Chapter 26: Response to Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

A. INTRODUCTION[1]

This document summarizes and responds to comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS"), issued on January 19, 2024, for the Bronx Metro-North Station Study Proposal (the "Proposed Actions"). Oral and written comments were received during the public meeting held by the New York City Department of City Planning ("DCP") on May 15, 2024. Written comments were accepted through the close of the public comment period, which ended at 5:00 P.M. on May 28, 2024. Appendix J contains the written comments received on the DEIS. A Final Environmental Impact Statement ("FEIS") was issued on June 14, 2024, incorporating comments received on the DEIS where relevant and appropriate as well as other background and project updates that were made subsequent to publication of the DEIS.

Section B lists the elected officials, organizations, and individuals that provided relevant comments on the DEIS. Section C contains a summary of these relevant comments and a response to each. These summaries convey the substance of the comments made, but do not necessarily quote the comments verbatim. Comments are organized by subject matter and generally parallel the chapter structure of the DEIS.

B. LIST OF ELECTED OFFICIALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO COMMENTED ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Elected Officials

1. Vanessa L. Gibson, Bronx Borough President, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Gibson_025)
2. Kristy Marmorato, New York City Council, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Marmorato_028)

Community Boards and Agencies

3. Tim Currier, Mayor's Office of Talent and Workforce Development (NYC Talent), oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Currier_033)
4. Nicholas Molinari, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Molinari_030)
5. Joseph O'Donnell, Director, Government and Community Relations, Metropolitan Transportation Authority Construction and Development, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (O'Donnell_034)

[1] This chapter is new to the FEIS.

6. Sarit Platkin, Director of Neighborhood Planning, New York City Department of Housing, Preservation and Development, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Platkin_038)
7. Jennifer Sun, Executive Vice President of Planning, New York City Economic Development Corporation, oral comment notes received May 15, 2024 (Sun_006) and oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Sun_026)

Organizations and Businesses

8. Zachary Bernstein, Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobsen (on behalf of Parkchester Preservation Company, L.P.), letter dated May 28, 2024 (Bernstein_020)
9. Ruben Diaz, Jr. Senior Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, Montefiore Medical Center, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 and oral comment notes received May 15, 2024 (Diaz, Jr._001)
10. Bernadette Ferrara, President, Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance, oral comment notes received May 15, 2024 (Ferrara_004) and oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Ferrara_032)
11. Kenneth Fisher, Cozen O'Connor (on behalf of ZP Realty LLP), letter dated May 24, 2024 (Fisher_018)
12. Arjan Gjushi, Baker Avenue Development LLC, letter dated May 16, 2024 (Gjushi_009)
13. Peter Hamilton, Parkchester Watch Group, email dated May 15, 2024 (Hamilton_007)
14. Daniel Kaplan, Senior Partner, FX Collaborative Architects, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Kaplan_027)
15. David M. Karnovsky, Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobsen (on behalf of Parkchester Preservation Company, L.P.), oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Karnovsky_029)
16. Jesse Lazar, Executive Director, AIA New York, letter dated May 15, 2024 (Lazar_003)
17. Eleanore Martins, Akerman, LLP (on behalf of Baker Avenue Development LLC), oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Martins_040)
18. Carlo A. Scissura, President & CEO, New York Building Congress, letter dated April 16, 2024 (Scissura_023)
19. Camelia Tepelus, Executive Director, Morris Park Business Improvement District, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Tepelus_041)
20. Frampton Tolbert, Executive Director, Historic Districts Council, letter dated May 13, 2024 (Tolbert_002)
21. Richard Vitacco, East Bronx History Forum, letter dated May 15, 2024 (Vitacco_015)
22. Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance, letter dated April 1, 2024 (VNNA_008)
23. Elise Wagner, Partner, Kramer Levin (on behalf of Montefiore Einstein), letter dated May 15, 2024 (Wagner_017)
24. Megan Wylie, Director, Government Relations, New York Building Congress, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Wylie_036)

General Public

25. Rose Almendina, email dated May 16, 2024 (Almendina_012)
26. Larissa Archer, email dated May 15, 2024 (Archer_013)
27. Daisy Colon, email dated May 15, 2024 (Colon_005)
28. Roxane Delgado, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Delgado_039)

29. Diana Finch, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Finch_035)
30. Tangela Gibson, email dated May 15, 2024 (Gibson_019)
31. Michael Kaess, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Kaess_037) and email dated May 28, 2024 (Kaess_022)
32. Dan Miller, email dated May 16, 2024 (Miller_010)
33. Kenneth Okrend, email dated May 16, 2024 (Okrend_011)
34. Ruth Papazian, email dated May 28, 2024 (Papazian_021)
35. Robert Press, oral comments delivered May 15, 2024 (Press_031)
36. Wendy Salazar, email dated May 17, 2024 (Salazar_016)
37. Luke Szabados, email dated May 16, 2024 (Szabados_024)
38. Damaris Torres, email dated May 15, 2024 (Torres_014)

C. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Chapter 1. Project Description

Density Concerns

Comment #1-1 The proposed heights for some of these developments, reaching up to 25 stories, raises valid concerns and apprehension about the density, congestion and community character. (Marmorato_028)

Response #1-1 Comment noted. In order to determine the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions, the FEIS was prepared in accordance with the *City Environmental Quality Review ("CEQR") Technical Manual*. Areas of analysis include land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; community facilities and services; open space; shadows; historic and cultural resources; urban design and visual resources; hazardous materials; water and sewer infrastructure; solid waste and sanitation services; energy; transportation; air quality; greenhouse gas emissions and climate change; noise; public health; neighborhood character; and construction. Any potential impacts identified in these analyses are disclosed in the FEIS.

Comment #1-2 This project is much too large and needs to be scaled down to less than half of the proposed size. (Press_031)

Response #1-2 Comment noted. The new housing opportunities, including affordable housing units, that would be created by the Proposed Actions are needed in order to respond to an unprecedented housing crisis affecting the nation and New York City specifically. The City of New York has established a goal of adding 500,000 housing units over the next decade. These additional units are an important component of reaching that goal. As described in the FEIS, there has been relatively little housing development within the

Project Area in recent years, in part because the current zoning does not allow for housing.

Comment #1-3 If the Projected Development Site #5 houses 20-30% of the formerly homeless as planned, we can predict that our families and children attending nearby PS 481 will be exposed to individuals at much greater risk for substance abuse issues and/or psychiatric disorder. Placing such a large number of individuals on a very small street in a small community, close to an elementary school with many one-way or dead-end streets will create challenges to public safety, traffic, congestion and excessive noise. The aforementioned changes will have a significant adverse impact on our neighborhood. Baker Avenue should remain an R5 zone. (VNNA_008)

Response #1-3 As part of the Proposed Actions, Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Areas would be mapped to require a share of new housing to be permanently affordable when new housing capacity would be created. The MIH program includes two primary options that pair set-aside percentages with different affordability levels to reach a range of low- and moderate-income households with incomes averaging at either 60 percent or 80 percent of the Area Median Income.

Housing & Increased Density Requests

Comment #1-4 Councilmember Marmorato's request to significantly decrease the proposed height and density of the rezoning is a non-starter. Such a change would effectively throw away six years of community engagement and may result in the loss of thousands of projected homes and jobs adjacent to a multi-billion dollar transportation investment. Given that this is quite literally a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, I can't state enough how much of a blunder such a modification would be. My fear is such a change may result in very little new affordable housing units, and the inability to meet the increased housing demand may worsen housing affordability in the area. There is already a housing shortage in our community and professionals who work here can not afford to live here as it is. The current proposed heights and density is necessary to enable mixed uses and affordable housing development; anything less may result in current uses continuing on the rezoned sites. (Kaess_022, Kaess_037)

Response #1-4 Comment noted. See response to Comment #1-2, above.

Comment #1-5 Affordable housing should have one-two-and three-bedroom apartments with no studios. At least some of the proposed developments must offer opportunities for home ownership which provides the foundation for community stability. (VNNA_008)

Response #1-5 Comment noted. Beyond having to meet the requirements of the proposed MIH areas, the affordability levels and unit mix of future development within the Project Area fall beyond the scope of the Proposed Actions and the EIS. As part of the City's larger planning work, DCP will continue working with elected officials and partner

agencies to maximize public benefits and create housing that meets the needs of the community.

Comment #1-6 As the owners of 1880 Tremont Avenue, we strongly support the proposed rezoning, with a request for a modification of the height limit applicable to the Site from 175 feet to 215 feet. This request is informed by the very positive feedback received at a well-attended community visioning event on May 2 to which we were invited by Majority Leader Farias, in whose district the Site is located. Participants at the event were shown physical models of potential development of the Site with both a 175-foot and a 215-foot height limit. Many members of the public appreciated that a modest increase in height from 175 feet to 215 feet would result in superior urban design by creating additional distance between two of the proposed buildings above the first floor, providing for a more open public space with more access to light and air. The additional height also allows us to break down what would otherwise be a block-long street wall along White Plains Road and creates flexibility to address participating residents' requests for more shopping options and community facility space at the Site. (Fisher_018)

Response #1-6 Comment noted. The current proposal limits the height to 175' in this location.

Comment #1-7 Parkchester Preservation Company, L.P., as owner of Projected Development Site 8, has been in conversation with the local community and other stakeholders. An increase in the proposed maximum building height for Projected Site 8 continues to garner support and would facilitate a development with affordable housing, retail and community facility spaces, parking, neighborhood connectivity and street activation. In the absence of this increased building height, developing Projected Site 8 and accomplishing project goals is uncertain. (Bernstein_020)

Response #1-7 Comment noted. See the response to Comment #1-6 above.

Comment #1-8 We believe that the current 17-story height limit poses challenges to the quality of the open space and results in elongated and ungainly building forms. There are significant benefits of allowing the northern portion of the site to reach 21 stories. (Kaplan_027)

Response #1-8 Comment noted. See the response to Comment #1-6 above.

Comment #1-9 The increased transit accessibility and employment opportunities that will result from the Proposed Project justifies higher-density zoning that will allow for more housing, commercial and institutional buildings to be constructed. The MTA also supports the city's public realm proposals to create public spaces, including streets and sidewalks, around these new stations that provide pedestrian safety, comfort, and convenience,

and will support the quality of new service that the MTA will be providing. (O'Donnell_034)

Response #1-9 Comment noted.

Comment #1-10 I'm glad my Community Board voted in favor of the plan but wish they had appreciated the way that designating some areas as R7 or R8 is better, because greater building height requires the creation of more public space and more green space. (Finch_035)

Response #1-10 Comment noted.

Montefiore Hospital

Comment #1-11 The proposed rezoning under the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Plan would change the zoning district designation for a very small portion of the existing large-scale community facility development ("LSCFD") from an R4 district to a C4-3 district. The C4-3 district would also be mapped within the proposed Special Eastchester - East Tremont Corridor District (the "Special District"). Because this zoning change would create an inconsistency with the definition of "large-scale community facility development," it may have the effect of precluding Montefiore Einstein from modifying the boundaries of the LSCFD or seeking additional LSCFD approvals that are needed to facilitate new development on the Campus. We can only assume that this was not the intended result. We believe that this issue can be addressed through a modification to the proposed zoning text for the Special District. More specifically, a provision could be added to the proposed Special District regulations stating, in effect, that any LSCFD that is located partially within the C4-3 district and the Special District and that existed prior to the effective date of the rezoning may continue to be treated as a LSCFD, and that the boundaries of such LSCFD may be modified by future actions. Such a modification would preserve for Montefiore Einstein the ability to implement changes to its Campus through the LSCFD designation, without affecting any of the planning goals underlying the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Plan. (Diaz, Jr._001, Wagner_017)

Response #1-11 Comment noted.

Comment #1-12 In the short-term, Montefiore's proposed new high-acuity hospital pavilion is expected to require an expansion of the existing Large-Scale Community Facility Development and related land use actions. It has recently come to our attention that the C4-3 zoning district proposed by the Morris Park Metro-North area plan creates an inconsistency with the Zoning Resolution's definition of "Large-Scale Community Facility Development." We therefore ask that the proposed text amendment be modified to incorporate language that addresses this recently discovered issue. (Diaz, Jr._001)

Response #1-12 Comment noted.

Purpose & Need

Comment #1-13 The no build option should be in place for all stations and let growth happen organically, and follow vehicular and pedestrian traffic as it actually happens not based on a hypothetical study. (Vitacco_015)

Response #1-13 Comment Noted. See the response to Comment #1-2, above.

Comment #1-14 The so-called housing shortage is a myth perpetrated by the real estate industry. (Vitacco_015)

Who is all this new housing in Morris Park and Van Nest being built for? The population of The Bronx fell by 93,000 people since the pandemic, so fewer Bronxites need housing. Meanwhile, there are hundreds of vacant NYCHA and rent-stabilized apartments throughout The Bronx. There's tons of vacant or underutilized office space in our borough near public transport and business corridors that can be retrofitted and repurposed for affordable housing. The Bronx has the lowest average rent in New York City, which means we already have more “affordable" units than any other borough. (Papazian_021)

Response #1-14 Comment noted. There has been relatively little housing development within the station areas in recent years. Within the Affected Area, covering both stations, there have been no new residential buildings constructed. Zoning along East Tremont Avenue and in affected areas along Bronxdale Avenue does not currently allow for housing. This also holds for Morris Park, where the majority of the lots proposed for rezoning do not currently allow for housing, this despite continuing demand as expressed by area institutions and rising housing costs.

Comment #1-15 Why are Van Nest and Morris Park being considered for upzoning but not Hunt’s Point and Co-Op City? Is it because both neighborhoods are organized, community-minded and traditional in nature? Most of the homes in both neighborhoods are one and two families, making the East Bronx unlike the densely populated and "pack and stack" style of the south and west Bronx. (Vitacco_015)

Response #1-15 As part of the community planning exercise for the Sustainable Communities in the Bronx, a multi-year public process that ended in 2014, opportunities for housing growth were identified as Morris Park and Parkchester/Van Nest. Building on this work, the Bronx Metro-North Station Study further refined those initial recommendations. While the study does not contemplate land use actions at Hunts

Point and Co-op City, those studies have been the subject of the larger planning process with a focus on improving connections to and from the proposed stations.

Potential and Projected Development Sites

Comment #1-16 Project sites 3925, 3926, and 3927 may serve as much needed Senior and/or Veteran Housing with R5, R6 housing. (VNNA_008)

Response #1-16 Comment noted. In order to assess the possible impacts of the Proposed Actions, a reasonable worst-case development scenario ("RWCDS") was developed for predicted conditions in a ten year period ending in 2033. The RWCDS does not require a single type of housing and senior or veteran housing in these locations is not precluded.

Comment #1-17 Project site 3952 is a crucial location for both Parkchester and Van Nest. This is a highly trafficked intersection with close proximity to the Parkchester/Van Nest Train Station. This location should house two important amenities for the aforementioned communities: 1) a much needed high-quality supermarket, i.e. Trader Joe's, Shop Rite; 2) a Youth Community Center. (VNNA_008)

Response #1-17 Comment noted. The Proposed Actions seek to allow for neighborhood and commuter-serving retail opportunities, where appropriate, and to encourage general retail growth to activate commercial corridors. According to the FEIS, the Proposed Actions are expected to result in a net increase of 302,236 square feet of local retail, which covers a wide variety of potential commercial uses. The Proposed Actions do not mandate certain commercial uses. The Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) Program's discretionary tax and/or zoning incentives, meant to encourage the establishment and retention of grocery stores in underserved communities, are available throughout a substantial portion of the Project Area. Additionally, the Proposed Actions are expected to result in new community facility space; however, the Proposed Actions do not mandate certain community facility uses.

Comment #1-18 The proposed density for the Project Sites at Eastchester Road and Morris Park Avenue will overwhelm an already well-developed location. This area would be better served by a trade or middle school or even a bowling alley. We have recently lost two bowling alleys in the Van Nest and Morris Park communities. (VNNA_008)

Response #1-18 Comment noted. The Proposed Actions seek to allow for neighborhood and commuter-serving retail opportunities and to encourage general retail growth to activate commercial corridors. The Proposed Actions are expected to result in a net increase of 302,236 square feet of local retail, which covers a wide variety of potential commercial uses.

Comment #1-19 The Parkchester Watch Group wants to see less dense zoning for the vacant lot on East Tremont and Unionport Road, to be in scale with heights of our buildings (around 13 floors). (Hamilton_007)

Response #1-19 Comment noted.

Comment #1-20 The Parkchester Watch Group supports the new Metro North Station and new housing units in the neighborhood but opposes the height of the new zoning. R8 zoning, planned on the vacant lot on the corner of East Tremont and Unionport Road, has no absolute height limits. A building significantly taller than our 13-story buildings in Parkchester could be built. We oppose zoning being changed on the current site of our two garages, heat plant, and management offices to anything that would permit residential buildings being built. Do not change the zoning to residential. (Hamilton_007)

Response #1-20 Comment noted.

Comment #1-21 The Parkchester Watch Group wants to see protections to keep Parkchester Condo's garages, management office and heat plant from being torn down or built upon. (Hamilton_007)

Response #1-21 Comment noted.

Non-Contiguous C4-3 District

Comment #1-22 I suggest removing the C4-3 district by Seminole and 10 Brook Avenue, as it is not contiguous with a larger study, and it does not make sense to rezone this area without a project that is already planned. (Gibson_025)

The property on Seminole and Mars Park Avenue needs to be removed from the proposal due to the fact that it does not fit within the community. (Marmorato_028)

I do agree with the Community Boards and residents' concerns about a couple of spots where new taller buildings might too closely impend on single and 2 family homes. The C-4 section at Tenbroeck and Seminole on Morris Park and the C-8 and R6 development by Baker Street, a small residential side street in Van Nest. But overall, I'm very much in favor, and thank the Commission for the opportunity to speak on this much-needed and revitalizing plan. (Finch_035)

Various stakeholders have requested that the Morris Park Avenue / Seminole Avenue portion of the rezoning be removed from the proposed rezoning. This property is reportedly owned by Montefiore, and given that Montefiore has publicly indicated that they intend to submit a private ULURP application following the conclusion of the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Rezoning, I believe it would be fair to remove this

portion of the rezoning as a compromise on this rezoning. NYC Planning should encourage Montefiore to include it in a future private ULURP application and allow them to make a proactive case for rezoning that property. Should that portion of the rezoning be removed, that zoning capacity should be transferred elsewhere in the rezoning area. Otherwise, the heights and density of other parts of the rezoning should not be decreased. (Kaess_022, Kaess_037)

Response #1-22 Comments noted.

Parkchester Condo Sponsors

Comment #1-23 The condo sponsor owns our buildings and garages. If they have money to build new buildings they should make a financial commitment to improving our buildings. New elevators, wheelchair ramps, cameras in the halls, properly fix leaks and mold. We also ask for modernization of our heating system: energy efficient, and thermostat control. We want a sizable upfront financial commitment from the sponsor that will go directly towards capital improvements, as well as an annual financial commitment that will be used for capital improvement. (Hamilton_007)

The current owners that you have allowed to benefit from this construction money have not taken care of the current existing owners of the condos. Our units have begun to reassemble slum lord apartments, the condo owners only put money into the external areas and that is only with a purpose as to appear in order for future residents. Once these residents come in they can't wait to leave or break their leases. Does the city want business with a slum owner. Or a condo owner that will provide services to only the new structure and continue to abandon the current. Unfortunately the resident owners can't just leave we have to continue paying common charges and city taxes for deplorable conditions. Do not be fooled into making the mistake of giving business to a crooked owner that will bring bad media attention to our mayor. (Almendina_012)

The condo sponsor already owns buildings that it neglects. (Torres_014)

Response #1-23 Comments noted. The maintenance of privately owned condominiums is beyond the scope of the FEIS.

Coordination with Existing Institutions

Comment #1-24 Who will be responsible for the management and cleanliness of the new public space near the Morris Park Station and plaza? Who will sweep the sidewalks, empty the trash receptacles, install and maintain planters—who will take responsibility? This plaza is indeed a welcoming new entrance gateway into the beautiful Morris Park Community. Maintenance of the future Morris Park Plaza needs must be funded. Plaza sanitation and beautification costs need to be included in the budget of local stakeholders, including the large medical institutions that will benefit tremendously

from the rezoning associated to the new stations. We urge all of them and all entities surrounding the station and to take ownership in ensuring that the future Metro North Morris Park Plaza is a welcoming care for point of access into Morris Park. (Tepelus_041)

Response #1-24 Design and maintenance of open spaces falls beyond the scope of the Proposed Actions and the EIS, though generally, open space is managed by the entity under which its jurisdiction falls. In the case of park space, this is NYC Parks. In the case of plaza spaces, this is typically overseen by the NYC Department of Transportation and generally managed through maintenance partnerships with local entities. In the case of publicly accessible park space on private land, this would be the responsibility of the private property owner.

Miscellaneous

Comment #1-25 There is an error in your online Project Brief with the Bronxdale Mapping. It is located in the Van Nest neighborhood of Bronx Community District (CD) 11, not the Parkchester neighborhood. (Ferrara_004)

Response #1-25 Comment noted.

Chapter 2. Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

Comment #2-1 We believe that any rezoning in the railroad right of way should still maintain Special District Zoning and ULURP review for projects in Parkchester. (Tolbert_002)

Response #2-1 As described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," in the FEIS the Proposed Actions would modify the boundaries of the Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District at its northern border. This part of the district would be rezoned from C8-4 to R8/C2-4 to promote new mixed-use residential development. The area that would be removed from the special preservation district is notably different from the ensemble of buildings that is central to the Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District's character and which the preservation district seeks to preserve. ULURP would remain in place for any development that meets the City's requirements.

Comment #2-2 According to the FEIS, there are 60 projected sites on 132 lots. There are also 36 potential sites on 72 lots. According to the City's plan, 204 lots could be developed from East Tremont Avenue and St. Lawrence Ave to Stillwell Avenue and Pelham Parkway South. The largest of these projected sites is number 5, Block 4025 in Van Nest with a lot count of 26, the largest in the study. The development of this site will

prove destructive to the R5 density of this section of Van Nest and weaken a historically vital neighborhood. (Vitacco_015)

The largest of the projected sites in the study is Number 5, block 4025 in Van Nest with a lot count of 26. The development of this site will prove destructive to R5 density of this section of Van Nest and weaken our historically remarkable neighborhood. Baker Avenue is a small, narrow street of one block located diagonally across from PS481 at 1684 White Plains Road. This project will overshadow the two-family homes directly across the street on Baker Avenue. The proposed building is a massive cement structure, which will contain 398 residential apartments with 1,500 plus new residents without adequate accommodations for parking. The building is completely discordant with the many 100 plus year-old homes in and around Baker Avenue. Replacing 19 residential properties on one side of Baker Avenue with a cement "wall" will seriously undermine the quality of life for the remaining homeowners that live across the street. (VNNA_008)

Building 398 residences to house more than 1,500 new residents at the projected development site at 4025 Baker Avenue will overcrowd a one-way street lined with two-family homes. It will negatively impact the neighborhood character of Van Nest and create chaos. It should stay zoned R5, but must not be zoned more than R5B/R6 to keep in line with the character of the Van Nest community. (Ferrara_004)

Response #2-2 As presented in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," in the FEIS, Projected Development Site #5 is located in an area that would be rezoned from an R5 district to R6A and R6-1 districts with a C2-4 overlay along the western frontage of White Plains Road.

R6A districts are contextual districts that produce high lot coverage, six- or seven-story apartment buildings near the street line. They allow all types of residential uses and are designed to produce Quality Housing buildings. R6-1 districts promote Quality Housing buildings with similar regulations to other R6 districts on wide streets under the MIH program. Different building setbacks are required depending on street width, and the district requires a 30-foot rear yard for residential parts of any building. C2 commercial overlays are mapped within residence districts along streets serving local retail needs. In mixed-use buildings, commercial uses are limited to one or two floors and must always be located below the residential uses. C2 commercial overlay districts permit a slightly wider range of uses than C1 districts.

As discussed in Chapter 8, "Urban Design and Visual Resources," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would facilitate development that is not currently permitted as-of-right in the Affected Area, which would create a notable change in the urban design character of the area. However, this change would not constitute a significant adverse urban design impact, as it would not negatively affect a pedestrian's experience. Rather, development facilitated by the Proposed Actions is expected to positively

affect the urban design of the area and improve the pedestrian experience in and surrounding the Affected Area.

Comment #2-3 We ask that any rezonings related to the Bronx Metro North Station Area in fact be limited to the railroad right of way so as not to adversely impact unique zoning such as the Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District. (Tolbert_002)

Parkchester is not landmarked. What has helped Parkchester maintain much of its unique architectural integrity and affordability has been its status as a Special Planned Community Preservation District. Parkchester is noted for being one of the first planned communities to attempt to bring such enhanced spatial relationships to middle and working class people. Though the complex was segregated when it opened, today Parkchester is a highly diverse community that remains relatively affordable. HDC believes that affordable communities deserve to be livable communities enriched by light, air and beauty. This is what Parkchester was built to provide, and what its Special District designation exists to maintain. (Tolbert_002)

Response #2-3 As described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would modify the boundaries of the Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District at its northern border. This part of the district would be rezoned from C8-4 to R8/C2-4 to promote new mixed-use residential development. The area that would be removed from the special preservation district is notably different from the ensemble of buildings that is central to the Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District's character, which the preservation district seeks to preserve.

Comment #2-4 Why is there a blanket rezoning of properties as opposed to rezoning by individual lots? And why is this upzoning bleeding into the neighborhoods adjacent to Parkchester/Van Nest? The western edge of Westchester Square, specifically from East Tremont and Castle Hill Avenues heading eastward to Silver Street and on the south side and on the north side at the southern border of Morris Park at Bronxdale between Van Nest Avenue and Sackett Avenues? The area of East Tremont Avenue east of Castle Hill Avenue and Silver Streets are designated R4-A on the south side and R4 on the north side of the street. Residents and community groups have fought diligently to keep the quality of life in their neighborhoods stable and livable. The north side of Bronxdale Avenue going north and south of Van Nest Avenue to Sackett Avenue is designated M1-1, which was maintained in the downzoning of October 11, 2005. (Vitacco_015)

Response #2-4 As described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," of the FEIS, the zoning changes introduced by the Proposed Actions would be consistent with the City's land use, zoning, and public policy objectives for the area. The Proposed Actions would

support the stated goals of the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Study, creating increased capacity for permanently affordable housing, retail opportunities, and jobs.

Establishing and mapping a new Special Eastchester - East Tremont Corridor District would facilitate the growth of housing and employment centers around new transit stations and encourage a broader range of services and amenities for residents, workers, and visitors; promote a lively and attractive streetscape around new transit stations and along major transportation corridors; and create a cohesive pedestrian and public realm network to better connect future developments with the new stations and surrounding neighborhoods.

Comment #2-5 We note that while Special Planned Community Preservation District zoning prevents as-of-right demolition of buildings in the complex, and development that alters the buildings' relationship to their surroundings, such actions could be permissible under special permits. Currently, projects in Parkchester seeking special permits must go through the City's ULURP process. (Tolbert_002)

Response #2-5 Comment noted.

Chapter 3. Socioeconomic Conditions

Comment #3-1 Higher density will cause sky-high rents for housing. We should be promoting affordable homeownership opportunities not high-density retail units. Developers benefit from retail units, but local homeowners do not. (Colon_005)

The Parkchester Watch Group wants to see real affordability in this plan. (Hamilton_007)

Our neighborhood is one of the cheapest in the city, where the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is $1,500. With the proposed 2560 development, you're seeking income of over $100,000; why is the city subsidizing housing for the rich? Thirty percent of area median income is 30% of that? That means a minimum of $2,500 monthly rent. The vacancy rate for apartments over $2,500 is 10%. HPD itself says that for housing connect they get more applications for apartments of $1,500 than are available, but for apartments over $2,000, not so much. We have this narrative of doing things for equity and inclusivity, but city policies have done the exact opposite. (Delgado_039)

After nine years of city planning meetings throughout the East Bronx regarding Metro North service to Penn Station, the plans suddenly changed from pedestrian walkways and retail amenities to upzoning and 7,500 "affordable" housing units, more than one thousand of which will be what City Planning euphemistically calls "permanently affordable inclusive" housing. The new renderings the community is being shown for the Metro North corridor between the Morris Park and Van Nest stations depict 12 to 14-story gleaming glass apartment buildings, but when I asked what the actual

structures will look like, I was told the renderings were just an artist's conception. And when I dug into the official government meaning of "permanently affordable inclusive housing" I found out it's Section 9 housing—which means these apartment buildings will look like standard-issue public housing, and they will be located steps away from the award-winning world-class architecture on the campus of Einstein College of Medicine – the jewel of Morris Park. The land between the Morris Park and Van Nest stations will appreciate in value; in other outer-borough neighborhoods with a short commute to Manhattan, the appreciation in land value would create opportunities for high-quality architecture and amenities—not low income housing. So why is it happening here? (Papazian_021)

Response #3-1 As described in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would result in the creation of 1,902 permanently affordable dwelling units (25 percent of the total incremental dwelling units that would be developed). Option 1 of the New York City Mandatory Inclusionary Housing text amendment of March 22, 2016 requires that 25 percent of units are affordable for households with incomes average 60 percent of the Area Median Income ("AMI") ($76,260 for a family of three) and that ten percent of those units be affordable to households earning 40 percent of AMI ($48,040 for a family of three). While the analysis anticipates that the average household income of new residents resulting from the Proposed Actions will be approximately $27,133 more than the average household income of the existing study area population, the Proposed Actions would introduce an incremental 5,572 market-rate dwelling units into the study area over the No Action condition. In order to afford these market-rate units, the occupants would have an average household income higher than the current average household income in the study area of $77,836. However, the 1,902 permanently affordable dwelling units would have to be affordable on average to households earning 60 percent of AMI ($76,260 for a family of three) and ten percent would have to be affordable on average to households earning 40 percent of AMI ($48,040).

Comment #3-2 The Bronx Metro-North Station Area Plan will support this important regional medical and education cluster by allowing for life science uses as of right, providing more affordable housing, and providing the necessary infrastructure to ensure the new stations are thoughtfully integrated into communities. The plan supports EDC's mission by connecting Bronx residents to existing and future jobs within the region while supporting neighborhood centered transit-oriented development and needed improvements in the public realm for healthy, livable communities. EDC believes the plan's emphasis on the preservation and creation of affordable housing, along with transit-oriented, housing development for a wide range of incomes will help Morris Park become a walkable urban neighborhood. (Sun_006)

The new Metro-North Station will be a significant investment and boost towards increasing economic opportunities and regional transit access for residents and employers in Hunts Point and the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center, while also improving public space and pedestrian safety for neighborhood livability. (Sun_006)

Response #3-2 Comments noted.

Comment #3-3 The Bronx has seen a steeper population decline than any other borough between 2020 and 2022. The burdensome nature of this megalithic proposal will certainly hasten the exodus of life-long residents who generationally have contributed to the development and success of each of their own communities. (Vitacco_015)

Rezoning the Van Nest and Morris Park neighborhoods so drastically does a disservice to individuals who look to both neighborhoods and the east Bronx in general. It is basically stifling upward mobility of low- to middle-income Bronxites and communities of color who want a piece of suburbia in the city, and truly reeks of discriminatory practices. It is forcing Bronx families and individuals to leave the Bronx and New York City for literal greener pastures of Westchester and Connecticut, permanently. If you rezone for one community, there should be rezoning for all communities along the Metro-North line; advocating for rezoning for some neighborhoods and not others clearly demonstrate bias. (Vitacco_015)

Response #3-3 As described in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," of the FEIS, between April 2010 and the end of 2022, the study area's population increased by 12.2 percent. Between the 2010 Census and 2020 Census, the study area's population grew by 10.8 percent, which was more than New York City (7.7 percent) and the Bronx (6.3 percent) during the same period. The socioeconomic analyses found that the Proposed Actions could potentially displace less than 0.1 percent of residents within the study area (direct residential displacement). This is well below the *CEQR Technical Manual* analysis threshold of 500 residents to be displaced by a proposed action, and the FEIS analysis concluded that the Proposed Actions would not substantially alter the socioeconomic character of the neighborhood.

Comment #3-4 With all of the planned rezoning for housing, is Jacobi upzoning their campuses as Einstein plans on doing, considering they want to increase the number of job opportunities in the health care field? Or is it all about housing to weaken a stable and suburbanized East Bronx community? (Vitacco_015)

Response #3-4 The potential expansions of the Jacobi and Einstein campuses are beyond the scope of the Proposed Actions and the EIS.

Comment #3-5 Most of the members of this community cannot afford the Metro-North fare. (Press_031)

Response #3-5 The fare charged at Metro-North stations is outside the scope of the Proposed Actions.

Comment #3-6 The proposed density for the Project Sites at Eastchester Road and Morris Park Avenue will overwhelm an already well-developed location. The proposed project of a plaza with retail businesses will be a detriment to small businesses barely recuperating from the pandemic. Some retail development is acceptable but not a full-scale plaza of competing businesses. (VNNA_008)

Response #3-6 As described in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," of the FEIS, a preliminary assessment found that the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts due to direct business displacement. The Proposed Actions could directly displace 60 businesses on projected development sites and an estimated 650 – 880 jobs associated with those businesses by the 2033 Build Year; however, the analysis found that these potentially displaced employees do not represent a majority of study area businesses or employment for any given sector. While these businesses provide value to the local economy, there are alternative sources of goods, services, and employment provided within the broader neighborhood, or study area, and elsewhere in the Bronx. In addition, the employment sector that represents the largest number of potentially displaced employees, Health Care and Social Assistance, would grow substantially in the Affected Area and it is likely that the largest impacted business, Montefiore Park and Montefiore-Einstein Cancer Center, would have an even larger presence in the Affected Area following the Proposed Actions.

Chapter 4. Community Facilities and Services

Comment #4-1 AIANY urges DCP and other city agencies to work together to leverage the full potential of this rezoning by making public investments in critical infrastructure – including schools, libraries, and public safety. (Lazar_003)

Response #4-1 City agencies are continuously evaluating current resource levels in order to best address community needs.

Comment #4-2 For the record, the communities of Van Nest and Morris Park have needed specific amenities for decades such as community centers, middle schools, high schools, senior housing and veteran housing with its existing number of residents. Now with additional 7,500 apartments equaling over 20,000+ residents to be added to areas that have had so little for so long, the hope for a balance of community needs is wishful thinking. It seems that the excitement of what the two Metro-North train stations will bring has taken a back seat to housing and over-development that will

forever change the characteristics and landscape of four neighborhoods. (Ferrara_004)

Response #4-2 As noted in the response to Comment #1-5, as part of the City's larger planning work, DCP looks forward to continuing to work with elected officials and partner agencies to maximize public benefits and create housing that best meets the needs of the community.

Comment #4-3 Thousands of new residents will necessitate an increased need for police officers and firefighters. (VNNA_008)

A significant increase in population will require an increased need for policing, firefighters and mental health care providers to service an increase in formerly homeless individuals. The need for increased policing is critical. Of concern is the fact that there is a profound shortage of police officers to meet the needs of an increasingly violent society. We have also seen an increase in major fires related to the use of electric bikes and scooters. (VNNA_008)

The 49th Precinct is understaffed and unable to handle the current increase in crime, which was up 225 in 2022, 27% in 2023, and is currently up 17% in 2024. Manpower at the precinct was 120 before COVID; it now has 72 officers, down 35%. (Press_031)

With all of this proposed upzoning, there need to be additional fire services, which already rely heavily upon Van Nest's Engine 90 and Ladder 41 and Unionport's Engine 64 and Ladder 47. With expected outgrowth a fire facility is essential. (Vitacco_015)

Response #4-3 As described in Chapter 4, "Community Facilities and Services," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would allow for growth in appropriate locations near new Metro-North stations, facilitate the construction of new housing, and facilitate active streetscapes and increased connectivity within the Affected Area; that area is already developed with several existing and well-established communities that are served by existing police, fire, and health care services. Therefore, demand for these services created by the Proposed Actions would be spread across several communities.

The New York City Police Department independently reviews staffing levels against a precinct's population, area coverage, crime levels, and other local factors, and makes service and resource adjustments as necessary.

The Affected Area is served by Battalion 20 of the New York City Fire Department's ("FDNY") Division 7, and Battalion 3 of Division 6. Division 7 covers an approximately 23.4-square-mile area, including Manhattan north of 148th Street and the north Bronx, and serves approximately 1,047,339 residents. Division 6 serves Manhattan between 126th and 148th streets as well as most of the south Bronx. The Affected Area is also served by six fire companies: Engine Companies 64, 89, and 90; Ladder Companies 41 and 50; and Squad Company 61. The Affected Area is served by several nearby Fire Houses. The Engine 90/Ladder 41 Fire House is located at 1843 White

Plains Road, approximately a quarter-mile north of the Affected Area. The Engine 64/Ladder 47 Fire House is located at 1214 Castle Hill Avenue, approximately a half-mile south of the Affected Area. The Battalion 20/Squad 61 Fire House is located within the Affected Area, at 1518 Williamsbridge Road. The Engine 97 Fire House is located just to the north of the Affected Area, at 1454 Astor Avenue. FDNY continually evaluates the need for changes in personnel, equipment, or locations of fire stations and makes any necessary adjustments.

Comment #4-4 The Van Nest, Morris Park and Pelham Parkway communities have never had a community center. We are advocating that 1571 Bronxdale Avenue be made a community center akin to the fully equipped Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club at 1930 Randall Avenue, Bronx, New York. As the Van Nest and Morris Park communities suffer from a lack of fresh produce and vegetables, space for a farmer's market should be provided for there. (VNNA_008)

Response #4-4 As noted in the response to Comment #1-17, the Proposed Actions are expected to result in new community facility space; however, the Proposed Actions do not mandate certain community facility uses. Additionally, as described in more detail in the response to Comment #4-13, the Proposed Actions are consistent with numerous public policy goals to promote the establishment and expansion of neighborhood grocery stores in underserved communities by providing zoning and financial incentives to eligible grocery store operators and developers. However, the establishment of a farmers' market is outside the scope of work for the Proposed Actions.

Comment #4-5 Van Nest and Morris Park have suffered from a dearth of public schools, especially middle and high schools for decades. The lack of school seats within the community has only been exacerbated by the recent closure of parochial schools within the communities. (VNNA_008)

The proposed density for the Project Sites at Eastchester Road and Morris Park Avenue will overwhelm an already well-developed location. This area would be better served by a trade or middle school. (VNNA_008)

The addition of 7,500 units of housing will lead to an overcrowding of schools; the Parkchester Watch Group would like to see a new elementary school included with this plan. (Hamilton_007)

The proposed developments for Pierce Avenue and Bronxdale Avenue will create congestion and negatively impact Van Nest Academy and Icahn 2 School. (Ferrara_004)

Response #4-5 The Proposed Actions' effects on community facilities, including public schools, were analyzed in the FEIS (Chapter 4, "Community Facilities and Services"). The analysis

concluded that the Proposed Actions would result in a significant adverse impact on elementary schools, although no significant adverse impacts on intermediate school, high school, public libraries, or early childhood programs would result. Chapter 21, "Mitigation Measures," of the FEIS discusses potential mitigation measures that would reduce and/or eliminate identified significant adverse impacts.

Comment #4-6 Van Nest needs an Arts & Cultural Center similar to the Bronx River Art Center located at 1087 East Tremont Avenue, in order to ensure that our children and families have access to proper arts and cultural education. (VNNA_008)

Response #4-6 As noted in the response to Comment #1-17, the Proposed Actions are expected to result in new community facility space; however, the Proposed Actions do not mandate certain community facility uses.

Comment #4-7 Van Nest and Morris Park have a large population of seniors who wish to age in place, as well as many veterans seeking housing. (VNNA_008)

Response #4-7 As noted in the response to Comment #1-16, beyond having to meet the requirements of the proposed Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Areas, the affordability levels and tenant selection criteria for future development within the Project Area fall beyond the scope of the Proposed Actions and the EIS. As part of the City's larger planning work, DCP looks forward to continuing to work with elected officials and partner agencies to maximize public benefits and create housing that best meets the needs of the community.

Comment #4-8 Van Nest lost its local post office in 2010; the nearest post office is 1.25 miles away. An increase in residents will necessitate a United States Post Office. (VNNA_008)

In 2012, the United States Postal Service (USPS) closed its sorting facility in the Bronx and transferred all its mail processing to Manhattan. The addition of a sorting facility in the Bronx as opposed to Manhattan would serve the Bronx well. Having a postal sorting center somewhere on East Tremont Avenue possibly on block 3952 would certainly add to the overall economic viability and thereby create needed permanent jobs. (Vitacco_015)

Response #4-8 Comment noted. This comment is beyond the scope of the Proposed Actions and the EIS.

Comment #4-9 Van Nest lost its library in 1998. At the time of its removal, elected officials promised that it would be replaced -- but no Van Nest library has been forthcoming. (VNNA_008)

Response #4-9 As described in Chapter 4, "Community Facilities and Services," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to libraries.

Comment #4-10 The Parkchester Watch Group has concerns about safety and security, especially with the open public space between the proposed buildings. We would like an MTA police substation in the train station. (Hamilton_007)

Response #4-10 Comment noted. This comment is outside the scope of this EIS and the Proposed Actions.

Comment #4-11 There is a lack of bright street light and security camera coverage in the area, and the East Tremont area is known for cars getting broken into. The Parkchester Watch Group wants a plan for NYPD security cameras on East Tremont Avenue and improved street lighting. (Hamilton_007)

Response #4-11 As described in the response to Comment #4-3, the New York City Police Department independently reviews resource adjustments, as necessary, against a precinct's population, area coverage, crime levels, and other local factors.

Comment #4-12 The Parkchester Watch Group would like to see a YMCA with a pool included in this plan. (Hamilton_007)

Response #4-12 The siting of YMCA facilities is outside the scope of this EIS and the Proposed Actions.

Comment #4-13 The Parkchester Watch Group would like to see a large-size supermarket included in this plan. (Hamilton_007)

Response #4-13 As noted in the response to Comment #1-17 and described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions are consistent with numerous public policy goals, including the New York City Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) Program, established in 2009 to promote the establishment and expansion of neighborhood grocery stores in underserved communities by providing zoning and financial incentives to eligible grocery store operators and developers; the primary and secondary study areas are both locate within designated FRESH-eligible areas.

Comment #4-14 If this upzoning does take place the community would benefit from a much-needed youth community center. The site of 1601 Bronxdale would prove valuable, especially with it having a pool already located in the facility, which was a former gym. (Vitacco_015)

Response #4-14 As described in the response to Comment #1-17, the Proposed Actions are expected to result in new community facility space; however, the Proposed Actions do not mandate certain community facility uses.

Chapter 5. Open Space

Comment #5-1 There needs to be more proposed open space. (Marmorato_028)

AIANY urges DCP and other city agencies to work together to leverage the full potential of this rezoning by making public investments in critical infrastructure – including open space and streetscape improvements. (Lazar_003)

Response #5-1 Comment noted. As described in the Project Description the Proposed Actions seek to incentivize the provision of publicly accessible open space, and DCP will continue conversations with agency partners about other potential public realm improvements, including the creation of new spaces and upgrades to existing open spaces.

Comment #5-2 An area of critical importance to the Einstein/East Campus is the walkway along Morris Avenue leading to the future train station, and the extension of that walkway as open space from Eastchester to Bassett Avenue is equally important. This area provides access and visibility from the Campus to the new station from those areas east of Eastchester Road. The entrance to the station and the adjacent plaza should be inviting and attractive to riders, residents and visitors of Montefiore's campus. Retail and commercial uses along Morris Park Avenue and Eastchester Road, leading to the station, and surrounding this plaza are needed for keeping it public and active. (Diaz, Jr._001)

Response #5-2 The area between the intersection of Morris Park Avenue and Eastchester Road and the proposed Morris Park Metro-North station would be rezoned to C4-4, which is a medium-density commercial district that allows for commercial, residential, and community facility uses.

Comment #5-3 The proposed design concept responds to the fact that the Parkchester neighborhood lacks a town center. It offers the opportunity to stage buildings around an inviting, open public space that allows for circulation between the new Metro North station and the existing community to its south, while creating an opportunity for much-needed neighborhood retail. Our proposed design concept would create a sense of place benefiting the existing community and the new residents and visitors that improved transit will attract. (Fisher_018)

Response #5-3 Comment noted.

Comment #5-4 Other stakeholder requests for additional open space are in direct conflict with their parallel demands to significantly limit the height and density of the Proposed Project. Mixed-use proposals with more open space would only be viable with a height and density increase as opposed to the current proposal. Height and density increases would make it possible to provide more open space without any loss in the amount of projected affordable housing. (Kaess_022, Kaess_037)

Response #5-4 Comment noted.

Comment #5-5 With the new Metro North stations proposed and the proposed rezoning, there would be an anticipated population influx in and around station neighborhoods, particularly the neighborhoods which have proposed land use changes. We seek to bolster accessible quality open spaces to meet this demand. We welcome not only investment in New York City Parks but additional creative solutions, such as the proposed plaza open spaces and potential, privately built, publicly accessible open spaces which will help alleviate demand on existing parks and offer opportunities to bring more New Yorkers within a walk of high quality open spaces. (Molinari_030)

Response #5-5 Comment noted.

Chapter 6. Shadows

Comment #6-1 Our buildings are close and the new buildings (at 1990 East Tremont Avenue and 2040 East Tremont Avenue) will be almost twice the height of our taller buildings, and over three times the height of our shorter buildings; they will block light. (Hamilton_007)

We recognize that the current proposal limits changes in zoning, but we remain concerned that new construction adjacent to the planned community of Parkchester may greatly impact the character of the community, including shadows. We encourage the City Planning Commission to change special districts only as minimally as possible. (Tolbert_002)

Excessive heights have the potential to overshadow surrounding buildings and diminish sunlight and airflow and strain your already burdened infrastructure. My constituents want a development of no more than six stories. (Marmorato_028)

Response #6-1 Chapter 6, Shadows," of the FEIS presents an analysis of incremental shadows resulting from buildings resulting from the Proposed Actions. The projected and potential development sites identified in the RWCDS would result in incremental shadow coverage on seven sunlight-sensitive resources. The detailed shadows analysis identified significant adverse impacts at three sunlight-sensitive resources. The analysis determined that a portion of Pelham Parkway, the Greenstreet at Sacket Avenue, and a small portion of the larger 129-acre Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District would not receive adequate sunlight during the growing season (at least the six- to eight-hour minimum specified in the *CEQR Technical Manual*) as a result of incremental shadow coverage, and vegetation at these resources could be significantly impacted.

Chapter 7. Historic and Cultural Resources

Comment #7-1 We are concerned that demolition in the railroad right of way could strip neighborhoods of historic resources. The New York City Department of City Planning should work closely with the Landmarks Preservation Commission to identify and safeguard historic resources in Hunts Point, Parkchester, Van Nest, Morris Park and Co-op City that may be impacted by the railroad right of way. LPC should identify and designate historic resources before, not after the rezoning takes place. In cases where demolition of historic resources is proposed, such as in Parkchester, where the Metro-North Station Study identifies 2000 East Tremont Avenue, 2040 East Tremont Avenue and 14 Metropolitan Oval, which are all decorated with Parkchester's unique public art in the form of terra cotta ornamentation, we urge the Department of City Planning to develop a plan to safeguard the artwork and store or display it within the community. (Tolbert_002, VNNA_008)

Response #7-1 An assessment of historic and cultural resources within 400 feet of the Affected Area is provided in Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would result in significant direct adverse impacts to the State and National Registers of Historic Places ("S/NR")-eligible Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District as a result of the demolition of 2000 and 2040 East Tremont Avenue. The demolition and/or alteration of contributing resources within the eligible historic district and potential construction of new buildings on the development site has the potential to result in indirect impacts to the S/NR-eligible Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District by changing the setting of contributing resources that would not be directly affected and by constructing new mixed-use buildings with affordable housing that may not be similar to the existing character of the area.

Comment #7-2 Parkchester should be landmarked. (Torres_014)

Response #7-2 Comment noted. The Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District is eligible for inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, though the determination as to whether it will be included as a listed resource would be made by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. It is not currently a designated or eligible resource per the New York City Landmarks Preservation Committee ("LPC"). Any such determination could be made in the future by LPC.

Comment #7-3 The proposed buildings at 1990 East Tremont Avenue and 2040 East Tremont Avenue will ruin the look of our historic planned community. Parkchester should be landmarked! We need to protect the historic fabric of the 83-year-old planned community, which has historical significance. (Hamilton_007)

Response #7-3 See responses to Comment #7-1 and Comment #7-2.

Comment #7-4 Van Nest and Morris Park are sister communities with Van Nest the older of the two communities which sit between two high-density neighborhoods which include Parkchester to the South and Pelham Parkway to the North. Van Nest is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the Northeast Bronx dating back to the Morris Park Race Track from 1889 to 1903 and the Van Nest Train Station. The upzoning proposals will weaken Van Nest and dismantle existing efforts to preserve our historically and culturally rich community. Van Nest has been chosen as one of "Six to Celebrate" by the Historic District Council because of its architectural and historic merit, the level of threat and the strength and willingness of local advocates to work to preserve the historical character of the community. (VNNA_008)

Response #7-4 Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources," of the FEIS provides an assessment of the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions to historic resources. The Proposed Actions have the potential to result in significant direct and indirect adverse impacts to the S/NR-eligible Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District as a result of the demolition of 2000 and 2040 East Tremont Avenue on Projected Development Site 8 and by changing the setting of contributing resources that would not be directly affected and by constructing new mixed-use buildings with affordable housing that may not be similar to the existing character of the area.

Comment #7-5 It would be critical to save and preserve 1571 Bronxdale Avenue, Block 4042 Lot 204 the former Laconia Hotel as an historic entry way and landmark to these four neighborhoods. Additionally, 1583 Bronxdale Avenue has been around since the days of the Morris Park Racetrack as well as 1571 Bronxdale Avenue and are both worthy of saving these historic structures and having them not be part of the blanket ULURP. (Vitacco_015, VNNA_008)

Response #7-5 Comment noted.

Comment #7-6 If the potential development sites located at 2040, 2000, and 1990 East Tremont Avenue are built upon, it is essential that the three artworks Lords of Industry are moved and displayed elsewhere in the Parkchester community. Sadly, we have witnessed the destruction of many terra-cotta artworks in Parkchester, during attempts to renovate many buildings. The destruction of these 84-year-old works of art would be irreversible. (Vitacco_015)

Response #7-6 Comment noted.

Chapter 8. Urban Design and Visual Resources

Comment #8-1 It would be essential to keep the height of 1601 Bronxdale Avenue (Block 4042 Lot 200) at its present height to foster better sight lines especially as it relates to one of

the many centerpieces of the Parkchester community: St. Raymond's Church, commonly known as the mother church of the Bronx. Additionally, East Tremont Avenue, Bronxdale Avenue, Castle Hill Avenue and Poplar Street remain the confluence of four historic neighborhoods: Westchester Square, Van Nest, Morris Park and Parkchester. In regards to St. Raymond's Church sight lines, block 4042 lot 224 designated as G-2 should be designated as Q1 or Q2, in order a potentially have a plaza area or park much the way there will be a plaza area for the Morris Park Metro-North station. Additionally, block 4042 lot 222, designated K-1, block 4042 lot 236 designated K-1, block 4042 lot 244 designated V1, block 4042 lot 247 designate as O1, should keep their designation or be zoned with minimal upzoning (no more than three stories) at best in order to maintain the sight lines for St. Raymond's church as viewed from Bronxdale Avenue in Morris Park. (Vitacco_015)

The proposed development for Project site 4042 is too large. The project will eviscerate the sight line of St. Raymond's Church from Bronxdale Avenue. It will cast deep shadows on the Church and St. Raymond's School. The St. Raymond School, Van Nest Academy and the Icahn 2 School will be negatively impacted by the proposed density on Bronxdale and Pierce Avenues. There must be preservation of the sight-line of Saint Raymond's Church from Bronxdale Avenue; East Tremont Avenue, Bronxdale Avenue, Castle Hill Avenue and Poplar Streets as the point of convergence of four historic neighborhoods (Westchester Square, Van Nest, Morris Park and Parkchester) and the former Laconia Hotel which during the days of Morris Park Racetrack (1889-1904) served as a historic entryway to the aforementioned four neighborhoods. The site would best serve the community as a museum location that may be used to educate new residents and students about the history and value of our communities. The museum would dovetail nicely with a much-needed youth community center which should be located at 1601 Bronxdale Avenue. (Ferrara_004, Vitacco_015, VNNA_008)

Response #8-1 As described in Chapter 8, "Urban Design and Visual Resources," of the FEIS, a detailed analysis was conducted based on the methodology set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual* and determined that the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse impact related to urban design and visual resources. Development facilitated by the Proposed Actions would not eliminate primary or significant viewsheds of important visual resources in and around the Affected Area. In particular, no significant facades or important features of the Parkchester Special Planned Community Preservation District, which are listed on the State/National Registers of Historic Places, St. Raymond Church and Cemetery, or significant views of other open space resources in and around the Affected Area would be obstructed by development facilitated by the Proposed Actions.

Comment #8-2 The project was proposed to be a shorter height than is currently being presented. (Almendina_012)

The proposed developments are too tall. (Torres_014)

Block 3952 (Parkchester Crossing) should be no higher than its counterpart 1598 Unionport Road, which is eight stories tall. (Vitacco_015)

Our buildings are close and the new buildings (at 1990 East Tremont Avenue and 2040 East Tremont Avenue) will be almost twice the height of our taller buildings, and over three times the height of our shorter buildings; they will block views and breezes. (Hamilton_007)

Response #8-2 As described in Chapter 8, "Urban Design and Visual Resources," of the FEIS, a detailed analysis was conducted based on the methodology set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual* and determined that the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse impact related to urban design and visual resources. The Proposed Actions would facilitate development that is not currently permitted as-of-right in the Affected Area, which would create a notable change in the urban design character of the area. However, this change would not constitute a significant adverse urban design impact as it would not negatively affect a pedestrian's experience. Rather, development facilitated by the Proposed Actions is expected to positively affect the urban design of the area and improve the pedestrian experience in and surrounding the Affected Area. The Proposed Actions would facilitate the construction of active lower-level uses, including retail, community facility spaces, and residential and office lobbies as well as pedestrian amenities like the proposed Morris Park Station plaza, reactivating the corridors of the Affected Area and making the area more accessible, safe, and enjoyable for pedestrians.

Further, while the Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of new buildings in the Affected Area, the height and bulk regulations that would be implemented as a result of the Proposed Actions are not expected to produce a significant number of high-rise towers in the Affected Area that would potentially result in wind channeling effects experienced at the pedestrian level.

Chapter 10. Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Comment #10-1 AIANY urges DCP and other city agencies to work together to leverage the full potential of this rezoning by making public investments in critical infrastructure – including basic services like power, sewer, and water. (Lazar_003)

Higher density will cause significant impacts on water and sewer infrastructure. (Colon_005)

Sewers, water supply, and storm water management infrastructure must be upgraded to meet the demand of thousands of new residents. Several of the proposed sites are scheduled developments on known flood plains. (VNNA_008)

The community's storm water management and sewage infrastructure needs urgent upgrades. (Marmorato_028)

We urge local elected officials and all city agencies involved in the planning process to take the opportunity of the Metro North expansion to the East Bronx for a deeper look at the needs of the surrounding communities, such as upgrading the capacity of DEP water drainage on Morris Park Avenue. (Tepelus_041)

For the Parkchester and Van Nest zoning changes along East Tremont Avenue, Bronxdale Avenue and White Plains Road will help to spur development that meets our local community needs. The future growth of the area through transit-oriented development needs to be partnered with infrastructure improvements that are vital for accessibility and livability. (Gibson_025)

Sewers overflow during heavy rains, flooding basements and roads. (Press_031)

Response #10-1 As described in Chapter 10, "Water and Sewer Infrastructure," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would introduce a mixture of land uses in amounts greater than the thresholds provided in the *CEQR Technical Manual* for the water supply and wastewater infrastructure; therefore, in accordance with the guidance of the manual, a preliminary analysis of potential impacts to the water supply system and the combined sewer and stormwater was performed. As per that preliminary analysis, combined sewer overflows affected by the Proposed Actions will not have adverse impacts to the combined stormwater and sanitary system.

Comment #10-2 Regarding flooding and stormwater management, the City Planning Commission should be aware that investments in this type of infrastructure are being made in our community. For example, DEP announced that Morris Park and Parkchester would receive one of four pilot "Cloudburst hubs" in New York City. This "Cloudburst Hub" has some overlap with the study area. If I recall correctly, this project is fully funded and is currently in the design phase. (Kaess_022, Kaess_037)

Response #10-2 Comment noted.

Chapter 11. Solid Waste and Sanitation Services

Comment #11-1 Sanitation collection must be upgraded to meet the demand of thousands of new residents. (VNNA_008)

Response #11-1 As described in Chapter 11, "Solid Waste and Sanitation Services," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would generate an increment above the No-Action condition of approximately 233 tons per week of solid waste but would not directly affect a solid

waste management facility. Approximately 72 percent of the additional solid waste generated by the Proposed Actions (167.2 tons) would be handled by the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), and approximately 28 percent (65.9 tons) would be handled by private carters. Overall, the uses facilitated by the Proposed Actions would be expected to generate solid waste equivalent to approximately 13.4 DSNY truck loads per week and up to six commercial carter truck loads per week. Although this would be an increase compared with conditions in the future without the Proposed Actions, the additional solid waste resulting from the Proposed Actions would be a negligible increase relative to the more than 10,000 tons of garbage and 2,000 tons of recycling handled by DSNY every day. It would also represent approximately 0.1 percent of the City's anticipated future weekly waste generation handled by DSNY by 2026, and approximately 0.09 percent of the City's anticipated future weekly commercial waste generation handled by private carters by 2025, as projected in the Solid Waste Management Plan. As such, the Proposed Actions would not result in an increase in solid waste that would overburden available waste management capacity.

Chapter 12. Energy

Comment #12-1 We urge local elected officials and all city agencies involved in the planning process to take the opportunity of the Metro North expansion to the East Bronx for a deeper look at the needs of the surrounding communities, such as moving electric lines underground to replace aboveground wooden poles for a more clean streetscape. (Tepelus_041)

Response #12-1 Comment noted.

Chapter 13. Transportation

Comment #13-1 It's unrealistic for the developer to place a supermarket at the projected development site at 4025 Baker Avenue with an entrance on White Plains Road where there's already congestion every morning and afternoon. (Ferrara_004, Hamilton_007)

Response #13-1 Comment noted. In order to determine the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions, the FEIS was prepared in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*. This included a detailed traffic analysis. Any potential impacts identified in these analyses are disclosed in the FEIS.

Comment #13-2 The new traffic light proposed by the developer at White Plains Road and Baker Avenue will not solve the problem. (Ferrara_004)

Response #13-2 Comment noted. The proposal for a new traffic light by a developer is outside the scope of this EIS and the Proposed Actions.

Comment #13-3 By adding over 1,500 new residents from the projected development site at 4025 Baker Avenue, the proposed 151 parking spaces will not ease the existing parking problem. (Ferrara_004)

Response #13-3 Comment noted. Please see the response to Comment #13-1, above.

Comment #13-4 Placing such a large amount of residents on a very small street (4025 Baker Avenue) in a small community, close to an elementary school with one-way and dead-end streets, will create challenges to traffic and congestion. (Ferrara_004)

Response #13-4 Comment noted. Please see the response to Comment #13-1, above.

Comment #13-5 Higher density will cause traffic congestion and sky-high rents for parking spaces. (Colon_005)

Response #13-5 Comment noted. In order to determine the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions, the FEIS was prepared in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*. This included a detailed traffic analysis. Any potential impacts identified in these analyses are disclosed in the FEIS. The cost of parking space is outside the scope of this EIS and the Proposed Actions.

Comment #13-6 The new Metro-North station establishes a regional connection for Morris Park providing faster access to Stamford, New Haven and Manhattan while also allowing workers and patients to access Morris Park more easily for employment and to receive care at area medical institutions. Enhanced transit access will strengthen Morris Park as a job destination and support the city's workforce development for growing jobs of the future. (Sun_006)

Response #13-6 Comment noted.

Comment #13-7 Will the parking garages built have enough spaces, and will current residents be allowed to use them? Will the new buildings get priority? Additional parking is needed; there is already a parking shortage; additional development will make it worse. Preserving our current garage spaces does not go far enough. (Hamilton_007)

Response #13-7 Comment noted. The determination of parking space allocation is outside the scope of this EIS and the Proposed Actions.

Comment #13-8 The Parkchester Watch Group wants to see a plan from the developer to minimize traffic jams. (Hamilton_007)

Response #13-8 Comment noted. Please see the response to Comment #13-1, above.

Comment #13-9 City Planning must work with the MTA to have more security for evening and late-night travelers. Presently the MTA will only be providing cameras as security for evening and late-night travelers with the last train at 2:00 am. Exiting trains to a deserted train station will make for an unsafe train station. A safe solution would be to allow commuters to park their car and quickly exit into the train station's parking lot, however, the MTA is adamant that no parking be provided to commuters. Additionally, security within the train station and the parking lot would help to keep the station safe for commuters. Lastly, moving the bus stop that is presently at the corner of Unionport Road and East Tremont Avenue to the front of the Parkchester/Van Nest Train Station will allow for safe and quick access to the buses. This is especially important for late-night travelers. (VNNA_008)

Response #13-9 Comment noted. This comment is outside the scope of this EIS and the Proposed Actions.

Comment #13-10 Jitneys or trolleys to transport commuters to local subway stations or local drop off points would provide for increased safety, efficiency and reduced traffic. The community of Riverdale also has a public jitney. The use of jitneys has been successfully employed with NYU and Yeshiva students to successfully transport them to the many NYU and Yeshiva Campuses in Manhattan. (VNNA_008)

Response #13-10 Comment noted. Please see the response to Comment #13-9 above.

Comment #13-11 City Planning and/or the MTA are encouraged to partner with local parking garages next to the train stations to vertically build up a few floors for local multi-level parking with discounted parking for commuters. Monthly permit parking for commuters using Metro-North should be made available as they are at other Metro-North Stations. (VNNA_008)

Response #13-11 Comment noted.

Comment #13-12 Most homes in Van Nest lack parking spaces because the community was built in 1893. Many residents of Parkchester park their vehicles in Van Nest thus exacerbating an already very difficult parking situation. Although the 2 and 5 trains are fairly accessible, Van Nest is home to many families, which rely upon access to private vehicles in order to adequately care for their children and elderly family members. The assumption that the availability of public transportation diminishes the use of private vehicles does not apply to a community with many multi-generational families. (VNNA_008)

Response #13-12 Comment noted. Please see the response to Comment #13-1, above.

Comment #13-13 The number of garages being built will favor residents and not all of the current Parkchester residents now utilizing these garages. We understand that the creation of garages goes against the green vision to eliminate garages hence eliminate cars but if we already have existing garages in a private property that the residents pay for, then why are you demolishing them? (Almendina_012)

Response #13-13 Comment noted.

Comment #13-14 The project does not seem to consider accommodations for parking important; it is therefore vital to maintain Block 4042 Lot 254 as a G7 parking facility. (Vitacco_015)

Response #13-14 Comment noted.

Comment #13-15 I oppose demolishing the garage at 2040 East Tremont. I use that garage, and parking is extremely difficult. I've tried Parkchester parking and sometimes it can take up to an hour to get a spot. If the garage is demolished where would I put my car? (Gibson_019)

Response #13-15 Comment noted.

Comment #13-16 Once the project is constructed, will people who used the prior existing garage have priority? (Gibson_019)

Response #13-16 The determination of parking space allocation is outside the scope of this EIS and the Proposed Actions.

Comment #13-17 A residential parking mandate should continue to be excluded from the special district zoning code. City Planning projections anticipate developers to continue to build parking and the developers of the major East Tremont Avenue sites have committed to include additional parking should the proposed rezoning for their sites allow for additional height and density; it should be noted that this commitment does not require any parking mandate be included in the special district zoning code. (Kaess_022, Kaess_037)

Response #13-17 Comment noted.

Comment #13-18 Any widening of Marconi Street should also consider bicycle infrastructure to provide a safer connection between Waters Place, which is due to receive a two-way protected bike lane, and the Bronx Psychiatric Redevelopment, which I believe is meant to include either a shared-use path or protected path for cyclists. (Kaess_022, Kaess_037)

Response #13-18 Comment noted.

Comment #13-19 I'm incredibly supportive of the future Marconi Street to Pell and Parkway connection we're excited about that that can help to alleviate a lot of traffic from our local streets

in the area, which is one of our top concerns that we have heard consistently from residents and employees that work in the Morris Park community. This connection is a game changer, and it needs to be prioritized as a real capital commitment for all of us. (Gibson_025)

Response #13-19 Comment noted.

Comment #13-20 The absence of parking mandate presents a significant challenge to many of our community who rely on their vehicles for daily transportation. While we want to embrace the expansion of public transportation options, we must acknowledge that for some private vehicles remain a necessity due to the work, obligations, family responsibilities, and the accessibility needs without adequate parking provisions, we've risks placing an undue burden on these individuals, forcing them to choose between their mobility and livelihoods. (Marmorato_028)

Response #13-20 Comment noted.

Comment #13-21 The only access roads for Community Board 11 are Bronxville Avenue, White Plains Road, Williams Road, and Eastchester Road; from 8 am to 5 pm, traffic is normally backed up for blocks from the Pelham Parkway on these streets. (Press_031)

Response #13-21 Comment noted. In order to determine the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions, the FEIS was prepared in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual* and includes a detailed traffic analysis. Any potential impacts identified in these analyses are disclosed in the FEIS.

Comment #13-22 The proposed density for the Project Sites at Eastchester Road and Morris Park Avenue will overwhelm an already well-developed location. This is an extremely highly trafficked intersection with a close proximity to the Morris Park Metro-North Station and both Jacobi and Einstein Hospitals. Adding to the already heavy traffic could potentially threaten the lives of patients being transported to area hospitals via ambulance. (VNNA_008)

Response #13-22 Comment noted. In order to determine the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions, the FEIS was prepared in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*. This included a detailed traffic analysis. Any potential impacts identified in these analyses are disclosed in the FEIS.

Comment #13-23 While the Metro-North New Haven line is beneficial, the blanket ULURP should not be considered until Metro-North service to the community has begun and actual traffic and pedestrian patterns become clear. The city is using Metro-North as a wedge against established communities to promote a housing agenda catering to transient,

24-hour neighborhoods results in less cohesion and more government control. This rezoning is too big, too soon and too fast. (Vitacco_015)

Response #13-23 Comment noted.

Chapter 16. Noise

Comment #16-1 Placing such a large amount of residents on a very small street (4025 Baker Avenue) in a small community, close to an elementary school with one-way and dead-end streets, will create challenges to excessive noise. (Ferrara_004)

Response #16-1 Per Chapter 16, "Noise," of the FEIS, the noise analysis concluded that the Proposed Actions would not generate sufficient traffic to have the potential to cause a significant noise impact. At all noise receptor locations, the maximum noise level increase would be below 3 dBA between No-Action and With-Action conditions. Therefore, the noise analysis concludes that the traffic generated by the Proposed Actions would not have the potential to produce significant increases to noise levels at any sensitive receptors within the Affected Area.

The Proposed Actions would introduce new sensitive receptors at projected and potential development sites with the Affected Area. Ambient noise levels adjacent to the projected and potential development sites were examined to determine if building noise attenuation requirements for maintaining interior noise levels would be necessary due to increase in traffic and train activity from the planned Metro-North Railroad service. That assessment finds that noise levels would range between the "marginally unacceptable" and "clearly unacceptable" exterior noise exposure categories, resulting in a noise attenuation requirement range of 28 to 37 dBA to ensure noise levels within the projected and potential development sites would comply with all applicable requirements. As a result, the Proposed Actions includes (E) designations for all but three of the projected and potential development sites. The window/wall attenuation levels required under the (E) designations would avoid the potential for significant adverse noise impacts due to the Proposed Actions; refer to Appendix H, "Noise," of the FEIS for the proposed (E) designations.

Chapter 18. Neighborhood Character

Comment #18-1 While the community needs the transportation described in the proposed project, it does not need the higher density, which will destabilize the neighborhood. (Colon_005)

1990 East Tremont Avenue and 2040 East Tremont Avenue are proposed to be only a few feet shorter than our heat plant smokestack at about 25 floors. (Hamilton_007)

With regards to 1601 Unionport development site #3952 on Unionport Road and East Tremont Avenue. This development should not exceed the height of the rest of

Parkchester which is 12 stories. To build a 17-story, or 23 story in this location would be out of character and unnecessary with adjacent developments right next to this between White Plains Road and St. Lawrence – #3927, #3926, #3925 and #3919 developments. (Ferrara_004)

While we recognize the need for increased housing supply and economic development, we must approach the vertical expansion with caution and sensitivity to the existing fabric of our neighborhoods. (Marmorato_028)

Response #18-1 As described in Chapter 18, "Neighborhood Character," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would alter neighborhood character in the primary study area (and, to some extent, the secondary area) but would not result in any significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character. Development facilitated by the Proposed Actions would re-orient the community towards the corridor and future Parkchester/Van Nest and Morris Park Station Areas. The Proposed Actions would enable improved connectivity to the planned stations from the surrounding neighborhoods through the implementation of comprehensive streetscape improvements, including revising the street alignment to allow for wider sidewalks and pedestrian safety elements, as well as upgrading currently difficult and dangerous crossings, improving circulation, and enhancing the pedestrian experience in and around the proposed new transit stations and surrounding neighborhoods. These improvements would change the primary study area from a transitional border area between several neighborhoods, primarily defined by industrial uses near the existing railroad right-of-way, to an area that draws together several types of varying neighborhoods to two mixed-use, pedestrian-focused neighborhoods centered on transit access.

Comment #18-2 Allowing tall buildings in these locations will not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood character; if anything, neighborhood character will be greatly enhanced. (Kaess_022, Kaess_037)

Response #18-2 Comment noted.

Comment #18-3 Too much housing will weaken our stable, residential communities as well as render our neighborhoods unrecognizable in a few short years. (VNNA_008)

Response #18-3 As noted in the response to Comment #3-3, the socioeconomic analysis conducted in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," of the FEIS in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual* found that the Proposed Actions would not substantially alter the socioeconomic character of the neighborhood.

Comment #18-4 Any building over 8 stories is too drastic of a departure from the existing historical nature of the community. (VNNA_008)

We recognize that the current proposal limits changes in zoning, but we remain concerned that new construction adjacent to the planned community of Parkchester may greatly impact the character of the community. We encourage the City Planning Commission to change special districts only as minimally as possible. (Tolbert_002)

To preserve the character of our historic community landscapes the overall project sites must not be higher than R6 zoning (No R6A, R6-1, R7-2 or R7-3 zoning). Allowing higher than R6 zoning would be a disservice and shock to established communities in Van Nest and Morris Park, given the lack of cohesion that would result. If additional housing is needed, consider developing upzoning proposals in the surrounding areas of the Co-op City and Hunts Point Metro-North Train Stations as these communities have a history of high-density development which is in sync with the existing character of these communities. The rezoning proposed for the Parkchester/Van Nest and Morris Park Metro-North train stations are too large and being developed too quickly. Maintaining the character of our community by adhering to a maximum building height of six floors will still allow for economic growth and additional housing that includes affordable housing without destroying the residential nature of our community. (VNNA_008)

Response #18-4 As described in Chapter 18, Neighborhood Character," of the FEIS, the Proposed Actions would alter neighborhood character in the primary study area and to some extent the secondary area. Development facilitated by the Proposed Actions would re-orient the community towards the corridor and Metro-North's future Parkchester/Van Nest and Morris Park Station Areas. The Proposed Actions would enable improved connectivity to the planned stations from the surrounding neighborhoods through the implementation of comprehensive streetscape improvements, including revising the street alignment to allow for wider sidewalks and pedestrian safety elements, as well as upgrading currently difficult and dangerous crossings, improving circulation, and enhancing the pedestrian experience in and around the proposed new transit stations and surrounding neighborhoods. These improvements would change the primary study area from a transitional border area between several neighborhoods, primarily defined by industrial uses near the existing railroad right-of-way, to an area that draws together several types of varying neighborhoods to two mixed-use, pedestrian-focused neighborhoods centered on transit access.

In the No-Action condition, development is expected to occur in a piecemeal manner and without the benefit of a comprehensive plan to coordinate appropriate densities and urban design controls across the neighborhood. In contrast, the Proposed Actions would provide for sufficient predictability, flexibility, and variety for building envelopes that account for the unique conditions in the study area with appropriate transitions between low- and medium-density adjacencies and the promotion of residential and economic development. While the character of this area of the Bronx has changed throughout the years and will continue to change with or without the

Proposed Actions, the Proposed Actions would encourage predictable development patterns that meet housing needs and facilitate the growth of Morris Park as an economic hub, facilitated by commercial, life sciences, and medical development.

The Proposed Actions would result in several adverse impacts related to community facilities, open space, shadows, historic and cultural resources, and transportation. However, none of these impacts, on their own or in tandem with one another would result in a significant adverse impact to neighborhood character. Rather the Proposed Actions would serve to enhance neighborhood character, allowing for a gradual transition of the primary study area from an interstitial industrial area to a mixed-use, pedestrian-focused neighborhood anchored by two new Metro-North stations. These changes would be considerate of the surrounding context of the secondary study area, allowing for contextual development based on the primary study area's surroundings, thereby permitting greater connectivity between neighborhood while also preserving the defining features of each neighborhood. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse neighborhood character impacts.

Comment #18-5 The founders of Van Nest and Morris Park built a community with R5 zoning to continue a bit of suburbia with two-and-three-family homes and apartment buildings no higher than five stories. Newer residents of Van Nest and Morris Park are often homeowners who were motivated to buy homes in the community because of its low density, unique history and charm as well as its very strong sense of community cohesiveness. Community leaders anticipated increased housing with the advent of the Van Nest and Morris Park Metro North Stations but the 46-block proposal of upzoning that currently includes a proposed 7,500 additional apartments with an expected addition of 20,000+ residents was experienced by residents of our community as an assault on everything we hold dear. Both communities desire growth by need but upgrades in infrastructure must be provided and sustainable before any housing development occurs. (VNNA_008)

Response #18-5 See the response to Comment #18-4.

General Support

Comment #27-1 HPD supports the Bronx Metro North Plan's ambitious goal to facilitate 7,000 new homes near two brand new regional rail stations in the Bronx. (Platkin_038)

We believe The Metro-North Station Area Plan is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create meaningful change and overall progress in the Bronx through economic development. (Diaz, Jr._001)

The Hunts Point and Co-Op City station areas will receive infrastructure investments but no zoning changes under the plan. In Morris Park and Parkchester/Van Nest, the plan would create up to 7,500 new homes, including 1,900 permanently affordable units through Mandatory Inclusionary Housing in Bronx Community Districts 9, 10 and 11. Most would be in Parkchester/Van Nest, along currently existing commercial corridors by adding residential uses to those areas. AIANY strongly supports the goals and provisions of this zoning proposal. (Lazar_003)

EDC believes in the potential for Morris Park to further support and advance the life sciences industry in New York City, while continuing to serve as a major employment center for the Bronx. (Sun_006)

I urge you to support the Metro North station area rezoning plan, and ensure that it contains as much housing as possible. That means not including any mandated parking, which has been proven over and over again to increase housing costs and decrease housing production. And it means not imposing arbitrary height limits. These stations represent a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the Bronx; it would be foolish to limit their potential. Instead, we should make sure that as many people as possible can call the Bronx home. (Miller_010)

Please do not allow this project to be neutered. Our city needs as much housing built as possible. (Okrend_011)

We wish to express our strong support for the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Study proposal. If approved, we intend to redevelop our property, a significant portion of which has historically remained vacant, with a mixed-use development. Our redevelopment plans include the construction of new housing, with a commitment to allocate 25-30% of these units as permanently affordable housing under the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Program. Additionally, our proposal will incorporate local commercial and/or community facility uses along White Plains Road, a prominent thoroughfare with a width of 100 feet. To address community needs we are very familiar with, we will provide open space as well as off-street parking. While still early in the design process, our development would be consistent with the R6-l and R6A zoning districts proposed by the subject land use application. We intend to locate taller portions of the development along White Plains Road, gradually transitioning to lower-density development along Baker Avenue and Garfield Street. This approach would integrate our development proposal with the existing built environment and neighboring lower density residential areas to the north and west. We firmly believe that the subject land use application holds immense potential to incentivize transit-oriented development that can provide critically-needed services, housing (including permanently affordable housing), and economic opportunities. As such, we respectfully request your approval of the proposed Bronx Metro-North Station Area Study. (Gjushi_009, Martins_040)

The New York Building Congress strongly supports the Bronx-Metro North Station Rezoning. The Department of City Planning's proposal will bring much-needed transit-oriented development and thousands of critical jobs to one of the most under resourced neighborhoods in New York City. (Scissura_023, Wylie_036)

I am looking forward to using the new Metro-North train stations and shopping/dining in the new rezoned areas around the stations. Please do not sacrifice thousands of units of housing and jobs because of some NIMBYs who want to see us maintain our dependence on automobiles for ages to come. (Szabados_024)

I come before all of you this morning to express my firm support for the transformative Metro North Expansion project in the great borough of the Bronx, particularly focusing on the crucial additional additions that are planned for our borrow through the Penn Access initiative. This project is not just about transportation, not just about 4 additional stations in the East Bronx, but it really represents an incredible once in a lifetime opportunity to expand many of our communities to add additional value and to really drive smart economic growth. I am asking for your consideration to support this proposal. (Gibson_025)

The proposed plan for Morris Park and the other areas has immense potential to bridge the gap between various healthcare and educational institutions, including Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein School of Medicine, Mercy University and Health and Hospitals, Jacobi Medical Center. These institutions collectively form one of the city's largest job hubs and the largest in the Bronx. By facilitating connectivity between these institutions, it will not only enhance accessibility across campuses and beyond the borough, but also foster workforce collaboration and innovation that the City is working to translate into job opportunities for Bronx residents. (Currier_033)

Montefiore Einstein strongly supports up-zoning adjacent to the new Morris Park Metro-North station. (Diaz, Jr._001, Wagner_017)

I support the Metro North rezoning because of its potential to bring much-needed affordable housing to the area. (Finch_035)

The plan's comprehensive land use changes are an essential component of the city's continued recovery and long-term economic health and will drive opportunity for the benefit of all New Yorkers. (Sun_006)

This proposed zoning action will connect land use and mobility through transit-oriented development, which AIANY has long supported. The fine-grained zoning changes will create opportunities for higher density mixed-use residential, commercial, and retail development at Parkchester/Van Nest and strengthen the regional medical care and research hub at Morris Park with direct access to regional public

transit. By providing access to jobs and housing along the underutilized Amtrak right-of-way with its mostly manufacturing/industrial uses, it will direct development in a way that protects the character of the existing neighborhoods nearby while allowing for growth around the transit stations. While separate from the citywide City of Yes Housing Opportunity zoning proposal, this neighborhood plan shares several of its goals – increased residential density closest to transit access, Mandatory Inclusionary Housing requirements and elimination of parking mandates for new housing developments. These measures create more affordable, healthier, and sustainable communities. (Lazar_003)

Response #27-1 Comments noted.

Public Outreach

Comment #28-1 We recognize the robust outreach and engagement that DCP has undertaken with the local communities over many years which was validated by a favorable vote by 2 of the 3 local community boards with jurisdiction as well as from the Bronx Borough Board and Bronx Borough President prior to this CPC hearing. We urge DCP to continue this community outreach. (Lazar_003)

Response #28-1 Comment noted. DCP looks forward to continued engagement with area stakeholders.

Comment #28-2 In 2011, the New York City Department of City Planning and the Metropolitan Transit Authority reached out to community leaders from Van Nest and Morris Park in order to explore expansion of the Metro North New Haven Line as a part of the larger Penn Station Access Project which was designed to improve the connection between the East Bronx and Penn Station. At the time there was an initial positive response to the plan because it was billed as providing increased access to Manhattan to the South and Connecticut to the North. Community leaders welcomed the anticipated growth in businesses and employment opportunities along with modest development of residential housing and commercial real estate in the areas within close proximity to the new Metro North Stations. There was extensive communication during workshops between City Planning, community agencies and residents in order to ensure development that would improve the quality of life in our communities by providing much needed amenities such as increased senior housing, middle schools and a community center as well as easier access to Penn Station. Given the foregoing, it came as a complete surprise that City Planning presented a scope of work on December 13th and 15th of 2022 that included 6,000 new apartments with an expected increase in population of at least 20,000 individuals. As such, the current proposal is not consistent with the wishes of the community. If implemented, the current scope of work will surely compromise the quality of life in our communities. (VNNA_008)

Response #28-2 The Sustainable Communities in the Bronx plan, available on DCP's website, included detailed recommendations for the creation of new housing and office space as part

of the larger planning exercise. Beginning with the launch of the Bronx Metro-North Station Study in the fall of 2018, housing has been a central aspect of the plan and public discussions, including during numerous public workshops and open houses held since. As part of an interim open house held in March 2019, DCP shared an initial draft of recommendations with recommendations specifically addressing:

- Ensure land use changes accommodate a range of housing needs
- Promote creation of homeownership opportunities
- Explore opportunities for residential development in the station area
- Explore opportunities for better connecting Morris Park East and area institutions to existing housing supply
- Explore opportunities to leverage new Metro-North service to connect to housing in city and region
- Explore land use and zoning changes that allow housing for a range of incomes within the immediate vicinity of the stations
- Mandatory Inclusionary Housing will be applied to any rezoned area and will require a portion of the housing is affordable
- Explore opportunities for changes to land use that would facilitate the construction of commercial hotels and short-term housing to meet the needs of those with family or loved-ones using area medical or hospice care services

These recommendations were further refined and codified in a zoning proposal first shared as part of the project's scoping sessions held on January 6, 2022 and then subsequently refined as part of the public comment period before filing of the Land Use Application in January 2024.

Comment #28-3 In previous meetings when we asked DCP about parking we have been told that parking is not included in the plan but not excluded from the plan. We feel DCP is sidestepping our concerns about parking and not listening to residents on this issue. (Hamilton_007)

The Van Nest and Morris Park communities request written agreement to assure that as projects begin negotiations, communities affected and City Council Member Marmorato be part of the initial blueprint process to discuss community amenities and infrastructure as a means to move forward. It is imperative that this process be agreed upon and finalized in a written document giving reassurance to both Van Nest and Morris Park communities. (Ferrara_004, VNNA_008)

Response #28-3 Comments noted.