DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW DIVISION

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Department of City Planning

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POSITIVE DECLARATION

October 3, 2005

Project Identification
CEQR No. 06DCP032M
ULURP Nos. Pending
SEQRA Classification: Type I

Lead Agency
City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007
Contact: Robert Dobruskin
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Name, Description and Location of Proposal:

Manhattanville in West Harlem Rezoning and Academic Mixed-Use Development

Columbia University is proposing the Manhattanville in West Harlem Rezoning and Academic Mixed-Use Development project for an approximately 35-acre area (the "Project Area") in the Manhattanville section of West Harlem in Manhattan Community District 9. The Project Area is roughly bounded by the Hudson River to the west, West 133rd and West 135th Streets to the north, Broadway to the east, including several parcels located east of Broadway between West 131st and West 135th Streets, and West 125th Street and St. Claire Place to the south. The proposed action would amend the zoning map from M1-1, M1-2, M2-3, and M3-1 districts to M1-1, R8A, R8A with a C1-4 overlay, and C6-2 districts and establish a new Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District in the Project Area.

The proposed action is intended to facilitate a proposal by Columbia to develop approximately 6.8 million gross square feet of new academic facilities and related uses over a 25-year period as part of an Academic Mixed-Use Development plan to meet its need for long-term growth and modernization. The Academic Mixed-Use Development would be built in an approximately 17 acre area generally located between Broadway and Twelfth Avenue, from West 125th Street to West 133rd Street, including several parcels located east of Broadway between West 131st and West 134th (the "Academic Mixed-Use Area"). The development would be comprised of academic buildings, laboratory/research facilities, housing for graduate students, faculty and

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other employees, administrative offices and support space, recreational facilities, retail, parking, and on-site centralized steam and chilled water plants. Approximately 4.7 million gsf of the development would be located above grade and 2.1 million gsf would be located below grade. It is possible that the Academic Mixed-Use Development would also include a hotel and conference center. Approximately 50,000 to 70,000 square feet of privately owned, publicly accessible open space would be provided. Since the Academic Mixed-Use Development would be built in phases, two analysis years – 2015 and 2030 – have been selected to assess the build-out of the proposed development in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The Academic Mixed-Use Development would have to accommodate the functions of the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Manhattanville Bus Depot located between West 132nd and West 133rd Streets. The proposed project assumes that the Manhattanville Bus Depot would be rebuilt below grade at its present location; however, alternatives, including the construction of new University facilities on top of the existing above-grade structure, will also be analyzed in the EIS. In any case, the bus depot operations would continue at that location.

In addition to the Academic Mixed-Use Development, the rezoning could also result in additional development on other sites within the Project Area. The Academic Mixed-Use Area constitutes Subdistrict A of the Project Area. Subdistrict B is an approximately 8 acre area located along the west side of Twelfth Avenue to Marginal Street; Subdistrict C comprises 3 parcels on the east side of Twelfth Avenue between West 133rd Street and north of West 134th Street; and Other Areas includes an area containing several parcels on the east side of Broadway between West 134th and West 135th Streets, and an area comprising all of the waterfront west from Marginal Street to the pier line. Within Subdistricts B, C and Other Areas, the proposed action is projected to induce approximately 469,257 square feet of development consisting of 210,270 square feet of residential development; 142,481 square feet of retail space; 61,698 square feet of community facility space; and 54,808 square feet of office development.

The proposed project requires the following approvals:

- A zoning text amendment to establish a Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use District coterminous with the Project Area; and

- Changes to zoning maps 5c and 6a to (1) map the Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use District coterminous with the Project Area, and to (2) change the underlying zoning districts within the Project Area from M1-1, M1-2, M2-3, and M3-1 to M1-1, R8A, R8A with a C1-4 overlay, and C6-2;

- Adoption of a General Project Plan (GPP) by the New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC) doing business as the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC) and the making of related findings under the UDC Act, SEQRA and the Eminent Domain Procedure Law (EDPL) to provide for ESDC's assistance to facilitate the acquisition of property below streets and possibly the assemblage of above-grade sites;

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) permit approval for construction and operation of on-site centralized steam and chilled water plants;

- If necessary, Metropolitan Transit Authority/New York City Transit (MTA/NYCT) approval of the modification of the Manhattanville Bus Depot; and

- Public Authority Control Board approval of ESDC actions.

In addition, the proposed project would also require the following City and State actions that are not subject to CEQR of SEQRA:

- New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) approval for an Amended Drainage Plan, a Private Drainage Proposal, and construction and operation of centralized steam and chilled water plants;

- New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) possible approval for any changes to street directions, street treatment, or similar changes to the local street network;

- NYCDOT, Bureau of Bridges approval to rebuild West 130th, West 131st, and possibly West 132nd Streets above the Academic Mixed-Use Development below-grade support facility.

- NYCDOT, Department of Franchises, Concessions and Consents possible approval for a revocable consents.

Statement of Significant Effect:

On behalf of the City Planning Commission, the Environmental Assessment and Review Division has determined, pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.7, that the proposed action may have a significant effect on the quality of the environment as detailed in the following environmental impacts, and that an environmental impact statement will be required:

1. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning, and public policy in the vicinity of the affected area.

2. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on socioeconomic conditions in the vicinity of the affected area.

3. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on community facilities and services in the vicinity of the affected area.

4. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on publicly accessible open space in the vicinity of the affected area.

5. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse shadow impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.

6. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on historic resources in the affected area.

7. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources in the vicinity of the affected area.

8. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in the vicinity of the affected area.

9. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on natural resources in the vicinity of the affected area.

10. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse hazardous materials impacts in the affected area.

11. The action, as proposed, is located within the designated coastal zone and may result in significant adverse impacts related to the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) within the affected area.

12. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on infrastructure in the vicinity of the affected area.

13. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on solid waste and

sanitation services in the vicinity of the proposed action.

14. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on energy consumption in the affected area.

15. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts to traffic, parking, transit, and pedestrian conditions in the vicinity of the affected area.

16. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts to air quality in the vicinity of the affected area.

17. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse noise impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.

18. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse construction-related impacts.

19. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse noise impacts in the vicinity of the affected area.

18. The action, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to other aspects of the environment.

Supporting Statement:

The above determination is based on an Environmental Assessment Statement prepared for the action which finds that:

1. The proposed action would alter existing land use and zoning patterns by rezoning the Project Area to permit the development of new academic, commercial, residential, community facility and retail uses.

2. The proposed action would result in approximately 6.4 million square feet of development in the Academic Mixed-Use Area, and could result in a total of 469,257 gsf of additional development within Subdistricts B, C and Other Areas. This has the potential to alter socioeconomic conditions in the area.

3. The proposed action would introduce a new residential population which could potentially increase demand on community facilities.

4. The proposed action would bring new residents, students, workers and visitors to the area, potentially placing additional demands on available open space resources.

5. The proposed action would result in the construction of new buildings containing various high-rise components with maximum heights of 320 feet. The proposed buildings could cast shadows on sunlight sensitive resources.

6. Construction of the proposed project could disturb archaeological resources should they exist within the Project Area. In addition, the proposed project could affect the context of existing historic structures in the area.

7. The proposed action would result in a new type of building use and form which would differ from existing urban design elements in the affected area, and may alter the urban design character and visual resources of the surrounding area.

8. The proposed action would result in new mixed-use development which could alter existing neighborhood character by affecting land use, socioeconomic conditions, historic resources, urban design, traffic, and noise.

9. The proposed action would result in new development within the Project Area which could affect natural resources.

10. The proposed action would result in demolition and construction in formerly industrial areas within the Project Area which could potentially expose construction workers and the public to hazardous materials.

11. The proposed action would result in new development in the designated coastal zone which could potentially be inconsistent with the policies of the LWRP.

12. The proposed action would result in new development within the Project Area which could place additional demands on infrastructure.

13. The proposed action would result in development within the Project Area which would result in the generation of solid waste, and which would require sanitation services.

14. The proposed action would result in new development within the Project Area which could increase demand for energy.

15. Development resulting from the proposed action (approximately 6.4 million square feet of development in the Academic Mixed-Use Area, and 469,257 gsf of additional development within Subdistricts B, C and Other Areas) would result in additional vehicular, pedestrian, and transit trips, and additional parking demand in the vicinity of the affected area.

16. The proposed action would result in new development within the Project Area which could potentially result in air quality impacts due to increased mobile source (vehicular) and stationary source (HVAC system) emissions.

17. The proposed action would increase the volume of traffic in the area, which could result in additional traffic noise. The proposed action could also potentially result in noise impacts due to the introduction of sensitive receptors, including academic, residential and office uses.

18. The proposed action would result in new, large-scale development that would involve demolition and construction activities which may result in construction-related impacts.

19. The proposed action would result in new development which could potentially result in public health concerns.

20. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to be prepared for the proposed action will identify and describe any other potential effects on the environment.

Public Scoping:

The CEQR lead agency hereby requests that the applicant prepare or have prepared, at their option, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in accordance with 6 NYCRR 617.9(b) and Sections 6-08 and 6-12 of Executive Order No. 91 of 1977 as amended (City Environmental Quality Review).

A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 2005 from 4:00 PM to approximately 8:00 PM, and will be held at I.S. 195, 625 West 133rd Street, between Broadway and Twelfth Avenue, New York, New York 10027. Written comments will be accepted by the lead agency until November 28, 2005.

Manhattanville in West Harlem Rezoning and
Academic Mixed-Use Development
Positive Declaration
CEQR No. 06DCP032M

This determination has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

Should you have any questions pertaining to this Positive Declaration, you may contact Brad Kieves, the project manager, at (212) 720-3417.

Robert Dobruskin

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Environmental Assessment & Review Division
Department of City Planning

10/3/05

Date