Chapter 21: Alternatives

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes a range of alternatives to the proposed project. Six alternatives are considered: the No Action Alternative, in which the project site and rezoning area would remain in their current condition; the As-of-Right Alternative, in which the project site is developed as-of-right with hotel and community facility uses; two Rezoning Only Alternatives, which consider a project under the proposed rezoning (to C4-7 and C6-2) but without any of the actions relating to the public parking garage, general large-scale development, or open space requirements; and two Zoning Text Amendment Alternatives, which consider several modifications to the text as proposed.

For each of the technical analyses presented in the EIS, the anticipated effects of the proposed action are compared to those that would result from each of the alternatives. The purpose of this analysis, as set forth in the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, is to provide the decision makers with the opportunity to consider practicable alternatives that are consistent with the project's purpose, and that could potentially reduce or eliminate significant adverse environmental impacts identified in the EIS.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

This alternative is analyzed as the future without the proposed action in each of the technical areas of the EIS, Chapters 2 through 20. The No Action Alternative would not involve any major changes to the project site or rezoning area, and no discretionary actions would be taken.

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

Under the No Action Alternative, the project site would remain vacant except for the building foundation and cellar/subcellar walls constructed to prevent the recontamination of the remediated areas of the site, which is being performed under the Brownfield Cleanup Program. The same or similar uses to those now on the zoning lot and in the rezoning area would continue under the No Action Alternative. No new residential and retail use would be introduced on the project site or in the rezoning area. Unlike the proposed action, this alternative would not reinforce the existing patterns of development in this area of Manhattan and land use in and around the project site, nor would this alternative provide housing and retail opportunities for the community. Overall, neither the No Action Alternative nor the project's development would result in significant adverse impacts to the area's land use, zoning, and public policy.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Like the proposed action, this alternative would not result in either direct or indirect commercial and residential displacement, and would not have any adverse effects on specific industries. However, unlike the proposed project, this alternative would not provide housing in the study

area and would not be consistent with existing trends in this area of Manhattan. The socioeconomic benefits of the proposed action would not be realized with the No Action Alternative.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed action would increase demands for police and fire protection. This alternative would not generate any new school-age children, while the proposed action would introduce new elementary, middle, and high school students. The proposed action would increase the demand for school seats; however, there would be sufficient capacity at the elementary and middle school levels to handle students generated by the proposed action. It is not expected that either the proposed action or the No Action Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts on elementary or middle schools.

OPEN SPACE

Under the No Action Alternative, there would not be an introduction of new residents and workers to the open space study area. The ¼-mile study area daytime population will have a passive open space ratio of 0.48, well above the 0.15 acres recommended by DCP. Therefore, the daytime population will be well served by passive open space. The ½-mile study area open space ratio will be below the average city-wide community district median of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. In addition, the active open space ratio in the area will continue to be well below the recommended guideline, with an active open space ratio of 0.27 acres per 1,000 residents. However, the study area will be well served by passive open space. With an inventory of 56.01 acres, the passive open space ratio will be 0.78 acres per 1,000 residents, well above the guideline of 0.50 acres per 1,000 residents. Likewise, with a worker/student population of 96,771, the passive open space ratio will be 0.57 acres per 1,000 daytime persons, well above the guideline of 0.15 for daytime populations. Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed action would result in any significant adverse effects on open space in the study area.

SHADOWS

Without a new building on the project site, no new shadows would be cast on the open spaces in the study area. While the proposed action would result in increased shadows, no significant adverse shadow impacts are anticipated.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

No significant adverse impacts on archaeological or architectural resources on the project site or in the study area would occur with either the No Action Alternative or with the proposed action. Unlike with the proposed action, the No Action Alternative would not necessitate the implementation of a construction protection plan for the West 59th Street Recreation House/West 60th Street Public Bath.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

With the No Action Alternative, the project site, zoning lot, and rezoning area would remain in their existing condition. The project site would be vacant except for building foundation and cellar/subcellar walls constructed to prevent the recontamination of the remediated areas of the site, and the existing residential, warehouse, and automotive uses on the zoning lot and rezoning area would remain. Unlike the proposed action, the No Action Alternative would not redevelop

the site with a new building similar in bulk and height to the existing and planned structures in the area. This alternative, unlike the proposed action, would not have beneficial effects on the streetscape of the area because it would not replace the existing vacant lot with a new building.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

In the No Action Alternative, the area surrounding the project site, zoning lot, and rezoning area will experience new residential and community facility development. With increased development and continued growth in travel demand in the area, some congested intersections will become worse and additional intersections will become congested. The moderately high noise levels in the area (i.e., projected No Action daytime $L_{eq(1)}$ values that range between 66.8 and 73.2 dBA), which are fairly typical of similar areas in Manhattan are expected to continue. Based on anticipated development in the area, the overall character of the area is expected to become more residential with less vacant land and fewer industrial/commercial uses. Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed action is expected to result in significant adverse impacts to the elements that contribute to the character of the neighborhood.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Under the No Action Alternative, the project site would be remediated under NYSDEC's Brownfield Cleanup Program, and no significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials would be expected to occur as a result. (E) Designations on Lots 58 and 61 would not be necessary under the No Action Alternative as it is not expected that these sites would be redeveloped without the proposed action. No significant adverse impacts are expected with the proposed action.

INFRASTRUCTURE, SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION, AND ENERGY

Under this alternative, demands on local utility systems, including water supply, solid waste and sanitation, and energy, would not increase over existing conditions, but even with the proposed action, no adverse impacts are anticipated.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Although this alternative would not generate any new traffic trips, traffic volumes in the study area would be expected to increase as a result of planned development in the study area and general growth in the city. Significant adverse traffic impacts at three intersections in the AM peak hour, two intersections in the midday peak hour, and four intersections in the PM peak hour that would result from the proposed action would not occur with this alternative, thus eliminating the need for mitigation associated with the proposed development. As with the proposed action, no impacts to parking are anticipated with this alternative.

TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS

Pedestrian facilities in the study area would experience an increase in pedestrian volumes as a result of background growth and planned developments. The No Action Alternative would not result in any new pedestrian trips associated with the development of the project site and, therefore, there would be no increased demand for pedestrian space in the study area. Similarly, subway and bus trips would not increase as a result of this alternative. As with the proposed action, no impacts to pedestrians, public transportation, and pedestrian safety conditions are expected with the No Action Alternative.

AIR QUALITY

With the No Action Alternative, the insignificant *de minimis* increases in the 8-hour carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations resulting from traffic generated by the proposed action and from the proposed parking garage that would be built on the project site would not occur. No violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) are predicted to occur under either the No Action Alternative or the proposed action, and both would be consistent with the New York State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the control of ozone and carbon monoxide. Like the proposed action, this alternative would not have any significant stationary source air quality impacts.

NOISE

Like with the proposed action, no significant adverse noise impacts would occur at the three noise receptor locations surrounding the project site with the No Action Alternative. In addition, neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed action would result in any significant adverse noise impacts from building mechanical systems and any backup power generation equipment.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

No construction would occur on the site with the No Action Alternative condition. The construction activities associated with the proposed action, including economic benefits, would not occur under this alternative. The economic effects of major construction projects are typically estimated based on direct benefits—the value of site improvements as measured by construction-related labor, materials and services, and indirect benefits—expenditures made by suppliers, construction workers, and other employees involved in the direct activity.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed action would result in significant adverse impacts to public health. It is expected that with either the No Action Alternative or the proposed action, no air quality impacts as a result of increase vehicular traffic or emissions from stationary sources would result. Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed action would create a new source of noise or odors, and neither would result in significant adverse hazardous materials impacts.

C. AS-OF-RIGHT ALTERNATIVE

While the applicant does not intend to construct the As-of-Right Alternative discussed in this section, an assessment of the As-of-Right Alternative is provided for illustrative and comparative purposes. The As-of-Right Alternative would be subject to the applicable sections of the New York City Zoning Resolution for split-lot developments in M1-6 and R8 districts. The M1-6 district allows, for example, community facility, transient hotels, service and retail uses, and office uses. Residential uses are prohibited in M1 districts. R8 districts, on the other hand, permit all residential and community facility uses and prohibit all retail, services, and other commercial uses.

The maximum allowable FAR in an M1-6 district is 10.0 FAR bonusable to 12.0 FAR through the provision of an urban plaza, and the maximum FARs for residential and community facility use in an R8 district are 6.02 and 6.5 FAR respectively. The average FAR of the As-of-Right Alternative is approximately 11 FAR or 75 percent greater than the proposed project.

The As-of-Right Alternative would consist of a hotel with an urban plaza bonus in the M1-6 portion of the project site and a community facility in the R8 portion of the project site (see Figures 21-1 and 21-2). Under this alternative, the existing uses on the projected development sites (Lots 58 and 61) would remain.

The hotel would be a 61-story (630 feet) slab oriented east/west along the block center line with two 10-story elements (120 feet) setback from the street line. The hotel would sit on a one-story base. The south-facing urban plaza would be located to the west of the hotel, filling the entire interior lot fronting West 60th Street. The community facility use would front on West 61st Street, be setback from the street line, rise to a height of 15 stories (141 feet), and sit on a one-story base.

This alternative would contain a total of 767,150 gross square feet (gsf). Of this, 665,787 gsf would be for the hotel use, and 101,363 gsf would be for the community facility use. It is expected that the hotel would contain approximately 832 rooms.

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

Under the As-of-Right Alternative, the project site would be developed with hotel and community facility uses. While hotel and community facility uses would be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, unlike the proposed action, this alternative would not reinforce the existing patterns of residential development in this area of Manhattan and land use in and around the project site, nor would this alternative provide housing and retail opportunities for the community. However, it is not expected that this alternative would alter the existing development trends in the area. Overall, neither the As-of-Right Alternative nor the project's development would result in significant adverse impacts to the area's land use, zoning, and public policy.

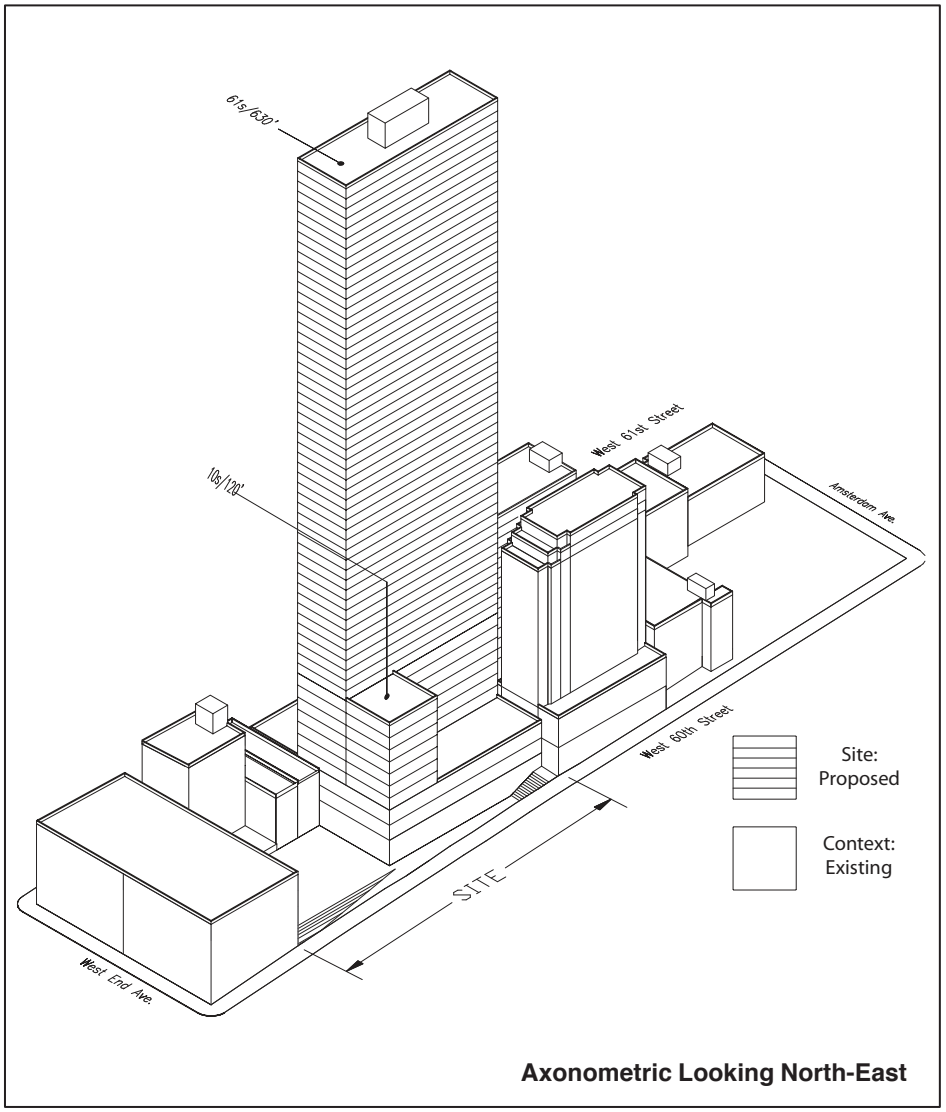
SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Like the proposed action, this alternative would not result in either direct or indirect commercial and residential displacement impacts, and would not have any adverse effects on specific industries. However, unlike the proposed project, this alternative would not provide housing in the study area, and would not be consistent with existing residential development trends in this area of Manhattan. However, it is not anticipated that the As-of-Right Alternative would alter existing residential development trends in this neighborhood. While a sizable hotel, this alternative is not a use that would be inconsistent with surrounding uses, nor is it anticipated that this hotel would have an impact on New York City's hotel industry. The As-of-Right Alternative would introduce a transient population that would provide support for existing retail uses in the neighborhood.

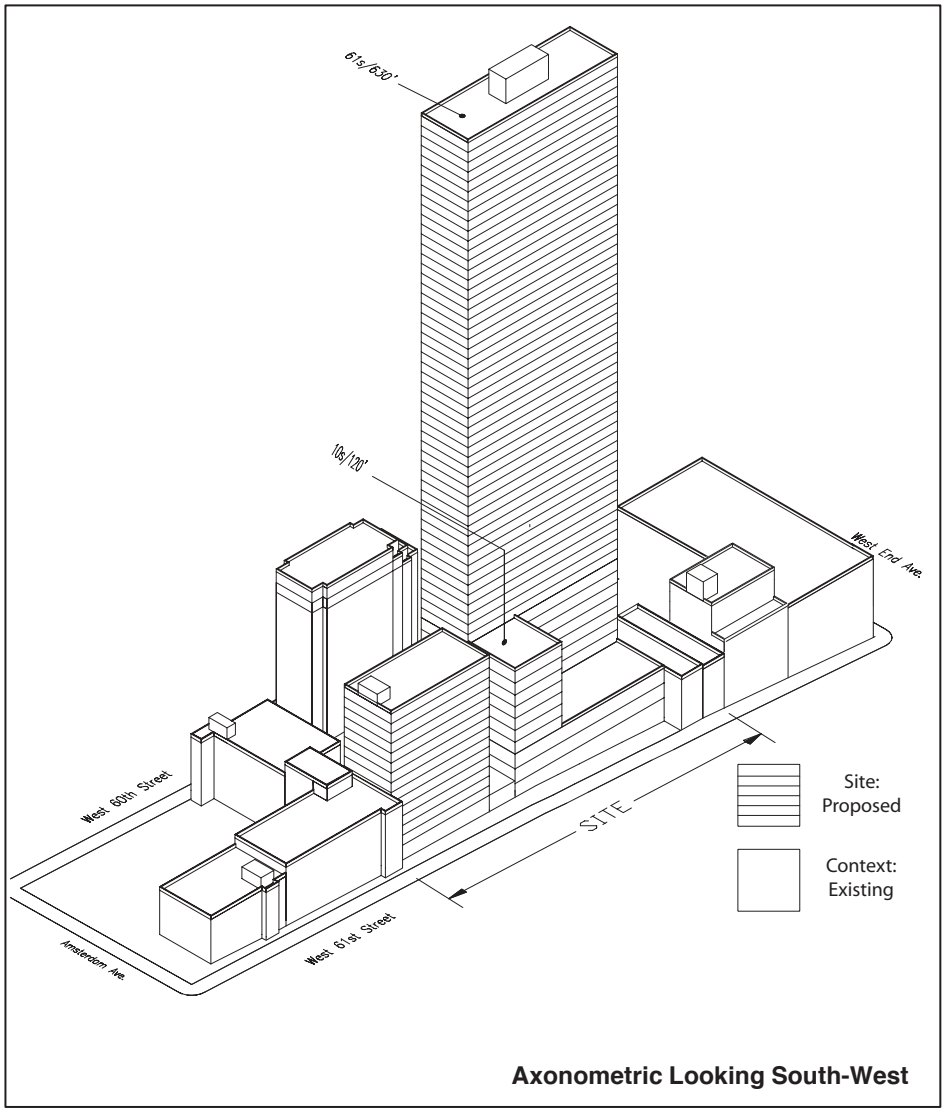
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Neither the As-of-Right Alternative nor the proposed action would increase demands for police and fire protection. This alternative would not generate any new school-age children, while the proposed action would introduce new elementary, middle, and high school students. The proposed action would exacerbate the deficiency in elementary school seats in the schools in the vicinity of the project site and rezoning area; however, Community School District 3 would operate below capacity. It is not expected that either the proposed action or the As-of-Right Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts on elementary or middle schools.

8.1.06



Axonometric Looking North-East



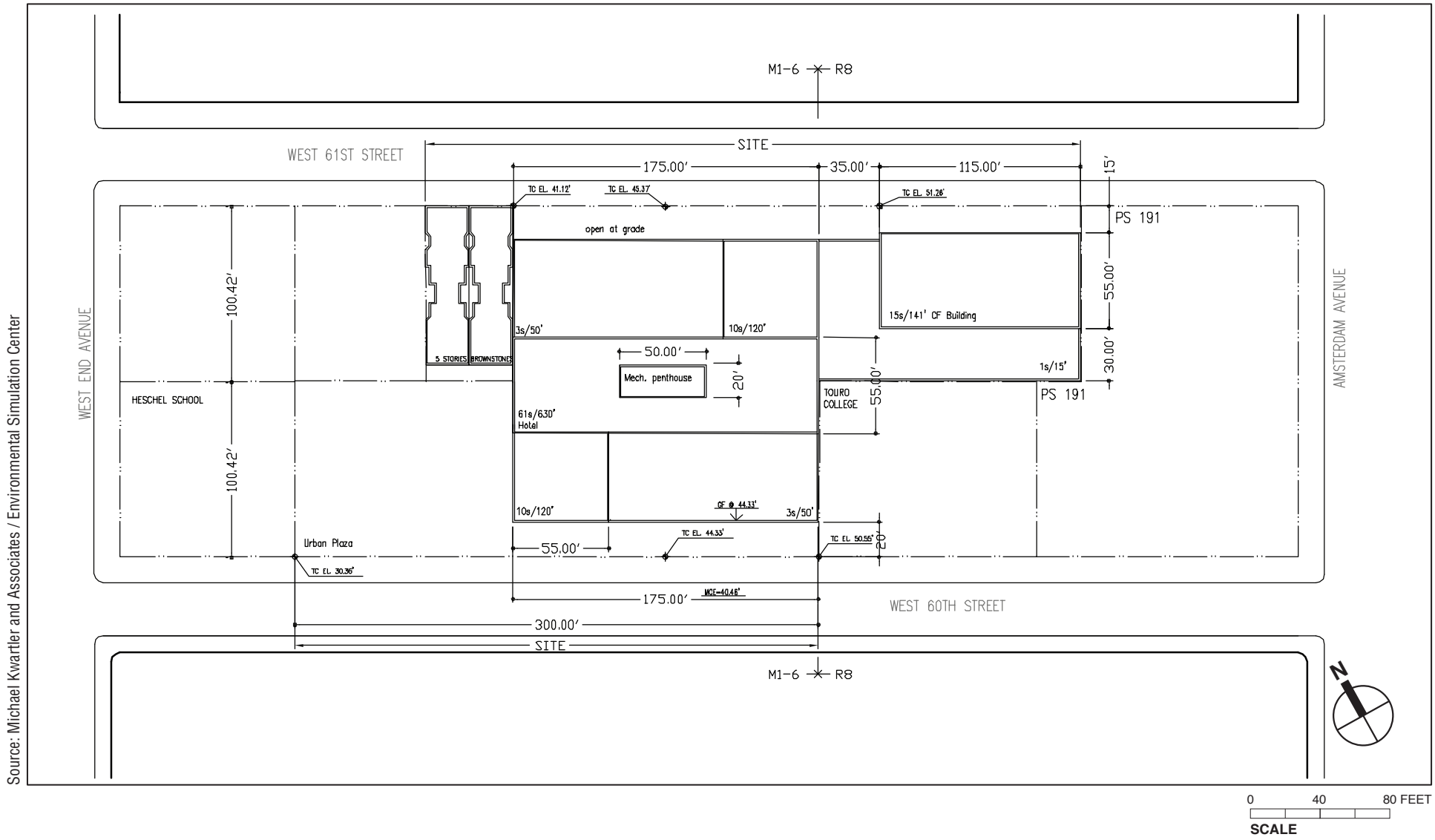
Axonometric Looking South-West

Source: Michael Kwartler and Associates / Environmental Simulation Center

As-of-Right Alternative – Illustrative View

Figure 21-1

6.8.06



Source: Michael Kwartler and Associates / Environmental Simulation Center

West 61st Street Rezoning
Project and Citywide GLSD Text Amendment

As-of-Right Alternative – Plan
Figure 21-2

OPEN SPACE

The proposed action would not result in any significant adverse impacts on open space in the study area. Under the As-of-Right Alternative, there would not be an introduction of new residents to the open space study area; however, there would be an increase in workers (like the proposed action) and hotel patrons. It is likely that the As-of-Right Alternative would introduce a larger non-residential population, which would place a greater demand on passive open space resources in the commercial study area than the proposed project.

SHADOWS

The As-of-Right Alternative would cast shadows on the area's open space. The combination of the building's east/west orientation and the height of the hotel at 61 stories (630 feet), over two times the height of the proposed project, would result in greater shadow increments than would occur with the proposed action. Unlike the proposed action, which would not result in shadow impacts, the taller building under the As-of-Right Alternative would have the potential to result in significant adverse shadow impacts.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

No significant adverse impacts on archaeological or architectural resources on the project site or in the study area would occur with either the As-of-Right Alternative or with the proposed action. Like with the proposed action, the As-of-Right Alternative would necessitate the implementation of a construction protection plan for the West 59th Street Recreation House/West 60th Street Public Bath.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Like the proposed action, the As-of-Right Alternative would alter the streetscape surrounding the project site, and the replacement of the vacant lot would be an improvement over existing conditions and conditions in the future without the proposed action. However, the maximization of the lot's zoning potential in the As-of-Right Alternative, with its 61-story hotel slab building, would not be as well integrated in the surrounding neighborhood as the proposed project. At 61 stories, the As-of-Right Alternative would be one of the tallest buildings in the area, taller than any building west of Amsterdam Avenue. A building of this height would tower over the buildings in the immediate area and would be approximately twice the height of the proposed project's tower (the proposed project's tallest element would be 304 feet in height). Furthermore, because the As-of-Right Alternative would be located along the centerline of the block and set back from the street line as per zoning, it would diminish the quality of the pedestrian's experience on both West 60th and West 61st Streets by breaking the continuity of existing streetwalls.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

While both the As-of-Right Alternative and the proposed project would substantially change the character of the project block, neither would result in significant adverse neighborhood character impacts. However, the As-of-Right Alternative would not be as well integrated into the surrounding neighborhood as the proposed action. While the As-of-Right Alternative's hotel and community facility uses would be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, unlike the proposed action, this alternative would not reinforce the existing patterns of development in this area of Manhattan and land use in and around the project site. The As-of-Right Alternative's

bulk—a 61-story slab building set back from the streetlines on West 60th and West 61st Streets—would tower over the buildings in the immediate area and would diminish the quality of the pedestrian's experience on both West 60th and West 61st Streets by breaking the continuity of existing streetwalls. As discussed below, the As-of-Right Alternative would result in similar and possibly additional significant adverse traffic impacts.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Like under the proposed action, with the As-of-Right Alternative, the project site would be remediated under NYSDEC's BCP. Chapter 10, "Hazardous Materials," describes the measures that would be implemented to avoid any significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials. Under the As-of-Right Alternative, it is not expected that Lots 58 and 61 would be redeveloped under the existing zoning district regulations, and no (E) Designations on Lots 58 and 61 would be in place to ensure that any redevelopment would be undertaken in a manner that would avoid significant adverse hazardous materials impacts.

INFRASTRUCTURE, SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION, AND ENERGY

Under this alternative, demands on local utility systems, including water supply, solid waste and sanitation, and energy, would increase over existing conditions, but like with the proposed action, no adverse impacts are anticipated.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The As-of-Right Alternative would result in 1,035, 1,604, and 1,414 peak hour person trips in the AM, midday, and PM peak hours as compared to the proposed action, which would result in 1,211, 944, and 975 peak hour person trips in the AM, midday, and PM peak hours. The As-of-Right Alternative would result in 336, 405, and 364 peak hour vehicle trips in the AM, midday, and PM peak hours as compared to the proposed action, which would result in 234, 75, and 133 peak hour vehicle trips in the AM, midday, and PM peak hours (see Tables 21-1- through 21-4). Based on these numbers, it is anticipated that the As-of-Right Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts at least at the same locations as the proposed action, and possibly at additional intersections, and the impacts would be at least of the same magnitude or greater. Although the As-of-Right Alternative would not include a 200-space parking garage that would replace spaces lost from the recently closed 100-space on-site lot, there is projected to be available off-street parking capacity to accommodate demand from the As-of-Right Alternative.

TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS

The As-of-Right Alternative would result in fewer subway, bus, walk, and total person trips than the proposed project in the AM peak period. Therefore, like the proposed action, the As-of-Right Alternative would not result in any significant adverse impacts during the AM period.

During the midday and PM peak periods, the As-of-Right Alternative would generate more subway, bus, walk, and total person trips than would the proposed action. Based on the trip generation for the As-of-Right Alternative, discussed above, this alternative would remain under the threshold requiring a quantified bus analysis. However, because of its higher overall trip generation, this alternative has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts to transit and pedestrian conditions, which would not occur under the proposed action.

Table 21-1
Algin - West 61st Street
As of Right Alternative: Hotel Use

Hotel Use: **832** **rooms**
665,787 **gsf**

Daily Person Trip Rate (1): **9.4** trips per room
Daily Delivery Trip Rate (1): **0.06** trips per 1000 gsf

Temporal & Hourly In/Out Distribution (1)

	Temporal	In	Out	Total	Delivery
Weekday AM Peak Hour	7.5%	39.0%	61.0%	100.0%	12.2%
Weekday MD Peak Hour	14.4%	54.0%	46.0%	100.0%	8.7%
Weekday PM Peak Hour	12.8%	65.0%	35.0%	100.0%	0.0%

Modal Split Estimates & Vehicle Occupancy (1)

	Auto	Taxi	Subway	Local Bus	Walk/Other	Total
Weekday AM/PM Peaks	9.1%	17.5%	24.2%	3.1%	46.1%	100.0%
Weekday MD Peak	8.1%	14.9%	12.8%	3.2%	61.0%	100.0%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.40	1.80				

Peak Hour Person Trips by Mode

	Auto		Taxi		Subway		Local Bus		Walk/Other		Total		
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	21	33	40	63	55	87	7	11	105	165	228	359	587
Weekday MD Peak Hour	49	42	91	77	78	66	19	17	371	316	608	518	1,126
Weekday PM Peak Hour	59	32	114	61	157	85	20	11	300	162	650	351	1,001

Taxi Trips

	Demand		Shared Trips		Inbound Only		Outbound Only		Total Trips	
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	22	35	11	11	11	11	24	24	46	46
Weekday MD Peak Hour	50	43	25	25	25	25	18	18	68	68
Weekday PM Peak Hour	63	34	32	32	31	31	2	2	65	65

Peak Hour Vehicle Trips

	Auto		Taxi		Delievery		Total		
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	15	23	46	46	5	5	66	74	140
Weekday MD Peak Hour	35	30	68	68	3	3	106	101	207
Weekday PM Peak Hour	42	23	65	65	0	0	107	88	195

Note:
(1) Coliseum Redevelopment FSEIS, July 1997

Table 21-2
Algin - West 61st Street
As of Right Alternative: Community Facility Use
Medical Office Space - Staff

Medical Office:	**101,363**	**gsf**
Daily Person Trip Rate (1):	**10.0**	trips per 1000 square feet
Daily Delivery Trip Rate (2):	**0.20**	trips per 1000 gsf

Temporal & Hourly In/Out Distribution (1)

	Temporal	In	Out	Total	Delivery
Weekday AM Peak Hour	24.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	9.7%
Weekday MD Peak Hour	17.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	7.8%
Weekday PM Peak Hour	24.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	5.1%

Modal Split Estimates & Vehicle Occupancy (1)

	Auto	Taxi	Subway	Local Bus	Walk/Other	Total
Weekday All Peaks	20.0%	10.0%	30.0%	30.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.00	1.40				

Peak Hour Person Trips by Mode

	Auto		Taxi		Subway		Local Bus		Walk/Other		Total		
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	49	0	24	0	73	0	73	0	24	0	243	0	243
Weekday MD Peak Hour	17	17	9	9	26	26	26	26	9	9	87	87	174
Weekday PM Peak Hour	0	49	0	24	0	73	0	73	0	24	0	243	243

Taxi Trips

	Demand		Shared Trips		Inbound Only		Outbound Only		Total Trips	
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	17	0	0	0	17	17	0	0	17	17
Weekday MD Peak Hour	6	6	3	3	3	3	3	3	9	9
Weekday PM Peak Hour	0	17	0	0	0	0	17	17	17	17

Peak Hour Vehicle Trips

	Auto		Taxi		Delivery		Total		
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	49	0	17	17	2	2	68	19	87
Weekday MD Peak Hour	17	17	9	9	2	2	28	28	56
Weekday PM Peak Hour	0	49	17	17	1	1	18	67	85

Note:
(1) 506 East 76th Street Rezoning FEIS (CEQR No. 98DCP009M), October 1999
(2) 400 East 61st Street Development FEIS (CEQR No. 85-212M)

Table 21-3
Algin - West 61st Street
As of Right Alternative: Community Facility Use
Medical Office Space - Visitors

Medical Office: **101,363** gsf
Daily Person Trip Rate (1): **33.6** trips per 1000 square feet

Temporal & Hourly In/Out Distribution (1)

	Temporal	In	Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	6.0%	92.5%	7.5%
Weekday MD Peak Hour	9.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Weekday PM Peak Hour	5.0%	31.4%	68.6%

Modal Split Estimates & Vehicle Occupancy (1)

	Auto	Taxi	Subway	Local Bus	Walk/Other	Total
Weekday All Peaks	25.0%	25.0%	29.0%	11.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.65	1.20				

Peak Hour Person Trips by Mode

	Auto		Taxi		Subway		Local Bus		Walk/Other		Total		
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	47	4	47	4	55	4	21	2	19	2	189	16	205
Weekday MD Peak Hour	38	38	38	38	44	44	17	17	15	15	152	152	304
Weekday PM Peak Hour	13	29	13	29	16	34	6	13	5	12	53	117	170

Taxi Trips

	Demand		Shared Trips		Inbound Only		Outbound Only		Total Trips	
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	39	3	3	3	36	36	0	0	39	39
Weekday MD Peak Hour	32	32	16	16	16	16	16	16	48	48
Weekday PM Peak Hour	11	24	6	6	5	5	18	18	29	29

Peak Hour Vehicle Trips

	Auto		Taxi		Total		
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	29	2	39	39	68	41	109
Weekday MD Peak Hour	23	23	48	48	71	71	142
Weekday PM Peak Hour	8	18	29	29	37	47	84

Note:
(1) 506 East 76th Street Rezoning FEIS (CEQR No. 98DCP009M), October 1999

Table 21-4
Algin - West 61st Street
As of Right Alternative:

Peak Hour Person Trips by Mode

		Auto		Taxi		Subway		Local Bus		Walk/Other		Total		
	USE	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	Hotel	21	33	40	63	55	87	7	11	105	165	228	359	587
	Community Facility	96	4	71	4	128	4	94	2	43	2	432	16	448
	Total	117	37	111	67	183	91	101	13	148	167	660	375	1,035
Weekday MD Peak Hour	Hotel	49	42	91	77	78	66	19	17	371	316	608	518	1,126
	Community Facility	55	55	47	47	70	70	43	43	24	24	239	239	478
	Total	104	97	138	124	148	136	62	60	395	340	847	757	1,604
Weekday PM Peak Hour	Hotel	59	32	114	61	157	85	20	11	300	162	650	351	1,001
	Community Facility	13	78	13	53	16	107	6	86	5	36	53	360	413
	Total	72	110	127	114	173	192	26	97	305	198	703	711	1,414

Peak Hour Vehicle Trips

		Auto		Taxi		Delivery		Total		
	USE	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
Weekday AM Peak Hour	Hotel	15	23	46	46	5	5	66	74	140
	Community Facility	78	2	56	56	2	2	136	60	196
	Total	93	25	102	102	7	7	202	134	336
Weekday MD Peak Hour	Hotel	35	30	68	68	3	3	106	101	207
	Community Facility	40	40	57	57	2	2	99	99	198
	Total	75	70	125	125	5	5	205	200	405
Weekday PM Peak Hour	Hotel	42	23	65	65	0	0	107	88	195
	Community Facility	8	67	46	46	1	1	55	114	169
	Total	50	90	111	111	1	1	162	202	364

AIR QUALITY

The As-of-Right Alternative would result in additional vehicle trips in the AM, midday and PM peak hours as compared to the proposed action. Although the additional emissions from vehicles traveling in the study area would result in greater levels of CO, no significant adverse air quality mobile source impacts are anticipated to occur. The As-of-Right Alternative would result in a much taller building compared to the proposed action and would result in additional fossil fuel usage due to its greater density; however, no significant stationary air quality would occur from the proposed action. Maximum pollutant concentrations from the Con Edison Steam Station on the project site were determined to be well below NAAQS. While higher concentrations of pollutants from the nearby Con Edison 59th Street Station may be experienced on the upper floors of the As-of-Right Alternative as compared to the proposed action, no violations of NAAQS are expected to occur.

NOISE

As discussed above, the As-of-Right Alternative would result in 336, 405, and 364 peak hour vehicle trips in the AM, midday, and PM peak hours as compared to the proposed action, which would result in 256, 89, and 158 peak hour vehicle trips in the AM, midday, and PM peak hours. While this alternative would have a greater vehicle trip generation than the proposed project, this increase in vehicle trips is not expected to result in noise impacts, as it would not result in a doubling of passenger car equivalent traffic. It is anticipated that similar levels of building attenuation as those required with the proposed action would be needed for the As-of-Right Alternative to achieve acceptable interior noise levels.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The construction that would occur on the site with the As-of-Right Alternative would be similar to the construction activities associated with the proposed action, including economic benefits. However, no construction would be expected to occur at the projected development sites under this alternative.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Neither the As-of-Right Alternative nor the proposed action would result in significant adverse impacts to public health. It is expected that under both the As-of-Right Alternative and the proposed action, no air quality impacts as a result of increase vehicular traffic or emissions from stationary sources would result. Neither the As-of-Right Alternative nor the proposed action would create a new source of noise or odors, and neither would result in significant hazardous materials impacts.

D. REZONING ONLY ALTERNATIVES

The Rezoning Only Alternatives would result in the same rezoning as the proposed action (see Chapter 1, "Project Description"). However, this alternative would not seek any of the actions relating to the public parking garage, general large-scale development, or the proposed text amendment to waive the "height factor" or "open space ratio" requirements of a general large-scale development.

Two Rezoning Only Alternatives are examined—a Height Factor Building and a Quality Housing Building. Development under both these alternatives would be similar to the proposed

project in that they would include ground-floor retail, community facility, and residential uses; however, the building mass would be distributed differently on the project site and less floor area would be developed. The purpose of assessing the Rezoning Only Alternatives is to isolate and evaluate the potential effects of the special permits and text amendment.

The proposed uses under the Rezoning Only Alternatives would be the same as with the proposed project (residential, community facility, and retail) and would not exceed the gsf analyzed in the EIS analysis of the proposed action. The Rezoning Only Alternatives would result in construction on the entire project site and similar projected development on the projected development sites (Lots 58 and 61). Because without the general large-scale development special permit the Rezoning Only Alternatives would result in somewhat smaller developments than the proposed action (approximately 68,000, and 72,800 square feet less), it is expected that the effects of the Rezoning Only Alternatives would be similar to or less than those for the proposed action in the areas of land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; community facilities; open space; historic resources; hazardous materials; waterfront revitalization; infrastructure; solid waste and sanitation; energy; traffic and parking; transit and pedestrians; mobile source air quality; noise; construction; and public health. Again, because the Rezoning Only Alternative would result in smaller developments with the same uses as the proposed action, the traffic impacts and associated mitigation would be expected to be the same as or less than for the proposed action. It is possible that at some locations, traffic impacts predicted with the proposed action would not occur, or that mitigation measures could be of a smaller degree. Although neither of these alternatives would include parking, the No Build analysis shows that there would be enough available capacity in the area to accommodate the demand from the recently displaced 100-space on-site lot, and the additional demand generated by the development under either of these Rezoning Only Alternatives.

The impact analysis areas in which the Rezoning Only Alternatives would most differ from the proposed action—urban design and visual resources, shadows, neighborhood character, and stationary source air quality—are discussed in the following sections.

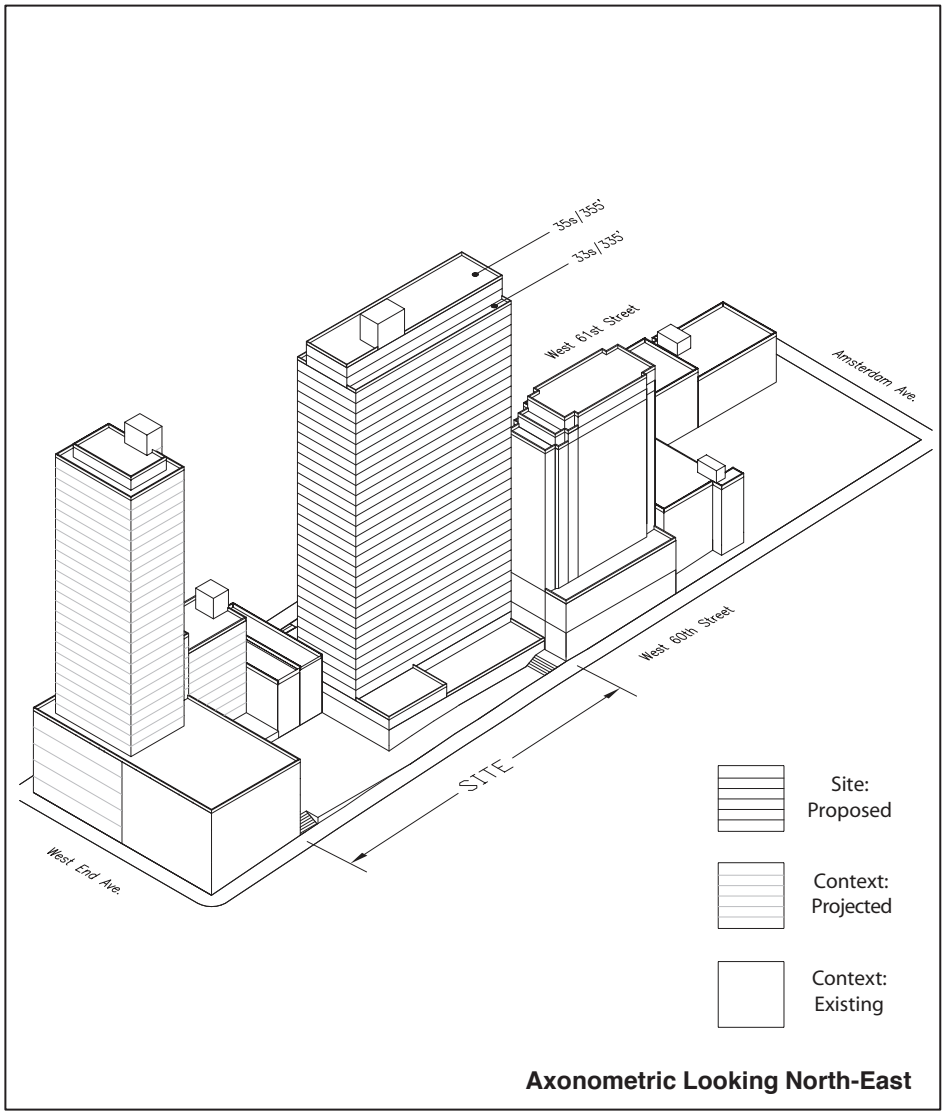
HEIGHT FACTOR BUILDING ALTERNATIVE

The Height Factor Building Alternative is based on the Height Factor regulations that tie the maximum allowable FAR to the "height factor" or "open space ratio." This alternative would result in the development of an approximately 413,255-gsf building containing ground-floor retail, community facility, and residential space. The building would be a 35-story (355 feet) slab, with low-rise wings that would be oriented east/west along the block's center line. Figures 21-3 and 21-4 provide axonometric and plan views of the alternative.

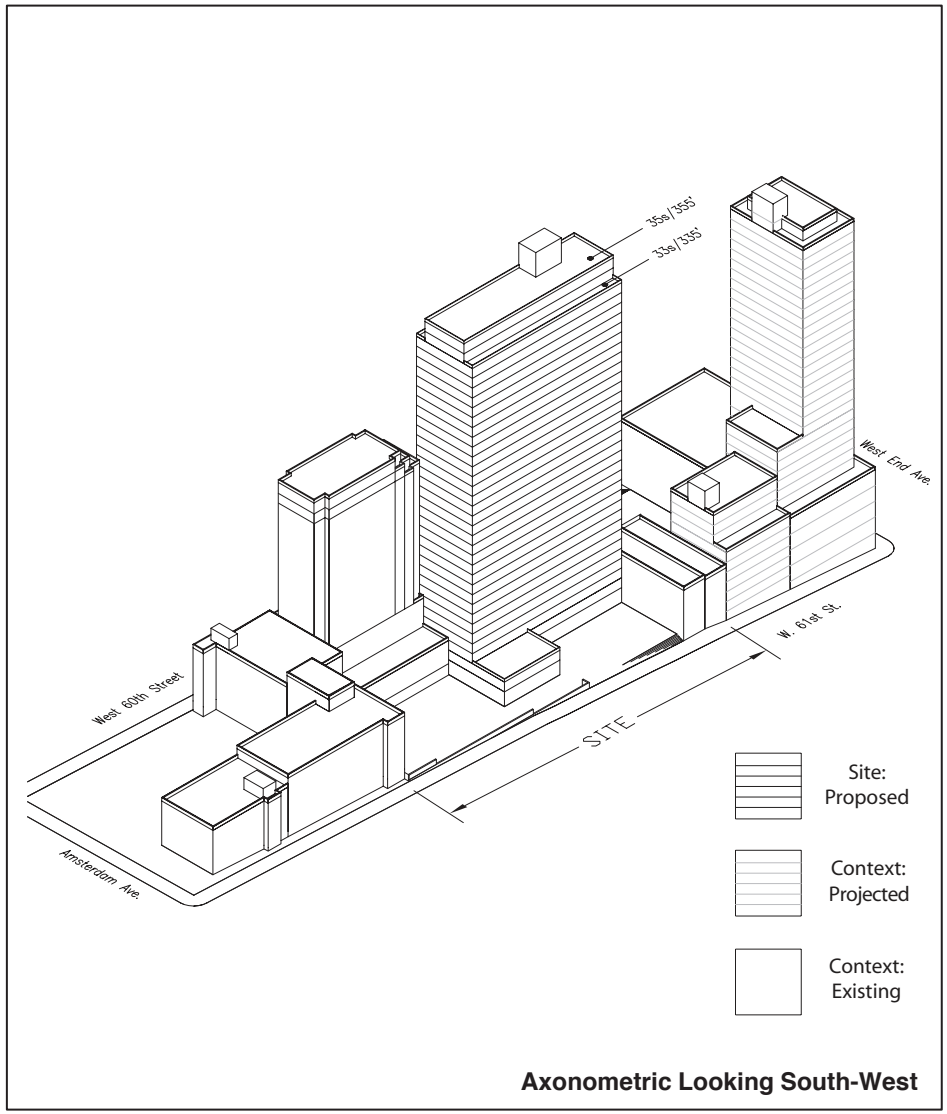
SHADOWS

Because the Height Factor Alternative would be taller than the proposed project and is a slab oriented east/west along the centerline of the block (i.e., it is not a square tower as is the proposed project), this alternative would cast a larger incremental shadow on the Amsterdam Houses playground. Unlike the proposed action, which would not result in shadow impacts, the taller building under the Height Factor Building Alternative would have the potential to result in significant adverse shadow impacts.

7.31.06



Axonometric Looking North-East



Axonometric Looking South-West

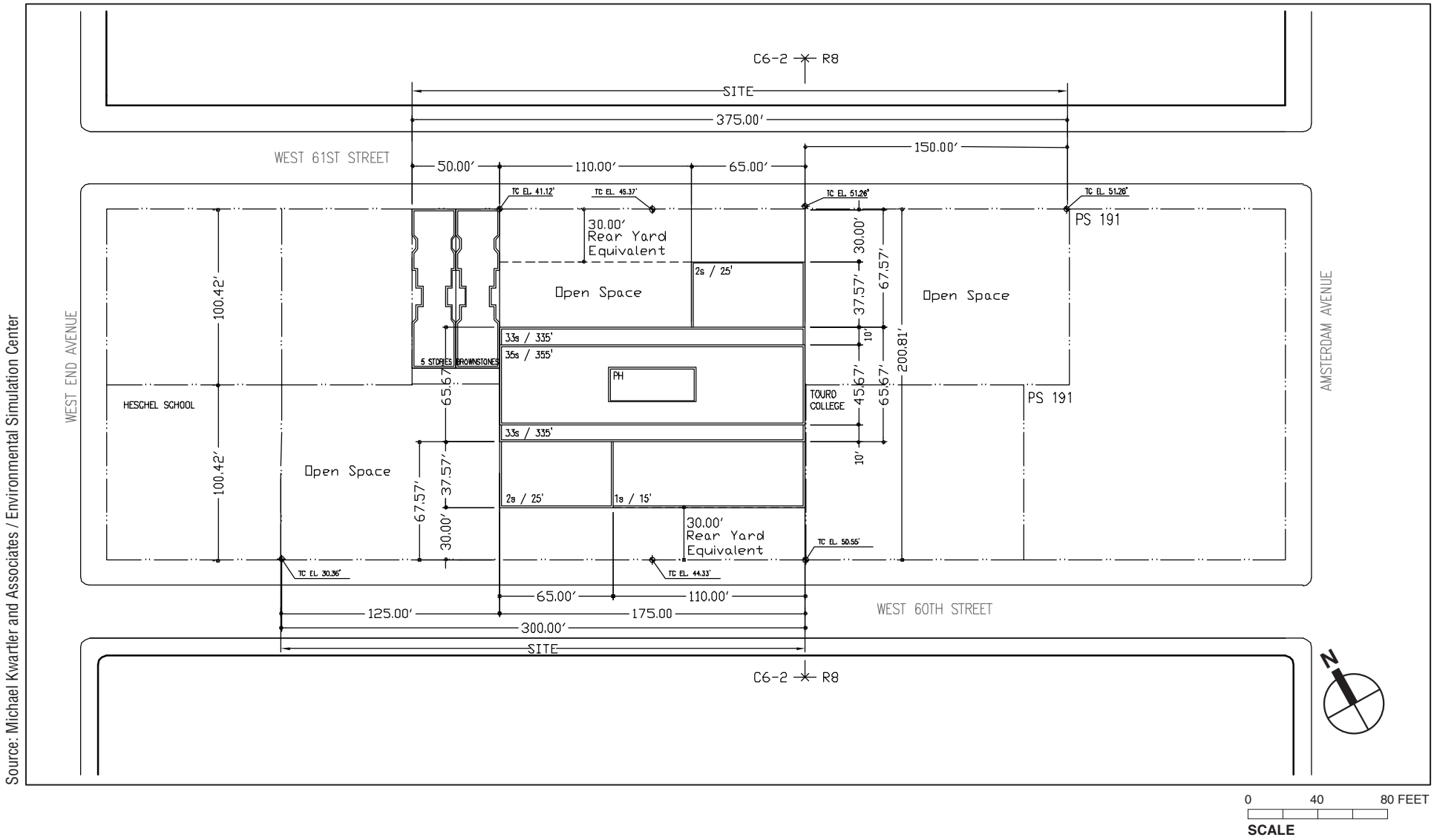
Source: Michael Kwartler and Associates / Environmental Simulation Center

West 61st Street Rezoning
Project and Citywide GLSD Text Amendment

Height Factor Building Alternative – Illustrative View

Figure 21-3

6.8.06



Source: Michael Kwartler and Associates / Environmental Simulation Center

West 61st Street Rezoning
Project and Citywide GLSD Text Amendment

Height Factor Building Alternative – Plan

Figure 21-4

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

As shown in Figure 21-3, this alternative would consist of a 35-story slab building with low-rise wings (175 feet in length) set back approximately 67 feet from both streetlines. Like the proposed project, the Height Factor Building Alternative would alter the streetscape surrounding the project site, and the replacement of the vacant site would be an improvement over existing conditions and conditions in the future without the proposed action. However, the Height Factor Building Alternative would not be as well integrated into the surrounding neighborhood as the proposed project would be. The Height Factor Building Alternative would not be consistent with either the context of existing buildings, which are aligned along their streetlines, or the emerging context of new buildings that all have building elements aligned along their respective street frontages. The ground-floor commercial and community facility uses would also be set back no less than 30 feet from both West 60th and 61st Streets, thereby reducing this alternative's positive effect on the area's streetscape. In addition, while the Height Factor Building Alternative's height would be consistent with the height of the area's older and newer high-rise buildings, the introduction of the midblock tower setback from the streets would appear more bulky than the proposed project, which would use its varying heights and setbacks to break up the bulk.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Neither this alternative nor the proposed action would significantly affect the elements that contribute to the area's neighborhood character—land use, socioeconomic conditions, historic resources, urban design, traffic, or noise. However, the Height Factor Building Alternative would not be as well integrated into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood as compared to the proposed action. As discussed above (see "Urban Design and Visual Resources"), this alternative's setbacks along West 60th and West 61st Streets would reduce this alternative's positive effect on the area's streetscape. In addition, while the Height Factor Building Alternative's height would be consistent with the height of the area's older and newer high-rise buildings, the introduction of the midblock tower setback from the streets would appear more bulky than the proposed project, which would use its varying heights and setbacks to break up the bulk.

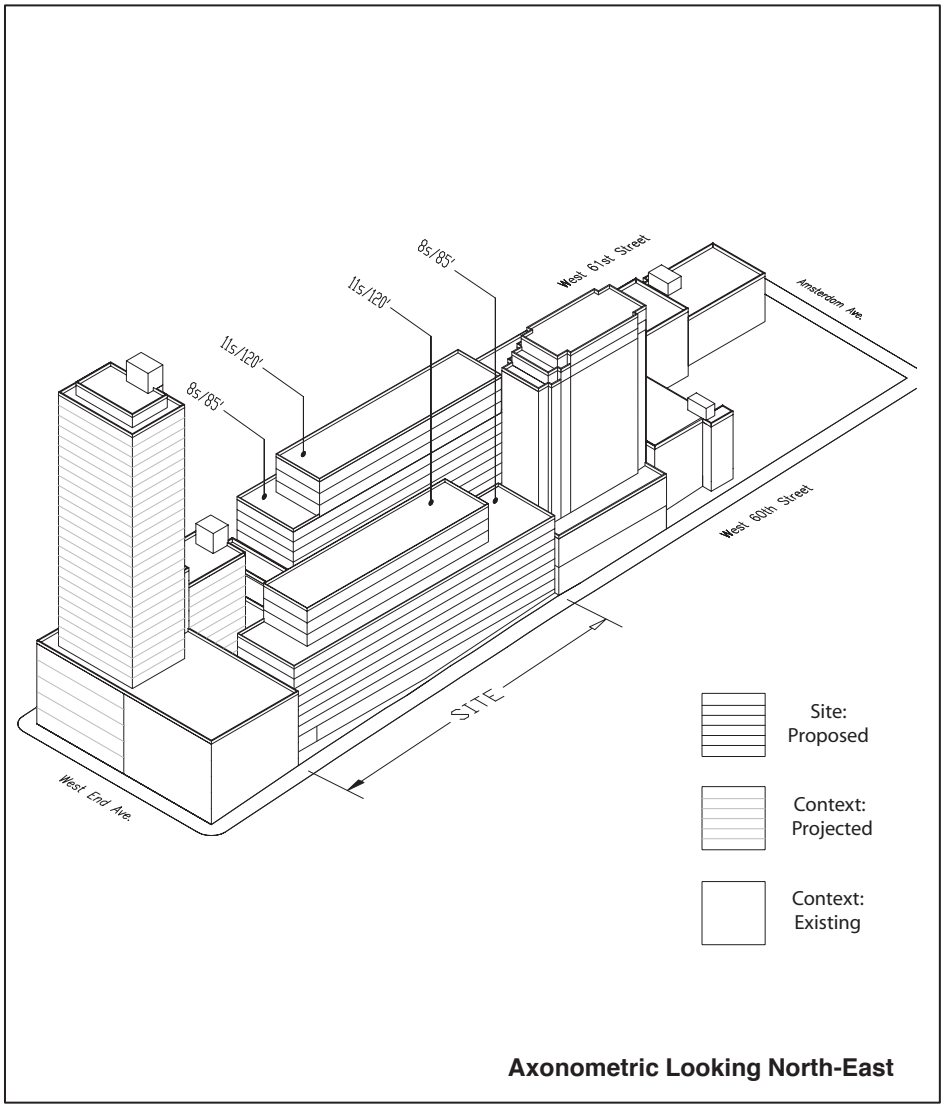
STATIONARY SOURCE AIR QUALITY

The Height Factor Building Alternative would result in a somewhat taller building compared to the proposed action but would result in lower overall fossil fuel usage due to its smaller density. Slightly higher concentrations of pollutants from the nearby Con Edison 59th Street Station may be experienced on the upper floors of the Height Factor Alternative, but no violations of NAAQS are expected to occur. Other air quality analyses performed for the proposed action would be expected to have similar results for the alternative. Therefore, no significant stationary air quality impacts would occur.

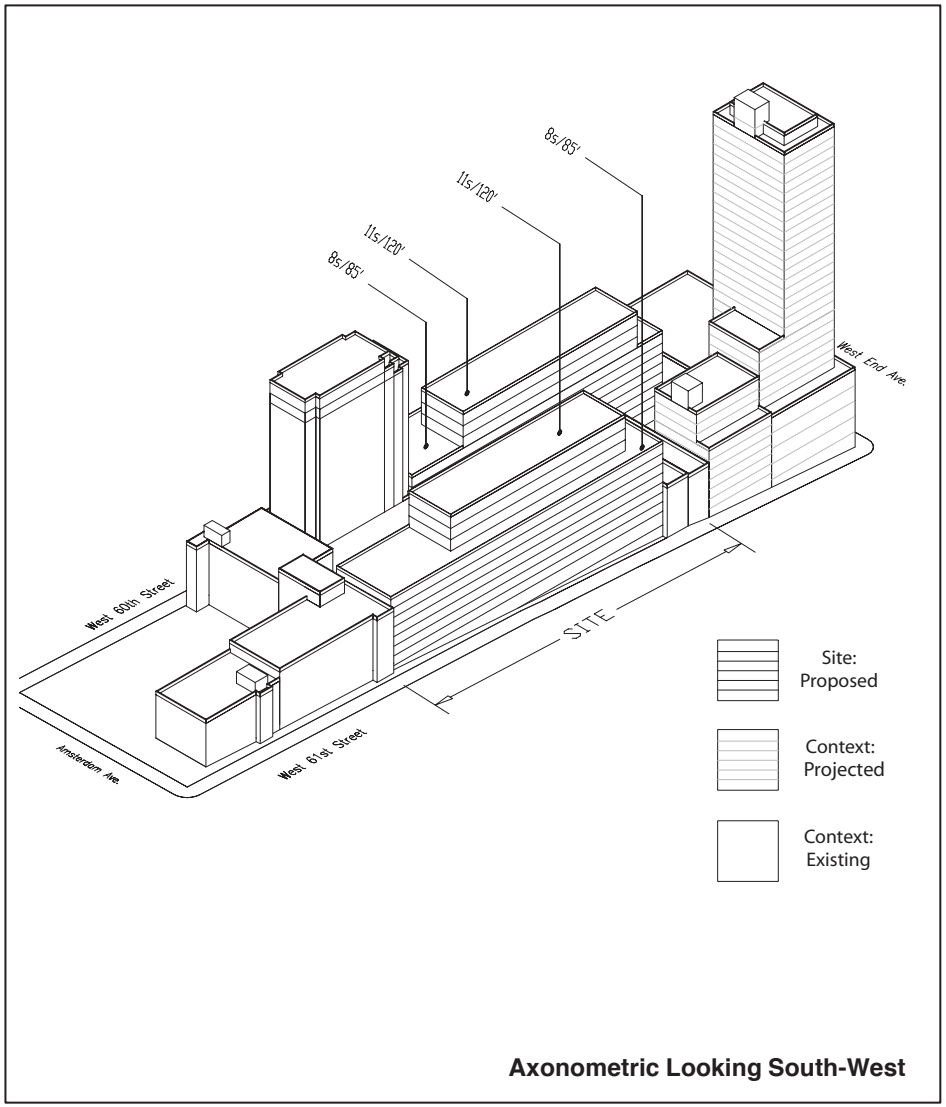
QUALITY HOUSING BUILDING ALTERNATIVE

The Quality Housing Building Alternative is based on Quality Housing regulations and would result in the development of an approximately 408,600-gsf building containing ground-floor retail, community facility, and residential uses. This alternative would result in two parallel buildings of 11 stories each, with their 8-story bases aligned with the West 60th and West 61st Street streetlines (see Figures 21-5 and 21-6).

8.1.06



Axonometric Looking North-East



Axonometric Looking South-West

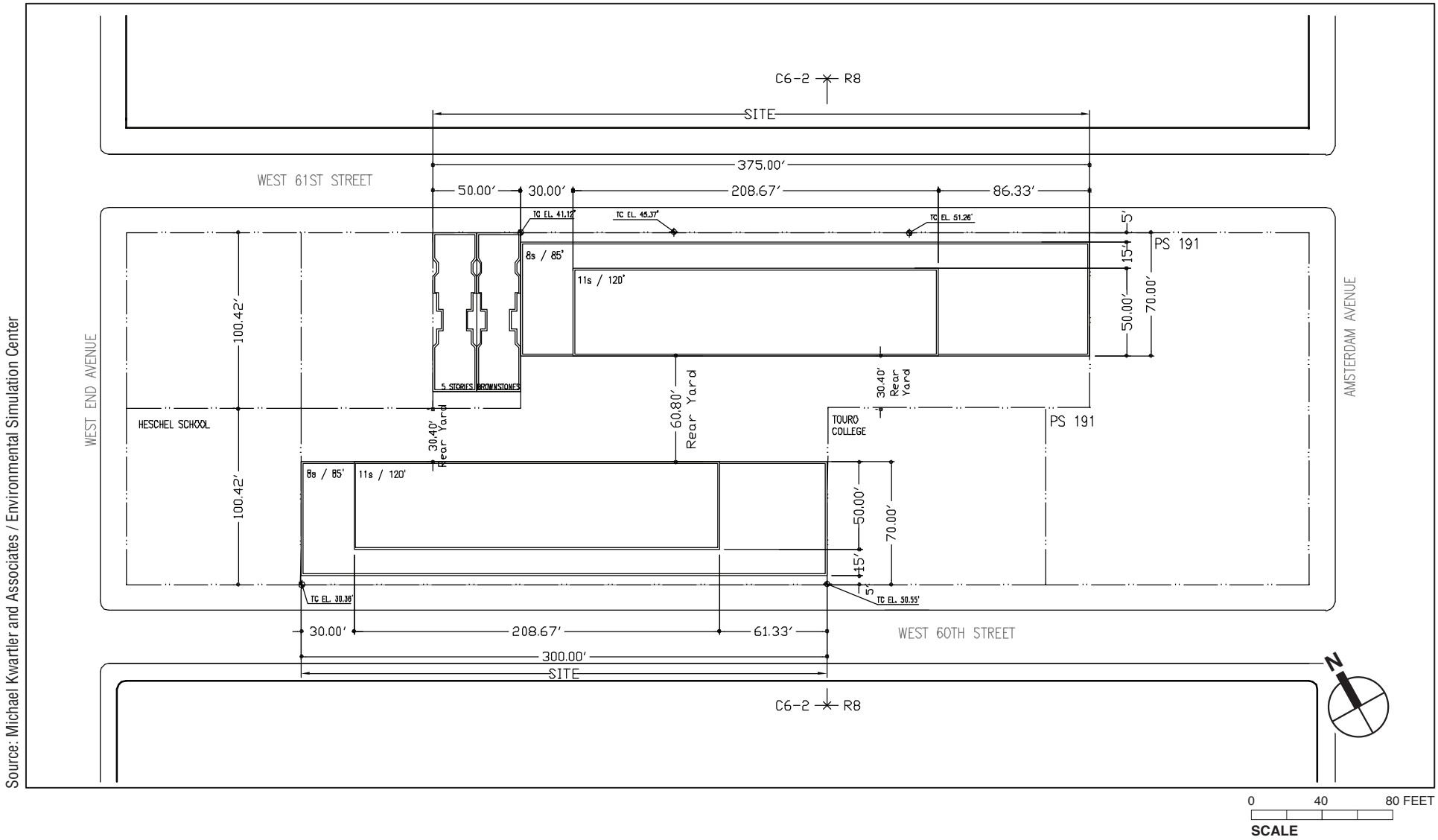
Source: Michael Kwartler and Associates / Environmental Simulation Center

West 61st Street Rezoning
Project and Citywide GLSD Text Amendment

Quality Housing Building Alternative – Illustrative View

Figure 21-5

6.8.06



Source: Michael Kwartler and Associates / Environmental Simulation Center

West 61st Street Rezoning
Project and Citywide GLSD Text Amendment

Quality Housing Building Alternative – Plan

Figure 21-6

SHADOWS

Unlike the proposed action, the Quality Housing Building Alternative would not cast shadows on several of the area's open spaces—James Felt Plaza and Frank Damrosch Park would experience incremental shadows lasting 30 minutes or less; Samuel N. Bennerson Playground and West End Towers Park would experience shadow increments of short duration in the December analysis period only; and the Amsterdam Houses Playground would experience incremental shadows would occur during the March and May analysis periods. However, the proposed action is not expected to result in significant adverse shadows impacts. Therefore, like with the proposed action, this alternative is not expected to result in any significant adverse shadows impacts.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Like the proposed project, the Quality Housing Building Alternative would alter the streetscape surrounding the project site, and the replacement of the vacant site would be an improvement over existing conditions and conditions in the future without the proposed action. However, the Quality Housing Building Alternative would not be as well integrated into the surrounding neighborhood as the proposed project.

Although a mid-rise building configuration, the Quality Housing Building Alternative would also have a monumental look. Comprised of two parallel street wall buildings of 300 and 375 feet in length with a single entrance on West 60th Street, the Quality Housing Building Alternative would have façade frontages considerably greater than that of any of the buildings in the immediate area, including those with full blockfronts of 200 feet. The Quality Housing Building Alternative illustrates the limitation of the Quality Housing regulations. Designed primarily for urban infill sites with relatively small frontages, the application of the Quality Housing regulations, with its tight zoning envelope, to this site's exceedingly long frontages, results in a building that cannot be characterized as being infill.

The Quality Housing Alternative would have a defined interior garden for the use of the residents, similar to that of the proposed project. Unlike the proposed project, it would not have the capacity to provide the extent of active recreation uses proposed for the proposed project; a tennis court and garden rooms, because the dimensions of the enclosed garden would preclude them.

The Quality Housing Building Alternative would provide retail and community facility uses along both streets as well as ground-floor apartments. While the retail and community facility uses would enhance the pedestrian's experience, the ground-floor apartments would lack privacy as compared to the proposed project, where all of the apartments would be located above the ground floor.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Neither this alternative nor the proposed action would significantly affect the elements that contribute to the area's neighborhood character—land use, socioeconomic conditions, historic resources, urban design, traffic, or noise. However, the Quality Housing Building Alternative would not be as well integrated into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood as compared to the proposed action. As discussed above (see "Urban Design and Visual Resources"), this alternative's would reduce the positive effect on the area's streetscape by massing the building's bulk in single long façade frontages along West 60th and West 61st Streets.

In comparison, the proposed project would use its varying heights and setbacks to break up its bulk.

STATIONARY SOURCE AIR QUALITY

The Quality Housing Building Alternative would result in a smaller building compared to the proposed action which would result in lower overall fossil fuel usage because of its smaller density. Because of its smaller size, concentrations of pollutants from the nearby Con Edison 59th Street Station and other source would be expected to be lower than the proposed action. Other air quality analyses performed for the proposed action would be expected to have similar results for the alternative. Therefore, no significant stationary air quality would occur.

E. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT ALTERNATIVES

As discussed in Chapter 22, "Conceptual Analysis of the Proposed Text Amendment," the text amendment proposed as part of the proposed action would allow the City Planning Commission (CPC) to waive within a general large scale development special permit, the applicable "height factor" and "open space ratio" requirements provided that applicants meet certain findings related to the amount and quality of open areas and landscaping. Chapter 22, "Conceptual Analysis of the Proposed Text Amendment," includes the proposed text amendment in its entirety, a description of the purpose and need for the text amendment, the areas of the City in which the text amendment would apply, and an analysis of the potential environmental effects of future use of the proposed Citywide text amendment.

Based on comments received at the public hearing (see Chapter 25, "Comments and Responses"), two alternatives to the zoning text amendment as proposed are described and assessed in the following sections. Zoning Text Alternative 1 includes one modification to the proposed text amendment concerning the minimum amount of open space that must be provided in order for the provisions of the text amendment to apply. Zoning Text Alternative 2 includes the same modification considered in Zoning Text Alternative 1 and three additional modifications requiring that (1) on-site open space complies with the Quality Housing open space provisions, (2) that at least 50 percent of the site's lot area is located within C6-1, C6-2, or C6-3 zoning districts, and (3) restricts the applicability of the proposed text amendment to Community board 7 only. Neither of these alternatives is intended to reduce or eliminate impacts resulting for the proposed text amendment since the conceptual analysis of the proposed text amendment provided in Chapter 22 concluded that the proposed text amendment would not result in any significant adverse impacts. The alternatives are included to address concerns about the proposed text amendment expressed at the public hearing relating to the need to provide a quantitative measure of open space to be provided on a site; the need to provide more specific standards for defining the quality of open space, specifying how much of the project lot area would need to be located within the applicable zoning districts; and, limiting the applicability of the text amendment to Manhattan Community District 7 only.

ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT ALTERNATIVE 1

In Zoning Text Amendment Alternative 1, the proposed text would be modified to include as a condition that no less that 50 percent of the amount of open space that would have otherwise been required under existing height factor and open space ratio requirements will be provided for developments that are constructed using the provisions of the text amendment (see Appendix E for the proposed text amendment as modified under this alternative). Chapter 22 included a conceptual analysis of the effects of the proposed text amendment for the environmental impact categories that could potentially be affected by the use of the text's provisions, including Open Space; Shadows; Historic Resources; Urban Design and Visual Resources; Neighborhood

Character; Natural Resources; Hazardous Materials; the Waterfront Revitalization Program; and Stationary Source Air Quality. The analysis concluded that the proposed text amendment would not result in significant adverse impacts in any of these categories. Whereas the provisions of the proposed text amendment would not require a specified amount of open space be provided in order to waive the existing height factor and open space ratio requirements, under this alternative, a minimum of 50 percent of the amount of open space that would otherwise be required under existing height factor and open space ratio requirements would be required to be provided. The effect of this modification would be to provide for a quantifiable minimum amount of open space that would have to be provided on a site in order to utilize the provisions of the text amendment. This would address concerns expressed at the public hearing that the proposed text amendment does not include a quantifiable measure of the amount of required open space. This modification would not alter any of the conclusions of the conceptual analysis provided in Chapter 22.

ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT ALTERNATIVE 2

In Zoning Text Amendment Alternative 2, the proposed text would be modified to include the following requirement as conditions to be met in order for the provisions of the proposed text amendment to apply:

- that no less than 50 percent of the amount of open space that would have otherwise been required under existing height factor and open space ratio requirements will be provided for developments that are constructed using the provisions of the text amendment (as in Zoning Text Amendment Alternative 1, described above);
- that the open space provided on the site will comply with the requirements that would have otherwise been required under the Quality Housing provisions of the New York City Zoning Resolution;
- that its provisions apply to general large-scale developments with at least 50 percent of their lot area within C6-1, C6-2, or C6-3 zoning districts; and
- that its provisions apply only within Manhattan Community District 7.

Chapter 22 included a conceptual analysis of the effects of the proposed text amendment for the environmental impact categories that could potentially be affected by the use of the text's provisions, including Open Space; Shadows; Historic Resources; Urban Design and Visual Resources; Neighborhood Character; Natural Resources; Hazardous Materials; the Waterfront Revitalization Program; and Stationary Source Air Quality. The analysis concluded that the proposed text amendment would not result in significant adverse impacts in any of these categories. Whereas under the proposed text amendment there are no specific criteria relating to the quality of open space provided, or to how much of the project lot area needs to be located within the applicable zoning districts, under this alternative the open space provided on the site would have to comply with the open space requirements of the Quality Housing Program, and at least 50 percent of the site's lot area would need to be located within a C6-1, C6-2, or C6-3 zoning district. In addition, whereas the proposed zoning text amendment would be applicable in Manhattan Community Districts 1-8 and 12, Queens Community District 12, and Brooklyn Community District 2, under this alternative, the proposed text amendment would be limited to only Manhattan Community Board 7. Also, as with Zoning Text Alternative 1, under this alternative, a minimum of 50 percent of the of the amount of open space that would otherwise be required under existing height factor and open space ratio requirements would be required to be

provided. The effects of the modification concerning the minimum amount of open space that must be provided are discussed above under Zoning Text Alternative 1. The effect of requiring that the open space provided complies with Quality Housing open space provisions, would be to establish specific standards relating to the quality of the open space to be provided. The effects of modifying the text to include as a condition that at least 50 percent of the site's lot area be located within a C6-1, C6-2, or C6-3 zoning district would be to further limit the applicability of the proposed text amendment. This would likely reduce the number of sites which could utilize the provisions of the proposed text amendment. Lastly, the modifications under this alternative would make the proposed text amendment applicable in Manhattan Community Board 7 only. These modification would address the concerns expressed at the public hearing that the proposed text amendment needs to provide more specific standards for defining the quality of open space; for specifying how much of the project lot area would need to be located within the applicable zoning districts; and, that it should be limited to only Manhattan Community District 7. These modifications would not alter any of the conclusions of the conceptual analysis provided in Chapter 22. ✷