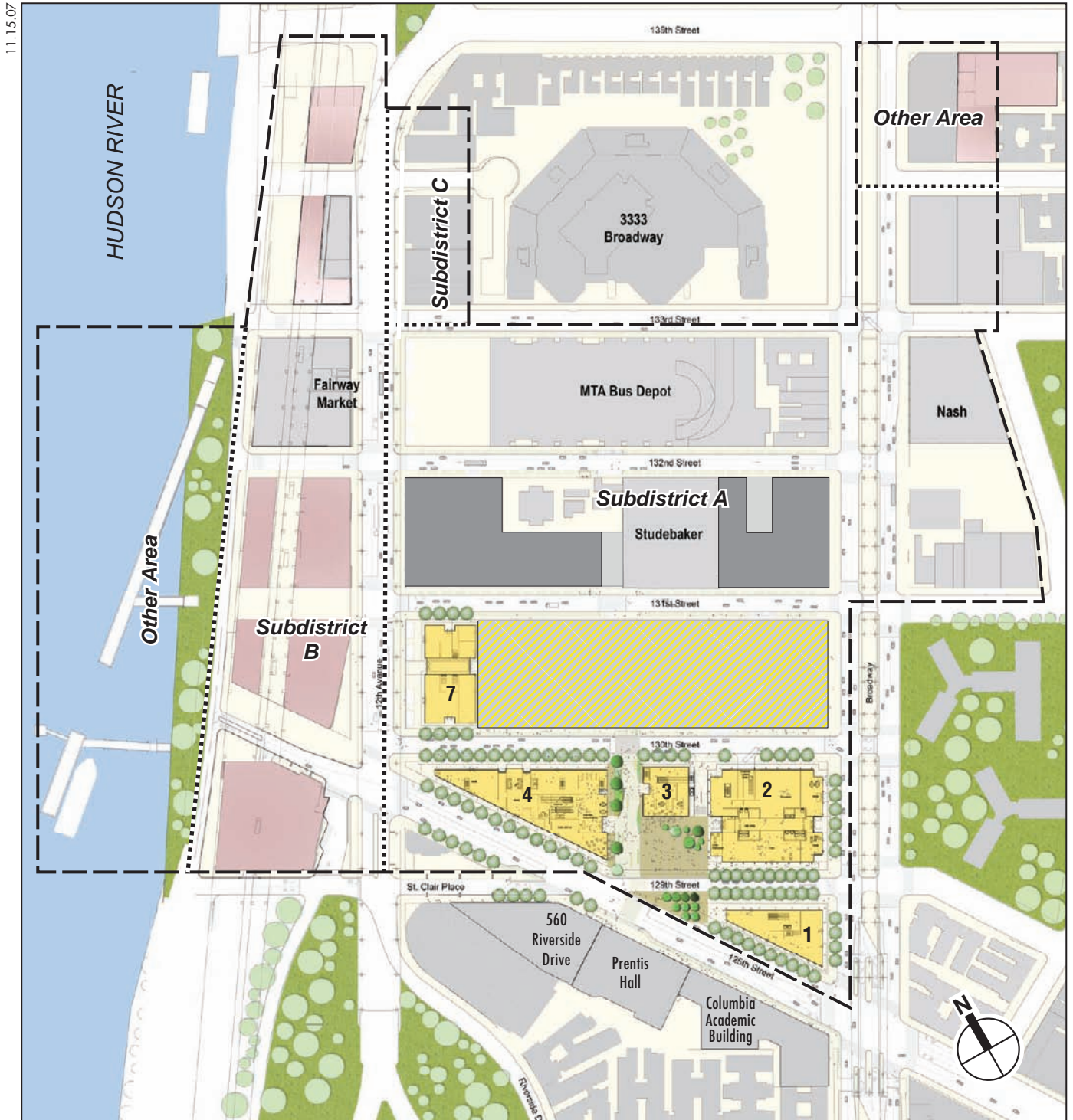
The Proposed Actions would, however, alter building arrangements. Most of the existing buildings in the Academic Mixed-Use Area are attached structures on relatively narrow lots, and the five proposed buildings constructed by 2015 would be freestanding with large footprints. This change to a more regular pattern of building arrangements from the existing mix of attached and freestanding structures on lots of various sizes would be different but not adverse. Further, the new arrangement of buildings organized around new publicly accessible open spaces would be an improvement over existing conditions. In Subdistrict B, building arrangements would not be perceptibly altered, because the six projected development sites are relatively small, and most of the existing buildings in the area are freestanding.

Academic Mixed-Use Area (Subdistrict A)

In the future with the Proposed Actions, five new buildings (one academic research, three academic, and one mixed-use building containing academic space and University housing) with active ground-floor uses would be constructed in Subdistrict A on Blocks 1995, 1996, and 1997. The four buildings on Blocks 1995 and 1996 would be clustered around an open space area (composed of the Small Square and the Grove) centered at the intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets, and they would be located across West 125th Street from Prentis Hall, 560 Riverside Drive, and the academic building that would be constructed at the southwest corner of West 125th Street and Broadway in the future without the Proposed Actions (see Figure 9-37). The fifth building constructed on the western end of Block 1997 would pull the first phase of development up Twelfth Avenue.

Streetscape Elements

The five buildings to be constructed on Blocks 1995, 1996, and 1997 would include active ground-floor uses along West 125th Street, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue in conformance with the proposed zoning. These uses would be required on 75 percent of the ground-floor frontage of buildings along these streets, for a minimum depth of 30 feet. Additionally, the proposed zoning would establish transparency requirements for all ground-floor uses that would mandate a minimum of 70 percent of the building’s streetwall surface to be glazed and a minimum of 50



11.15.07

- — — — — Project and Rezoning Area Boundary
- Subdistrict Boundary
- 1** Development Site
- Construction Staging/ Interim Parking
- Under Construction
- Existing Development
- Columbia University Development
- New Open Space
- Subdistricts B, C, and the Other Areas Projected Development Sites

NOT TO SCALE

Note: Building articulations and design features illustrative

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percent to be transparent for a minimum of 15 feet above grade. From the range of permitted active ground-floor uses mandated by the proposed zoning, the Academic Mixed-Use Development would include uses, such as retail, galleries, performance spaces, community centers, and other community services, in glazed and transparent spaces to enliven West 125th Street, connecting it to the lively commercial corridor of 125th Street east of Broadway, and to provide a pedestrian-friendly approach to the West Harlem Waterfront park (see Figure 9-38). These measures would improve the streetscape along West 125th Street and the adjacent section of the Broadway corridor, which is currently characterized by fast-food restaurants, a gas station, a vacant lot, and the ground floor of a storage building. They would also improve the Twelfth Avenue streetscape. This visual openness to the buildings' ground floors would be a clear improvement over the existing streetscape of garage openings, jumbled signage, blank ground floors, roll-down metal gates, and chain-link fences.

Additional urban design requirements of the proposed zoning that would affect the Subdistrict A streetscape include mandatory widened sidewalks and streetwalls of varying heights. On the east side of Twelfth Avenue, the existing sidewalk would be widened by 30 feet, with a 15-foot-wide zone for the provision of an open market and an adjacent 15-foot-wide clear path. By 2015, these widened sidewalks on Twelfth Avenue would be constructed between West 125th and 131st Streets on the western ends of Blocks 1996 and 1997. Within the market zone, the proposed zoning would allow permanent landscaping and seating, and movable features such as kiosks, seating, and open retail structures (see Figure 9-39). On the narrow side streets (except the south side of West 129th Street), the existing sidewalks would be widened by 5 feet and improved as paved surfaces with permitted landscaping that would include street trees. The widened sidewalks along the north side of West 129th Street, both sides of West 130th Street, and the south side of West 131st Street would be a pedestrian amenity with permitted landscaping and seating, and they would create more open views through the Project Area along the side streets and a lively pedestrian market area on Twelfth Avenue that would complement the West Harlem Waterfront park and the new retail spaces projected across the avenue in Subdistrict B (described below).

By 2015, the mandatory streetwall requirements would create on Blocks 1995, 1996, and a portion of 1997 a generally unified arrangement of streetwalls and building setbacks from the streetline on Broadway, West 125th Street, and a portion of West 129th Street and from the widened sidewalks on Twelfth Avenue, West 130th Street, and a portion of West 129th Street. In the proposed zoning, most of the mandatory streetwalls are defined as lower and upper streetwalls. For buildings built to a height lower than 60 feet on a narrow street or 85 feet on a wide street, lower and upper streetwalls are not required and the streetwalls may be built in a single plane. The lower streetwall is the portion that extends from grade to a specified minimum height above the highest elevation of the street frontage. There would also be a maximum height set for the lower streetwall. For buildings with Broadway frontage, the minimum and maximum heights of the lower streetwall would be measured above the highest elevation of the Broadway street frontage. Depending on the site, the minimum and maximum height range would be 15 to 45 or 55 feet above the highest elevation of the street frontage. The upper streetwall is the portion that extends from the lower streetwall to the maximum building height.

On Broadway and West 125th Street, at least 70 percent of the upper streetwall would be at or within 5 feet of the streetline and 70 percent of the lower streetwall would be set back at least 2 feet, but no more than 10 feet, from the upper streetwall. Buildings fronting on Broadway would have a required recess with a minimum depth of 10 feet for 20 percent of the area of the upper streetwall. On West 129th and West 130th Streets, 50 percent of the upper streetwall would be



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located within 5 feet of the widened sidewalk line (or the streetline on the south side of West 129th Street where there would not be a widened sidewalk), and 50 percent of the lower streetwall would be set back at least 2 feet, but no more than 10 feet, from the upper streetwall. On Twelfth Avenue, a maximum of 70 percent of the upper streetwall would be located at or within 2 feet of the widened sidewalk line, and the remaining portion would be set back from the widened sidewalk line by a minimum distance of 20 feet if the setback area faces both the avenue and a narrow street or by 10 feet if the setback area only faces the avenue. On Twelfth Avenue, the lower streetwall would be located at the same distance from the widened sidewalk line as the upper streetwall or set back from the upper streetwall by no more than 10 feet for at least 80 percent of the length of the upper streetwall.

On the western portion of Block 1996, at the intersection of West 130th and 125th Streets, there would be some flexibility because of the unique shape of the site and its location on Twelfth Avenue. The streetwall could be built without an upper and lower streetwall and rise in a single plane, which would be located at or within 5 feet of the streetline or the widened sidewalk line, whichever is applicable, if on a wide street and between 2 and 5 feet of the streetline if located on West 130th Street, and would rise to a minimum height of 45 feet or the height of the building, whichever is less, and a maximum height of 130 feet. If the streetwall is not built in a single plane, the upper and lower streetwalls could follow the rules for West 125th Street if located on a wide street, and the rules for narrow streets, if located on West 130th Street, as described above.

The proposed zoning would permit recesses in portions of the mandatory streetwalls for decorative or functional purposes, provided that for any required streetwall, below a height of 85 feet on a wide street and 60 feet on a narrow street, the depth of the recess would not exceed 3 feet from the streetline or the mandatory sidewalk line, and the maximum area of recesses would not be allowed to exceed 30 percent of the area of the required streetwall; these limitations would not apply to recesses required on Broadway.

The mandatory widened sidewalks and streetwalls and the transparency requirements would create coordinated streetscapes and widened views to the Riverside Drive viaduct and the Hudson River. Unified streetwalls and transparent ground floors that house active uses would be an improvement over the existing streetscape of gas station service areas and building ground floors characterized by auto-related uses and jumbled signage, especially along West 125th Street. In combination with the anticipated streetscape improvements along West 125th Street and the renovation of 560 Riverside Drive to include a new entrance through the currently blank street-level façade, the new development would create an inviting corridor to the waterfront (see Figure 9-38).

A major improvement to the streetscape of Subdistrict A would be the publicly accessible open areas planned around the intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets (see Figure 9-37). These open areas include the Small Square, an approximately 11,770-square-foot open space area on the north side of West 129th Street on Block 1996 (see Figure 9-40), and the Grove, a small, approximately 585-square-foot open space at the western tip of Block 1995. In addition, there would be a north-south midblock open area on Block 1996 between Sites 3 and 4 connected to the Small Square. The five new buildings would be clustered around these linked open spaces to focus the development on West 125th Street, and the open spaces would form a central square connected to the street grid. The north-south midblock open area on Block 1996 connected to the Small Square may have a width of 45 feet clear and open to the sky above a height of 20 feet. The Small Square would be paved and landscaped with a minimum of eight trees, and it would be required to contain a minimum number of movable seats. The Grove



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would be a paved surface planted with trees, and it would also be required to contain fixed or movable seats. These interrelated open spaces would invite pedestrians into the proposed development, and no fences would be permitted. The open spaces would also provide landscaped pedestrian amenities in an area where there are not any and would be a visual improvement on blocks characterized by nondescript garages and commercial buildings. Further, the open spaces would also enhance and complement the West 125th Street waterfront corridor, making it more walkable and inviting.

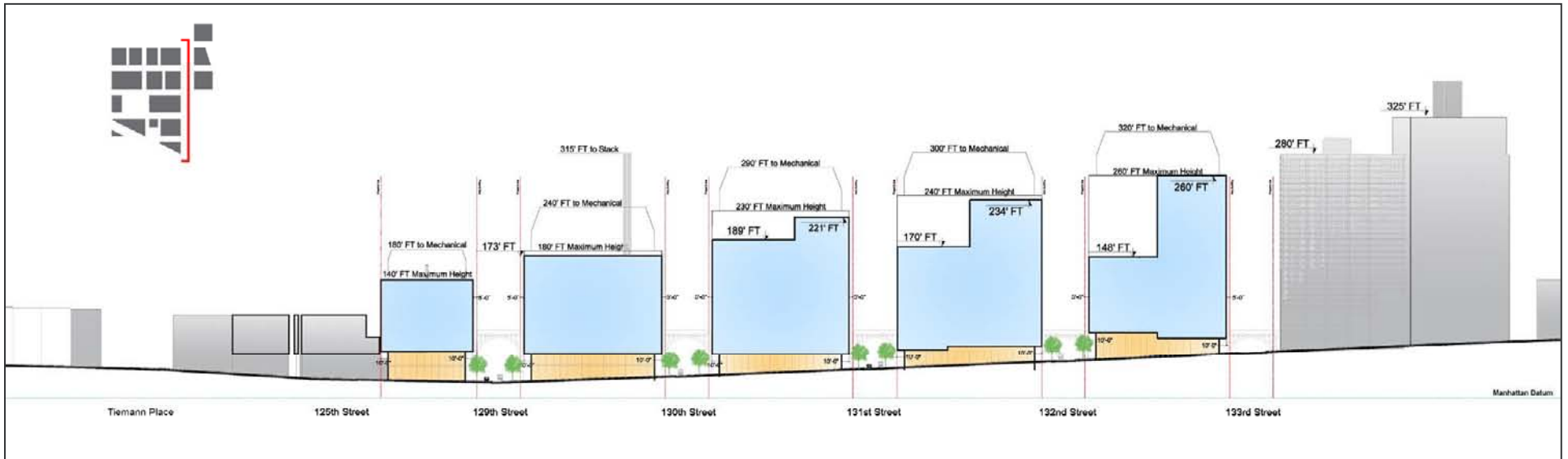
Overall, the Proposed Actions would greatly improve the streetscape in the southern portion of Subdistrict A. There would be no significant adverse impacts to the streetscape of the Academic Mixed-Use Area.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type

Under the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario, the five new buildings with active ground-floor uses to be constructed on Blocks 1995, 1996, and 1997 would be freestanding with large footprints to provide expansive floor plates. They would have a rectilinear massing, setbacks at and above grade, transparent ground floors, and coordinated streetwalls. The five new buildings would range in maximum building height (to the top of the roof) from 120 to 190 feet (160 to 240 feet with mechanical space). In general, the proposed zoning would restrict the height of mechanical space to a maximum of 40 feet above the maximum building height of the academic and housing buildings and 60 feet above the maximum building height of the research buildings. Setback and sky exposure plane controls would regulate the placement of rooftop mechanical equipment to limit views of it from the street. In addition to rooftop mechanical space, the buildings on Sites 1 and 2 would have several exhaust stacks. Each building's exhaust stacks would be clustered together as they extend upward through the structure and out above the roof. The configuration of the cluster on the roof visible from the street would most likely appear as two stacks, as shown in Figures 9-41 and 9-42. This configuration is assumed for the EIS analysis. It is also possible that the clustered stacks could be contained within a single structure; that structure would not be larger than the two-stack configuration shown in Figures 9-41 and 9-42.

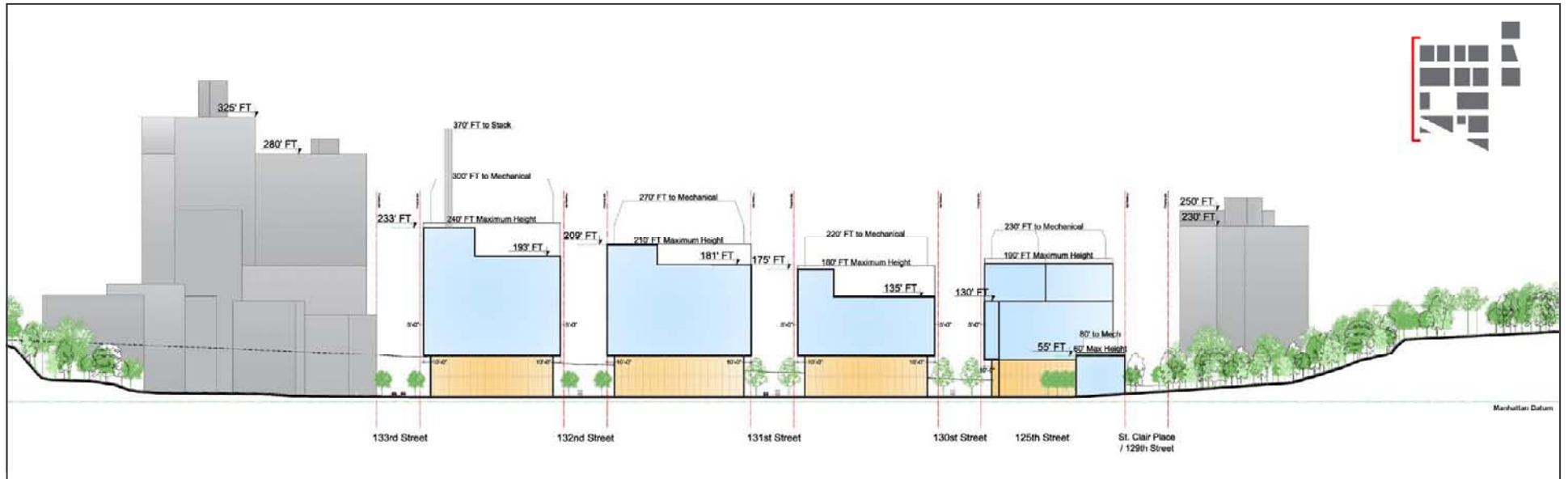
The height of the stacks on Site 1 would be approximately 20 feet above the maximum building height to the roofline of 140 feet; on this site the maximum height for mechanical space would be 40 feet. Thus, the stacks would be within the maximum envelope allowed for mechanical space at this site, and each stack would be approximately 1.5 feet in diameter. It is possible that Site 1 would connect to the central energy plant at Site 2 and therefore would not have any stacks on its roof. The height of the stacks on Site 2 would be approximately 135 feet above the maximum building height to the roofline of 180 feet; on this site the maximum height for mechanical space would be 60 feet. Thus, the stacks would rise 75 feet above the maximum height of the building with mechanical equipment on the roof, and each stack would be approximately 5 feet in diameter. The proposed zoning would regulate the width and placement of these stacks to minimize views of them from the street. In no case would the stacks be located within 10 feet of the upper street walls. Within 50 feet of the upper street wall, the width of the stacks would be limited to 10 percent of the aggregate width of the building street walls per street frontage. Beyond 50 feet of the upper street wall, the stacks could occupy an area that does not exceed 30 percent of the building coverage at ground level. However, the length and width of each building stack, or the total length or width of all stacks on each building, could not exceed 30 feet.

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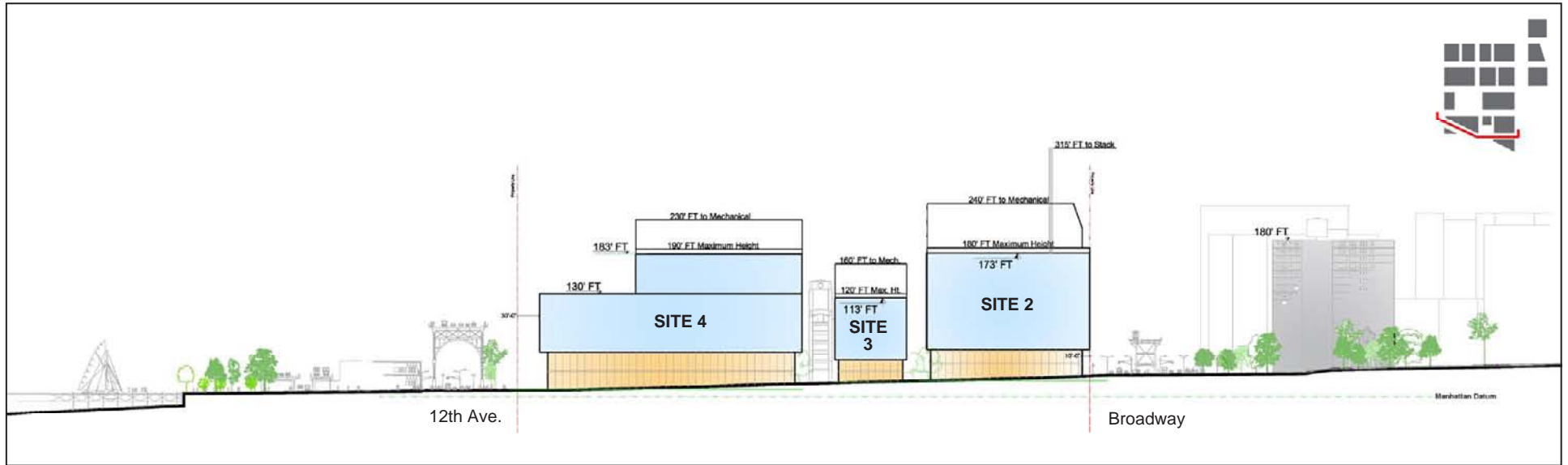


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The GPP would limit building uses on Sites 1 and 3 to academic uses, on Site 2 to academic research, and on Sites 4 and 7 to academic use, University housing, or a mix of both uses. While academic or University housing types would have similar forms and bulk as mandated by the streetwall and maximum building height requirements set forth in the proposed zoning, it is expected that a housing building could be taller and slimmer than an academic building due to different floor plate needs (i.e., an academic building would require larger and more consistent floor plates). However, the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario maximizes buildings heights on each site based on location and not use, and therefore the uses for the Illustrative Plan are the uses for the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario.

Under the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario, an approximately 140-foot-tall (180 feet with mechanical space) academic building would be constructed on Block 1995 (Site 1), and its footprint and massing would largely conform to the block shape and bow-tie intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets. On Block 1996, a 180-foot-tall (240 feet with mechanical space) academic research building would be constructed on the eastern end of the block (on Site 2), a 190-foot-tall (230 feet with mechanical space) academic building would be located at the western end of the block (on Site 4), and a 120-foot-tall (160 feet with mechanical space) academic building would be constructed between the other two on Site 3 (see Figure 9-43 for an illustrative elevation of the three buildings on Block 1996). The westernmost building would be shorter at Twelfth Avenue, where it would have a maximum height of 130 feet (170 feet with mechanical space). As described above, these four buildings would be oriented around the open spaces located at the intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets, which are intended to have the character of an urban square framed by the four buildings. As required by the proposed zoning, the first two floors of the academic building on Site 3 would be transparent facing the Small Square. On Block 1997, a 180-foot-tall (220 feet with mechanical space) mixed-use building containing academic space and University housing (for graduate students, faculty, and other employees) would be constructed on Site 7 at the western end of the block. See Figures 9-39 and 9-40 for illustrative renderings of some of the proposed buildings.

The five buildings constructed in Subdistrict A would have a different use from the existing industrial, storage, and auto-related buildings in the Project Area. They would also be significantly larger in terms of bulk and height compared with the surrounding low-rise buildings. However, the new academic buildings clustered around new open spaces would be a visual improvement over the three gas stations, a paved surface parking lot, and other nondescript and low-rise buildings on Blocks 1995 and 1996 and the western end of Block 1997. While the replacement of low-rise industrial buildings with large academic buildings would be a dramatic change to the southern portion of the Project Area, the new buildings would be similar in height to the 172-foot-tall towers of the Manhattanville Houses, the 25-story, approximately 276-foot-tall buildings at 560 Riverside Drive, and the 21-story towers of the General Grant Houses. Further, transforming this area from auto-related uses into a district of academic, academic research, and University housing buildings with ground-floor retail, cultural, and community space would distinctly improve the urban design of the Project Area. For these reasons, there would be no significant adverse impacts to building bulk, use, and type in the Academic Mixed-Use Area.



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Subdistrict B

Streetscape Elements

It is projected that six sites would be developed with one- and two-story commercial buildings in Subdistrict B. The proposed zoning and the constraints of the Amtrak rail line and Henry Hudson Parkway would limit the height of these buildings to no more than 60 feet (except for the southernmost block between St. Clair Place and West 125th Street, Marginal Street, and Twelfth Avenue, which would have a height limitation of 130 feet), and they would remain below the height of the Riverside Drive viaduct. Along Twelfth Avenue and West 125th Street, 70 percent of the mandatory streetwall would be located at or within 3 feet of the streetline and would rise to a maximum height of 60 feet. It is likely that the new buildings would house ground-floor retail with office space or similar compatible uses above. The triangular former hotel at West 125th Street and the Fairway Market are not located on the projected development sites and are expected to remain, along with the rooftop billboards on those buildings.

New buildings with unified streetwalls and ground-floor retail would improve the streetscape along the west side of Twelfth Avenue, which is currently characterized by parking lots, nondescript garage and storage buildings, billboard posts, and chain-link fences. Further, they would create draws for pedestrians north along the avenue, while enhancing the West 125th Street corridor to the West Harlem Waterfront park, and the new uses and buildings would improve the setting of the adjacent waterfront park. In combination with the anticipated streetscape improvements, West 125th Street between Twelfth Avenue and Marginal Street—the entrance to the new open space—would be safer and more inviting for pedestrians. The projected retail spaces along Twelfth Avenue would complement the active ground-floor uses of the Academic Mixed-Use Development buildings on West 125th Street and Twelfth Avenue, and the projected retail spaces along Marginal Street would provide amenities for waterfront open space users. Further, it is anticipated that redevelopment of the six projected sites with new buildings would remove several of the existing billboards located in Subdistrict B, including the tall billboard at the southwest corner of West 135th Street and Twelfth Avenue, the billboard on the roof of the building at the southwest corner of West 132nd Street and Twelfth Avenue, and the numerous billboards on the roof of the building between West 125th Street and St. Clair Place. Elimination of these billboards would improve the urban design of Subdistrict B. Therefore, there would be no significant adverse impacts to the streetscape of Subdistrict B.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type

Due to the physical constraints of the Henry Hudson Parkway and the Amtrak rail line viaducts that run over the six projected development sites, as well as the zoning restrictions on building heights that would limit buildings between West 125th and West 133rd Streets to 60 feet, the projected commercial buildings developed along the west side of Twelfth Avenue would be one to two stories in height (except for the southernmost block between St. Clair Place and West 125th Street, Marginal Street, and Twelfth Avenue, which would have a height limitation of 130 feet) [see Figure 9-35]. The low-rise scale of the projected buildings would preserve light and air under the Riverside Drive viaduct. Although the projected buildings would have a different use and type—office and retail—from the existing garage and industrial buildings, they would be similar in bulk and height. Overall, there would be no significant adverse impacts to these urban design features of Subdistrict B.

The projected office and retail buildings in Subdistrict B would improve the waterfront streetscape and enhance the setting of the West Harlem Waterfront park in the Other Area west of Marginal Street.

Subdistrict C

As described in Chapter 1, no development is projected for Subdistrict C. Therefore, the urban design of Subdistrict C, including streetscape and building bulk, use, and type, is expected to remain unchanged as a result of the Proposed Actions.

Other Areas

Streetscape Features

In the Other Area east of Broadway, two lots containing two former warehouse buildings are projected development sites for community facility and residential uses. Since storefronts on Broadway and blank ground floors with loading docks on West 135th and West 134th Streets characterize the streetscape of the Other Area east of Broadway, redevelopment with residential and community facility uses would not be a significant adverse impact on this urban design feature.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type

Redevelopment of the two projected development sites in the Other Area east of Broadway would not have significant adverse impacts on these urban design features. An expansion of the existing community health center on West 134th Street and a residential building on West 135th Street, which could receive floor area from the adjacent apartment building at 525 West 134th Street, would increase existing building bulk in the Other Area east of Broadway. However, the Other Area east of Broadway is surrounded by residential streets, and there would be no significant adverse impacts on building bulk, use, and type.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions are not expected to have any significant adverse impacts on the visual resources of the Project Area—the Studebaker Building, the former Lee Brothers Storage Building, the Hudson River, and the Manhattan Valley IRT and Riverside Drive viaducts. As described above, the Studebaker Building will have been renovated for Columbia administrative offices in the future without the Proposed Actions, and the connected open space area on Block 1996 (the Small Square) and the north–south open area on Block 1997 between West 130th and West 131st Streets would provide a new view corridor through Subdistrict A to the Studebaker Building tower.

Development in the Academic Mixed-Use Area would not block any significant view corridors and views of visual resources or limit access to any visual resource. Views of the Riverside Drive viaduct and the Hudson River in the West 125th, West 129th, and West 130th Street view corridors would be enhanced by the widened sidewalks that would open views (see Figure 9-44). The new buildings with uniform streetwalls would better frame views on these streets than the existing jumble of nondescript industrial buildings. Further, it is anticipated that the projected development in Subdistrict B would enhance views of the Riverside Drive viaduct by improving the streetscape along Twelfth Avenue under the viaduct and by creating pedestrian activity. Similarly, the projected retail and office development in Subdistrict B would create a more pedestrian-friendly waterfront environment, complementing the West Harlem Waterfront park.



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As described more fully in Chapter 19, “Air Quality,” the proposed buildings on Sites 1 and 2 would have rooftop cooling towers as part of their mechanical systems. These cooling towers would emit visible water vapor plumes. These plumes, which would be more visible on days with cool temperatures and/or high humidity, would not have significant adverse impacts on views or visual resources. The cooling tower systems would be designed to minimize the plumes, and they would be similar to small systems that are typical elements of modern commercial and institutional buildings. Any visible plumes would be elevated and similar to other such plumes that are emitted throughout the city by modern buildings, and they would not block views or alter the setting of any visual resource.

STUDY AREA

URBAN DESIGN

Topography and Natural Features, Street Pattern and Hierarchy, Block Shapes, and Building Arrangements

The Proposed Actions would have no significant adverse impacts on the urban design of the study area. The proposed zoning and subsequent development in the Project Area would not alter the topography, natural features, the street pattern and hierarchy, or the block shapes of the study area. While the coordinated plan of freestanding buildings arranged around open spaces in the Academic Mixed-Use Development would alter building arrangements in the Project Area, it would be in keeping with other building arrangements in the study area, such as the Manhattanville Houses and General Grant Houses complexes.

Streetscape Elements

The buildings constructed in the southern portion of the Academic Mixed-Use Area would include required active ground-floor uses on West 125th Street, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue. Designed to be visually transparent, these uses would enliven the streetscapes along those streets and connect the Project Area to the commercial corridor farther east along West 125th Street and the residential neighborhoods to the east and south. Similarly, the transparent lower portions of these buildings along West 129th and West 130th Streets are intended to create welcoming corridors through the Project Area. Streetscape improvements, which include the active ground-floor uses and transparent ground floors, widened sidewalks, mandatory streetwalls, and the new privately owned, publicly accessible open spaces are intended to provide an improved corridor and a welcoming gateway to the waterfront. The new open spaces and widened sidewalks on West 129th Street would create a landscaped neighborhood focal point and pedestrian gathering space at the intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets that is intended to draw people toward the waterfront. With the anticipated streetscape improvements, the West 125th Street corridor to the waterfront is intended to become more pedestrian-friendly (see Figure 9-38).

Building Bulk, Use, and Type

Although the five buildings constructed at the southern end of the Project Area, which would have maximum building heights of 120 to 190 feet (160 to 240 feet with mechanical space), would be taller and bulkier than other buildings in the Project Area, they would be similar in height and bulk to immediately surrounding buildings in the study area. The new buildings would be similar in height to the 210-foot-tall academic building planned on the south side of West 125th Street in the future without the Proposed Actions, the six 172-foot-tall towers of the Manhattanville Houses across Broadway to the east, the 276-foot-tall buildings at 560 Riverside

Drive, and the five 21-story buildings of the General Grant Houses to the south. While the buildings on Sites 1 and 2 would have exhaust stacks, those stacks, like the exhaust stack on the roof of the Riverside Park Community building, would not substantially add to the overall perceived height or bulk of the proposed buildings, as they would be structures with diameters that would be 5 feet or less, and would be clustered together and placed at least 10 feet from each building's upper streetwalls. In addition, the five new buildings would form a consistent architectural composition (in terms of streetwalls and building heights) at the prominent intersection of Broadway and West 125th Street that would be visible for long distances in the view corridors along those streets, as well as from the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct, and would contribute to a strengthened visual corridor looking west on West 125th Street to the Hudson River.

The projected buildings in the Other Areas would be in keeping in terms of bulk, use, and type with the surrounding residential neighborhood in the northern portion of the study area. The projected redevelopment of sites in Subdistrict B would not substantially differ in bulk or type from other buildings in the study area, since the proposed zoning would restrict the height of any new development to 60 feet (except for the southernmost block between St. Clair Place and West 125th Street, Marginal Street, and Twelfth Avenue, which would have a height limitation of 130 feet), and the sites are constrained by the Amtrak and Henry Hudson Parkway viaducts to the west. In addition, with academic and commercial buildings clustered at the intersection of Twelfth Avenue, St. Clair Place, and West 125th Street, Riverside Park would no longer have an aging industrial area at its base.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions would have no significant adverse impacts on the study area visual resources. Although the five proposed academic buildings in the Academic Mixed-Use Area would be taller than the Manhattan Valley IRT and Riverside Drive viaducts, they would not block views of the viaducts, and would, in fact, improve views along West 125th, West 129th, and West 130th Streets of the Riverside Drive viaduct by widening sidewalks and framing the views with unified streetwalls. Further, views from the Riverside Drive viaduct would be improved, as they would include the five new buildings.

The projected office and retail buildings at the base of the Riverside Drive viaduct in Subdistrict B would be similar in scale to the existing buildings along Twelfth Avenue. They would also improve views underneath the viaduct by replacing nondescript industrial buildings and parking lots and by attracting new viewers to the viaduct with the office and retail uses.

The exhaust stacks on the proposed buildings on Sites 1 and 2 and the elevated water vapor plumes produced by the cooling towers on those same buildings would not have any significant adverse visual impacts on the study area. Zoning controls would minimize the visibility of the stacks from street level in the immediate vicinity within the study area. Although the stacks would likely be visible from farther away in the Broadway and West 125th Street view corridors, the stacks would be similar in appearance to the stack on the roof of the Riverside Park Community building, which is visible for long distances without detracting from area views. The water vapor plumes would be brief and similar to plumes emitted by modern commercial and residential buildings throughout the study area and the city. Located on the roofs of the proposed buildings and set back at least 10 feet from the upper street walls, the stacks would not create visual obstructions of views or visual resources, nor would they alter the visual character of the

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study area. Similarly, the plumes would not create any visual obstructions as they would be dispersed above the proposed buildings and would have brief durations.

The new development in the Project Area would not have adverse visual impacts on St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church, as there is no existing visual relationship between the church and the Project Area. From most locations within Riverside Park, there would be no views of the buildings constructed in the Project Area due to distance and intervening buildings. Overall, there would be no significant adverse impacts on the visual resources of the study area.

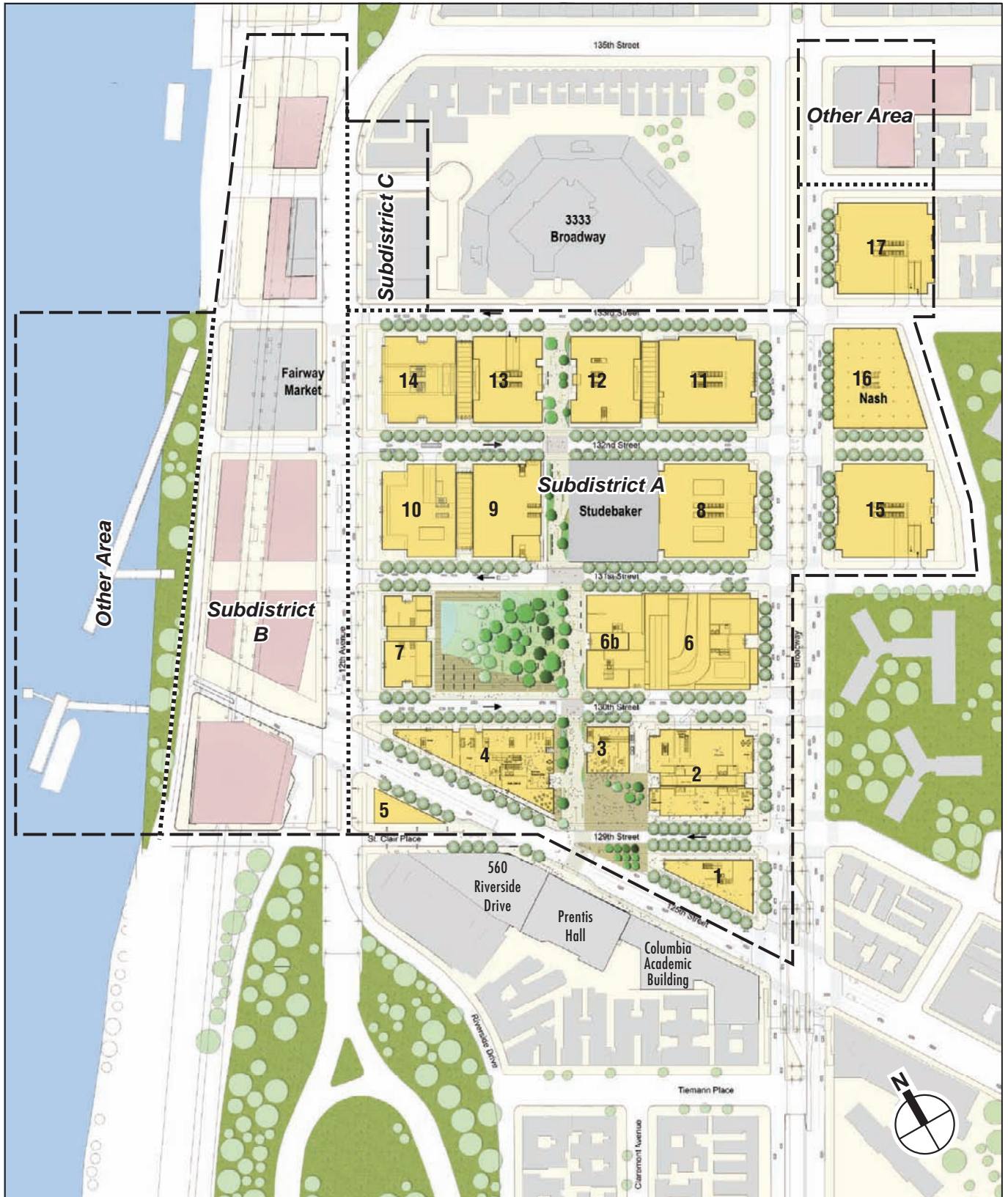
F. 2030 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

There are no known projects planned for completion in the Project Area and study area by the 2030 analysis year.

G. 2030 FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

PROJECT AREA

With full build-out of the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario, up to 17 new, mostly freestanding structures with maximum building heights of 120 feet to 260 feet (160 to 320 feet with mechanical space) and a small 60-foot-tall (80 feet with mechanical space) retail building would be developed in the Academic Mixed-Use Area (see Figure 9-45). These buildings would range in floor area from approximately 10,970 gsf to 517,551 gsf. By 2030, development would continue from the intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets north along Broadway and Twelfth Avenue with the blocks in between filled in and two new buildings constructed to the north and south of the former Warren Nash Service Station building. According to the maximum building heights set forth in the proposed zoning, the new buildings would increase in height up the valley slope along Broadway and Twelfth Avenue. (See Figures 9-41 and 9-42 for illustrative elevations of the proposed buildings on the west side of Broadway and the east side of Twelfth Avenue.) Primarily academic research buildings would line Broadway and academic, University housing, and recreational buildings would line the east side of Twelfth Avenue. A large, through-block open space (the Square) would be constructed on Block 1997 between West 130th and West 131st Streets, three north-south midblock open areas would be constructed between West 130th and West 133rd Streets, and an east-west midblock open area would be constructed on Block 1986 between Broadway and Old Broadway at West 132nd Street. The north-south open areas would provide a continuous, landscaped open space corridor through Subdistrict A that would link the Square on Block 1997 with the open spaces planned around the intersection of West 125th and West 129th Streets. The new open spaces would also provide a view corridor through Subdistrict A from West 125th Street north to the Studebaker Building and a view corridor south through the proposed development to Prentiss Hall. Those two historic and architecturally significant buildings are intended to be visually connected and integrated into the proposed Academic Mixed-Use Development, along with the former Warren Nash Service Station building, which would be renovated in accordance with the GPP.



- Project and Rezoning Area Boundary
- Subdistrict Boundary
- 1** Development Site
- Existing Development
- Columbia University Development
- New Open Space
- Subdistricts B, C, and the Other Areas Projected Development Sites

NOT TO SCALE

Figure 9-45
Subdistrict A: 2030 Illustrative Site Plan

URBAN DESIGN

Topography and Natural Features, Street Pattern and Hierarchy, Block Shapes, and Building Arrangements

The Proposed Actions would not alter the street pattern, since all development would occur on existing blocks, and minimal re-grading is expected for construction. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not affect the topography and natural features, street pattern and hierarchy, and block shapes of the Project Area. Constructed at the allowable maximum building heights, the proposed buildings would step up in height northward along Broadway and Twelfth Avenue. The arrangement of maximum building heights would reflect the topography of the valley slope. Placing shorter buildings at the valley bottom along West 125th Street and the tallest buildings on the higher elevations of the slope would preserve the viewer's reading of the natural topography (see Figure 9-46). Although the Academic Mixed-Use Development would alter building arrangements, this change from the existing condition, of attached and freestanding structures on lots of various sizes interspersed with parking lots, would not be a significant adverse impact on the urban design of the Project Area.

Streetscape Elements

As described more fully above in "2015 Future with the Proposed Actions," the proposed buildings along Broadway, West 125th Street, and Twelfth Avenue would include active ground-floor uses with transparency requirements in conformance with the proposed zoning (see Figures 9-47 and 9-50). The proposed zoning would also mandate widened sidewalks of 30 feet over the existing sidewalks on Twelfth Avenue and of 5 feet over the existing sidewalks on the side streets (except on the block between West 131st and West 132nd Streets and on the south side of West 129th Street). There would be no widened sidewalks on the north side of West 131st Street and the south side of West 132nd Street to preserve the existing streetwalls created by the Studebaker Building, which is built out to the property line. As described above, the widened sidewalks on Twelfth Avenue would have a 15-foot-wide zone for an open market and an adjacent 15-foot-wide clear path. The widened sidewalks on the narrow side streets would be improved as paved surfaces with permitted landscaping that would include street trees. These widened sidewalks are intended to open views through the Project Area, to provide pedestrian amenities and lively streetscapes, and to improve the pedestrian connections to the waterfront (see Figures 9-48 and 9-49).

Mandatory streetwalls would be required on Broadway, Twelfth Avenue, the side streets, and Old Broadway. On Broadway, 70 percent of the upper streetwall would be within 5 feet of the streetline, and 70 percent of the lower streetwall would be set back at least 2 feet, but no more than 10 feet, from the upper streetwall. In addition, at least 20 percent of the upper streetwall facing Broadway would be recessed to a minimum depth of 20 feet. On the side streets, 50 percent of the upper streetwall would be located within 5 feet of the widened sidewalk line (or the streetline where there would not be a widened sidewalk), and 50 percent of the lower streetwall would be set back at least 2 feet, but no more than 10 feet, from the upper streetwall. On Twelfth Avenue, 70 percent of the upper streetwall would be located at or within 2 feet of the widened sidewalk line, and the remaining portion would be set back from the widened sidewalk line by a minimum distance of 20 feet if the setback area faces both the avenue and a narrow street or by 10 feet if the setback area only faces the avenue. The lower streetwall would be located at the same distance from the widened sidewalk line as the upper streetwall or set back from the upper streetwall by no more than 10 feet for at least 80 percent of the upper

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**MANHATTANVILLE IN WEST HARLEM REZONING
AND ACADEMIC MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT**

Figure 9-46
**Illustrative Model
Long-Distance View East**



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streetwall. On Old Broadway, 50 percent of the streetwall would be located at or within 2 feet of the streetline and would rise to a minimum height of 45 feet or the building height, whichever is less, and to the maximum allowable building height. Throughout Subdistrict A, the proposed zoning would permit recesses in portions of the mandatory streetwalls for decorative or functional purposes.

The streetwall requirements are intended to provide unified streetwalls and consistently designed streetscapes through Subdistrict A, and the widened sidewalks are intended to create pedestrian-friendly streets and open westward views of the Riverside Drive viaduct through the Project Area. The required active ground-floor uses along Broadway and Twelfth Avenue are intended to create lively pedestrian corridors through the Project Area that would connect the northern and southern portions of the study area with streets lined by neighborhood amenities in spaces with largely transparent façades (see Figures 9-47 and 9-50). Further, the market zone within the widened sidewalk on Twelfth Avenue is intended to create a lively area of outdoor activity that would provide pedestrian amenities and enhance the waterfront (see Figure 9-39).

By the 2030 Build year, a large, centrally located through-block landscaped area (the Square) would be constructed between West 130th and West 131st Streets on Block 1997, and three north-south midblock open areas would be located between West 130th and West 133rd Streets on Blocks 1997, 1998, and 1999. The publicly-accessible Square would abut the north-south open area on Block 1997. As required by zoning, the Square would follow the topography of the site, and there would be no perimeter fences. It would be covered in a minimum of 50 percent soft landscape, i.e., grass, shrubs, and trees, and is expected to serve both active and passive recreation. (See Figures 9-49 and 9-51 for illustrative renderings of the Square.) Additionally, the Square would be required by zoning to provide a 15-foot minimum clear path between West 130th and West 131st Streets at least 100 feet from the adjacent north-south open area, contain seating for a minimum of 200 people with both fixed and movable seats, provide a minimum of 30 trees, and provide bicycle racks and drinking fountains. All buildings flanking the Square would have transparency requirements for the first two floors of the façades fronting on the open space. The north-south open area adjacent to the Square would link the Square to the open areas laid out around the intersection of West 125th and 129th Streets and to the two north-south midblock open areas above West 131st Street. The north-south midblock open areas between West 130th and West 131st Streets would be aligned with the tower of the Studebaker Building on Block 1998, and, in accordance with the proposed zoning, it would have a minimum clear path of 15 feet with a minimum width of 50 feet clear and open to the sky, and it would be improved as a paved surface with permitted landscaping. From the Square, there would be unobstructed views of the Studebaker Building, and there would be visual connections with Prentis Hall to the south and to the waterfront. An additional midblock open area would be located on Block 1986 adjacent to the south of the former Warren Nash Service Station building. It would run east-west between Broadway and Old Broadway along the alignment of West 132nd Street and is expected to be landscaped and contain seating. The east-west midblock open area would have a minimum width of 60 feet open to the sky.

Although the Proposed Actions would dramatically transform the streetscape of the Project Area, they would not have a significant adverse impact on that urban design feature. Academic buildings with unified streetwalls would replace parking lots and largely windowless, masonry buildings with ground floors characterized by loading docks covered by roll-down metal gates. The existing array of ground-floor signage throughout the area and the large painted signs on the storage buildings at 3243 Broadway and 614-618 West 131st Street would be removed. The open spaces and landscaped sidewalks would provide greenery in an area largely devoid of it,



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and the side streets would become inviting to pedestrians, thereby establishing connections and improved view corridors through the Project Area to the waterfront (see Figure 9-48).

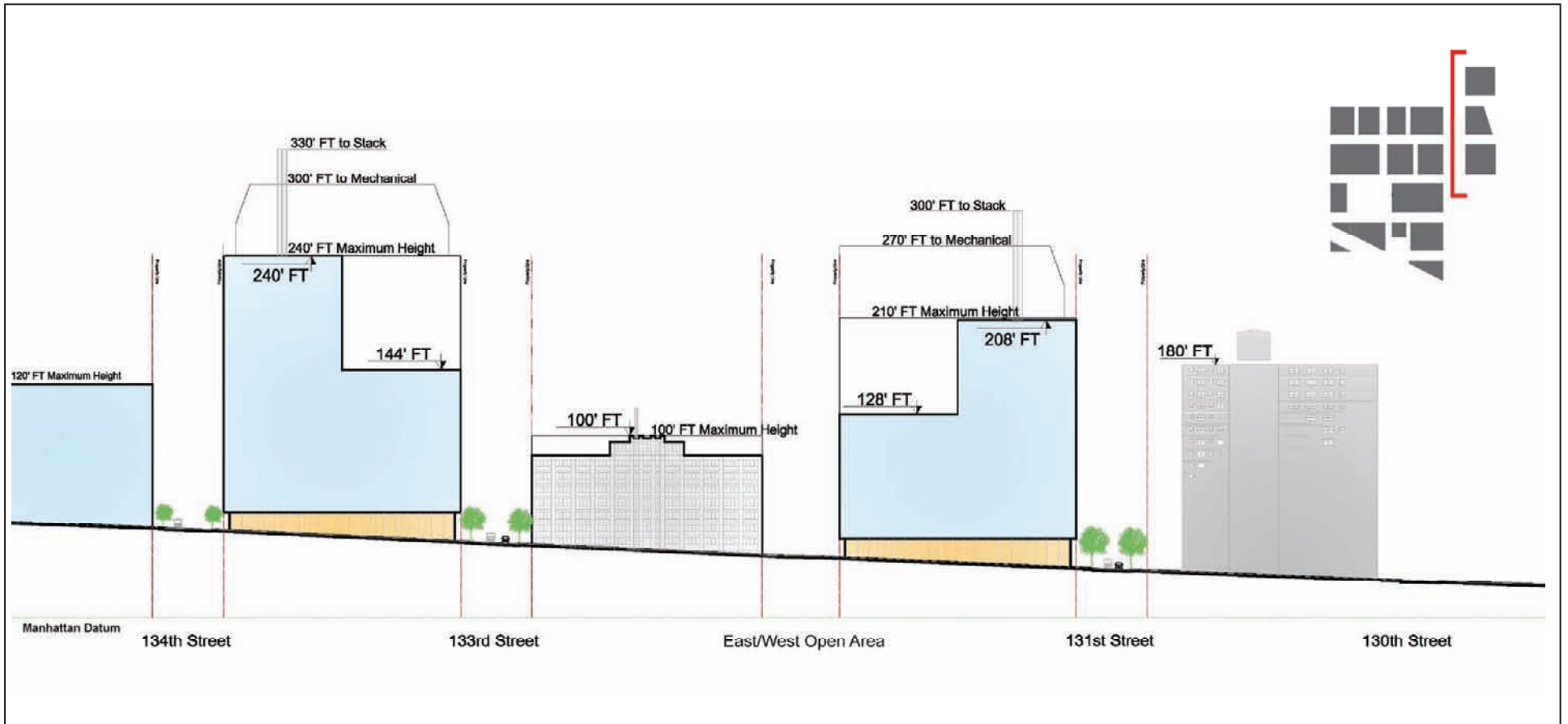
The publicly accessible, landscaped Square between West 130th and West 131st Streets would draw people to the area, and the north–south open areas between West 130th and West 133rd Streets would provide midblock connections through the Academic Mixed-Use Area to the large landscaped Square, linking it to the northern portion of the study area. With the Small Square constructed on Block 1996 by the 2015 analysis year, there would be landscaped connections through the Academic Mixed-Use Area between West 125th and West 133rd Streets. Those midblock connections would also provide views to the Studebaker Building and Prentiss Hall.

The active ground-floor uses on Twelfth Avenue would complement the mixed-use academic and University housing building for graduate students, faculty, and other employees that would be constructed on Block 1997 (between West 130th and 131st Streets) under the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario by the 2015 analysis year and the projected commercial buildings across the avenue in Subdistrict B. They would create a corridor along the avenue of retail, cultural, and other community service spaces with transparency requirements, and they would complement the West Harlem Waterfront park. The mandatory widened sidewalks with required market zones along Twelfth Avenue would allow for landscaped areas with seating and retail amenities, and the mandatory streetwall requirements would set the buildings back from the Riverside Drive viaduct to bring more light and air to the avenue. Further, the expected transparent bases would enhance the improved airiness of the avenue. Along Broadway, the required active ground-floor uses would strengthen existing retail and service segments along the street to the north and south of the Project Area.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type

By 2030, six or seven new buildings ranging in height from 160 feet to 260 feet (220 to 320 with mechanical space) would be constructed in the Academic Mixed-Use Area on the blocks between West 134th and West 130th Streets. In addition, the existing 100-foot-tall former Warren Nash Service Station building would be renovated for academic use as required by the GPP. Under the reasonable worst-case development scenario for maximum building heights (shown on Figure 9-35), a University housing building would be located on the Twelfth Avenue frontage of Block 1999 (on Site 14); most of the academic research buildings would front on Broadway (on Sites 6, 8, 11, 15, and 17) with one located midblock between West 132nd and West 133rd Streets on Site 12; academic buildings would be located on the western ends of Blocks 1998 and 1999 (on Sites 10 and 13); and a recreational facility would be adjacent to the through-block open space corridor connecting West 131st and West 133rd Streets. On Block 1997 (Site 6), either one or two academic research buildings would be constructed on the eastern half of the block. In this scenario, the bus depot on Block 1999 would remain on site, but would be relocated below grade. See Figures 9-41, 9-42, and 9-52 for illustrative elevations of the proposed buildings along Broadway and Twelfth Avenue, and Figures 9-53 and 9-54 for illustrative models of the Academic Mixed-Use Development.

The proposed zoning would set maximum building heights and control the height and placement of rooftop mechanical space, and the GPP would limit uses on development sites. Although different building use types could have different forms and bulk, as academic research buildings could have different floor plate requirements than buildings with housing, the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario utilizes the maximum building heights permitted for each site in consideration of site location and not building use. Under the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario, the taller buildings would be located along the



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avenues (Broadway and Twelfth Avenue), and they would increase in height northward up the valley slope (see Figures 9-41, 9-42, and 9-52). The tallest buildings would be shorter than the Riverside Park Community building and similar in height to the Manhattanville Houses. The proposed buildings constructed in the midblock of the Academic Mixed-Use Development would be shorter than the avenue buildings, and this maximum building height arrangement would set lower heights around the central open space and flanking the north-south midblock open areas.

Under the reasonable worst-case development scenario, three of the proposed buildings would have several exhaust stacks on their roofs. Each building's exhaust stacks would be clustered together as they extend upward through the structure and out above the roof. The configuration of the cluster on the roof visible from the street would most likely appear as two stacks, as shown in Figures 9-41 and 9-42. This configuration is assumed for the EIS analysis. It is also possible that the clustered stacks could be contained within a single structure; that structure would not be larger than the two-stack configuration shown in Figures 9-41 and 9-42.

The height of the stacks on Site 14 would be 130 feet above the maximum building height to the roofline of 240 feet; the stacks would rise 70 feet above the maximum height of the building with mechanical equipment on the roof (on this site, as well as on Site 15 and Site 17, the maximum height for mechanical space would be 60 feet), and each stack would be approximately 5 feet in diameter. The height of the stacks on Site 15 would be approximately 90 feet above the maximum building height to the roofline of 210 feet; the stacks would rise 30 feet above the maximum height of the building with mechanical equipment on the roof, and each stack would be approximately 3.5 feet in diameter. The height of the stacks on Site 17 would be approximately 90 feet above the maximum building height to the roofline of 240 feet; the stacks would rise 30 feet above the maximum height of the building with mechanical equipment on the roof, and each stack would be approximately 3.5 feet in diameter. In addition, there would be 23-foot-tall stacks with approximately 1.5-foot diameters on the roof of the 100-foot-tall former Warren Nash Service Station building. The stacks on each of the four buildings would be clustered together and would be similar in size and appearance to those on the roofs of the buildings constructed on Sites 1 and 2 by 2015 under the reasonable worst-case development scenario, and to the stack on the Riverside Park Community building. The proposed zoning would regulate the width and placement of the stacks to minimize views, and the stacks would not substantially add to the overall perceived height or bulk of the proposed buildings and the former Warren Nash Service Station building. Intervening buildings and the viaducts would obscure most Project Area views of the stacks on Sites 14, 15, 16, and 17. Along Twelfth Avenue, there could be some views of the stacks on Site 14, and there could be some views of the stacks on Sites 15, 16, and 17 along Broadway.

Out of a collection of primarily low-rise nondescript brick buildings devoted to auto-related and storage uses, the Academic Mixed-Use Development would create an area of buildings with unified streetwalls and building height limits arranged around a connected system of publicly accessible open spaces. (See Figure 9-55 for an illustrative aerial rendering of the Academic Mixed-Use Development.) Integrated into this collection of new structures would be the renovated Studebaker Building and the former Warren Nash Service Station building, which, with their large footprints and rectilinear massing without setbacks, would be similar in bulk and massing to the new buildings. In addition, the open space system would provide southerly views to Prentiss Hall, which would become visually connected to the Studebaker Building in the new view corridor created by the open spaces at the intersection of West 125th and West 129th



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Streets, the central Square, and the north–south open area between West 130th and West 131st Streets that would align with the Studebaker Building tower.

Although the buildings of the Academic Mixed-Use Development would be taller and bulkier than, and different in design from, most of the existing buildings that currently make up the Project Area, the transformation of the largely industrial area, pursuant to a coordinated design, into an academic area with community amenities would not be a significant adverse impact to building bulk, use, and type in the Academic Mixed-Use Area.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions would not have any significant adverse impacts on visual resources located in the Project Area. The new buildings would not block publicly accessible views of the Manhattan Valley IRT and Riverside Drive viaducts. Although the buildings along Broadway and Twelfth Avenue would be taller than the adjacent viaducts, they would not visually overwhelm these two resources, and the viaducts would remain defining features of the Project Area, which they would continue to physically and visually frame (see Figures 9-39 and 9-44). On Twelfth Avenue, the mandatory widened sidewalks and streetwall regulations would pull the buildings on the east side of the avenue away from the Riverside Drive viaduct (see Figure 9-39). On the narrow side streets, the mandatory widened sidewalks and streetwall regulations would widen the east–west view corridors through the Academic Mixed-Use Development to provide fuller views of the Riverside Drive viaduct arches (see Figure 9-48). Because Broadway is wide and the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct is located in the center of the street, the new buildings along both sides of Broadway would not be set close to the viaduct (see Figures 9-47 and 9-50). There would not be any mandatory widened sidewalks on Broadway, but the buildings along it could have optional upper streetwalls set back up to 5 feet from the streetline. Lower streetwalls would be set back from the upper streetwalls. From within the Project Area, the new buildings, landscaped sidewalk areas, and the new open spaces would enhance westward views to the Riverside Drive viaduct (see Figures 9-48 and 9-51). Publicly accessible views east to the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct would be similarly framed (see Figure 9-49).

As westward views through the Project Area of the Riverside Drive viaduct would be enhanced, so would views along West 125th Street through West 133rd Street of the Hudson River vista that would be framed by unified streetwalls rather than low-rise, nondescript and mostly auto-related and storage buildings with unattractive signage. Further, the widened sidewalks along the narrow side streets would open views to the river. From the West Harlem Waterfront park, the new academic buildings on Twelfth Avenue—although they would be partially obscured by the intervening viaducts—would replace nondescript, low-rise buildings currently lining the avenue underneath the viaduct with buildings pulled back from the viaduct to increase light and air to the avenue. While the new buildings along Twelfth Avenue would alter the immediate setting of the former Lee Brothers Storage Company building on Riverside Drive, they would not block views of it.

Eastward views of the Studebaker Building on West 131st and West 132nd Streets from Twelfth Avenue would be obscured by intervening buildings, but the new central open space (the Square) on Block 1997 and the through-block landscaped open area on Block 1998, which would be adjacent to the building, would provide landscaped vantage points for new views of the visual resource. The through-block open area on Block 1998 would leave the area adjacent to the Studebaker Building’s west façade open and publicly accessible, and the connected system of open spaces would provide a view corridor to the visual resource from West 125th Street that

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would be aligned with the building's tower. Views west of the Studebaker Building on West 131st and West 132nd Streets would remain largely the same, as the building's east façade is blank and currently adjacent to an existing storage building. Therefore, there would be no adverse impacts to the Studebaker Building.

Under the full build-out of the urban design reasonable worst-case development scenario, the proposed buildings on Sites 1, 2, 6, 14, 15, 16, and 17 would have rooftop cooling towers that would be similar to other small systems typical of modern commercial and institutional buildings. The cooling towers would emit elevated water vapor plumes, but any visible plumes would not alter the visual character of the Project Area or impair any views. Similarly, the exhaust stacks located on the proposed buildings on Sites 14, 15, and 17, and on the former Warren Nash Service Station building would not create visual obstructions of views or visual resources, as they would be located on the building roofs and set back from the upper street walls.

STUDY AREA

URBAN DESIGN

Topography and Natural Features, Street Pattern and Hierarchy, Block Shapes, and Building Arrangements

Development in the Academic Mixed-Use Area would occur within existing blocks, and the existing streets and blocks would be retained. It would therefore have no significant adverse impacts on the topography, natural features, street pattern and hierarchy, and block shapes of the study area. Though building arrangement would differ—mostly freestanding buildings would replace buildings that are typically attached—this configuration exists in the study area, such as at the Manhattanville Houses east of Broadway and General Grant Houses south of West 125th Street. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would have no significant adverse impacts on building arrangements in the study area.

Streetscape Elements

The glazed and transparent active ground-floor uses required under the proposed zoning along Broadway and Twelfth Avenue would provide street-level visual interest, pedestrian activity, neighborhood amenities, and, along with the transparent ground floors through the Academic Mixed-Use Area, enhanced views and a pedestrian streetscape experience. The landscaped Square, Small Square, Grove, and midblock open areas would provide greenery and streetscape improvements.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type

The community facilities and active ground-floor uses of the Academic Mixed-Use Development would be in keeping with the mixed-use character of the study area. The proposed mostly freestanding, 120- to 260-foot-tall buildings with large floor plates would be bulkier and taller than many of the residential and commercial buildings in the study area. However, the Columbia University buildings would be similar in bulk and height to 560 Riverside Drive, the Manhattanville Houses, and the General Grant Houses, and they would be smaller in scale than the Riverside Park Community building that would continue to prominently rise over the Project Area (see Figure 9-55). Further, the new buildings would be similar in bulk, footprint, and arrangement to the Studebaker Building and the former Warren Nash Service Station building.

Both of those existing buildings, which are architecturally significant remnants of Manhattanville's industrial history, would be incorporated into the Academic Mixed-Use Development. Overall, there would be no significant adverse impacts to the urban design of the study area.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions would have no significant adverse impacts on visual resources in the study area. As described above, views to the Hudson River along West 125th Street to West 133rd Street would be improved through the Project Area, as would views east from within the park. There would be no visual relationship between the Academic Mixed-Use Development and St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church.

There would only be a slight visual relationship between the development and Riverside Park. From the extreme northern end of the park at St. Clair Place, there may be limited views of some of the academic buildings lining the east side of Twelfth Avenue, but most views would be blocked by intervening buildings. Views south to Riverside Park along the Riverside Drive viaduct would be framed on the west side by the new Twelfth Avenue community facilities buildings, but views of the park and Grant's Tomb would not be blocked. Although some views south on Broadway of the Riverside Church might be blocked by new buildings, views of the church would still be obtainable from the east side of Broadway and from the higher ground of the northern portion of the study area.

The full build-out of the Academic Mixed-Use Development would be visible in the Broadway, West 125th, West 126th, and West 133rd Street view corridors, because they border and run through the Project Area. As described above, westward views on the side streets would continue unobstructed through the Project Area, and they would be framed by unified streetwalls with ground-floor retail, cultural, and community facility spaces. Views north and south on Broadway would be of a similar unified streetwall framing the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct. From most other sections of the study area, there would be no, or only limited, views of the Columbia University buildings due to intervening structures.

The exhaust stacks that would be located on the roofs of the former Warren Nash Service Station building and the proposed buildings on Sites 1, 2, 14, 15, and 17 would likely be visible from within the study area, such as from locations along the Broadway view corridor, but they would not detract from the overall visual character of the study area and would be similar in appearance to the stack on the Riverside Park Community building. With diameters of 5 feet or less, these stacks would be structures set back at least 10 feet from the buildings' upper streetwalls. Located on the roofs of the proposed buildings and set back from the upper street walls, the stacks would not be located in any view corridors, and they would not block or obscure views of any visual resources. Along Broadway, intervening buildings and the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct would obstruct some views of the stacks on the buildings on Sites 1, 2, 15, and 17, and on the former Warren Nash Service Station building. Similarly, intervening buildings and the Riverside Drive viaduct and Henry Hudson Parkway would obstruct some views along Twelfth Avenue and from the west of the stacks on the roof of the proposed building on Site 14, which would not have adverse impacts on area views. From farther away within the study area, the exhaust stacks would appear as minor building features, like the stack on the Riverside Park Community building.

Any visible plumes produced by the cooling towers on some of the proposed buildings would be elevated and brief in duration. If visible from within sections of the study area, they would be a

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typical urban occurrence, as most modern commercial and residential buildings emit similar plumes. Elevated above the proposed buildings, any visible plumes would not block views, alter the setting of any visual resource, or alter the visual character of the study area. Therefore, visible water vapor plumes would not have any significant adverse impacts.

Overall, the Proposed Actions would have no significant adverse impacts on the urban design and visual resources of Manhattanville. *