7 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

7.1 Introduction

Per the 2021 *CEQR Technical Manual*, historic and cultural resources include both architectural and archaeological resources. Archaeological resources include physical remains, usually subsurface, such as burials, foundations, artifacts, wells, or privies of the prehistoric, Native American, or historic periods. Architectural resources generally include historically important buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts including:

- Buildings and properties designated as a New York City Landmark (NYCL) or historic district by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), or buildings and properties calendared for NYCL consideration;
- Properties listed on the State/National Register of Historic Places (S/NR) or contained within a district listed on or formally determined eligible for S/NR listing;
- Properties recommended by the New York State Board for listing on the S/NR, National Historic Landmarks (NHL) designated by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior; and
- Properties not identified by one of the programs listed above, but that meet their eligibility requirements by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

The Proposed Actions would enable the development of approximately 866,017 gross-square-feet (gsf) of floor area within three buildings across two development sites in the Crotona Park East neighborhood of the Bronx, Community District 9. The Proposed Actions would also new public open space and provide new public access to the Bronx River and Starlight Park through shore public walkways and upland connections.

7.2 Principal Conclusions

The Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact to historic and cultural resources. The Proposed Actions would facilitate development on three development sites.

Architectural Resources

As indicated in an Environmental Review letter from LPC dated 12/1/2021, attached at Appendix E, the Proposed Rezoning Area does not contain any architectural historic or cultural resources.

Views of the Study Area's three historic architectural resources would continue to be available in the With-Action Condition. The Proposed Actions would introduce new publicly accessible space along the waterfront that would allow for views of the Study Area's historic and cultural resources. These views from the waterfront would not exist in the No-Action Condition (and do not currently exist).

Chapter 6, "Shadows," demonstrates there would be no significant shadow impacts to historic and cultural resources in the Study Area. Chapter 8, "Urban Design and Visual Resources," shows that the viewing context of historic resources in the Study Area would not be altered in the With-Action, and would not result in significant adverse visual impacts to historic and cultural resources in the Study Area. Accordingly, the Proposed Actions would not have the potential to result in significant adverse historic and cultural resource impacts and no further assessment is warranted. Chapter 18, "Construction," shows that there would be no adverse construction related historic resources impacts as all projected-generated construction would occur at least 90 feet from any architectural historic resource

Archaeological Resources

The Proposed Rezoning Area is shown within in an "archaeological buffer area" on the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (SHPO)'s Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS). New development on the development sites would require ground disturbance in an area where soils may have not been previously disturbed. As indicated in an Environmental Review letter from LPC dated 12/1/2021, attached at Appendix E, the Proposed Rezoning Area is not archeologically sensitive. Therefore, no further consideration of archaeological resources is warranted.

7.3 Methodology

Eligibility Criteria

For a resource to be eligible for State or National registers of historic places, the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture must be present in a district(s), a site(s), a building(s), a structure(s), or an object(s) that possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

A. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

B. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

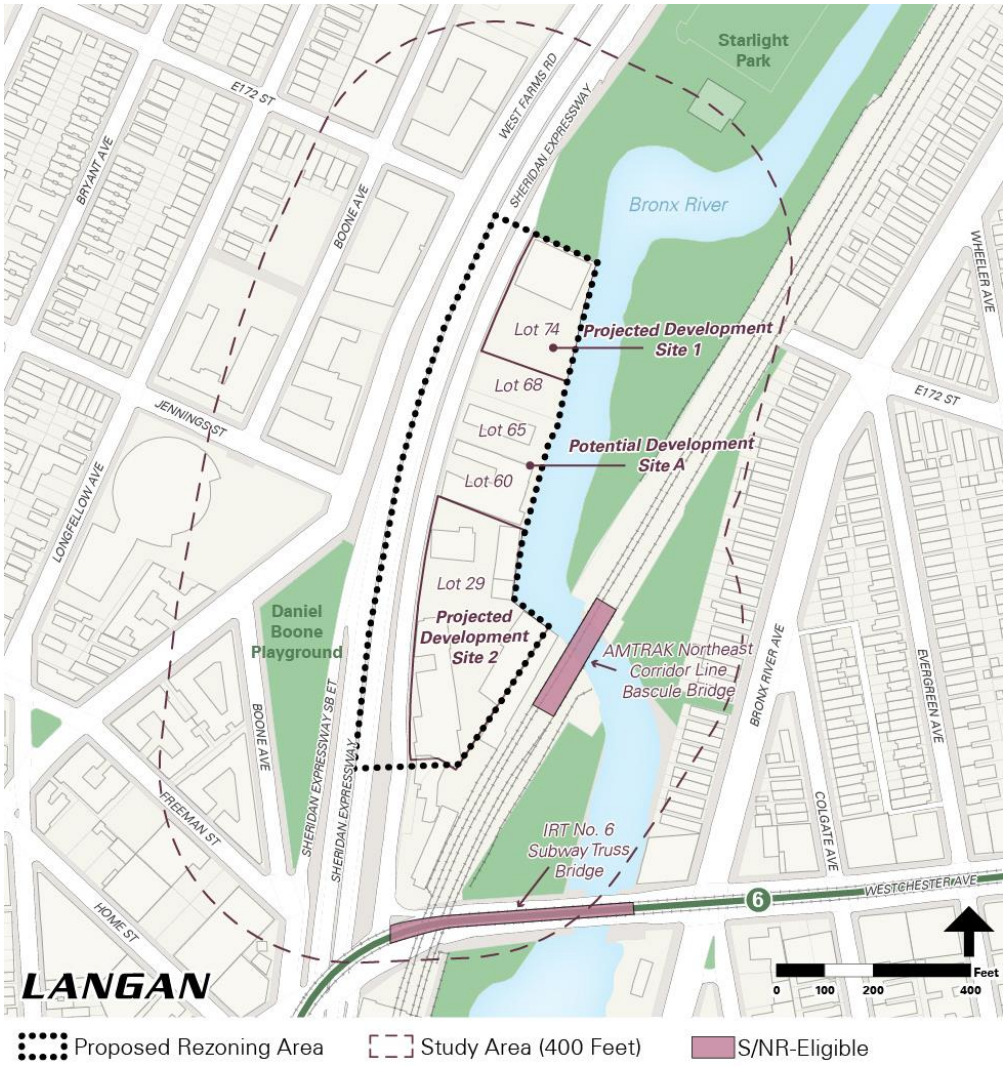
C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. Has yielded – or may be likely to yield – information important in prehistory or history.

Architectural Resources

The first step to evaluate if a proposed project may affect a historic resource is to consider what geographic area the project might affect and identify historic resources within that area. To assess potential direct and indirect impacts to architectural resources, the *CEQR Technical* Manual recommends an architectural resources study area this is within 400 feet of the Rezoning Area (the "Study Area"). Figure 7-1 shows the Historic and Cultural Resources Study Area established for this project.

Figure 7-1: Historic and Cultural Resources



Once the study area is established, the historic and cultural resources in the study area are inventoried and described. The impact of the project on these resources is then analyzed and compared to CEQR impact criteria to determine if the project could result in significant adverse historic and cultural impacts. If the project could result in a significant

adverse historic and cultural resources impact, a discussion on potential mitigation measures and alternatives is warranted.

As indicated in an Environmental Review letter from LPC dated 12/1/2021, attached at Appendix E, the Proposed Rezoning Area does not contain any architectural historic or cultural resources.

Architectural resources within the Study Area were inventoried using SHPO's Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) database and LPC's Discover NYC Landmarks Map. Photographs of the historic resources in the Study Area were captured during site reconnaissance conducted on 2 October 2020.

Archaeological Resources

For archaeological resources, the study area is the area of ground disturbance that would be disturbed by project-generated construction. The Proposed Rezoning Area is within in an "archaeological buffer area" on SHPO's CRIS. New development on the development sites would require ground disturbance in an area where soils may have not been previously disturbed.

Archaeological resources are typically assessed for projects that would result in in-ground disturbance. The Proposed Actions would involve in-ground disturbance, which is why an archaeological assessment is warranted.

As indicated in an Environmental Review letter from LPC dated 12/1/2021, attached at Appendix E, the Proposed Rezoning Area is not archeologically sensitive. Therefore, no further consideration of archaeological resources is warranted.

Impact Criteria

Federal regulations define an adverse effect as the introduction of tangible or intangible elements that compromise or diminish the characteristics for which an historic or cultural resource has been determined significant. A project's effects on resources are compared to the No-Action Condition to assess impacts. The assessment asks three major questions:

1. would there be a physical change to the property?;
2. would there be a physical change to its setting, such as context or visual prominence (also known as indirect impacts)?; and
3. if there would be a physical change to the property or setting, is the change likely to alter or eliminate the significant characteristics of the resource that make it important?

For archaeological resources identified on the site of the proposed project, a significant adverse impact typically occurs if the project would disturb or destroy those resources. For architectural resources, a significant adverse impact may occur if the project would affect the historically significant characteristics of a resource.

7.4 Assessment

Existing Conditions

Table 7-1 shows there are three historic and cultural resources in the Study Area, including two S/NR-eligible resources and one S/NR-undetermined resource. An S/NR-undetermined resource has not had its historic significance determined by SHPO. There are no S/NR-listed historic districts or buildings or LPC-designated resources or districts in the Proposed Rezoning Area or within the Study Area.

Table 7-1: Historic and Cultural Resources in the Study Area

Resource Name	S/NR-Eligible	S/NR-Undetermined
Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge	X	
IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge	X	
Westchester Avenue Bridge		X

Sources:
SHPO's Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS), accessed on December 14, 2021
LPC's Discover NYC Landmarks Online Map, accessed on December 14, 2021

Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge (S/NR-Eligible, USN: 00501.001362)

Shown in Photograph 7-1, the Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge is a steel railroad bridge over the Bronx River that was constructed in 1907. It is one of twelve bascule bridges in New York City and an example of an early 20th-century Scherzer-type bascule bridge. The Scherzer-type rolling-lift bascule was developed in the 1890s and has double leaves that rest on curved supports that roll in their tracks backwards and forwards to raise and lower the leaves. The bridge is eligible because it appears to meet Criterion C for listing the National Register of Historic Places (a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction) in the area of engineering.[1]

The Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge is east of the Proposed Rezoning Area and bisects Starlight Park. SHPO's resource evaluation from March 2005 indicates there are no sunlight-sensitive elements on the bridge.

[1] New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Resource Evaluation, March 24, 2005 (USN: 00501.001362), last accessed 15 December 2021. https://cris.parks.ny.gov/

Photograph 7-1: Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge



View northwest from the Bronx River near Westchester Avenue towards the Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge. Date captured: 2 October 2020.

IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge (S/NR-Eligible, USN: 00501.001363)

Shown in Photograph 7-2, the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge is an S/NR-eligible resource that spans the Bronx River and the Amtrak Northeast Corridor line. The Subway Truss is southeast of the Proposed Rezoning Area.

The IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge is a multiple-span steel truss bridge and was part of the IRT No. 6 subway viaduct constructed in 1920. It runs above and parallel to Westchester Avenue. The western span of the bridge over the Amtrak right-of-way is an example of a Pratt through-truss, while the eastern span, over the Bronx River is a Parker truss. The bridge also appears to meet eligibility Criterion C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in the area of engineering.[2]

The SHPO's resource evaluation from March 2005 indicates that the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge contains no sunlight sensitive elements.

Photograph 7-2: IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge



View west along Westchester Avenue towards Edgewater Road. The IRT No. Subway Truss Bridge can be seen at the center of the frame above Westchester Avenue. Date captured: 2 October 2020.

Westchester Avenue Bridge (S/NR-Undetermined, USN: 00501.000966)

Shown in Photograph 7-3, the Westchester Avenue Bridge spans the Bronx River along Westchester Avenue, and is directly beneath the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge. The Westchester Avenue Bridge is southeast of the Proposed Rezoning Area. The bridge has two vehicular travel lanes in each direction and a pedestrian sidewalk on both sides of the roadbed. The bridge is an undetermined historical resource – SHPO has not made a determination on whether the bridge may be eligible for listing on the state or national registers of historic places.

Photograph 7-3: Westchester Avenue Bridge



View south along the Bronx River towards the Westchester Avenue Bridge (lower bridge). The IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge runs above the Westchester Avenue Bridge. Date captured: 2 October 2020.

No-Action Condition

In the No-Action Condition, the Proposed Rezoning Area and the historic resources in the Study Area would continue as existing conditions. A one story, approximately 14,000-gsf automobile mechanic training facility would remain on Projected Development Site 1, and the buildings, garage, and open public parking facility would remain on Projected Development Site 2. Potential Site A would remain improved as a hotel, an open truck parking facility, and a vacant industrial building. The existing uses conform to the use requirements of M1 districts (the existing hotel was developed prior to the adoption of the M1 Hotels Text Amendment in 2018, and there is a "grandfathered" use).

With-Action Condition

The Proposed Actions would enable the development of one mixed-use building on Projected Development Site 1 and two mixed-use buildings on Projected Development Site 2. While there is no specific development proposal, the Proposed Actions could also facilitate the development of a two-tower building on Potential Development Site A. All new buildings would be up to 24 stories tall.

The Proposed Actions would not result in the physical alteration or disturbance of a historic architectural or archaeological resource because there are no historic resources on or adjacent to the development sites. The Proposed Actions also would not alter street alignments or render a publicly accessible space inaccessible to the public.

Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge

The Proposed Actions would not cause a direct effect to the Bascule Bridge, and the bridge would remain in its current condition in the With-Action Condition. Views of the bridge are largely from the Westchester Avenue Bridge and from points in Starlight Park; views of the bridge from these locations would not be affected, however, the "viewing context" may change with the introduction of new buildings and landscaping when viewed from some locations.

Currently, publicly accessible views of the Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge are largely obstructed through the Proposed Rezoning Area, with only the upper-most portions of the bridge visible from Sheridan Boulevard and discrete points further west. The Proposed Actions may further obstruct some long-range partial views of the bridge; however, new publicly accessible views would be made available from the proposed shore public walkway in the With-Action Condition. These new publicly accessible views would provide sweeping views of the Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge and the Bronx River from an area that is not currently accessible to the public, thereby improving the bridge's visibility over the No-Action Condition. Accordingly, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse historic and cultural resources impact to the Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge.

IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge

The Proposed Actions would not cause a direct effect to the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge. Views of the bridge would continue to be enjoyed by the public from locations such as Westchester Avenue, Starlight Park, and Concrete Plant Park.

Like the Amtrak Bascule Bridge, publicly accessible views of the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge from Sheridan Boulevard and points farther west are largely obstructed, with only the upper-most portions visible. Long-range views of the bridge may be further obstructed by project-generated development; however, new publicly accessible views would be made available from the proposed shore public walkway in the With-Action Condition. These new publicly accessible spaces would provide views of the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge and the Bronx River from an area that is not currently accessible to the public, thereby improving the bridge's visibility. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse historic and cultural resources impact to the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge.

Westchester Avenue Bridge

The Proposed Actions would not cause a direct effect to the Westchester Avenue Bridge. Views of the bridge would continue to be enjoyed by the public from locations such as Westchester Avenue, Starlight Park, and Concrete Plant Park.

Publicly accessible views of the Westchester Avenue Bridge from Sheridan Boulevard and points farther west are largely fully obstructed by existing development on the development sites and other intervening objects. In the With-Action Condition, new publicly accessible views may be made available from the proposed shore public walkway. These new publicly accessible areas would provide views of the Westchester Avenue Bridge and the Bronx River from an area that is not currently accessible to the public, thereby improving the bridge's visibility over the No-Action Condition. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in a direct significant adverse historical and cultural resources impact to the Westchester Avenue Bridge.

Architectural Resources Conclusion

The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to architectural resources within the Study Area. Although the Proposed Actions would introduce taller buildings than the No-Action Condition, as described in Chapter 6, "Shadows," there would be no significant adverse shadow impacts to the Study Area's historic resources. As described in Chapter 8, "Urban Design and Visual Resources," views of nearby historic resources would continue to be available for public enjoyment from other publicly accessible areas including along existing view corridors formed by the street pattern and from Starlight Park.

The Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge would not be directly affected by the Proposed Actions, and would remain as existing conditions in the With-Action Condition. New views would be made available from the proposed shore public walkway towards the bridge, and these views would incorporate the Bronx River. The bridge would also continue to be visible from Starlight Park and Westchester Avenue.

The IRT No. Subway Truss Bridge runs over the Westchester Avenue Bridge, and neither of these historic resources would be directly affected by the Proposed Actions and would remain as existing conditions in the With-Action Condition. Views of these resources would continue to be available from Westchester Avenue, Starlight Park, and along portions of the Study Area's street grid.

There would be no significant adverse urban design and visual resources impacts because there would continue to be views of the historical and cultural resources from a variety of locations in the Study Area. While the viewing context may change due to the introduction of new buildings, these contextual viewing changes are typical of new development in mature dense urbanized area such as Crotona Park East.

As described in Chapter 18, "Construction," all projected-generated construction would occur at least 90 feet from any architectural historic resource, and therefore there is no potential for the Proposed Actions to result in construction related historic resources impacts.