Chapter 25: Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

There are a number of resources, both natural and built, that would be expended in the construction and operation of the proposed project. These resources include the materials used in construction; energy in the form of fuel and electricity consumed during construction and operation of the proposed NYU Core project; and the human effort (i.e., time and labor) required to develop, construct, and operate various components of the proposed project.

The resources are considered irretrievably committed because their reuse for some purpose other than the proposed project would be highly unlikely. The proposed project constitutes an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the project 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 project. As described in "Purpose and Need of the Proposed Actions" in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the proposed project—which includes development in both the Proposed Development Area and Commercial Overlay Area—is a key element in NYU's plan to meet its long-term needs with respect to academic space, housing for faculty and students, campus and neighborhood amenities, and recreational facilities. It is located within the existing boundaries of NYU's central Washington Square campus. Its key components—the four new buildings over 19 years proposed to be located on parcels bounded by West 3rd Street, Mercer Street, West Houston Street and LaGuardia Place—are on two super blocks that have been part of the NYU campus since the 1960s. By proposing to locate the four new buildings in this location, NYU would be able to enhance its facilities significantly while minimizing its need to expand the footprint of its campus into the Greenwich Village neighborhood. The four new buildings proposed for these two blocks would serve the needs of the NYU schools and divisions that are already located at the Washington Square campus and which cannot be as well served by facilities in remote locations of New York City. The proposed commercial overlay within the Commercial Overlay Area north of the two superblocks is intended to allow for an enlivened, more flexible streetscape to better connect NYU's buildings to the City and the surrounding area, and would bring zoning up to date to reflect pre-existing, non-conforming uses.

In addition, the proposed project would include new parkland and publicly accessible open space, neighborhood retail, and potentially a public school, all of which would be notable assets to the community. ✷