Chapter 9: Urban Design and Visual Resources

A. INTRODUCTION

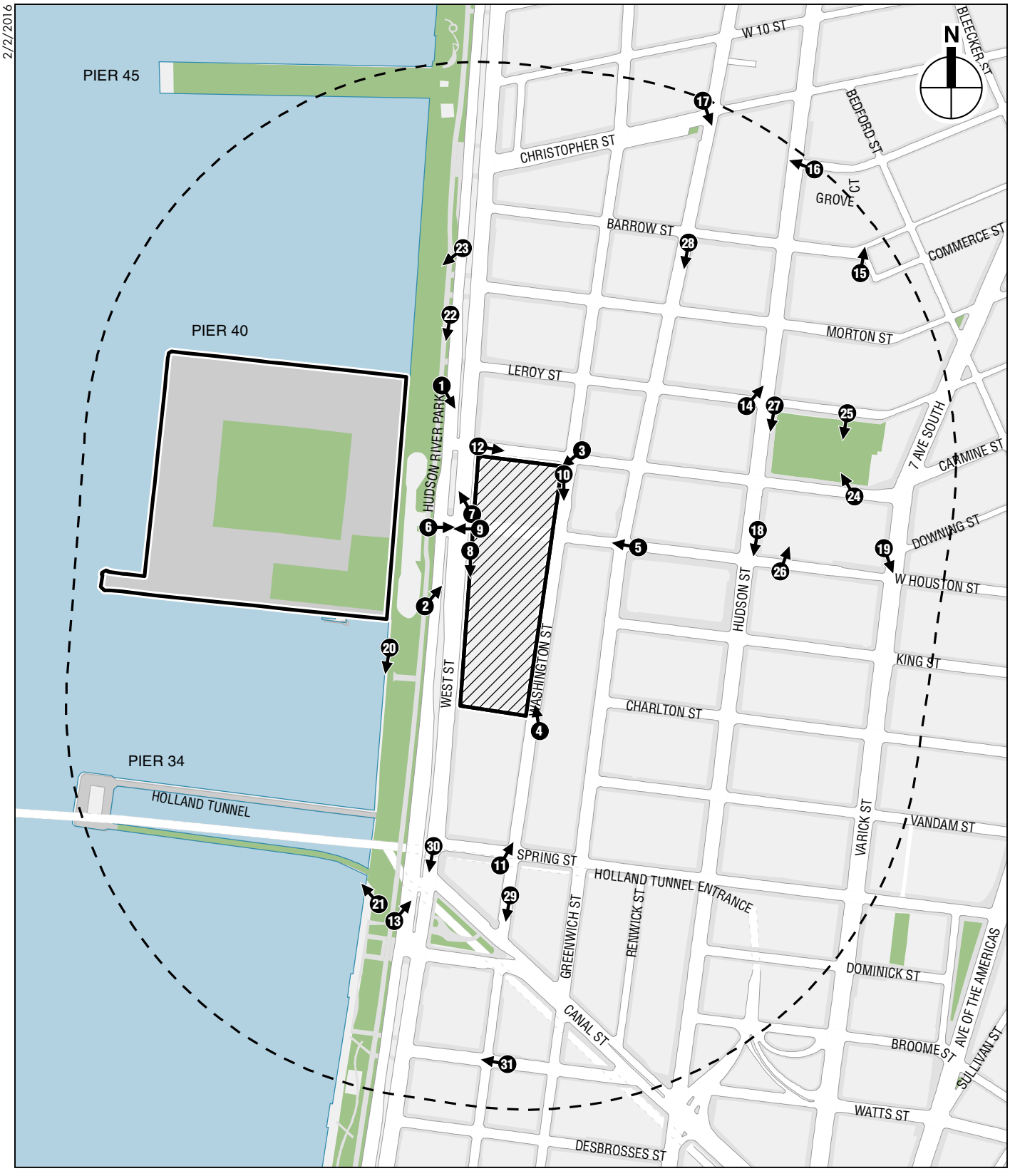
This chapter considers the potential for the proposed actions to result in significant adverse urban design and visual resources impacts. As defined in the 2014 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, urban design is the totality of components that may affect a pedestrian's experience of public space. A visual resource can include views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or otherwise distinct buildings, and natural resources.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the applicants, the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) and SJC 33 Owner 2015 LLC, are proposing a series of discretionary actions (the proposed actions) that would facilitate the redevelopment of St. John's Terminal Building at 550 Washington Street (Block 596, Lot 1) (the development site) with a mix of residential and commercial uses, and public open space (the proposed project) in Manhattan Community District 2. The development site is located south of Clarkson Street between Washington Street and Route 9A/West Street. The St. John's Terminal Building spans a portion of West Houston Street and is across from Pier 40 of the Hudson River Park (see **Figure 9-1**).

Based on the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning. Examples include projects that permit the modification of yard, height, and setback requirements, and projects that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed "as-of-right" or in the No Action condition.

As described in detail in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the proposed actions include a zoning text amendment, a zoning map amendment that would allow additional uses and increased density of the North and Center Sites, four zoning special permits, an authorization, and a Chairperson's certification. In addition, 200,000 square feet (sf) of floor area would be transferred from Pier 40 to the development site. Overall, the proposed actions would be expected to result in physical alterations beyond those allowed by existing zoning; thus, the proposed project meets the threshold for a preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources.

The proposed actions would allow for a mixed-use development with buildings of varying heights, including taller and shorter components. The two towers on the North Site would have retail at the ground, mezzanine, and second floors, and parking in the cellar. A new outdoor publicly accessible open space would occupy the platform spanning West Houston Street. Between the Center and South Sites would be a new east-west driveway that would extend between Washington and Route 9A/West Streets. A new hotel (or office) building with event space would occupy the South Site. Cellar-level parking would also be developed in the Center and South Sites. The Washington Street sidewalks adjacent to the development site would be widened from approximately five- to five-and-a-half feet wide to approximately 13-and-a-half-



Development Site

Granting Site

Study Area (Quarter-Mile boundary)

Photo View Direction and Reference Number

550 WASHINGTON STREET

Project Location

Figure 9-1

feet wide. In addition, street trees would be planted in the sidewalks adjacent to the development site on Washington, Clarkson, and Route 9A/West Streets. It is assumed that the full build out would be completed by 2024.

The analysis presented below considers the maximum building envelope that could be developed with the proposed actions. The two scenarios considered in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)—the proposed project and the proposed project with big box retail—would result in the same massing and substantially similar architectural design. In the second scenario, big box retail would replace part of the parking in the cellar of the Center Site building. Since this does not affect the massing or design, and therefore, would not affect urban design or visual resources in the study area, this second scenario is not considered further for this analysis. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the South Site building could contain either hotel or office use, and the EIS analyses are generally based on hotel use as a more conservative assumption. For this analysis, the potential for office use on the South Site is also considered.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The proposed actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources.

URBAN DESIGN

The proposed actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to urban design. The buildings that would be developed with the proposed project would be built to the sidewalk maintaining a consistent streetwall. The proposed new buildings would be taller than other buildings within the study area, however, the new buildings would be designed to be contextual to the surrounding area and would be massed as towers rising from lower-height bases, with multiple and varied setbacks at different heights at each façade. The setbacks would allude to the variety of building heights of nearby study area buildings. These design features would help to minimize the perceived scale of these buildings. As currently envisioned by the private applicant (SJC 33 Owner 2015 LLC), the building designs would also incorporate elements of the industrial character of the site and historic warehouses in the surrounding area through the use of stone and brick contrasted with steel and glass, and large window openings. The private applicant also intends for many of the buildings' setbacks to have planted terraces, drawing connections to the Hudson River Park to the west.

As described below, the proposed project would have beneficial streetscape effects in the areas closest to the development site as the proposed development would contribute active ground floor uses to the surrounding area. Street trees would be added to the sidewalks adjacent to the development site, and the sidewalks on Washington Street adjacent to the development site would be widened. Also contributing to the urban design character of the development site and surrounding area, the proposed project would include a publicly accessible open space on the platform above West Houston Street with openings allowing sunlight to reach the street level. Further, an east-west driveway between the Center and South Sites would be created that would break down the massing of the new development by establishing a physical and visual separation between the Center and South Site buildings.

Juxtaposing heights and forms, and visual connections through the development site at the publicly accessible open space platform at West Houston Street would be in keeping with the changing urban design character of the study area. These project components would enhance the pedestrian experience of the urban design characteristics of the development site and surrounding area.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The proposed actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on view corridors or visual resources in the study area.

Occupying an existing city block, the proposed project would not obstruct any existing view corridors in the study area, including the view corridors on Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street. With both the No Action and With Action developments, westward views on West Houston Street would be more open than in existing conditions, creating more views and visual access to the Hudson River Park and the Hudson River. With the proposed project, the Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street view corridors would include views to the proposed buildings on the development site and would continue to provide southward views to the tall buildings in Lower Manhattan. Further, the proposed project would result in new street trees on the sidewalks adjacent to the development site. Therefore, the widened sidewalks on Washington Street adjacent to the development site, along with the new street trees, would enhance the Washington Street view corridor. In addition, expansive views of the Hudson River, the Hudson River Park and the Holland Tunnel ventilation structure at the west end of Pier 34,[1] and the New Jersey waterfront would remain available in the Route 9A/West Street view corridor. In these view corridors, the proposed buildings on the North Site would be substantially taller than other study area buildings. In addition, the proposed buildings that would be developed on the Center and South Sites would change the context of some views on these view corridors. Views to more distant taller buildings would remain available with the proposed project. Although the proposed project would introduce new tall buildings to these view corridors, these changes would not adversely affect the pedestrian experience of these view corridors, as existing views on these view corridors would be maintained.

The other view corridors and visual resources in the study area do not have a meaningful visual or contextual relationship with the development site and, therefore, would not be affected by the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not adversely affect the pedestrian experiences of view corridors in the study area. With the proposed project, views to visual resources—tall buildings in Lower Manhattan, the Hudson River, Hudson River Park, including the Holland Tunnel ventilation structure at the west end of Pier 34, and the New Jersey waterfront—would remain available from existing vantage points as the proposed project would be developed on an existing block. Therefore, the proposed project would not adversely affect visual resources in the study area.

B. METHODOLOGY

As defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, urban design is the totality of components that may affect a pedestrian's experience of public space. This analysis considers the effects of the proposed actions on the experience of a pedestrian in the study area. The assessment focuses on those project elements that have the potential to alter the built environment, or urban design, of the development site, which is collectively formed by the following components:

[1] The ventilation structure at the west end of Pier 34 is part of the Holland Tunnel and is also known as the New York river ventilation building. It is approximately 107 feet above the deck of Pier 34 and approximately 7 feet above mean high tide. *Holland Tunnel*, National Historic Landmark Nomination. History Division, National Park Service. March 29, 1993.

- Street Pattern and Streetscape—the arrangement and orientation of streets define location, flow of activity, street views, and create blocks on which buildings and open spaces are arranged. Other elements including sidewalks, plantings, street lights, curb cuts, and street furniture also contribute to an area's streetscape.
- Buildings—a building size's, shape, setbacks, pedestrian and vehicular entrances, lot coverage and orientation to the street are important urban design components that define the appearance of the built environment.
- Open Space—open space includes public and private areas that do not contain structures, including parks and other landscaped areas, cemeteries, and parking lots.
- Natural Features—natural features include vegetation, and geologic and aquatic features that are natural to the area.
- View Corridors and Visual Resources—visual resources include significant natural or built features, including important views corridors, public parks, landmarks structures or districts, or otherwise distinct buildings.

Consistent with the land use, zoning, and public policy analysis, the following analysis considers a ¼-mile study area around the development site. The study area considers where the proposed actions would be most likely to influence land use patterns and the built environment (see **Figures 9-1 and 9-2**). This analysis addresses the urban design and visual resources of the study area for existing conditions, the future without the proposed actions (the No Action condition), and the future with the proposed actions (With Action condition) for the 2024 Build year, when the complete build out of the proposed project is expected to be completed. The analysis considers the maximum building envelopes that could be developed with the proposed actions, however the analysis discusses the design of the proposed buildings. The proposed project includes building forms and heights that are within the maximum building envelopes that could be developed with the proposed actions.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

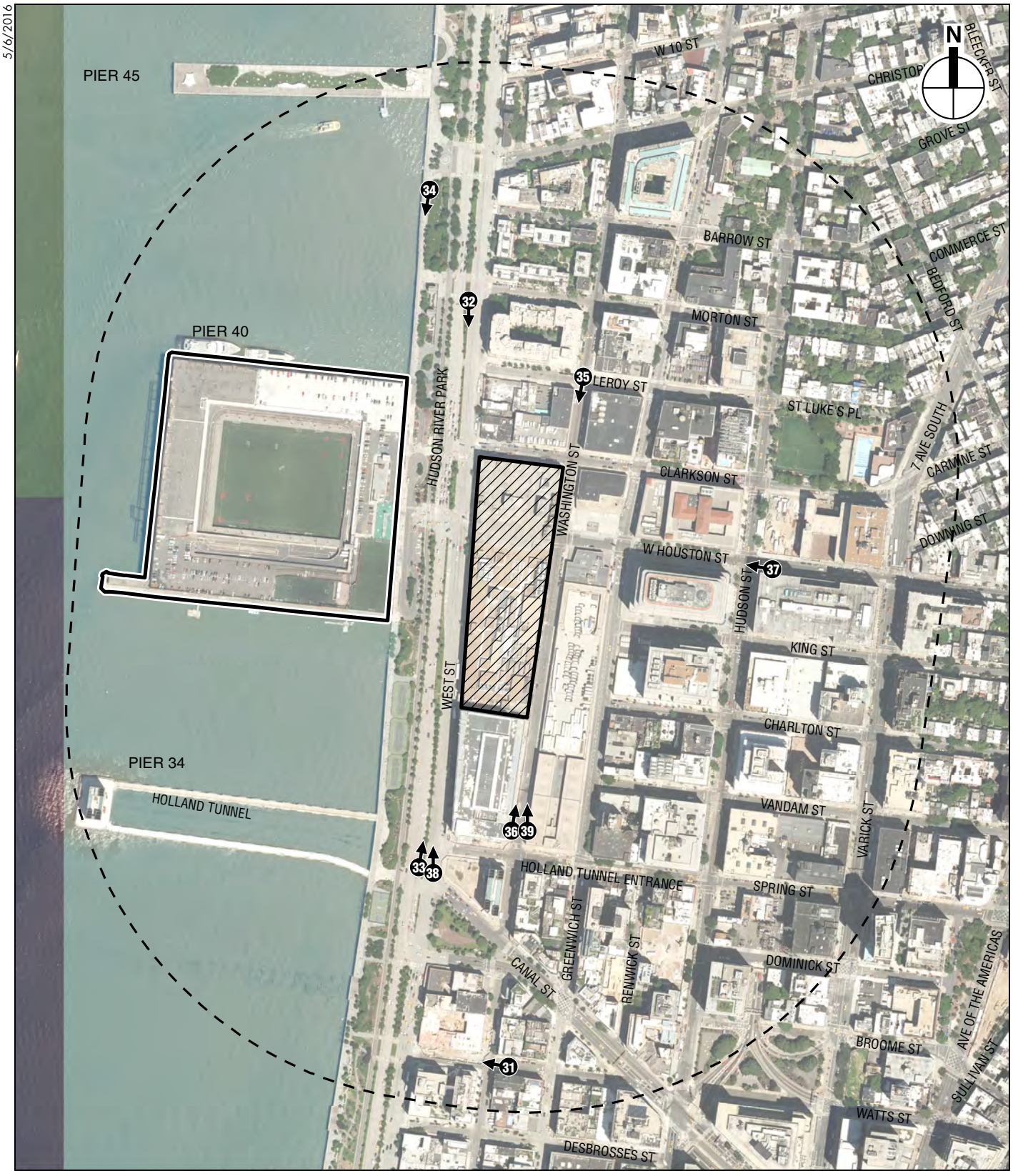
The development site is on the north end of Block 596, Lot 1 and is bounded by Route 9A/West Street, Washington Street, and Clarkson Street (see **Figures 9-1 and 9-2**).

URBAN DESIGN

DEVELOPMENT SITE

The development site contains the long rectangular, four-story St. John's Terminal Building that was built in 1934. The building has a large footprint measuring approximately 860 feet north-south and approximately 280 feet wide at its north end and approximately 210 feet wide at its south end. At the building's southern end is a one-story, through-block garage. The building has frontages on Route 9A/West Street, Washington Street, and Clarkson Street.

The building rises from the sidewalk without setbacks, is faced in buff-colored brick, and does not have any projecting elements. The building's ground floor is interrupted at West Houston Street, which passes below the building's upper floors. Several entrances and window openings have been altered or infilled with tan brick or ventilation components. At the ground floor, the building is characterized by multiple garage and building entrances that open onto the adjacent sidewalks. The building's north façade is much narrower but also has garage openings, along with loading docks and window openings. In addition, the façades opening onto West Houston Street also have garage entrance openings, doorways, and windows. The building's second floor



Development Site

Granting Site

Study Area (Quarter-Mile boundary)

Photo View Direction and Reference Number

Aerial Project Location

Figure 9-2

has large window openings; the windows on the third and fourth floors are smaller. The fourth floor has tan brick cladding that contrasts the original buff-colored brick of the building's lower floors. Rectangular rooftop mechanical equipment and a rooftop perimeter fence are visible from the adjacent sidewalks. Although visually bulky, the existing building is underbuilt by approximately 242,819 square feet of zoning floor area (zoning square feet [zsf]), containing only a total of approximately 739,231 zsf (see **Figures 9-3 through 9-5**).

The sidewalks adjacent to the development site vary in width. On Route 9A/West Street, the sidewalks are approximately 16 feet wide. They have wide curb cuts at each garage entrance, street trees within narrow fields of Belgian block pavers adjacent to the street, decorative street lights, a telephone box, and street signage. The Clarkson Street sidewalks adjacent to the development site are approximately 14 feet wide, with wide curb cuts at each garage entrance, and standard cobra head streetlights with hanging traffic lights. The Washington Street sidewalks adjacent to the development site are very narrow at approximately five- to five-and-a-half-foot-wide. The sidewalks on West Houston Street between Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street are approximately 14-and-a-half feet wide (north sidewalk) and approximately 12-and-a-half feet wide (south sidewalk). There are no street trees but there are wide curb cuts at each garage entrance, standard cobra head streetlights with hanging traffic lights, fire hydrants, and street signage, including a bus stop.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

DEVELOPMENT SITE

View corridors from the sidewalks adjacent to the development site include north-south views on Route 9A/West Street that provide long views of the tall towers in Lower Manhattan, including One World Trade Center, nearby components of the Hudson River Park, and expansive views of the Hudson River and the New Jersey waterfront in the distance. The Washington Street view corridor also includes views of buildings lining the street and long views to distant tall Lower Manhattan buildings (see **Figures 9-6 through 9-8**). These view corridors are described in below. Views on Clarkson Street adjacent to the development site include limited views to nearby sections of the Hudson River Park, though views closest to Route 9A/West Street are more expansive. Views on West Houston Street are extremely limited by the existing building that spans above this east-west street. Therefore, views on Clarkson and West Houston Street from adjacent to the development site are not view corridors.

As defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, "a visual resource is the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings, or natural resources (p. 10-1)." There are no visual resources on the development site as the building on the development site is not visually distinct or visually prominent.

The Hudson River Park is a visual resource that can be seen from the sidewalks adjacent to the west and north sides of the development site. Components of the Hudson River Park that can be seen in views from the development site include walkways and bikeways; landscaped lawns and seating areas; dense trees and foliage; a fountain; Pier 34 to the southwest, which contains the tan brick-faced, approximately 107-foot-tall Holland Tunnel ventilation structure; Pier 40 to the west; Pier 45 to the northwest; and another Holland Tunnel ventilation structure within the landside portion of the park between Leroy and Morton Streets. The Hudson River is another visual resource that can be viewed from vantage points adjacent to the development site. The Hudson River provides expansive views of buildings in Manhattan and distant views to the New



Southeast view to the St. John's Terminal Building's north and west facades from Hudson River Park **1**



Northeast view from Hudson River Park to the St. John's Terminal Building's west façade and West Houston Street underpass **2**

Development Site Photographs
Figure 9-3



Southwest view to the St. John's Terminal Building's north and east facades from Clarkson Street **3**





Northwest views to the St. John's Terminal Building's east facade from Washington Street **4**



Western view on West Houston Street to the St. John's Terminal Building's east façade and underpass **5**



Eastern view from Hudson River Park to the St. John's Terminal Building's west façade and underpass **6**



Northwest view on Route 9A/West Street from the development site **7**



Southwest view on Route 9A/West Street from the development site **8**



Western view to the Pier 40 Headhouse from the development site **9**



Southeast view on Washington Street from the development site **10**



UPS facility on Washington Street across from the development site **11**



Industrial buildings on Clarkson Street across from the development site **12**

Jersey waterfront. However, because the Hudson River Park and the Hudson River are low, linear visual resources, their visibility is limited to the west and north sides of the development site, with views being further restricted by dense foliage in the Route 9A/West Street median and in the Hudson River Park during certain times of year (see **Figures 9-6 through 9-8**). Other visual resources that can be seen from the sidewalks adjacent to the development site on Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street—which are also view corridors—include southward views to One World Trade Center and other tall buildings in Lower Manhattan.

STUDY AREA

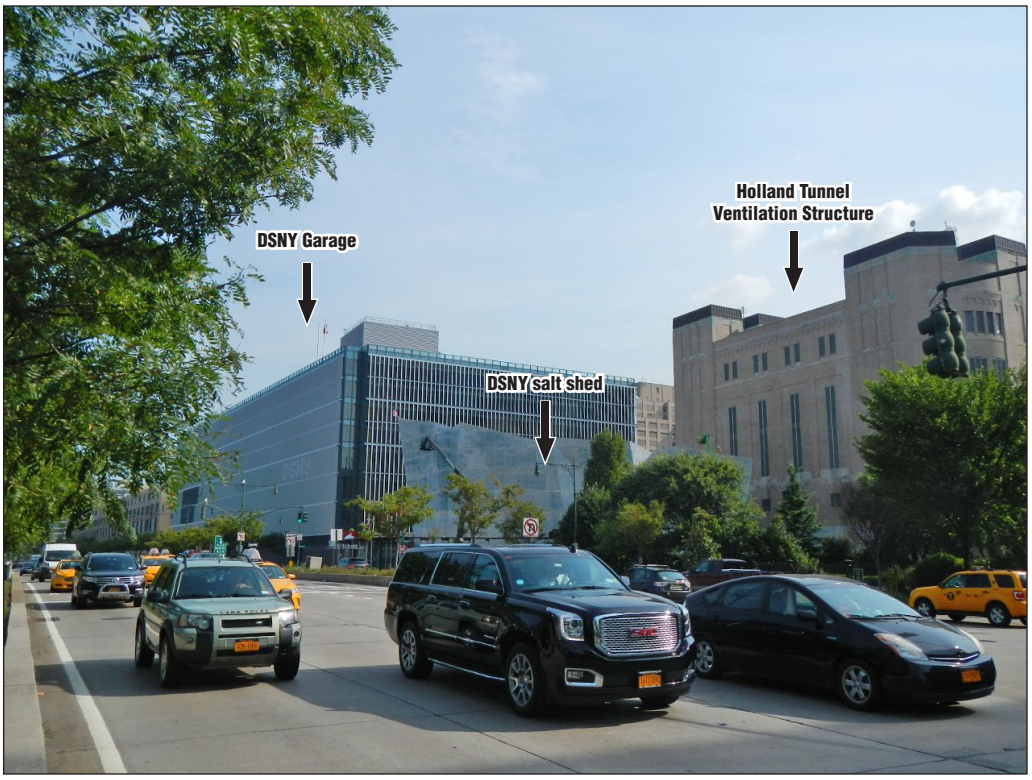
URBAN DESIGN

The ¼-mile study area is generally bounded by the Hudson River and Hudson River Park to the west, West 10th and Christopher Streets to the north, Varick Street to the east, and Desbrosses Street to the south (see **Figure 9-1 and 9-2**). The western portion of the study area contains the Hudson River and Hudson River Park, including Piers 34, 40, and 45 and an extensive walkway/bikeway system, as described in more detail below. The study area to the north includes both large and small residential buildings, many of which have ground floor retail, and institutional building complexes. The eastern section of the study area is primarily large warehouse buildings that have been converted to commercial and residential uses. The southern portion of the study area is a mix of larger warehouses converted to commercial and residential uses, industrial and parking facilities, smaller commercial and residential buildings, and a few transportation facilities. **Figures 9-6 through 9-16** provide photographs of the study area.

Streets

The study area streets are generally laid out in a grid, though the grid is interrupted by a few superblocks and other large blocks, as described below (see **Figures 9-1 and 9-2**). Several streets—including West 10th, Christopher, Barrow, Commerce, and Morton Streets and Seventh Avenue South—extend at angles from the north-south streets. The segments of Seventh Avenue South, Carmine Street, and Downing Street extend at northeast angles from Varick Street. In addition, the segment of Canal Street in the southern portion of the study area extends diagonally northwest-southeast from Route 9A/West Street. The block sizes and shapes vary throughout the study area with small irregularly-shaped blocks north and south of the development site. Larger blocks include the long, narrow development site block that contains the nearly completed New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) garage at the south end of the block. Other large blocks are east of the development site, including the long, narrow superblock immediately to the east that contains the UPS facility and is bounded by West Houston, Greenwich, Spring, and Washington Streets. Most of the larger rectangular study area blocks are concentrated in the area bounded by Greenwich, Clarkson, Varick, and Spring Streets.

Study area streets vary in width. Route 9A/West Street (approximately 250 feet wide) is the primary north-south roadway in the western portion of the study area. It is an eight-lane surface level divided highway, with raised medians—ranging from six to 24 feet wide—that contain plantings, trees, decorative lighting, and bollards. West Houston Street, which bisects the development site, is a westbound street serving vehicles headed to Route 9A/West Street. Route 9A/West Street and West Houston Street are heavily trafficked. Washington Street near the development site carries truck traffic for the UPS, FedEx, and DSNY facilities. Hudson and Varick Streets are also wide, primary north-south roadways (90 and 100 feet wide, respectively) that extend through the study area and have wide sidewalks. Varick and Hudson Streets, which are north-south streets, are approximately 90 feet wide and carry one-way traffic, with Varick



Northeast view on Route 9A/West Street to the DSNY salt shed and garage south of the development site **13**



Northeast view on Hudson Street from Leroy Street **14**



Residential buildings on Barrow Street in the Greenwich Village Historic District **15**



The Church of St. Luke in the Field in the Greenwich Village Historic District **16**





Barrow Street building within the Church of St. Luke in the Field complex in the Greenwich Village Historic District **17**

Study Area Views
Figure 9-10



Southwest view on Hudson Street from West Houston Street **18**



Southeast view on Varick Street from West Houston Street **19**

Study Area Views
Figure 9-11



Southern view from Hudson River Park **20**



Northwest view from Hudson River Park **21**

Study Area Views
Figure 9-12

2.2.16



Southern view from Hudson River Park of bikeway/walkway and landscaping **22**



Southwest view from Hudson River Park to the north façade of Pier 40 **23**



James J. Walker Park, view from Clarkson Street **24**



James J. Walker Park playground **25**



City As School at 16 Clarkson Street **26**

Study Area Views
Figure 9-14



Southern view on Hudson Street from Leroy Street **27**



Southern view on Greenwich Street from Barrow Street **28**

Study Area Views
Figure 9-15



Southern view on Washington Street from Canal Street **29**



Southern view on Route 9A/West Street from Canal Street **30**



Western view on Watts Street from Washington Street from the northern section of the Tribeca North Historic District **31**

Study Area Views
Figure 9-16

Street carrying southbound traffic and Hudson Street carrying northbound traffic. The two other north-south streets are Greenwich and Washington Streets, both of which are narrower (approximately 65 and 60 feet wide, respectively). Most east-west streets range from approximately 60 to 80 feet wide and carry one-way traffic. West Houston, King, Charlton, and Vandam Streets terminate at Greenwich Street, where the large block containing the UPS facility is located. Canal Street is a wide, approximately 100-foot-wide diagonal street that carries two-way traffic and is a heavily trafficked thoroughfare though this part of Manhattan.

Beginning south of Vandam Street, six-lane Varick Street is divided by rubber delineators at the center of the street. The southern portion of Varick Street is characterized by heavy traffic and directional signage for the Holland Tunnel. A network of study area streets converge at the block bounded by Hudson, Broome, Varick, and Watts Streets providing access to the Holland Tunnel. The tunnel entrance is mid-block between Hudson and Varick Streets, immediately north of Broome Street where the tunnel's access ramp slopes downward. Limestone-clad stone walls and an overpass with signage identify the Holland Tunnel, along with security kiosks, movable fences and bollards, and curving access roads to the south.

Some streets have Belgian block pavers, including segments of Barrow, Morton, Leroy, and Clarkson Streets, and the portion of Greenwich Street south of Canal Street. Many streets have designated bicycle lanes, including West Houston, Washington, Greenwich, Hudson, Clarkson, and Charlton Streets. In addition, there are three Citi Bike stations in the study area on Barrow, West Houston, and Watts Streets. Sidewalk widths in the study area vary, with most wider streets having wide sidewalks and the narrower streets having narrow sidewalks. The Houston Street subway station has entrances on the north and south sides of King Street west of Varick Street and entrances on the east side of Varick Street on the north and south sides of King Street. An entrance to the Christopher Street PATH Station between Hudson and Greenwich Street opens from the ground floor of a brick-faced building and provides access to the PATH train. A wide limestone canopy curves above the entrance with stairs leading down into the PATH station (see **Figures 9-8 through 9-10**).

Street furniture in the study area includes decorative and standard street lighting, parking regulation signs and parking meters, subway station entrances, bus stop signs and shelters, newspaper stands, fire hydrants, garbage cans, concrete and steel protective bollards and jersey barriers, concrete planters, mailboxes, and newspaper boxes. Several buildings have rooftop water towers. Directional roadway signage spans above portions of Canal, Hudson, and Varick Streets in the areas near the entrance to the Holland Tunnel. Some buildings have rooftop or façade-mounted billboards. Most streets in the study area have parallel parked vehicles, including cars and trucks (see **Figures 9-9 through 9-11, 9-15, and 9-16**).

Street trees in the study area are limited, with most street trees located on the residential streets in the northern portion of the study area, and also along Hudson Street. Varick, Greenwich, and Washington Streets have very few street trees (see **Figures 9-6 through 9-11, 9-15, and 9-16**). In contrast, Route 9A/West Street has many trees and landscaped areas in the medians and more extensive plantings in the Hudson River Park to the west, as described in "Open Space and Natural Features" (see **Figures 9-12 and 9-13**).

Buildings

The building characteristics vary by location: light industrial buildings immediately south, east, and north of the development site; smaller and mid-size residential buildings, many with ground floor retail, in the northern and southern portions of the study area; large former manufacturing

buildings, many of which have been converted to office buildings, in the eastern portion of the study area; and the large Pier 40 building (the granting site) in the Hudson River west of the development site.

The industrial buildings include the two-story long and narrow UPS facility that occupies the entire superblock bounded by Washington, West Houston, Greenwich, and Spring Streets. The building has loading docks along its east and west façades, with curb cuts and trucks extending onto the sidewalk and roads during loading and unloading. North and northeast of the development site are two three- and five-story buildings occupied by FedEx. These buildings are faced in masonry, are built to the sidewalk, and have garage and commercial entrances. A two-story parking facility with a filling station within a paved surface lot to the south occupy the small block east of the development site. South of the development site, a DSNY garage with panelized sunshaded-façades occupies the remainder of the superblock. Across from the garage, on the south side of Spring Street, are a concrete, irregularly-shaped DSNY salt shed and the tan brick-faced, approximately 122-foot-tall ventilation structure for the Holland Tunnel (see **Figures 9-7 through 9-9**).

The buildings in the northern and southern portions of the study area are primarily older late-19th and early-20th century residential buildings, but these areas also include institutional buildings such as churches and schools (see **Figures 9-10 and 9-16**). The residential buildings in the northern part of the study area are mostly older three- to 12-story attached buildings that include rowhouses, small apartment buildings, and some larger former manufacturing buildings that have been converted to residential. Most residential buildings are built to the lot lines, are attached to other buildings on the blockfront, and maintain a continuous streetwall. Many residential buildings have ground floor retail, especially on Hudson Street. The residential buildings on both sides of Hudson Street are generally small, narrow buildings, while the apartment buildings and converted manufacturing buildings in this part of the study area have larger footprints and are generally taller buildings. Part of the northern portion of the study area east of Greenwich and Hudson Streets is in the Greenwich Village Historic District (State/National Registers of Historic Places [S/NR], New York City Landmark [NYCL]). The historic district is characterized by mid-19th century townhouses on tree-lined streets, a church complex, and residential buildings with ground floor retail on Hudson Street. The residential buildings in the southern part of the study area are primarily five- to eight-story converted older brick-faced manufacturing buildings, though there are also some rowhouses in this area. The southern portion of the study area also includes a few newly constructed residential buildings with ground floor retail. Most older buildings in this area are faced in brick with limestone or terra cotta detailing and have ground floor cast iron and brick store fronts. A small section of the southern part of the study area—on Greenwich Street south of Watts Street—includes late-19th century brick-faced warehouse buildings with ground floor commercial that are in the Tribeca North Historic District (NYCL). Newer buildings in this area are generally six to 12 stories and have metal and glass curtain walls; many newer buildings also have commercial uses on the ground floor.

The large former manufacturing buildings that characterize the eastern portion of the study area have large footprints and are built to the sidewalk and stand 10 to 18 stories tall. Many have been converted to office buildings with ground floor retail. Many of these buildings have loading docks and service entrances on the east-west side streets. These buildings are generally older masonry-faced buildings with decorative brickwork and terra cotta detailing. These larger buildings characterize the blockfronts generally bounded by Clarkson, Varick, Spring, and Greenwich Streets (see **Figures 9-11 and 9-15**).

Pier 40 in the Hudson River Park west of the development site across Route 9A/West Street is an approximately 15-acre, three-story structure with a hollow square at its center. It is under the jurisdiction of HRPT. The pier's head house is faced in orange brick and has blue paneling at the second floor. A central entrance is set within a gray granite surround with a projecting canopy and "Pier 40" lettering above the canopy. The entrance opens onto a pick-up/drop-off driveway within the Hudson River Park. Vehicular entrances also open from the head house. The pier's north and south façades have multiple bays separated by masonry columns, with cinder block infill, glass, and metal framing. Spanning vertically above the roof are steel frame structures; no signage is on these structures. Chainlink fences extend vertically from the roof of the head house and the eastern portion of the pier. A narrow apron walkway extends along the north and south sides of the pier (see **Figures 9-7 and 9-13**).

Several institutional facilities are in the study area, primarily in the historically residential portion of the study area to the north. These facilities include the Church of Saint Luke in the Fields, which occupies most of the block bounded by Barrow, Christopher, Hudson, and Greenwich Streets. The church complex includes a chapel on Hudson Street, a parochial school on Christopher and Greenwich Streets, a playground on Christopher Street, and housing and gardens on Hudson Street, with the gardens open to the public. A brick wall establishes the property lines on portions of Hudson and Barrow Streets, a metal fence is on Christopher Street, and a chainlink fence is at the corner of Barrow and Greenwich Streets (see **Figure 9-10**). Other institutional buildings in the study area are the two-story red brick-faced Hudson Park Library at 66 Leroy Street, immediately east of James J. Walker Park and the five-story red brick and stone-faced City As School immediately south of James J. Walker Park at 16 Clarkson Street (see **Figure 9-14**). The New York City Fire Museum, which occupies a former fire house, is at 278 Spring Street. The seven-story Metro New York Developmental Disabilities Service Office occupies a former industrial building at 75 Morton Street.

The streetwall is generally consistent with most buildings built to the property line. However, it is interrupted by surface parking lots and curb cuts located throughout the study area. Surface parking lots near the development site are on Leroy and Greenwich Streets, West Houston Street between Washington and Greenwich Streets, and on King and Greenwich Streets. Other surface parking lots are more distant from the development site, concentrated on Spring and Dominick Streets between Varick and Hudson Streets. The streetwall is also interrupted by James J. Walker Park and the City-As-School building, which has an H-shaped form (see **Figure 9-14**).

Open Space and Natural Features

Study area topography is generally flat. The Hudson River, which extends along the west side of Manhattan, is the most prominent natural feature in the study area as it encompasses a large section of the western part of the study area. However, its visibility from the study area is generally limited to areas closest to the river. The Hudson River Park is a 500-acre linear park that extends along the Hudson River waterfront between West 59th Street and Battery Park at the southern end of Manhattan. The portion of the Hudson River Park within the study area includes a waterfront esplanade with upland areas improved with landscaping, seating areas, a basketball court, a tennis court, a dog run, restrooms, and grassy lawns. This portion of the park also includes Piers 34, 40, and 45, which contain publicly accessible recreational amenities. Pier 34 has two "finger" piers that meet at the Holland Tunnel ventilation structure at the pier's west end. The southern portion of the pier includes seating and walking areas, while the northern portion is closed to the public and provides emergency access to the vent shaft. Pier 40, as described above, is the largest pier in the park and contains recreational amenities, parking, and

offices for the HRPT. Pier 45 has grassy lawns with seating and shade structures. The Hudson River Greenway also extends through the study area and is immediately adjacent to Hudson River Park. The greenway includes an active pedestrian path and the Route 9A/West Street bikeway (see **Figures 9-12 and 9-13**).

Other open spaces in the study area are Canal Park, James J. Walker Park, and the Garden at St. Luke in the Field. Canal Park is a small triangular park in the southern portion of the study area that is bounded by Canal and Washington Streets, and Route 9A/West Street. It contains grassy lawns, trees, and other plantings, a central pathway, and has a decorative perimeter fence. It also includes historic images on a granite planter. James J. Walker Park is in the northeastern part of the study area and occupies most of the block bounded by Hudson and Clarkson Streets, St. Luke's Place, and Seventh Avenue South/Varick Street. The park contains play equipment, a baseball diamond, seating areas, and trees (see **Figure 9-14**). The Garden at St. Luke in the Field is within the northern portion of the study area, at the northwest corner of Barrow and Hudson Streets. It contains landscaped gardens that are open to the public. Part of the block bounded by Broome, Varick, Watts, and Hudson Streets is within the southeast portion of the study area. This block includes landscaping with trees, pedestrian walkways, and access roads providing access to the Holland Tunnel.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

View corridors on Varick, Hudson, Greenwich, and Washington Streets include views of the buildings lining these streets, which form consistent streetwalls that include primarily older buildings with large footprints, wide street frontages, and that are faced in masonry (see **Figures 9-7, 9-11, and 9-15**). Views south on Varick Street include the approximately 792-foot-tall Woolworth Building (1913) in Lower Manhattan and the approximately 454-foot-tall Trump SoHo Hotel (2010) at the southeast edge of the study area on Varick Street between Spring and Dominick Streets. This hotel building, which is the tallest building in the study area, is visually prominent from several vantage points, including views from adjacent streets. The northern portion of the Hudson Street view corridor includes smaller three-to five-story masonry-faced residential buildings with small footprints and narrow street frontages. Southward views on Greenwich and Washington Streets, and Route 9A/West Street include the tall buildings in Lower Manhattan, including the approximately 1,776-foot-tall One World Trade Center (2014).

The Route 9A/West Street view corridor includes expansive views to the Hudson River and the Hudson River Park, which are visual resources, as described below. Other views that include these two visual resources are generally limited to vantage points from the ends of east-west streets that end at Route 9A/West Street (see **Figures 9-6, 9-12, 9-13, and 9-16**). Longer westward views to the Hudson River and Hudson River Park are limited by distance, intervening buildings, and the flatness of these visual resources. Further, four of the east-west streets in the study area—West Houston, King, Charlton, and Vandam Streets—terminate at Greenwich Street limiting longer views to the waterfront.

Visual resources in the study area include the Hudson River, the Hudson River Park, including the Holland Tunnel ventilation structure at the west end of Pier 34, and the residential buildings in the Greenwich Village Historic District in the northern section of the study. The Hudson River and Hudson River Park are important visual resources as they provide broad open views of the waterfront, buildings in Manhattan, and the New Jersey waterfront. Although the Hudson River extends along the west side of Manhattan and is an important visual resource, its visibility within the study area is generally limited to areas closest to the river. Similarly, the Hudson River Park's many features also have limited visibility. The Holland Tunnel ventilation structure

at the west end of Pier 34 is an approximately 107-foot-tall structure that is visible from nearby areas of the Hudson River Park and vantage points from nearby streets, however, its low height and small form also limit its visibility to nearby vantage points (see **Figures 9-12 and 9-13**).

Small areas of three historic districts are within or immediately outside the study area. As noted above, the Greenwich Village Historic District (S/NR, NYCL) is a primarily residential historic district in the northern part of the study area that comprises mid-19th century townhouses on narrow tree-lined streets, a church complex, and residential buildings with ground floor retail on Hudson Street. The historic district has an irregular street pattern, small buildings on small lots, many street trees, and historic streetlamps (see **Figure 9-10**). The small area of the Tribeca North Historic District (NYCL) on Greenwich Street immediately south of Watts Street includes former late-19th century brick-faced warehouse buildings with ground floor commercial (see View 31 of **Figure 9-16**). Immediately adjacent to the former warehouse buildings in the eastern part of the study area is the Charlton-King-Vandam Historic District (NYCL), which is characterized by primarily 19th century Federal and Greek Revival townhouses.

Visual resources that can be seen from the study area but that are located outside the study area include two Lower Manhattan buildings—One World Trade Center and the Woolworth Building. One World Trade Center, at approximately 1,776 feet tall, is the tallest building in Lower Manhattan. As such it is visually prominent from many vantage points in the study area, particularly in southward views on Washington Street, Route 9A/West Street, and from the Hudson River Park. The approximately 792-foot-tall Woolworth Building, an early 20th century terra cotta-clad building, is a visual resource that can be seen in views south on Varick Street (see **Figures 9-6, and 9-11 through 9-16**).

D. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

See **Figures 9-17 and 9-18** for a roof plan and sections of the development site in the No Action condition. **Figures 9-25 through 9-30** show comparative No Action and With Action illustrative views of the development site.

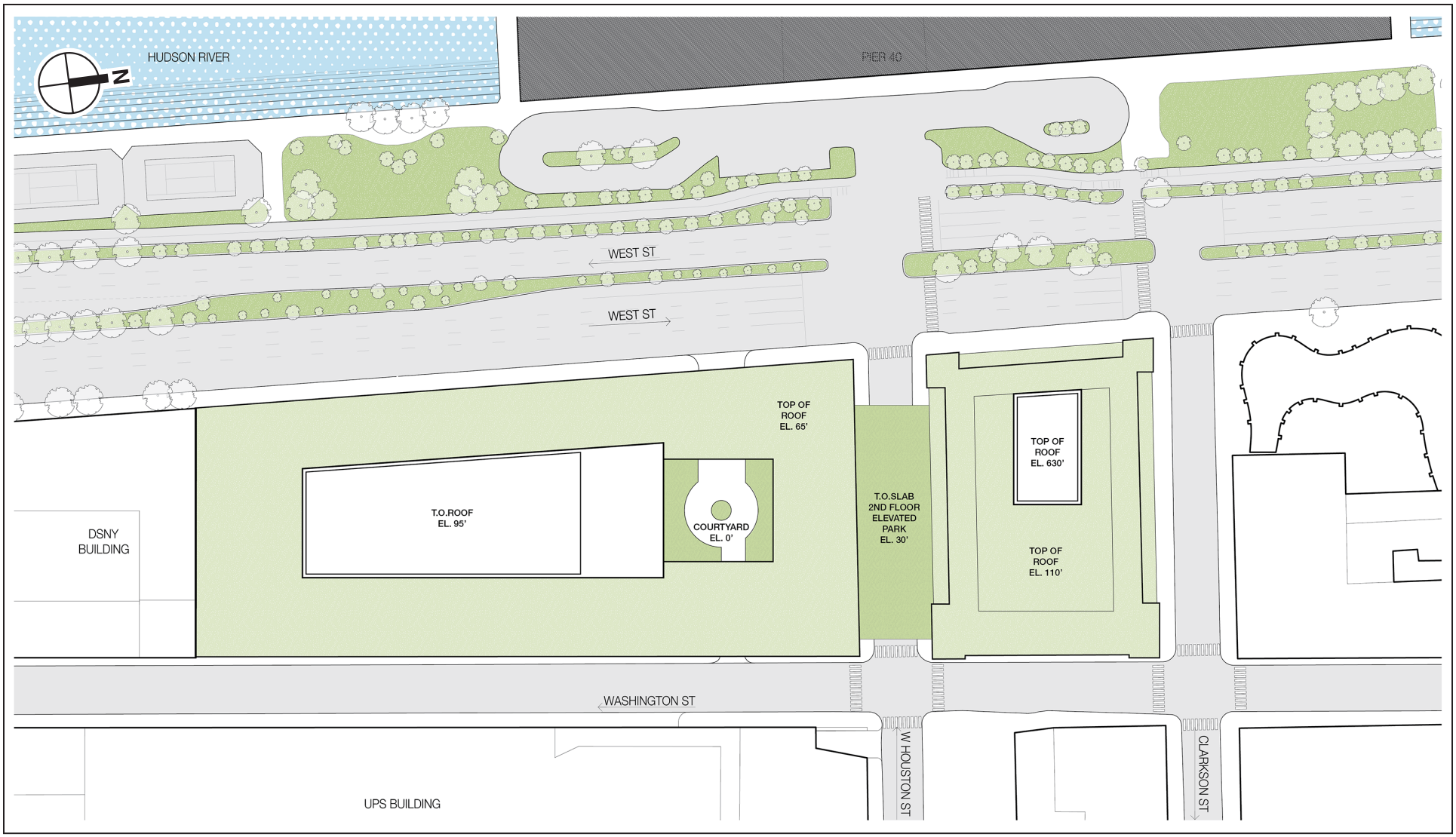
DEVELOPMENT SITE

URBAN DESIGN

Absent the proposed actions, the existing St. John's Terminal Building will be demolished. The No Action development will utilize the full floor area of the development site. Absent the proposed actions, the platform space above West Houston Street will be developed as a continuous private open space serving the building tenants. The No Action development will concentrate the bulk of its square footage on the North Site with the development of a 48-story (approximately 630-foot-tall) slab-like tower that will rise from a six-story rectangular base. As currently envisioned by the private applicant, the tower will rise without setbacks, and both the tower and the base will have a glass and steel curtain wall. The building will contain a hotel, offices, and retail, with accessory parking in the basement. The Center and South Sites will be redeveloped with a new three- and four-story rectangular, block-like building that will be similar in form and massing to the existing St. John's Terminal Building. Further, this new building will contain approximately the same square footage as the existing St. John's Terminal building on this portion of the development site. The new building will contain offices, event space, and retail, with accessory parking in the cellar (see **Figures 9-17, 9-18, and 9-25 through 9-30**).

The No Action development is assumed to include approximately 322,000 gross square feet (gsf) of retail uses, approximately 427,000 gsf of office space, an approximately 285,000-gsf

4.26.16

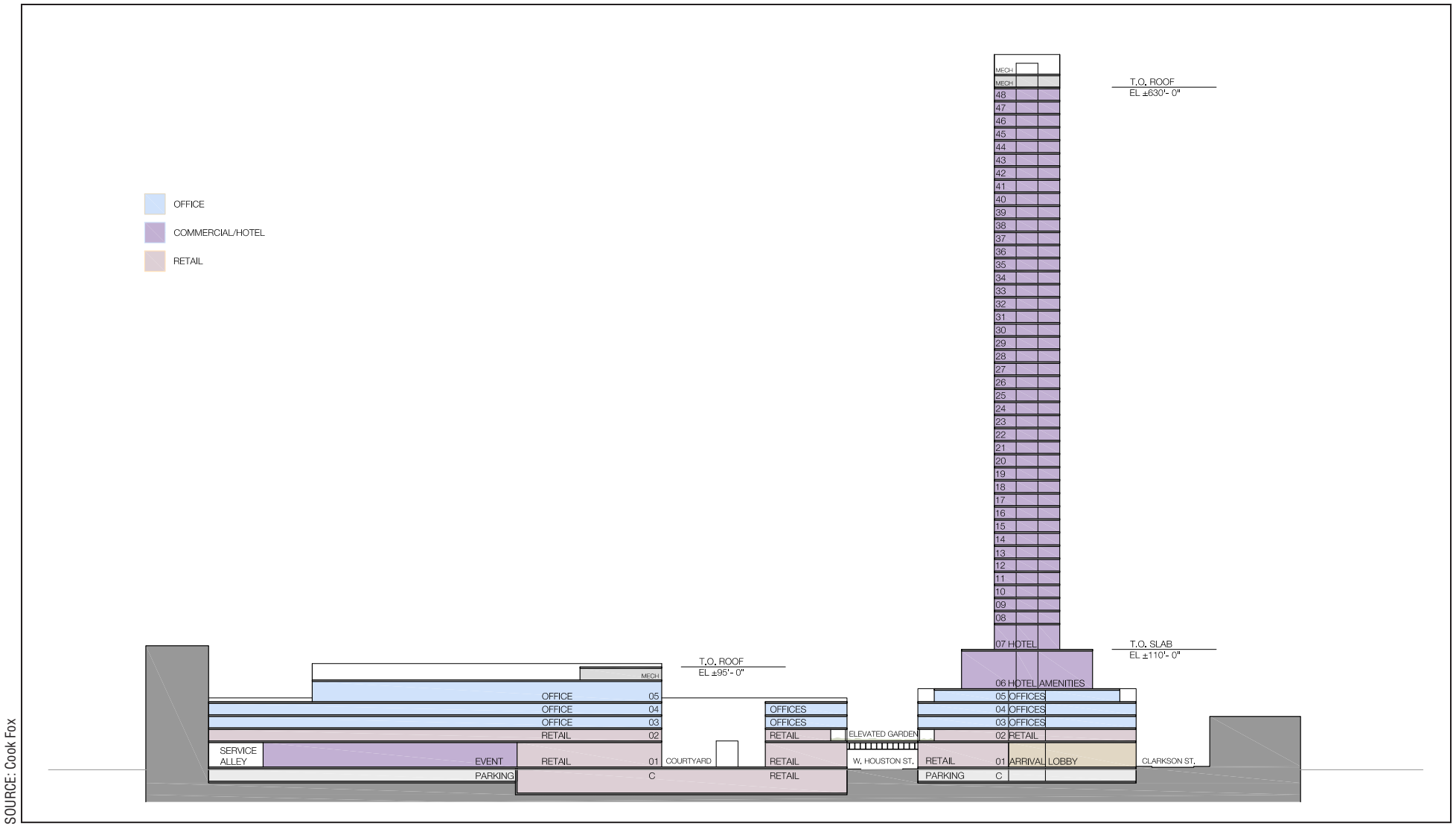


SOURCE: Cook Fox

NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

550 WASHINGTON STREET

No Action Roof Plan
Figure 9-17



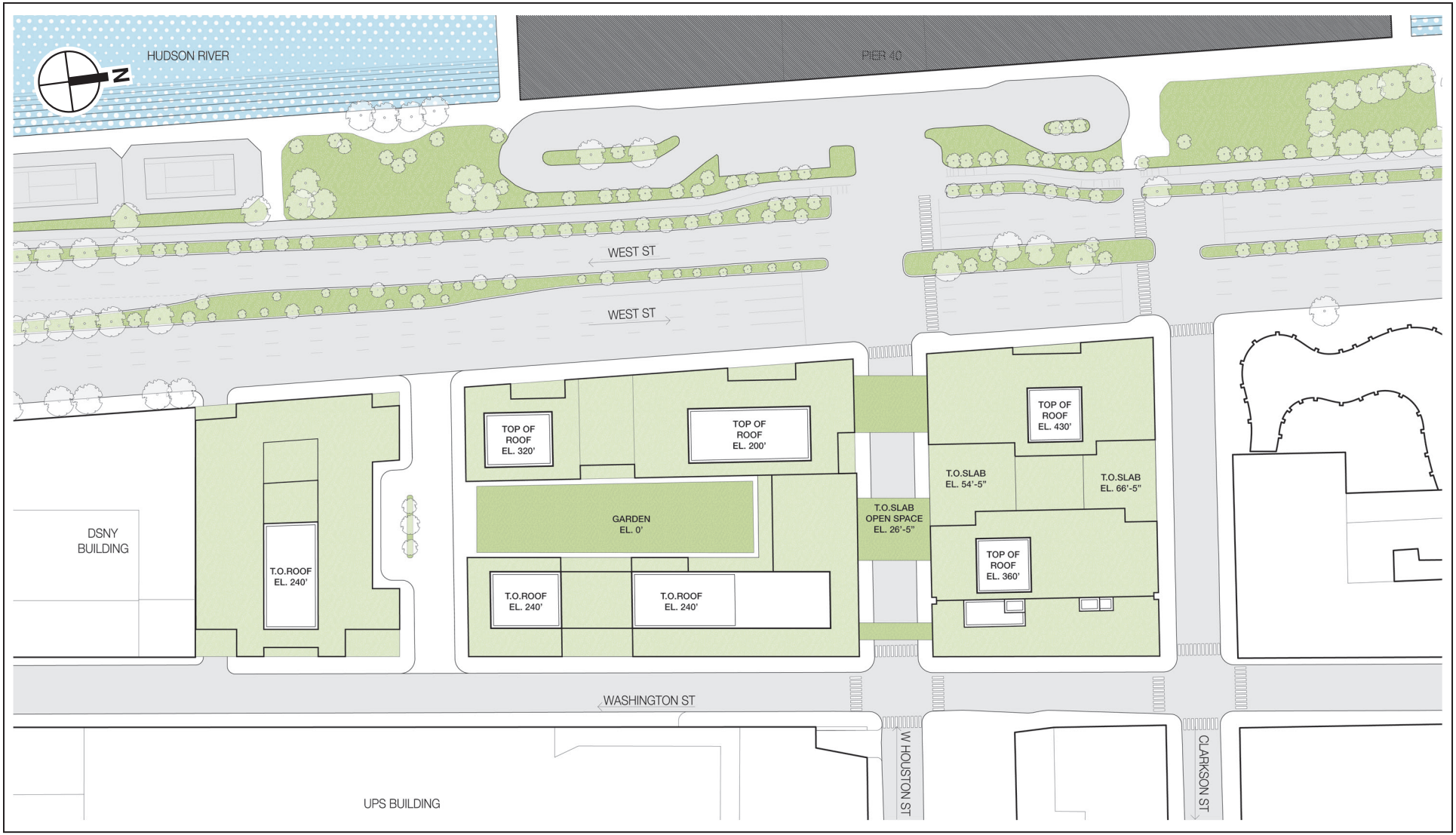
SOURCE: Cook Fox

NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action Section View Looking West

Figure 9-18

5.4.16

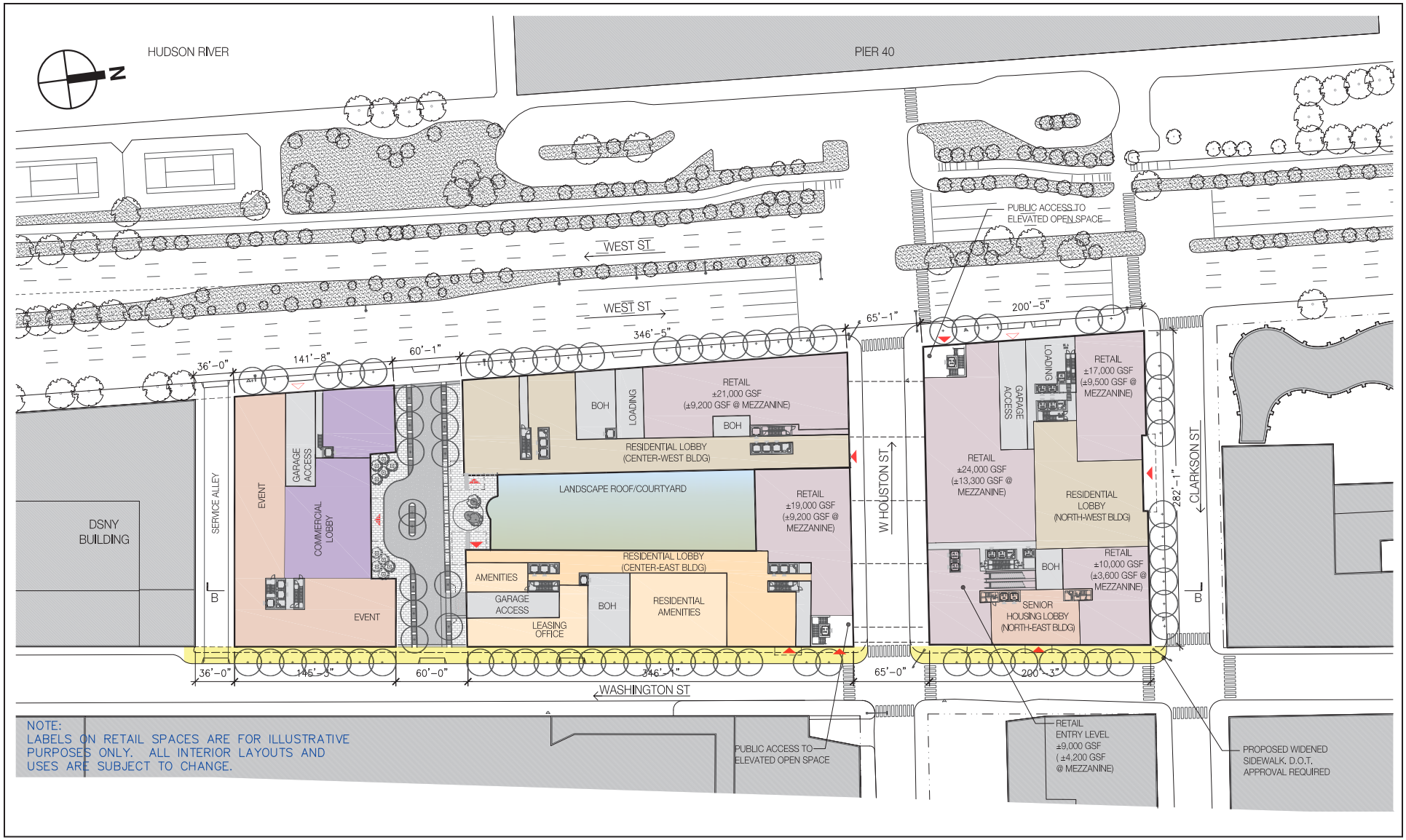


SOURCE: Cook Fox

550 WASHINGTON STREET

Proposed Roof Plan
Figure 9-19

5.4.16

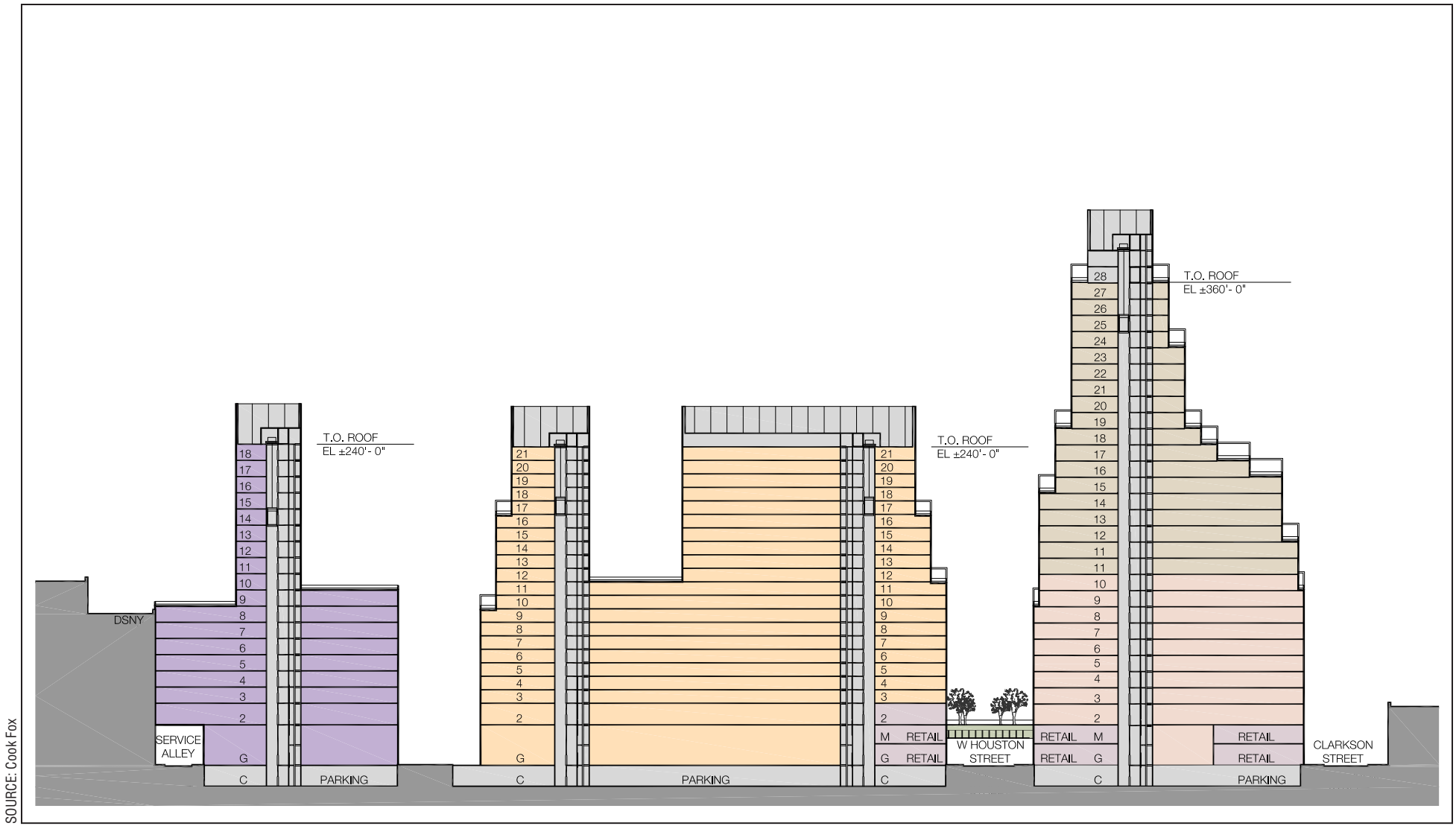


SOURCE: Cook Fox

Pedestrian Entrance
Vehicular Entrance
Street Trees
Widened Sidwalk

550 WASHINGTON STREET

Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Figure 9-20



SOURCE: Cook Fox

NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

550 WASHINGTON STREET

Proposed Section View Looking West

Figure 9-21



SOURCE: Cook Fox

NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Illustrative Rendering of the Proposed Project in Southward view on Route 9A/West Street, with the North Site buildings in the foreground

Figure 9-22



SOURCE: Cook Fox

NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Illustrative Rendering on West Houston Street toward the Publicly Accessible Open Space between the North and Center Sites

Figure 9-23



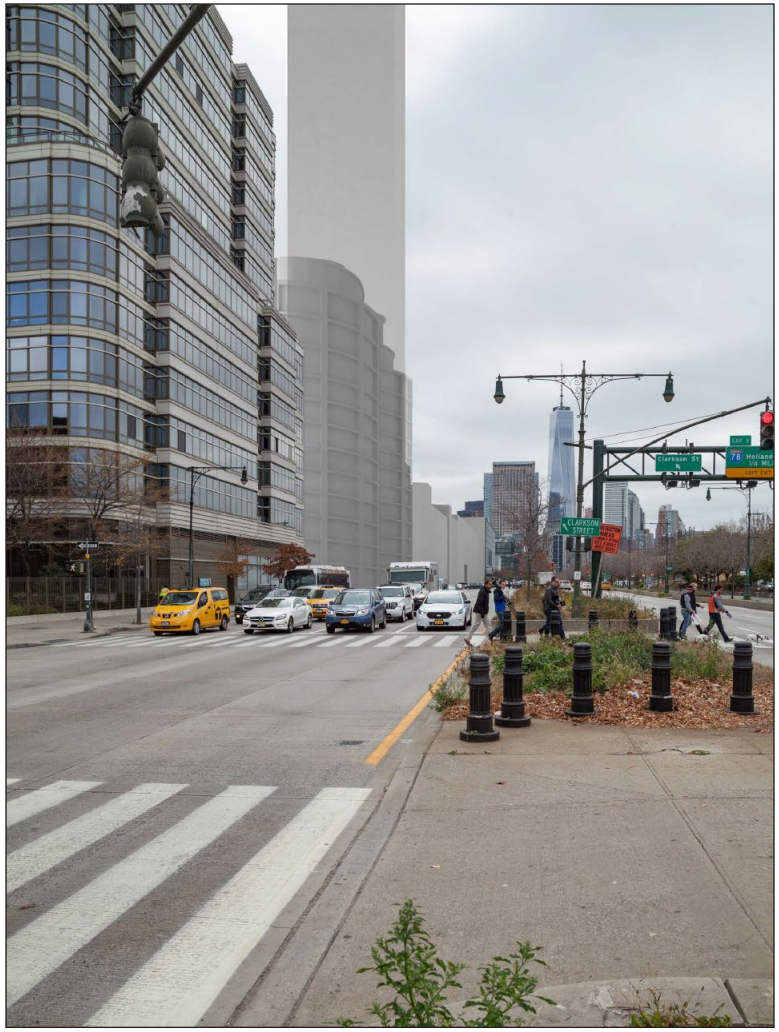
SOURCE: Cook Fox

NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Illustrative Rendering from the Publicly Accessible Open Space between the North and Center Sites

Figure 9-24

5.3.16



No Action View **32a**



With Action View **32b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Southeast Views from Route 9A/West Street near Morton Street
Figure 9-25



No Action View **33a**



With Action View **33b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Northeast Views from
Route 9A/West Street near Spring Street
Figure 9-26



No Action View **34a**



With Action View **34b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Southeast Views from
Hudson River Park near Barrow Street
Figure 9-27



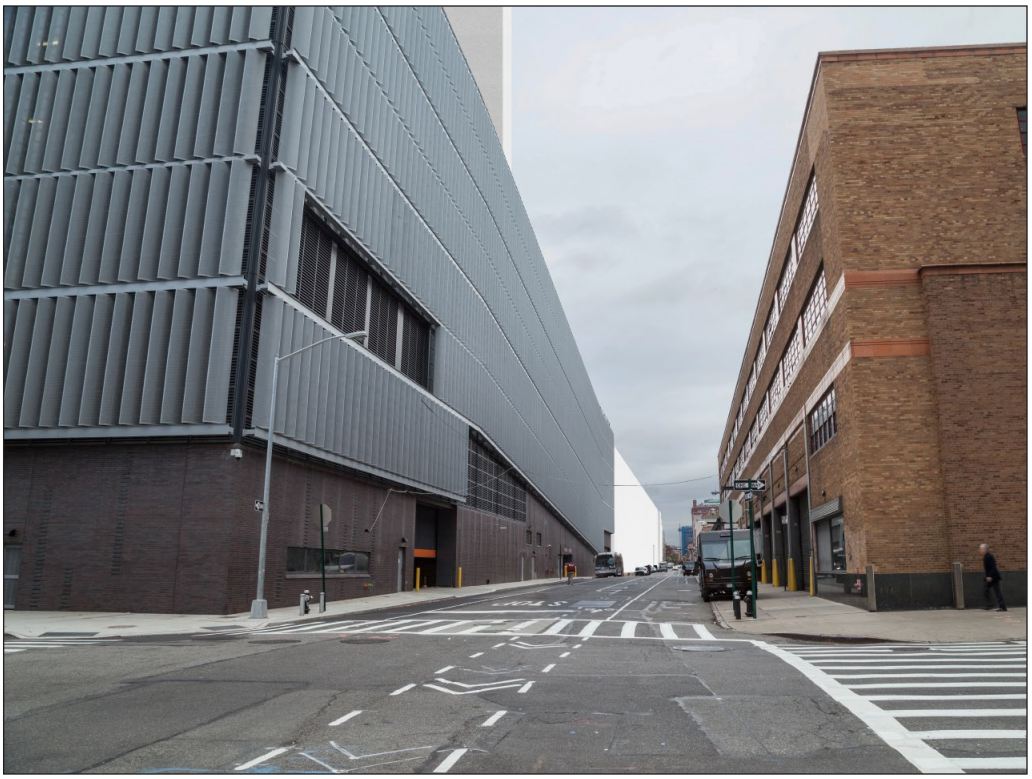
No Action View **35a**



With Action View **35b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Southwest Views from Washington Street near Leroy Street
Figure 9-28



No Action View **36a**



With Action View **36b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Northwest Views from
Washington Street near Spring Street
Figure 9-29



No Action View **37a**



With Action View **37b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Northwest Views from
West Houston Street near Hudson Street
Figure 9-30

hotel (438 rooms), and approximately 176 accessory parking spaces. The No Action development will not include any publicly accessible open space or residential units. The new buildings will have curb cuts for parking garage and loading dock access, and will have commercial retail entrances opening onto the adjacent sidewalks. The ground floor components of the new buildings will enhance the pedestrian experience of the development site by contributing active uses to the currently underutilized site. However, in the No Action condition, the sidewalks adjacent to the development site will remain the same as in existing conditions, and will continue to include the very narrow, approximately five- to five-and-a-half-foot-wide sidewalks on Washington Street. No new street trees will be added to the sidewalks adjacent to the development site because the development site will remain zoned as a manufacturing district in the No Action condition. The streets around the development site will continue to be busy, with West and West Houston Streets being heavily trafficked, and Washington Street carrying truck traffic for the UPS, FedEx, and DSNY facilities.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

In the No Action condition, view corridors on Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street will continue to include views of Lower Manhattan and One World Trade Center. View corridors that include the Hudson River, the Hudson River Park, and the New Jersey waterfront will also remain available as the No Action development will be developed on an existing block and will not obstruct any existing views to these visual resources (see **Figures 9-25 through 9-30**).

STUDY AREA

URBAN DESIGN

As described in Chapter 2, "Analytical Framework," there are several projects planned or under construction in the study area that are expected to be built by 2024 (see Table 2-2 and Figure 2-5). These projects are expected to add new buildings to the study area that will change the built environment in terms of introducing new, taller and mid-rise buildings with a variety of forms, massings, and materials that will add new active uses that will enliven the streetscape of the study area. Among the No Build projects is a 15-story residential building that will be constructed immediately north of the development site at 354-361 West Street (see **Figures 9-25 and 9-27**). The other No Build projects in the study area are located away from the development site and, therefore, do not have a contextual relationship with the development site. In general, the No Build projects are anticipated to be consistent with the changing urban design context of the study area.

In the No Action condition, the tower that will be developed on the North Site will be substantially taller than other nearby buildings (see **Figures 9-25 through 9-28 and 9-30**). As a tall tower with a slab-like form and glass and steel curtain wall, its massing and form will be dissimilar to other study area buildings, as most study area buildings have lower height bulkier forms with masonry cladding. The three- and four-story rectangular, block-like building that will be developed in the No Action condition on the Center and South Sites will have a form and massing similar to the existing building on this part of the development site. It will maintain the long, uninterrupted streetwall between West Houston and Spring Streets (see **Figures 9-17 and 9-18**).

The No Action development would not adversely affect the built environment's arrangement, appearance, or functionality. The new building that will be built on the North Site in the No Action condition will be substantially taller than all other study area buildings and will have a form and massing unlike most study area buildings as it will rise as a single slab from a low

base. The platform structure that will span above West Houston Street in the No Action development will not have gaps permitting sunlight to reach the sidewalk and the platform level open space would not be publicly accessible (see **Figure 9-17**). The building that will be developed on the Center and South Sites in the No Action condition will have a low height and block-like form similar to the existing building on the development site. The sidewalks on the west side of Washington Street adjacent to the development site will remain the same as in existing conditions, at approximately five- to five-and-a-half feet wide and no street trees will be planted adjacent to the development site. While the changes to the development site in the No Action condition will not adversely affect the arrangement, appearance, or functionality of the built environment, the No Action development will not substantially enhance the pedestrian experience of these urban design components.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Occupying an existing city block, the No Action development will not obstruct any view corridors in the study area including the view corridors on Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street (see **Figures 9-25, 9-26, 9-28, and 9-29**). In the Route 9A/West Street view corridor, the No Action building on the North Site will be a tall, narrow tower in the foreground among buildings of varying heights and forms. This view corridor will continue to provide views to the tall buildings in Lower Manhattan, and expansive views of the Hudson River, the Hudson River Park, and the New Jersey waterfront. In the Washington Street view corridor, the North Site building will be substantially taller than other buildings as this view corridor is characterized by nearby two- to six-story bulky industrial buildings. The No Action building that will be constructed on the Center and South Sites will be of a similar massing and form to the existing building so the Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street view corridors will not be substantially affected by this change. Therefore, the No Action buildings will not adversely affect the pedestrian experiences of these view corridors.

Views to visual resources in the study area in the No Action condition were also considered. The No Action building on the North Site will have a massing at the base that will be similar to existing conditions with the building built to the sidewalk. It will also have a private open space on a platform spanning above West Houston Street. In contrast to existing conditions where the existing building also spans above West Houston Street, the platform will create an opening above the platform between the North Site building and the Center Site that will provide westward views from West Houston Street. However, because the Hudson River and Hudson River Park are low, linear visual resources, no new publicly accessible pedestrian views to these visual resources will be created in the No Action condition. Further, because the No Action development will be on an existing block and will replace the St. John's Terminal building, existing views to the Hudson River and Hudson River Park will remain available from the west side of the development site and will not be substantially altered with the addition of a new tower building on the North Site and a new, low block-like building on the Center and South Sites. However, the No Action building on the Center and South Sites will maintain a continuous streetwall, will not break down the massing of the new buildings on the development site, and will not provide a new east-west driveway between Washington Street and Route 9A/West Street(see **Figures 9-17 and 9-18**). Absent the proposed actions, the Hudson River and Hudson River Park, including the Holland Tunnel ventilation structure at the west end of Pier 34, will remain visual resources in the study area as views to these visual resources will remain available from existing vantage points. Because of the extent and expanse of the Hudson River and the Hudson River Park, these visual resources will continue to exist in the context of the changing built environment of the study area. The No Action development will contribute new buildings

to the context of these visual resources, with the tall tower at the North Site being substantially taller than the buildings that will be developed on the Center and South Sites. Although these new buildings will change the context of nearby visual resources, these changes will not be adverse. The other visual resources in the study area will not be affected by the No Action buildings as they are away from the development site and do not have a meaningful visual relationship with the development site due to distance and intervening buildings.

E. THE FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

See **Figures 9-19 through 9-21** for a roof plan, ground floor plan, and section of the development site in the With Action condition. **Figures 9-22 through 9-24** are illustrative renderings of the proposed development, including the North Site and the publicly accessible open space that would be created on the platform spanning West Houston Street. **Figures 9-25 through 9-30** show comparative No Action and With Action illustrative views of the development site. **Figures 9-31 and 9-32** are comparative No Action and With Action illustrative views of the development site with an office building on the South Site.

This analysis considers the maximum building envelope that could be developed with the proposed actions. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the South Site building could contain either hotel or office use, and the EIS analyses are generally based on hotel use as a more conservative assumption. If office use were to be developed on the South Site, it is expected that the new office building would be an approximately 144-foot-tall, nine-story office building (see **Figures 9-31 and 9-32**). The South Site office building would have the same footprint as the approximately 240-foot-tall hotel building that is analyzed in this chapter. The redevelopment of the South Site with an office building would result in a lower-height building than the proposed South Site hotel tower that utilizes the maximum building envelope; however, with either building, the massing at the base would be similar. In both scenarios, the building would have a primary entrance opening into a pick-up/drop-off area from the east-west driveway to the north. Further, the east-west driveway between the Center and South Sites that would be created in either scenario would break down the massing of the new buildings by establishing a physical and visual separation between the Center and South Site buildings. Therefore, the redevelopment of the South Site with a lower-height office building is not considered further as it would result in similar changes to urban design and visual resources as the proposed hotel building that is analyzed below, except that the height of the South Site building would be expected to be lower with office use.

DEVELOPMENT SITE

In the With Action condition, the buildings that would be developed with the proposed project would be built to the sidewalk maintaining a consistent streetwall (see **Figures 9-19 and 9-20**). Street trees would be added to the sidewalks adjacent to the development site, and the sidewalks on Washington Street adjacent to the development site would be widened, as described below. The buildings would be massed as towers rising from lower-height bases, with multiple setbacks at different heights at each façade. The setbacks would allude to the variety of building heights of nearby study area buildings. As currently envisioned by the private applicant, the building designs would incorporate elements of the industrial character of the site and historic warehouses in the surrounding area through the use of stone and brick contrasted with steel and glass, and large window openings. The private applicant also intends for many of the buildings' setbacks to have planted terraces, drawing connections to the Hudson River Park to the west.



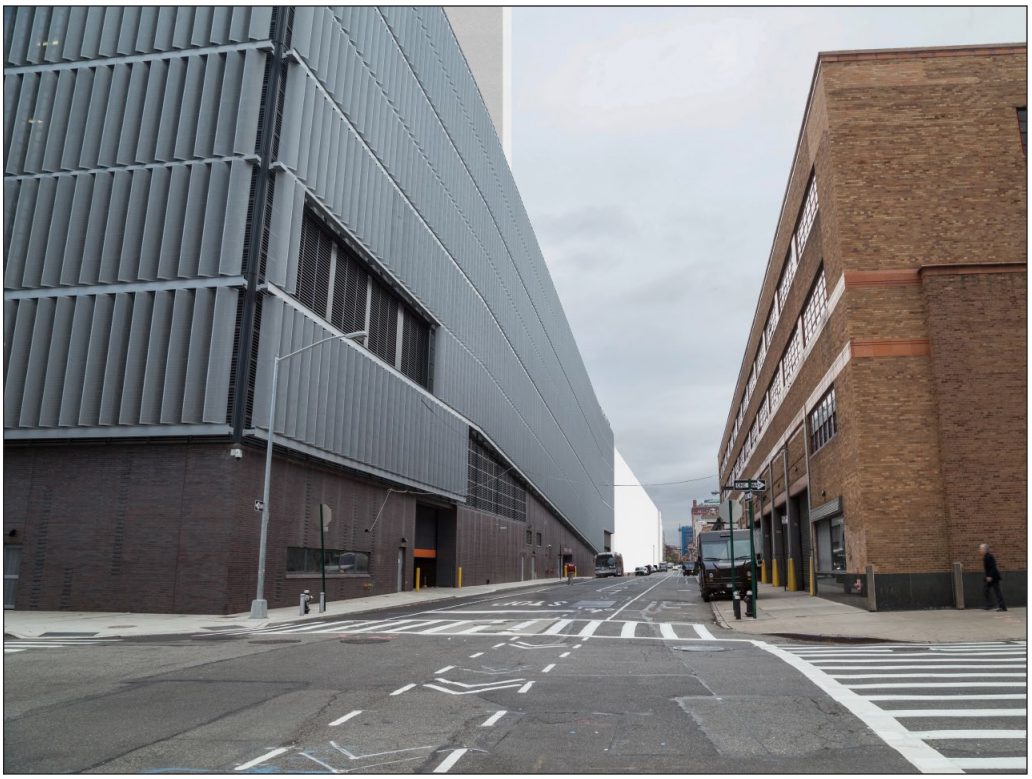
No Action View **38a**



With Action View with the South Site Office Building **38b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Northeast Views from
Route 9A/West Street near Spring Street
Figure 9-31



No Action View **39a**



With Action View with the South Site Office Building **39b**

SOURCE: Cook Fox
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action and With Action Comparative Views—
Northwest Views from
Washington Street near Spring Street
Figure 9-32

The North Site, which occupies the block north of West Houston Street, would be rezoned from M1-5 to C6-4. With the proposed project, it is assumed that the North Site would be redeveloped with residential towers with a height of approximately 360 feet to the roof of the east tower[1] and approximately 430 feet to the roof of the west tower; retail would be in the base of the buildings. In contrast, in the No Action condition the North Site will be redeveloped with an approximately 630-foot-tall slab-like hotel tower rising without setbacks from an approximately 110-foot-tall base containing offices and retail. With the proposed project the North Site is expected to be redeveloped with an approximately 734,600-gsf building, with approximately 579,600 gsf of residential floor area, including both market-rate units and affordable senior units. The North Site would also include approximately 100,000 gsf of retail uses on the ground, mezzanine, and second floors and approximately 55,000 gsf of parking. The North Site building would have residential entrances on Clarkson and Washington Streets and a vehicular entrance on Route 9A/West Street (see **Figures 9-19 through 9-22**). The retail uses would contribute to the pedestrian experience along the sidewalks adjacent to the North Site as the buildings would have glass that would provide transparency at the ground floor.

A new approximately 20,750-sf outdoor publicly accessible open space would be created on the platform spanning West Houston Street. The existing platform would be modified to create large openings that would allow daylight to reach the street level, enhancing the experience of pedestrians and drivers on West Houston Street. These openings in the platform would also provide pedestrians with views to the upper floors of the new buildings on the North and Center Sites. Public access to the open space would be from the southeast and southwest corners of the North Site (see **Figures 9-19 through 9-21** and **Figures 9-23 and 9-24**). In contrast, in the No Action condition, the platform would remain a solid mass that would maintain shadows on the street and sidewalks in this area, and the open space would not be publicly accessible. In either case, West Houston Street would remain a busy, well-trafficked thoroughfare as it is today.

The Center Site includes the portion of the development site that extends approximately 340 feet south of the midline of West Houston Street. With the proposed actions, the Center Site would be rezoned from M2-4 to C6-3 to allow development of two primarily residential buildings with heights of approximately 320 feet to the roof of the west building and approximately 240 feet to the roof of the east building. The west building's tallest component would be a tower at the southwest portion of the Center Site, oriented along Route 9A/West Street. The remainder of the building would be lower in height, approximately 106 feet tall. The Center Site would provide approximately 754,500 gsf of residential floor area, including both market rate and affordable units. There would also be approximately 60,000 gsf of retail uses on the cellar, ground, mezzanine, and second floors. The Center Site would also contain cellar-level parking (see **Figures 9-19 through 9-21**). Residential entrances would be on West Houston and Washington Streets, and the east-west driveway between the Center and South Sites, as described below. The Center Site would have ground floor retail that would have entrances on West Houston Street. As currently envisioned by the private applicant, the ground floor façade materials, including glass (for transparency), along with active uses in the buildings, would improve the pedestrian experience of the Center Site.

[1] Unless otherwise noted, the building heights of the No Action and With Action buildings included in this analysis are the roof heights. These heights do not include the height to the top of the mechanical bulkheads.

Between the Center and South Sites would be a new east-west driveway that would extend between Washington and Route 9A/West Streets. The driveway would provide access to the Center Site and South Site buildings (see **Figures 9-19 through 9-21**).

The South Site would be rezoned from M2-4 to M1-5. It is assumed that the South Site would be redeveloped with an approximately 240-foot-tall building that would contain approximately 229,700 gsf of hotel (or office) space and approximately 41,400-gsf event space. The tower portion of the building would rise from an approximately 113-foot-tall base with a primary entrance opening into a pick-up/drop-off area from the east-west driveway to the north. The South Site would also contain cellar-level parking. The building's base would be similar to height and bulk to the DSNY building immediately to the south. In contrast, in the No Action condition, the Center and South Sites would be redeveloped with a new five-story building of a similar bulk and mass to the existing building on the development site. Therefore, with the proposed actions, the buildings that would be developed on the Center and South Sites, and the east-west driveway between them, would be a marked contrast to the No Action condition (see **Figures 9-19 through 9-21**). The east-west driveway between the Center and South Sites would break down the massing of the new development by establishing a physical and visual separation between the Center and South Site buildings.

With the proposed project, the sidewalks adjacent to the development site would continue to vary in width, and the sidewalks on Route 9A/West Street, Clarkson Street, and West Houston Street would remain as in existing conditions. In the With Action condition, the Washington Street sidewalks adjacent to the development site would be widened to approximately 13-and-a-half-feet wide (see **Figure 9-20**). In contrast, in the No Action condition, the Washington Street sidewalks will remain approximately five- to five-and-a-half feet wide. In addition, in the With Action condition, street trees would be planted in the sidewalks adjacent to the development site. In contrast, in the No Action condition no street trees would be planted because the development site would remain zoned as a manufacturing district. Therefore, the increased sidewalk widths and the addition of street trees would improve the pedestrian experience in the With Action condition. Nevertheless, as in the No Action condition, the streets around the development site would continue to be busy, with West and West Houston Streets being heavily trafficked, and Washington Street carrying truck traffic for the UPS, FedEx, and DSNY facilities.

The transfer of floor area within the Special Hudson River Park District made possible by the proposed actions would enable the critical repair and rehabilitation of Pier 40's infrastructure in Hudson River Park. The rehabilitation of the pier would improve the physical appearance of the pier.

In both the No Action and With Action conditions, the proposed project would replace the former St. John's Terminal Building with new mixed-use buildings that would enliven the surrounding area with active uses. In the No Action condition, the North Site would be redeveloped with an approximately 678-foot-tall hotel tower compared with the approximately 430-foot-tall and 360-foot-tall residential buildings that would be developed in the With Action condition. In contrast, the North Site buildings that would be developed in the With Action condition would be shorter than the No Action tower and would have multiple setbacks that would relate to the heights, forms, massings of nearby buildings. Although the proposed project would redevelop the Center and South Sites with new buildings that would be taller than the No Action building, the proposed buildings, like the North Site buildings, would have forms and massings that would be similar to other nearby buildings. The proposed project would also include a publicly accessible open space on the platform over West Houston Street, in contrast to

the private open space that would be created in the No Action condition. This visual east-west connection would contribute to the pedestrian experience of the development site compared to the conditions that would be created in the No Action scenario. Therefore, the proposed actions would not have significant adverse impacts on the urban design of the development site but would enhance the pedestrian experience by creating visual connections through the site and through a new publicly accessible open space over West Houston Street.

STUDY AREA

URBAN DESIGN

As described above, the proposed project would have beneficial streetscape effects in the areas closest to the development site as the proposed development would contribute active ground floor uses to the surrounding area, in contrast with the No Action condition, the proposed project would include a publicly accessible open space on the platform above West Houston Street with openings allowing sunlight to reach the street level. Further, the east-west driveway between the Center and South Sites that would be created in the With Action condition would break down the massing of the new development on the Center and South Sites compared to the No Action condition where no break in the massing between the Center and South Sites would be created. These urban design components of the proposed project would enhance the pedestrian experience of the development site by creating active ground floor uses, a publicly accessible open space above West Houston Street, and visual east-west connections to the Hudson River and Hudson River Park. Although the proposed buildings would include components that would be taller and have different forms from other buildings in the study area, the proposed buildings would be designed to incorporate elements of the industrial warehouse area through the use of materials and the juxtaposition of lower height building components with taller components. In contrast, the No Action development would result in a tall, approximately 630-foot-tall tower that would rise from a low base. The No Action building on the North Site would be approximately 200 feet taller than the tallest of the proposed North Site buildings (approximately 430 feet tall) and its slab-like form would be dissimilar to study area buildings. Further, the other new buildings that would be developed in the With Action condition would also be substantially shorter than the approximately 630-foot-tall No Action building, ranging in height from approximately 200 to approximately 360 feet tall (see **Figures 9-25 through 9-30**).

Similar to the No Action development, the proposed new buildings in the With Action condition would not adversely affect the built environment's arrangement, appearance, or functionality. Both the No Action and With Action developments would have buildings that would be taller than other study area buildings except the 454-foot-tall Trump SoHo Hotel at the southeast edge of the study area. However, as described above, the proposed buildings would be designed to be contextual to the surrounding area, with irregular massing, varied setbacks, and changing heights. These design features, in contrast to the No Action tower, would help to minimize the perceived scale of these buildings (see **Figures 9-22 and 9-25 through 9-30**). Further, the new buildings that would be constructed in both the No Action and With Action conditions would contribute vitality to the pedestrian experience through new active uses at the ground floor levels of the new buildings. In addition, the juxtaposing heights and forms, break in the buildings' massing, new street trees, widened sidewalk on Washington Street, and visual connections through the development site at West Houston Street would be in keeping with the changing urban design character of the study area and would not adversely affect a pedestrian's experience of the urban design characteristics of the development site.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Occupying an existing city block, both the No Action and With Action developments would not obstruct any existing view corridors in the study area, including the view corridors on Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street (see **Figures 9-25 through 9-30**). With the proposed project, westward views on West Houston Street would be more open than in existing conditions, providing more views and visual access to the Hudson River Park and the Hudson River. The Route 9A/West Street and Washington Street view corridors would include views to the new buildings on the development site and would continue to provide southward views to the tall buildings in Lower Manhattan. In addition, in contrast to the No Action condition, with the proposed project new street trees would be planted on the sidewalks adjacent to the development site and the sidewalks on Washington Street adjacent to the development site would be widened (see **Figure 9-20**). Therefore, the widened sidewalks and the new street trees would enhance the Washington Street view corridor. Expansive views of the Hudson River, the Hudson River Park and Holland Tunnel ventilation structure at the west end of Pier 34, and the New Jersey waterfront would remain available in the Route 9A/West Street view corridor. In these view corridors, in both the No Action and With Action conditions, the new buildings on the North Site would be substantially taller than other study area buildings. In addition, the proposed buildings—compared to the new building in the No Action condition—on the Center and South Sites would change the context of some views on these view corridors. Views to more distant taller buildings would remain available in both conditions (see **Figures 9-25 through 9-30**). However, although both the No Action and With Action developments would introduce new buildings to these view corridors, these changes would not adversely affect the pedestrian experience of these view corridors, as existing views would be maintained.

The other view corridors and visual resources in the study area do not have a meaningful visual or contextual relationship with the development site and, therefore, would not be affected by the proposed project. Therefore, neither the No Action nor With Action developments would adversely affect the pedestrian experiences of view corridors in the study area.

In both the No Action condition and with the proposed project, views to visual resources—tall buildings in Lower Manhattan, the Hudson River, Hudson River Park, including the Holland Tunnel ventilation structure at the west end of Pier 34, and the New Jersey waterfront—would remain available from existing vantage points as the proposed project would be developed on an existing block. In addition, these visual resources exist in the context of the changing built environment of the study area. In both the No Action and With Action conditions, the other visual resources in the study area would not be affected by the new buildings on the development site as the visual resources are located away from the development site and do not have a meaningful visual relationship with the site due to distance and intervening buildings. Therefore, the new buildings that would be constructed on the development site, in either the No Action or With Action condition, would not adversely affect visual resources in the study area.

Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse impacts to view corridors or visual resources in the study area. ✷