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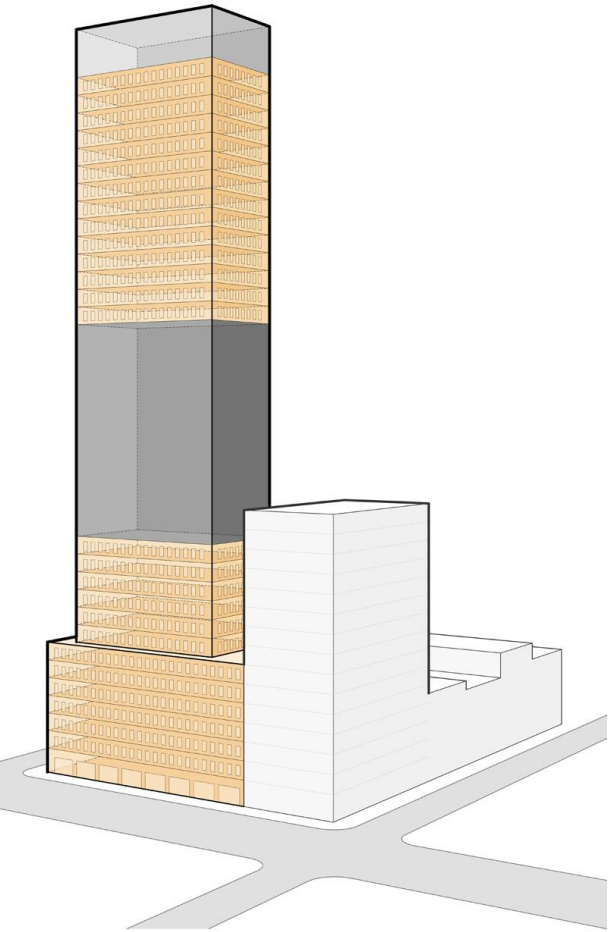
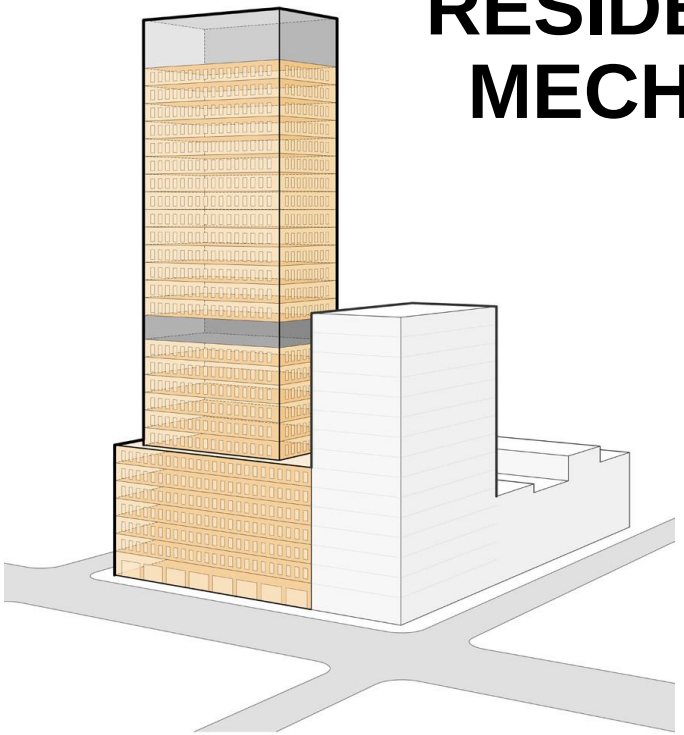




RESIDENTIAL TOWER MECHANICAL VOIDS

Text Amendment

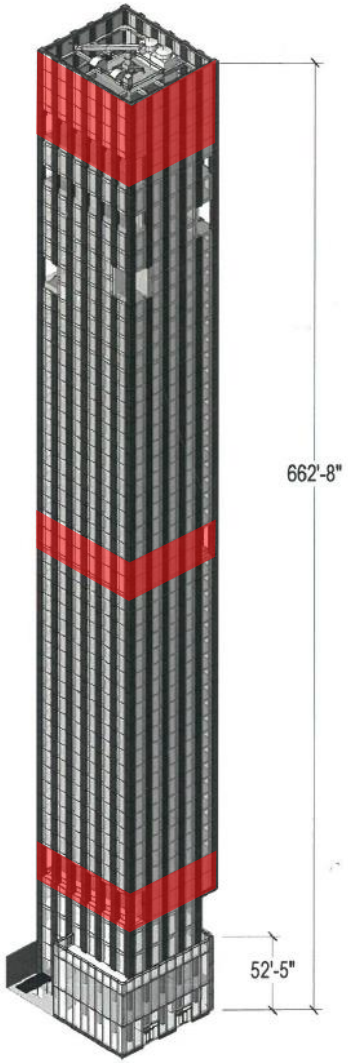
February 2019

NYC PLANNING

Introduction – What is a "Mechanical Void"?

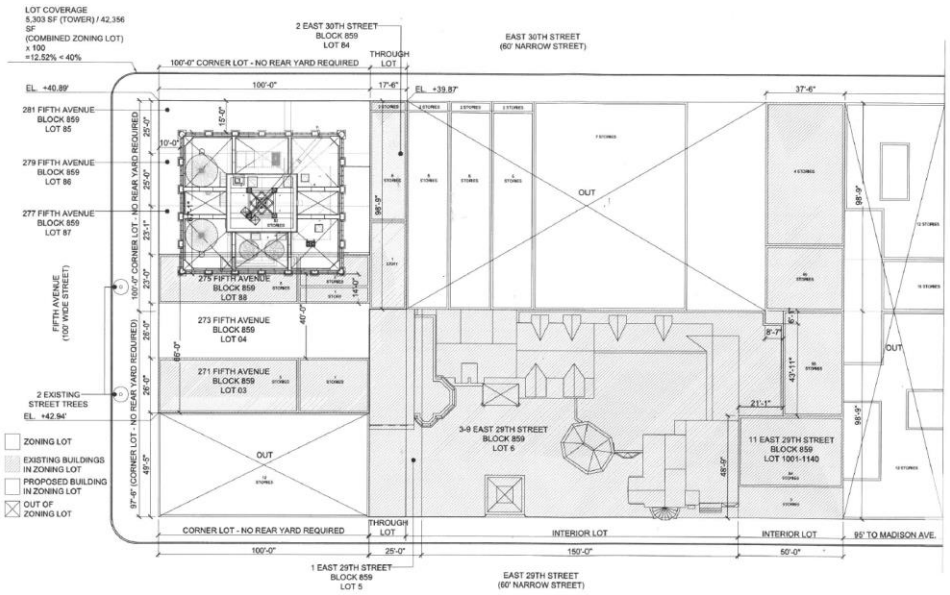
- NYC Zoning Resolution allows mechanical floor spaces to be excluded from zoning floor area calculations. There are no explicit height limits on these spaces.
- In recent years, some developments utilized excessively tall mechanical floors so that upper-story residential units are located above the surrounding context.
  - Known as a "mechanical void"
- Mayor de Blasio asked DCP to examine the issue of excessive mechanical voids and provide a recommendation.
- DCP conducted a citywide analysis of recent construction to better understand the mechanical needs of residential buildings and to assess where and when excessive mechanical spaces are being used.

A Typical Tower
281 Fifth Avenue, MN (under construction) / C5-2 District



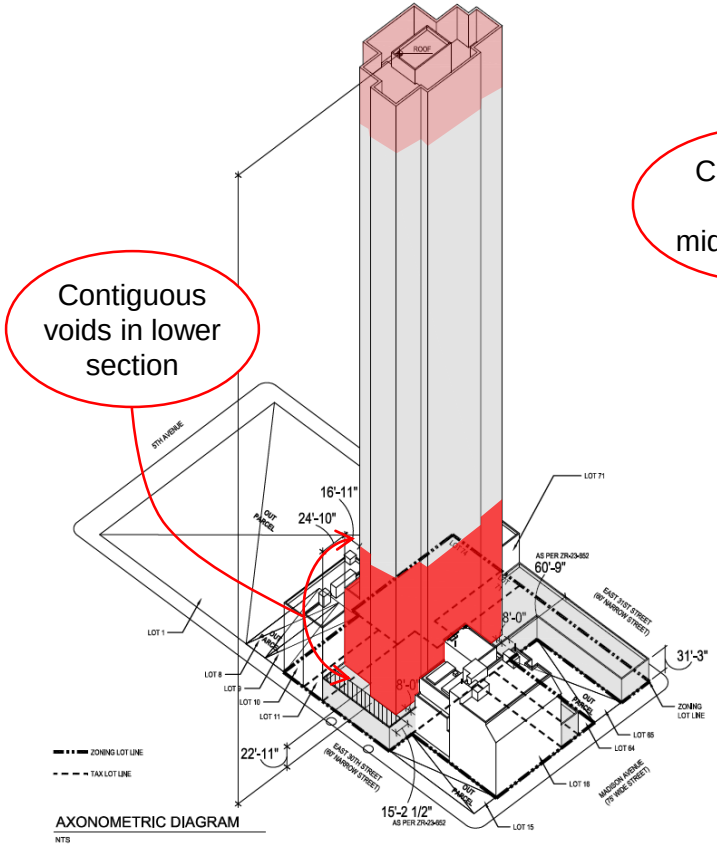
A typical *tower* has:

- A mechanical floor at a lower level, typically in between non-residential floors and residential floors
- Taller towers typically have an additional mechanical floor every 20 stories or so
- A larger mechanical bulkhead on the top

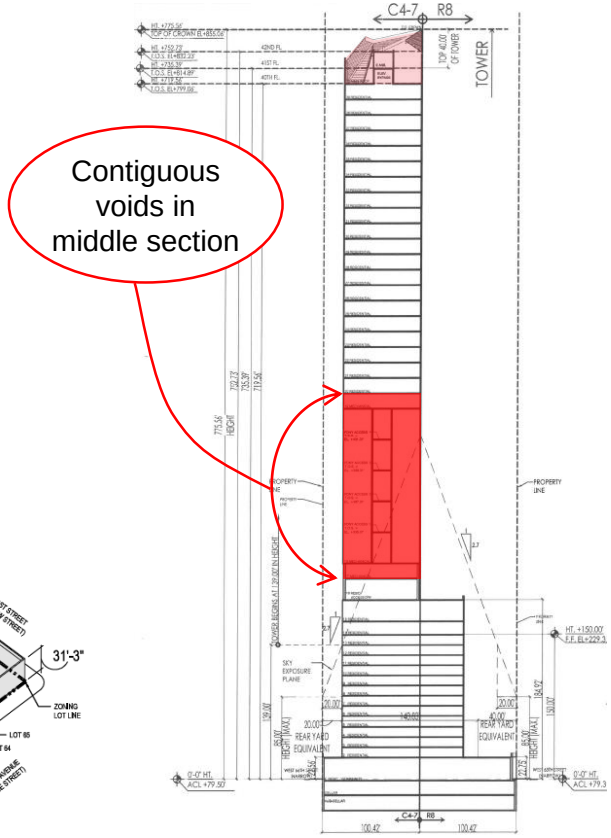


Proposal: What We Would Address

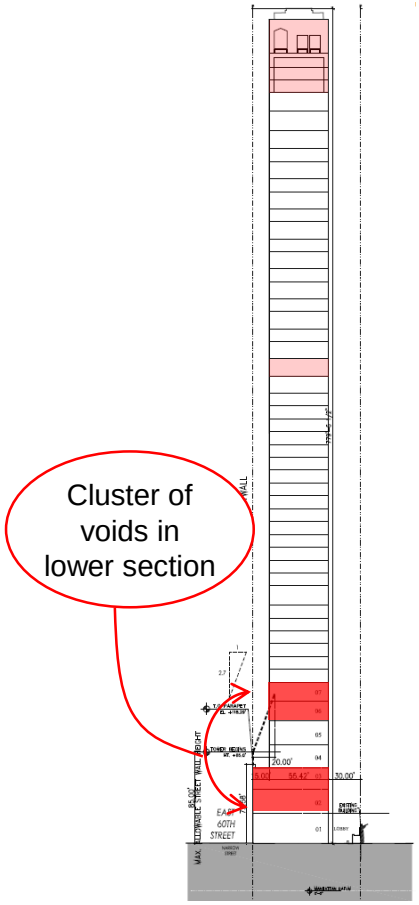
Excessively large, contiguous or clustered, residential mechanical voids in towers



Standard Tower



Tower on a Base



Standard Tower

Proposal: Our Goals

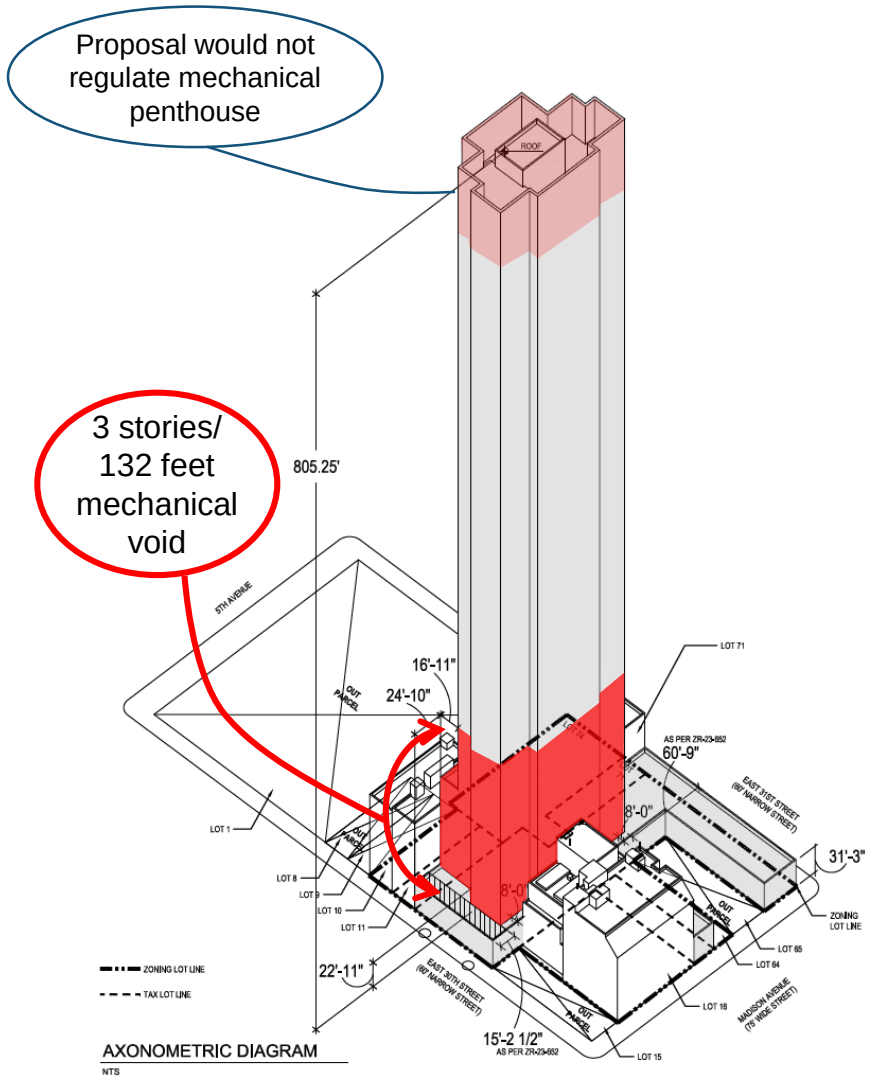
- Limit the use of artificially tall residential mechanical voids
- Encourage residential buildings that activate and engage with their surroundings
- Recognize the need for reasonably sized and distributed mechanical spaces in residential buildings
- Continue to support the bulk flexibility for design excellence

Proposal: Basic Rule

- Modify residential tower floor area provisions in ZR 23-16 to count mechanical voids that exceed the height of 25 feet as “zoning floor area”
- Mechanical penthouses above the highest residential floor would not be subject to this regulation

  If a mechanical void is 132 feet in height, that space would count as 5 floors of “zoning floor area”

  (132’ / 25’ = 5.28, rounded to 5)

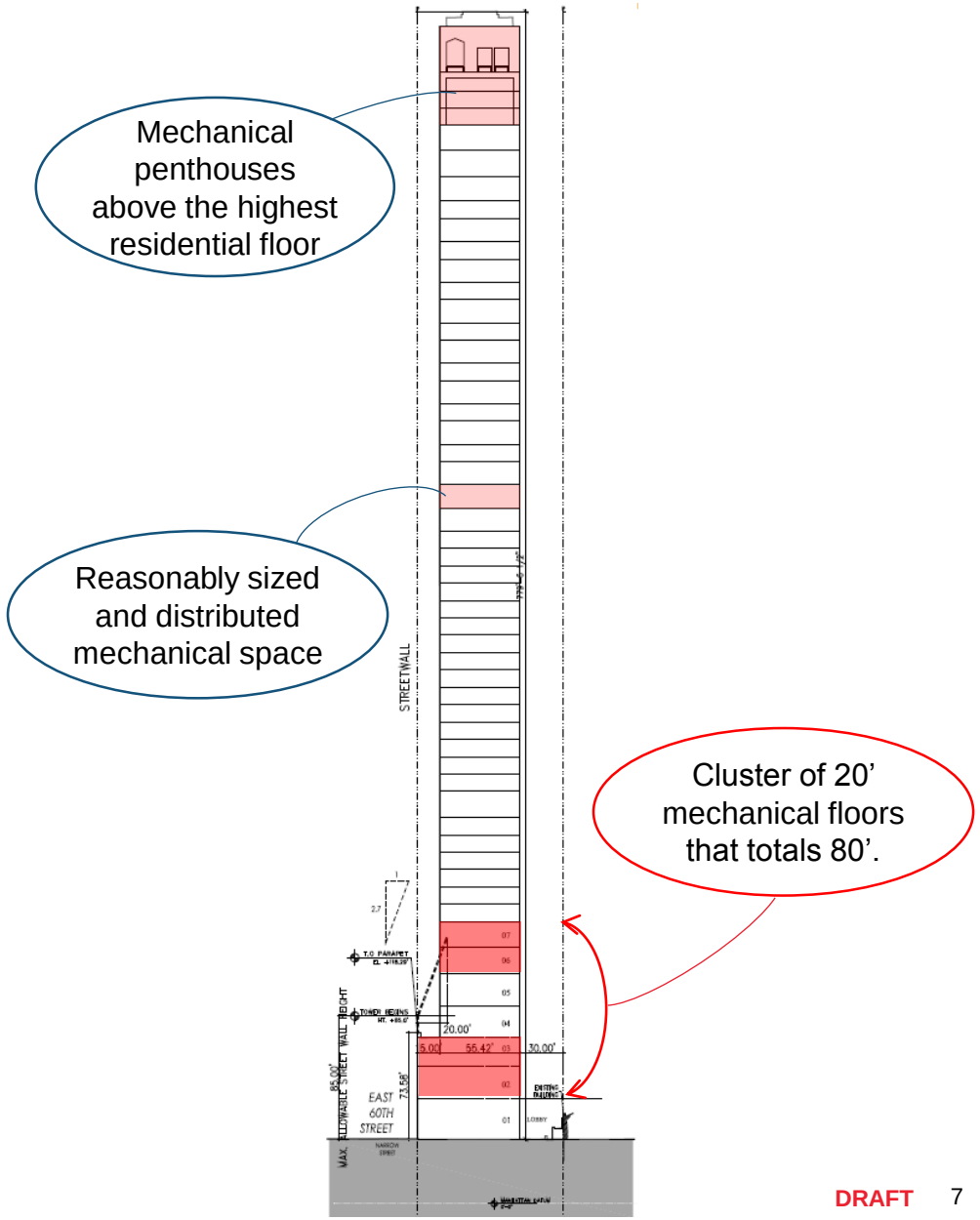


Proposal: Clustering

If any mechanical floors are located within 75' of each other they would all count as “zoning floor area,” regardless of the height of each floor

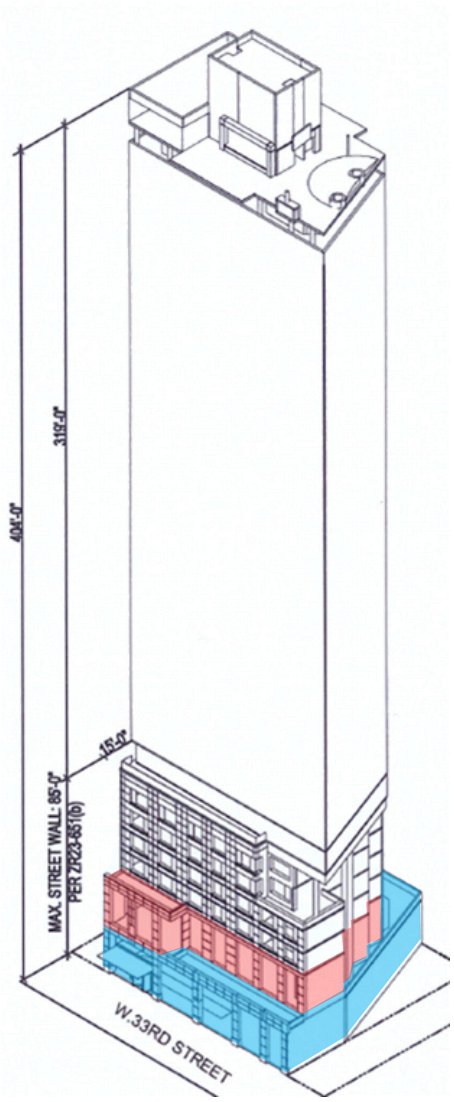
A cluster of mechanical floors which total 80 feet would count as 3 floors of “zoning floor area,” even when each floor is less than 25 feet and noncontiguous

(80’ / 25’ = 3.2 rounded to 3)



Proposal: Residential Voids v. Non-residential Voids

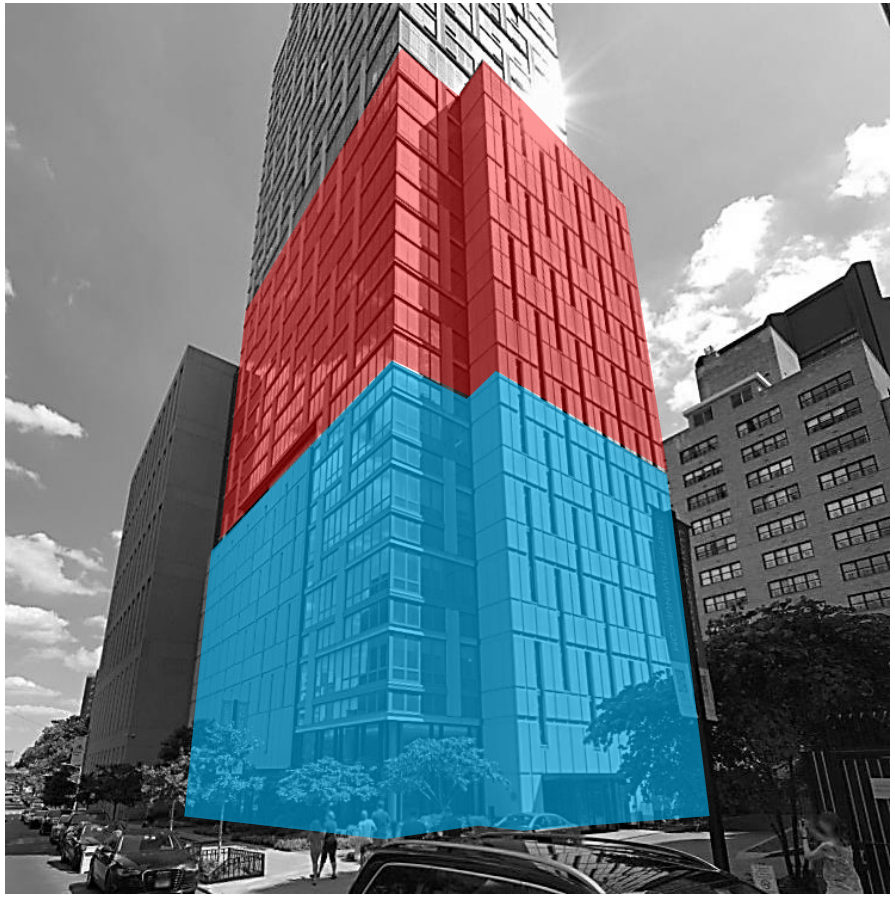
For mixed-use buildings, non-residential mechanical spaces would also be subject to the same “25-foot/75-foot rule,” if non-residential floor space occupies less than 25% of a building



Proposal: Residential Voids v. Non-residential Voids

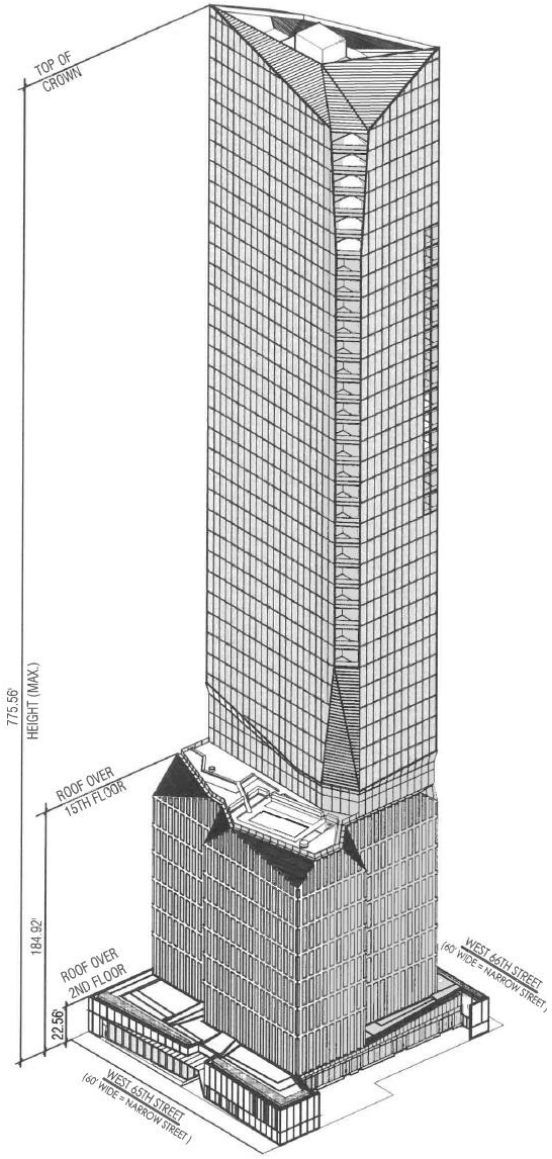
For mixed-use buildings with substantial amount of non-residential floor space (i.e. more than 25%), non-residential mechanical voids would not be subject to this proposal.

Mt. Sinai Medical School / residential tower on the right has three floors of mechanical spaces in the middle: two floors for medical use and one floor for residential use.

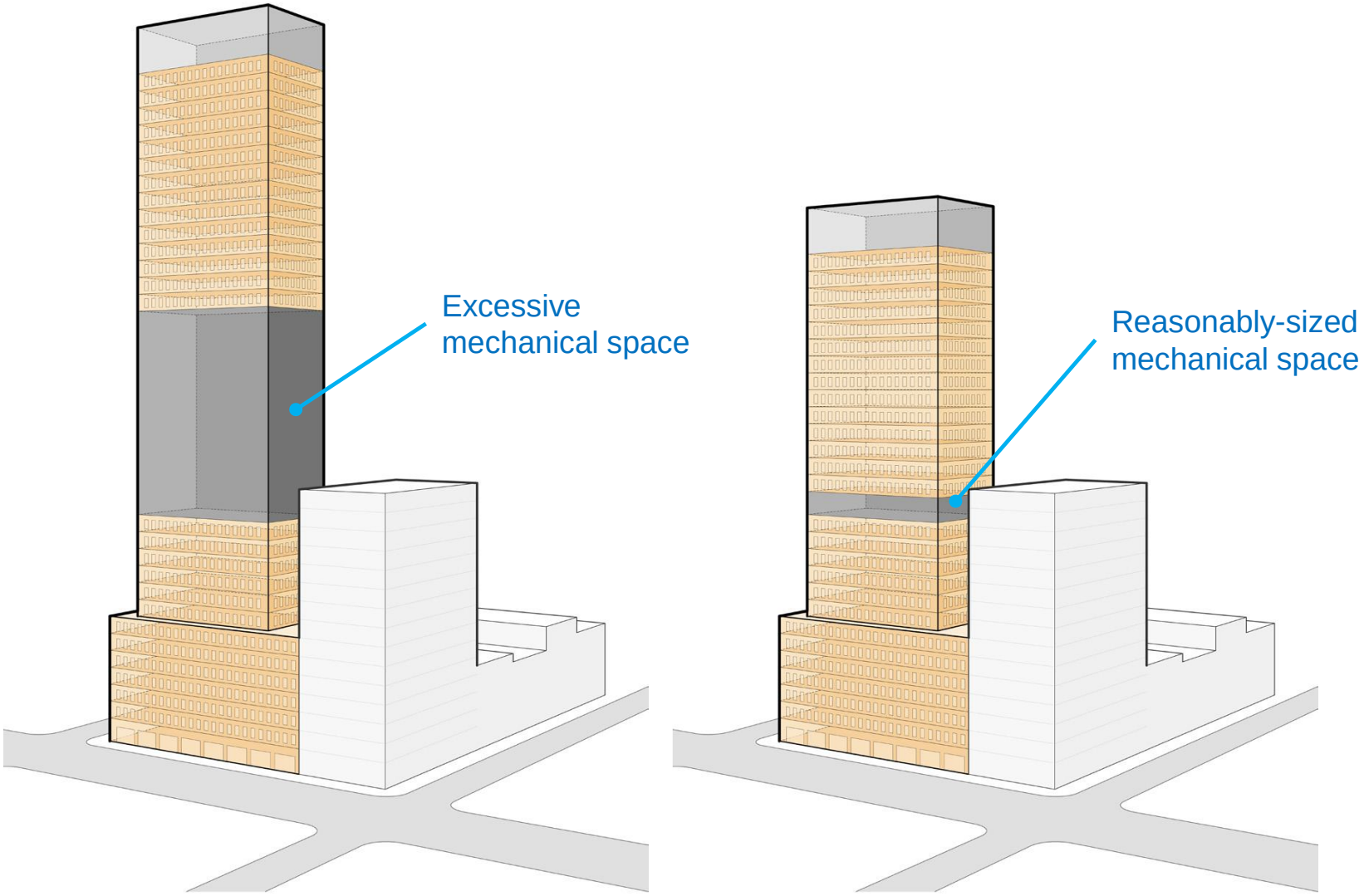


Proposal: Text Amendment Summary

- Modify residential tower floor area provisions (ZR 23-16) to count mechanical voids that are taller than 25 feet as “zoning floor area”
- Mechanical voids located within 75 feet of each other to count as “zoning floor area,” regardless of the height of each floor
- Non-residential mechanical spaces in mixed-use buildings to be subject to the same “25-foot/75-foot rule,” if non-residential uses occupy less than 25% of a building



Proposal: Text Amendment Summary



No Action

With Action

Proposal: Where These Regulations Would Apply

- Residential tower developments located within non-contextual R10 and R9 Districts and their equivalent Commercial Districts
- Special Districts that rely on the underlying FAR and tower height regulations
- The proposal would also include portions of Special Districts that impose special tower regulations