Chapter 21: Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions on the loss of environmental resources, both in the immediate future and in the long term, and identifies whether the Proposed Actions forecloses future options or involve trade-offs between short- or long-term environmental gains and losses. According to the 2020 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, environmental resources include human-made and natural resources.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Proposed Actions would facilitate the construction of the Proposed Project, an approximately 596,200 gross-square-foot (gsf) state-of-the-art laboratory and office building on the site of the Applicant's existing building at 310 East 67th Street, Block 1441 Lot 40 (the "Development Site"). In addition to the Development Site, the Rezoning Area contains two residential buildings, not owned or controlled by the Applicant. Immediately adjacent to the Development Site on Lots 1001–1202 is 310 East 66th Street, a 16-story, approximately 208,000-gsf residential building with ground floor retail uses on Second Avenue between East 66th and East 67th Streets. Across Second Avenue is a 45-story approximately 776,206 gsf residential tower with ground floor retail use (Block 1421, p/o Lot 21). It is part of a larger development which includes townhouses on East 67th Street that are outside the rezoning area. Given the existing size and use of these two buildings, neither site is expected to be redeveloped as a result of the rezoning.

B. ASSESSMENT

Resources, both natural and built, would be expended in the construction and operation of the Proposed Project building on the Development Site. These resources include the materials used in construction; energy in the form of fuel and electricity consumed during construction and operation of the projects; and the human effort (i.e., time and labor) required to develop, construct, and operate various components of the projects.

The resources are considered irretrievably committed because their reuse for some purpose other than the construction of the buildings facilitated by the Proposed Actions would be highly unlikely. The Proposed Actions constitute an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the Development Site as a land resource, thereby rendering land use for other purposes infeasible, at least in the near term.

These commitments of land resources and materials are weighed against the benefits of the Proposed Actions. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Proposed Actions would facilitate the construction a new, approximately 596,200 gsf, split between 206,400 gsf of UG-4 community facility uses for the Applicant and 389,800 gsf of commercial laboratories and related uses for the Applicant's partners. The Proposed Actions would allow the existing inefficient building to be replaced with a new building containing state-of-the-art, flexible, and efficient research and development facilities. The Development Site is conveniently located near one of

New York's largest complexes of medical care, education, and research institutions. The Proposed Project would offer space for the Applicant and its research partners with large floor plates and 16-foot floor-to-floor heights to accommodate the mechanical systems needed for both wet and dry laboratories. The combination of location, design, and program would create a vital life sciences hub that encourages collaboration and would be especially well situated and organized to advance the City's economic development agenda and allow collaboration amongst research partners.

The Proposed Project would also support New York City's policy of strengthening the life sciences industry as a driver of economic development. In 1990, Section 74-48 special permit text was first adopted and allowed Columbia University and the precursor of the City's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to develop the Columbia Audubon Research Park. EDC has continued this active role and more recently announced the LifeSci NYC initiative to connect research to industry, unlock space for companies to grow and build a pipeline for diverse life sciences talent. With the Proposed Project, the Applicant would provide a platform for collaboration among academic, institutional, and commercial entities that make up the city's life sciences ecosystem. ✷