Chapter 7 : Historic and Cultural Resources

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential for the Proposed Actions to affect historic and cultural resources, which include archaeological and architectural resources. The *2014 City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* identifies architectural resources to include historically important buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts. Archaeological resources are physical remains, usually subsurface, of the prehistoric, Native American, and historic periods—such as burials, foundations, artifacts, wells, and privies. An assessment of architectural or archaeological resources is usually needed for projects that involve or are located adjacent to known or eligible historic or landmark structures or within historic districts, or projects that require in-ground disturbance, unless such disturbance occurs in an area that has already been excavated.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Applicant is seeking a set of Proposed Actions in the form of discretionary approvals to include zoning map and text amendments, a large-scale general development (LSGD) special permit, a City Map Amendment to re-establish a portion of Beach 52nd Street south of Rockaway Beach Boulevard to reconnect with Rockaway Freeway, and public funding and/or financing from various City and New York State agencies and/or programs related to affordable housing development on the Project Site. The Project Site is situated in Queens Community District 14 (CD 14). The Proposed Actions would facilitate the Proposed Project to consist of an approximately 2,371,000 gross square feet (gsf) development on the Project Site, comprised of 11 buildings with approximately 2,200 income-restricted dwelling units (DUs), of which 1,927 DUs would be income-restricted up to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), to include approximately 201 DUs set aside for Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors (AIRS) senior housing, with the remaining 273 DUs restricted to income levels not exceeding 130% of AMI. In addition to the residential DUs, the Proposed Project would include approximately 72,000 gsf of retail space, including a fitness center and a supermarket, approximately 77,000 gsf of community facility space, approximately 24,000 square feet (sf) of publicly-accessible open space, and approximately 973 accessory parking spaces.

II. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse impact to historic and/or cultural resources.

Archaeological Resources

Consistent with guidance in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the study area for archaeological resources is defined as the area that would be disturbed for project construction, which for the Proposed Project is identified as the Project Site itself. Consultation with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) was undertaken to determine whether the Project Site may contain archaeological resources. In a comment letter dated March 19, 2018, LPC determined that the Project Site does not possess archaeological significance. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on archaeological resources.

Architectural Resources

The study area for the assessment of architectural resources consists of the Project Site and the 400-foot radius surrounding the Project Site. In a comment letter dated March 19, 2018, LPC determined that the Project Site does not possess architectural significance. Furthermore, in a comment letter dated April 18, 2018, LPC stated that there was no apparent designated, listed, or eligible architectural properties located

within the 400-foot radius surrounding the Project Site. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse impact on architectural resources.

III. ASSESSMENT

Archaeological Resources

Archaeological resources are physical remnants, usually buried, of past activities on a site. They can include remains from Native American people who used or occupied a site, including tools, refuse from tool-making activities, habitation sites, etc. These resources are also referred to as "pre-contact," since they were deposited before Native Americans' contact with European settlers. Archaeological resources can also include remains from activities that occurred during the historic period (beginning with European colonization of the New York area in the 17th century) and that include European contact with Native Americans, as well as battle sites, foundations, wells, and privies. Cemeteries are also considered archaeological resources.

Archaeological resources usually need to be assessed for actions that would result in any in-ground disturbance. In-ground disturbance is any disturbance to an area not previously excavated and includes new excavation deeper and/or wider than previous excavations on the same site. For any action that would result in new ground disturbance, assessment of both prehistoric and historic archaeological resources is appropriate.

Archaeological Resources Study Area

The study area for archaeological resources is defined as the area that would be disturbed for project construction. For the Proposed Project, this is identified as the Project Site itself.

Criteria and Regulations

LPC Guidelines for Archaeological Work in New York City outline specific steps to determine whether a proposed action could affect areas of archaeological sensitivity. The first step in this process is an initial review conducted by LPC of the City tax lots that would be excavated due to the Proposed Project. LPC was consulted to determine the potential archaeological sensitivity of the Project Site. In a comment letter dated March 19, 2018 LPC determined that the Project Site does not possess archaeological significance (see **Appendix C**). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse impact on archaeological resources.

Architectural Resources

As defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, architectural resources include: New York City Landmarks (NYCLs), Interior Landmarks, Scenic Landmarks, New York City Historic Districts (NYCHDs); resources calendared for consideration as one of the above by LPC; resources listed on or formally determined to be State and/or National Register of Historic Resource (S/NR)-eligible, or contained within a district listed on or formally determined eligible for listing on the Registers; resources recommended by the New York State Board for listing on the Registers; and National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) ("known architectural resources"). Architectural resources also considered under CEQR include properties that appear to meet criteria for NYCL designation and/or S/NR-listing ("potential architectural resources").

In general, potential impacts on architectural resources can include both direct physical impacts and indirect impacts. Direct impacts include demolition of a resource and alterations to a resource that cause it to become a different visual entity. A resource could also be damaged from vibration (e.g., from construction blasting or pile driving), and additional damage from adjacent construction could occur from falling objects, subsidence, collapse, or construction machinery. Adjacent construction is defined as any construction

activity that would occur within 90 feet of an architectural resource, as defined in New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) Technical Policy and Procedure Notice (TPPN) #10/88.[1]

Indirect impacts are either contextual or visual impacts that could result from a project's construction or operation. As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, indirect impacts could result from blocking significant public views of a resource; isolating a resource from its setting or relationship to the streetscape; altering the setting of a resource; introducing incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements to a resource's setting; or introducing shadows over a historic landscape or an architectural resource with sun-sensitive features that contribute to the significance of that resource (e.g., a religious building with stained glass windows).

Architectural Resources Study Area

Study areas for architectural resources are determined based on the area of potential effect for construction period impacts, as well as the larger area in which there may be visual or contextual impacts. The *CEQR Technical Manual* sets the guidelines for the study area as being typically within an approximately 400-foot radius of the Project Site. The 400-foot study area accounts for potential physical impacts to architectural resources that may be in proximity to the Project Site (i.e., within 90 feet) that could potentially experience accidental construction damage and it accounts for potential visual and contextual impacts to architectural resources resulting from the Proposed Project. The boundaries of the 400-foot study area are approximately Beach 54th Street to the west, midblock past Beach Channel Drive to the north, Beach 49th Street to the east, and midblock past Rockaway Freeway to the south.

Criteria and Regulations

Once the study area was established, a list of all parcels (by block and lot) located within the study area was compiled and provided to LPC. In a comment letter dated March 19, 2018, LPC determined that the Project Site does not possess architectural significance (see **Appendix C**). Furthermore, in a comment letter dated April 18, 2018, LPC stated that there was no apparent designated, listed, or eligible architectural properties located within the 400-foot radius surrounding the Project Site (see **Appendix C**). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in as significant adverse impact on architectural resources.

[1] TPPN #10/88 was issued by DOB on June 6, 1988, to supplement Building Code regulations regarding historic structures. TPPN #10/88 outlines procedures for the avoidance of damage to historic structures that are listed on the NR or NYCLs resulting from adjacent construction, defined as construction within a lateral distance of 90 feet from the historic resource.