DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW DIVISION

Carl Weisbrod, *Director*
Department of City Planning

October 21, 2015

POSITIVE DECLARATION

Project Identification
550 Washington Street / Special Hudson River Park District
CEQR No. 16DCP031M
ULURP Nos. Pending
SEQRA Classification: Type I

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

550 Washington Street / Special Hudson River Park District

The applicants, the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) and SJC 33 Owner 2015 LLC, are requesting discretionary approvals (the "Proposed Actions") that would facilitate the redevelopment of the St. John's Terminal Building with a mix of residential and commercial uses, and public open space (the "Proposed Project") at 550 Washington Street (Block 596, Lot 1) (the "Development Site") in Manhattan Community District 2. The Development Site is zoned M1-5 and M2-4 and is located along Route 9A, south of Clarkson Street and intersected by West Houston Street, and is directly across from Pier 40 along the Hudson River.

The Proposed Actions require several approvals: a zoning text amendment, a zoning map amendment, two zoning special permits and a Chairperson's certification, as well as an action by Hudson River Park Trust.

The Proposed Actions include a proposal by DCP for a zoning text amendment to:

1. Establish the Special Hudson River Park District comprising Pier 40 and the Development Site. The text amendment would further define Pier 40 as the Granting Site and the Development Site as the Receiving Site in the special district. The special district would include provisions for a new special permit that, in accordance with a recent amendment to the Hudson River Park Act, would permit the transfer of floor area within the Special Hudson River Park District. The special permit would additionally allow specified bulk waivers and require that residences serve a variety of income levels on the Development

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Site. Under the proposed special district text, the uses and increased density permitted by the proposed zoning districts, described below, would not be applicable to the Development Site absent the grant of the special permit. The text amendment would also establish two Chairperson's Certifications to facilitate the transfer of floor area.

The Proposed Actions also include a proposal by SJC 33 Owner 2015 LLC for:

2. A Zoning Map amendment to map the Special Hudson River Park District comprising Pier 40 and the development site and to rezone the development site. The Zoning Map amendment would further rezone the portion of the development site north of West Houston Street from an M1-5 manufacturing zoning district to a C6-4 commercial zoning district (the "North Site"), which would permit residential use and increased density; rezone a portion of the development site south of West Houston Street from an M2-4 manufacturing zoning district to a C6-3 commercial zoning district the "Center Site"), which would also permit residential use and increased density; and rezone the remainder of the development site south of West Houston Street from an M2-4 manufacturing zoning district to an M1-5 manufacturing zoning district the "South Site"), which would permit hotel use but leave the existing permitted density unchanged.

3. A special permit pursuant to the proposed Special Hudson River Park District to permit the transfer of 200,000 square feet of floor area from Pier 40 to the Development Site and permit certain bulk waivers on the Development Site. Under the proposed special district text, the uses and increased density permitted by the proposed C6-4, C6-3 and M1-5 zoning districts, described below, would not be applicable to the Development Site absent the grant of the special permit.

4. A special permit pursuant to the Manhattan Core parking regulations (ZR Section 13-45 and 13-451) for additional accessory parking.

5. A Chairperson's certification pursuant to the proposed Special Hudson River Park District to facilitate the transfer of floor area.

In addition to the approvals described above, the Proposed Project also requires an action by the Hudson River Park Trust. The Hudson River Park Trust must conduct a Significant Action process as required by the Hudson River Park Act, Chapter 592 of the Laws of 1998 ("the Act") before its Board of Directors can approve the sale of the defined amount of floor area. Further, before the Board can approve the sale, it must also comply with SEQRA and adopt SEQRA Findings.

It is expected that there will be a Restrictive Declaration in connection with the Proposed Project, which would govern the Proposed Project's development.

The Development Site is currently developed with the existing St. John's Terminal Building, a four-story tall brick building, except for a portion that spans over West Houston Street, which is three stories tall. While the portion of the building north of West Houston Street is largely vacant, the southern portion is occupied by commercial tenants (office, back office and communications)

and is also used as temporary event space (fashion shows, exhibits, etc.). Under the Proposed Actions, the existing building would be demolished and replaced with five new buildings.

The Proposed Actions would facilitate a proposal by SJC 33 Owner 2015 LLC to construct a mixed-use development of 1,961,200 gross square feet to include residential, hotel, retail and event space uses. The full build out of the Proposed Project is assumed to include approximately 1,334,100 gross square feet (approximately 1,586 units) of residential uses, including up to 476 permanently affordable units serving a variety of income levels (in total, 30% of units and 25% of residential zoning floor area will be affordable); 160,000 gross square feet of retail uses; 229,700 gross square feet of hotel space; 41,400 gross square feet of event space; 14,200 square feet of publicly accessible open space; and 886 parking spaces.

For the environmental review, two reasonable worst case development scenarios will be considered. Under the first scenario, the Development Site would be redeveloped with the Proposed Project as described above. Under the second scenario, the Development Site would be redeveloped as above, except the amount of retail use would increase from 160,000 gross square feet to 255,000 gross square feet, of which 104,000 gross square feet would be big box retail, and the number of parking spaces would be reduced from 886 spaces to 412 spaces. Absent the Proposed Actions, the Applicant would develop the site with a 1,152,000 gross square foot development including office, hotel, retail, event space and 176 parking spaces.

The analysis year for full build out is 2024. The proposed project may be phased and development of the three sites may take place in any order; therefore, the environmental review will also consider an interim build year if full development would result in significant adverse impacts requiring mitigation.

Statement of Significant Effect:

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

1. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning and public policy.

2. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to socioeconomic conditions.

3. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to community facilities.

4. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on open space resources.

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

6. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to historic and cultural resources.

7. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to urban design and visual resources.

8. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to natural resources.

9. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials.

10. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to water and sewer infrastructure.

11. The actions, as proposed, will not result in significant adverse impacts related to solid waste and sanitation services.

12. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts on energy.

13. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to transportation.

14. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts to air quality.

15. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts to greenhouse gas emissions.

16. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse noise impacts.

17. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse public health impacts.

18. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse impacts related to neighborhood character.

19. The actions, as proposed, may result in significant adverse construction-related impacts.

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

1. Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy – The Proposed Actions would alter existing land uses and zoning by allowing different uses than the current zoning permits.

2. Socioeconomic Conditions – The Proposed Actions could result in indirect residential

displacement.

3. Community Facilities – The Proposed Actions would not result in the direct displacement of any existing health care, fire department, or police department facilities nor would it create a sizeable new neighborhood where none existed before; therefore, assessment of health care facilities or fire and police protection services is not warranted. However, analyses would be warranted for public schools, libraries, and child care facilities as the proposed actions would introduce a new residential population to the area.

4. Open Space – The Proposed Actions would not directly affect existing open space resources. However, the proposed actions may have an indirect effect due to increased demand for use of publicly accessible spaces by the sizable new residential, worker and visitor population that would be introduced to the area by the Proposed Actions.

5. Shadows – The Proposed Actions would result in new buildings that may cast shadows on accessible open spaces and sunlight-sensitive architectural and/or natural resources in the area.

6. Historic and Cultural Resources – The Proposed Actions would result in in-ground disturbance on the Development Site, and therefore has the potential to affect archaeological resources that may be present. The existing building on the Development Site is not a known architectural resource; however, there are architectural resources in the surrounding area.

7. Urban Design and Visual Resources – The Proposed Actions and subsequent projected development would result in physical changes in the affected area beyond the bulk and form currently permitted as-of-right; therefore, these changes could affect a pedestrian's experience of public space and may alter the urban design character and visual resources of the surrounding area.

8. Natural Resources - The Development Site is located on the Hudson River waterfront and the Proposed Actions may potentially impact natural resources due to shadows being cast over Hudson River.

9. Hazardous Materials – The Proposed Actions could result in additional in-ground disturbance due to demolition of an existing building and construction of new buildings, which may have hazardous materials conditions.

10. Water and Sewer Infrastructure – The Proposed Actions would result in an incremental increase of more than 1,000 residential units in a combined sewer area in Manhattan, which could place additional demands on infrastructure, including water and sewer.

11. Solid Waste and Sanitation Service – The Proposed Project would not generate more than 50 tons/week solid waste and therefore, would not result in any significant adverse impacts to solid waste and sanitation services.

12. Energy – Although the Proposed Actions would not affect the transmission or generation of energy, and thus would not result any significant adverse energy impacts, the projected

amount of energy consumption during long-term operation resulting from the Proposed Actions should be assessed.

13. Transportation – The Proposed Actions would result in an increase in the number of vehicular trips and increase ridership on mass transit facilities. It also would affect pedestrian movements in the area due to the increased number of residents, workers and visitors to the area.

14. Air Quality – Increased demand for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and additional vehicular traffic introduced by the Proposed Actions may affect air quality.

15. Greenhouse Gas Emissions – The Proposed Actions would allow an increase in development density that may affect greenhouse gas emissions due to increased construction and operational activities with the projected development.

16. Noise – The Proposed Actions would increase the volume of traffic in the area, which could result in additional traffic noise and may have the potential to result in mobile source noise impacts.

17. Public Health – A public health assessment may be warranted at the discretion of the lead agency if an unmitigated significant adverse impact is identified in CEQR analysis areas, such as air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, or noise.

18. Neighborhood Character – The Proposed Actions has the potential to alter certain constituent elements of the affected area's neighborhood character, including socioeconomic conditions, urban design and visual resources, historic and cultural resources, transportation and noise.

19. Construction – Construction of the Proposed Project may result in construction related impacts.

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

Public Scoping:

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

A public scoping meeting will be held on Friday, November 20, 2015 at 10:00 am at the New York City Department of City Planning, Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street, New York, New York, 10007. Written comments will be accepted by the lead agency until the close of business on Monday, November 30, 2015.

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

Should you have any questions pertaining to this Positive Declaration, you may contact the Project Manager, Evren Ulker-Kacar, AICP, at (212) 720-3419.

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New York City Department of City Planning

10/21/15

Date