RIVER RING
Chapter 16: Public Health

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter assesses the reasonable worst-case development scenario's (RWCDS) effect on public health. As defined by the 2020 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, public health is the organized effort of society to protect and improve the health and well-being of the population through monitoring; assessment and surveillance; health promotion; prevention of disease, injury, disorder, disability, and premature death; and reducing inequalities in health status. The goal of CEQR with respect to public health is to determine whether adverse impacts on human health may occur as a result of a proposed project and, if so, to identify measures to mitigate such effects.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* states that a public health assessment is not necessary for most projects. Where no significant adverse unmitigated impacts are found in other CEQR analysis areas—such as air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, or noise—no public health analysis is warranted. If, however, an unmitigated adverse impact is identified in any of these other CEQR analysis areas, the lead agency may determine that a public health assessment is warranted for that specific technical area.

As outlined in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Proposed Actions include a City map change, a zoning map amendment, a zoning text amendment, a zoning authorization, a zoning certification, and a zoning Special Permit for a large Scale general development (LSGD), which would facilitate the construction of an approximately 1.336 million gross square foot ("gsf") mixed-use development (the "Proposed Development") containing approximately 1.12 million gsf of residential space[1] (approximately 1,250 rental units, of which approximately 313 units would be affordable), 50,000 gsf of community facility space, 83,000 gsf of commercial space (including 60,000 gsf of office and 23,000 gsf of local retail), and approximately 83,000 gsf of below-grade parking (up to 250 accessory attended parking spaces), as well as approximately 126,308 sf (2.9 acres) of new waterfront public space (plus 2.32 acres of accessible in-river space and 0.86 acres of intertidal area).[2] In addition, as part of the RWCDS, a non-Applicant owned Projected Development Site at 230 Kent Avenue (Block 2362, Lot 1) is expected to be improved with a three-story, approximately 20,223 gsf mixed-use light industrial, commercial and community facility building as a result of the proposed zoning change.

As described in the relevant analyses of this EIS, the Proposed Actions would not result in any unmitigated significant adverse water quality, air quality (operational and construction-related), or operational noise impacts, and, with the establishment of an (E) designation (E-636) as part of the Proposed Actions, no unmitigated significant adverse impacts would occur in the area of hazardous materials. However, the Proposed Actions have the potential to result in unmitigated temporary significant adverse construction-

[1] Residential gsf includes approximately 70,000 sf of amenity space as a combined total for both towers.

[2] The beach is designed to provide secondary contact recreation access, and per NYS Department of Health regulations, swimming will be prohibited. Signage will be provided on-site to indicate that swimming is prohibited.

related noise impacts at nearby sensitive receptors, as presented in Chapter 21, "Unavoidable Adverse Impacts."

B. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

An assessment was conducted based on the methodology set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, and determined that the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact related to public health. The Proposed Actions are not expected to result in unmitigated significant adverse impacts in the following technical areas that contribute to public health: operational air quality, construction-related air quality, operational noise, water quality, or hazardous materials. The Proposed Actions would result in temporary, unmitigated significant adverse construction-related noise impacts. However, during construction associated with the Proposed Actions, none of the nearby receptors would experience prolonged exposure to noise levels above 85 dB(A) or episodic and unpredictable exposure to short-term impacts of noise at high decibel levels. As such, the Proposed Actions are not anticipated to cause excessively high chronic noise exposure and, therefore, are not expected to result in a significant adverse public health impact related to noise.

C. PUBLIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT – CONSTRUCTION NOISE

As described in Chapter 18, "Construction," the construction noise impact analysis identified potentially significant adverse impacts at six residential or mixed-use buildings, two commercial buildings and one open space in the surrounding area. Construction associated with the Proposed Actions would be required to follow the requirements of the New York City Noise Control Code) for construction noise control measures. Specific noise control measures may include a variety of source controls, path controls, and receiver controls and will be described in a noise mitigation plan required under the New York City Noise Control Code. While the incorporation of feasible and practicable mitigation measures will continue to be explored between the DEIS and FEIS, they are not expected to completely eliminate the significant adverse construction noise impact. Therefore, predicted noise levels due to construction-related activities associated with the Proposed Actions would result in increased noise levels that would exceed the *CEQR Technical Manual* impact criteria.

Assessment

The *CEQR Technical Manual* construction noise impact thresholds are based on quality of life considerations and not on public health considerations. In terms of public health, significance is not determined based on the incremental change in noise level, but is based principally upon the magnitude of noise level and duration of exposure. Noise in and around homes may decrease quality of life by disrupting sleep or interfering with conversations. Prolonged exposure to levels above 85 dBA will eventually harm hearing.

Although the *CEQR Technical Manual* thresholds for significant adverse construction noise impacts are predicted to be exceeded at certain locations during construction, these exceedances would not constitute a significant adverse public health impact. An impact found pursuant to a quality of life framework does not definitively imply that an impact will exist when the analysis area is evaluated in terms of public health. The predicted noise impacts identified would not constitute chronic exposure to high levels of noise because of the short term and intermittent nature of construction noise as described in Chapter 18, "Construction." The predicted construction noise levels occur over a limited duration during

the construction period based on the amount and type of construction work occurring in the construction work areas.

As discussed in Chapter 18, "Construction," the noise analysis results indicate that exterior noise levels would not exceed 85 dBA at any receptors. Elevated noise levels would be associated with specific pieces of equipment that would not operate continuously during construction. Noise levels during hours or days in which those pieces of equipment would not be operating would be lower than the peak analysis period noise levels determined as part of the construction noise analysis. Furthermore, construction activity would typically be limited to a single shift during the day with limited exceptions that would require variances from the New York City Department of Buildings, leaving the remainder of the day and evening unaffected by construction noise. Since the construction noise levels would fluctuate and would not occur constantly throughout the construction period, which itself is limited in duration, it would not be categorized as "chronic." Consequently, construction of the Proposed Development would not have the potential to result in chronic exposure to high levels of noise, and is therefore not expected to result in a significant adverse public health impact related to noise.