Chapter 8: Historic and Cultural Resources

A. INTRODUCTION

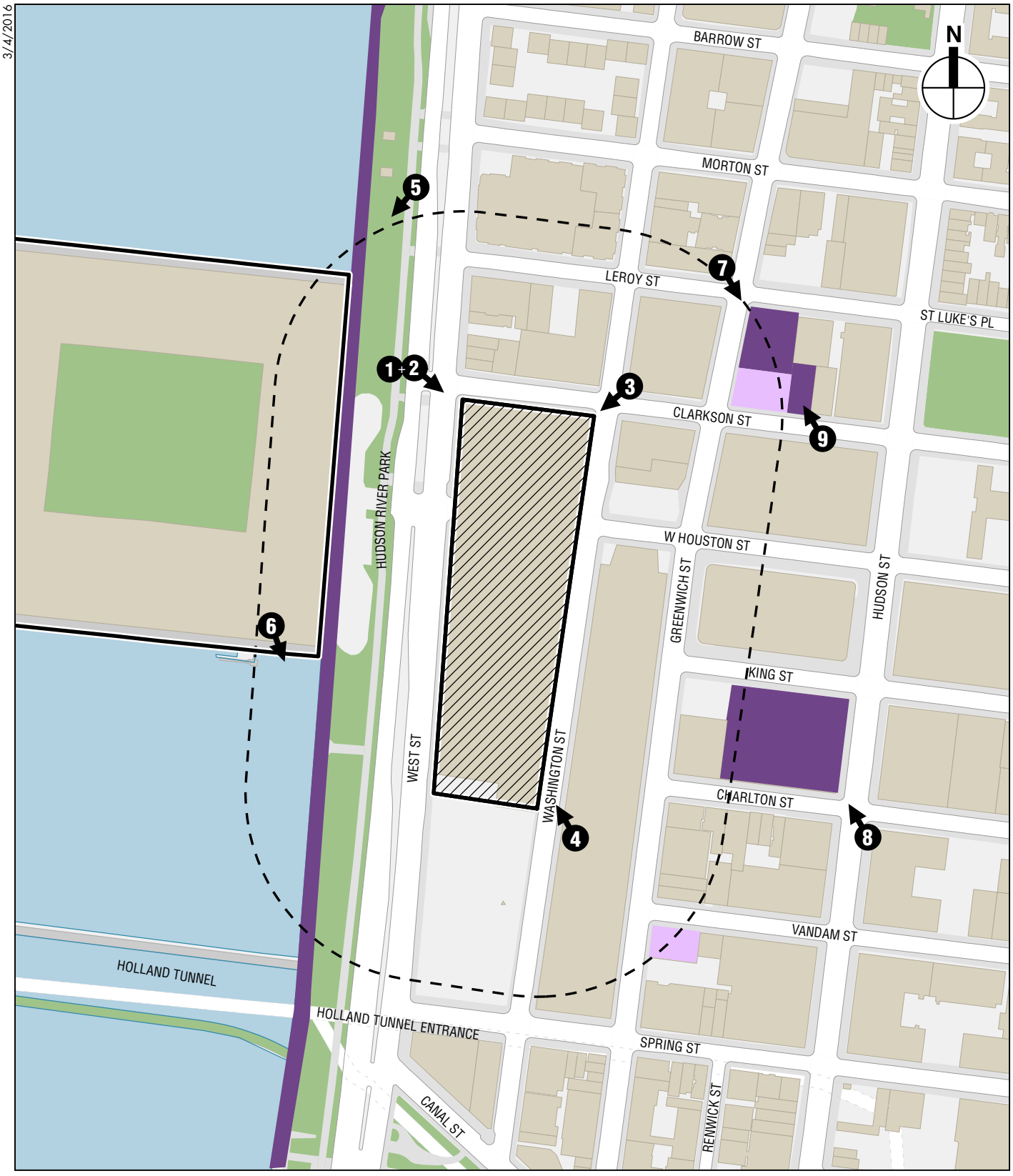
This chapter considers the potential of the proposed actions to result in significant adverse impacts to historic and cultural resources, which include archaeological and architectural resources. In a letter dated November 5, 2015, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) determined that the development site has no archaeological significance; therefore, no further consideration of archaeology is warranted (see **Appendix C, "Agency Correspondence"**).

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 8-1**).

The 2014 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* recommends that a historic and cultural resources assessment be performed if a proposed action would result in any of the following actions: in-ground disturbance; new construction, demolition, or significant physical alteration of any building, structure, or object; the change in scale, visual prominence, or visual context of any building, structure, or object or landscape feature; or the screening or elimination of publicly accessible views, even if no known historic resources are located nearby. Since the proposed actions have the potential to affect architectural resources, this analysis of historic and cultural resources has been prepared in accordance with CEQR guidelines, which require city agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic and cultural resources.

The North Site is proposed to be redeveloped with residential towers with a height of 360 feet to the roof of the east tower (not including mechanical bulkheads) and 430 feet to the roof of the west tower, and retail at the ground, mezzanine, and second floors, and accessory parking in the cellar. It would also include a new outdoor publicly-accessible open space on a platform spanning above West Houston Street. It is expected that the Center Site, immediately south of West Houston Street, would be developed with two primarily residential buildings with heights of 320 feet and 240 feet to the roof. The Center Site buildings would also include retail at the cellar, ground, mezzanine, and second floors. There would also be a new approximately 20,750-square-foot outdoor publicly-accessible open space on the platform spanning West Houston Street between the North and Center Sites. The existing platform would be modified to create large openings that would allow light and air to reach the street level.

Between the Center and South Sites would be a new east-west driveway that would extend between Washington and West Streets. A new hotel (or office) building with event space is being proposed on the South Site, with either a height of 240 feet to the roof (hotel) or 144 feet



Development Site

Granting Site

Study Area (400-foot boundary)

Known Architectural Resource

Potential Architectural Resource

0 400 FEET

1 *Photograph View Direction and Reference Number*

Historic and Cultural Resources Project Location

Figure 8-1

to the roof (office). It is assumed that the full build out would be completed by 2024. The proposed project intends to provide a financial benefit to the Hudson River Park to facilitate the repair and maintenance of Pier 40, which is along the Hudson River waterfront and across Route 9A/West Street from the development site.

The analysis presented below considers the maximum building envelope that could be developed with the proposed actions. The two scenarios analyzed 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 meaningfully affect the relationship of the proposed project to historic 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 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 building. If hotel use were to be developed on the South Site, that building would be approximately 240 feet tall. Therefore, the South Site with an office use would result in a lower-height building than a hotel use that would utilize the maximum building envelope. Therefore, the redevelopment of the South Site with a hotel use is considered in this chapter, since it would be a taller building than the office option and represents the more conservative approach to the analysis.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The proposed actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts to historic and cultural resources. The proposed project would not result in any significant adverse impacts to architectural resources on the development site as no historic architectural resources are located on the development site. Pier 40 is not a historic architectural resource. No architectural resources in the study area would be directly affected by the proposed project. The proposed project also would not result in any significant adverse indirect impacts to historic architectural resources in the study area because of distance, intervening buildings, and the lack of meaningful contextual relationships between the development site and study area architectural resources. In addition, because none of the historic architectural resources in the study area have sunlight-sensitive features, incremental shadow from the proposed project would not adversely affect any study area architectural resources.

B. METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

Architectural resources are defined as buildings, structures, objects, sites, or districts that are listed on or determined eligible for such listing on the State/National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR) based on the criteria defined below, National Historic Landmarks (NHLs), New York City Landmarks and New York City Historic Districts (NYCLs), and properties that have been found by LPC to appear eligible for designation, considered for designation ("heard") by LPC at a public hearing, or calendared for consideration at such a hearing (these are "pending" NYCLs).

The study area for architectural resources is determined based on the proposed action's area of potential effect on architectural resources, which accounts for both direct physical impacts and indirect impacts. Direct impacts include demolition of a resource and alterations to a resource that cause it to become a different visual entity. A resource could also be damaged by adjacent

construction activities such as blasting, pile driving, falling objects, subsidence, collapse, or damage from construction machinery unless proper protection measures are put in place. Adjacent construction is defined as any construction activity that would occur within 90 feet of a historic resource, as defined in the New York City Department of Building (DOB) *Technical Policy and Procedure Notice (TPPN) #10/88*.[1]

Indirect impacts are contextual or visual impacts that could result from project development. As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, indirect impacts can result from a change in scale, visual prominence, or visual context of any building, structure, or object or landscape feature; screening or elimination of publicly accessible views; or introduction of significant new shadows or significant lengthening of the duration of existing shadows on a historic landscape or on a historic structure if the features that make the resource significant depend on sunlight. Significant adverse direct or indirect impacts can occur if a project would cause a change in the quality of a property that qualifies it for S/NR listing or for designation as a NYCL.

To account for potential direct and indirect impacts, the architectural resources study area for the proposed actions has been defined following the guidelines of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, as being within 400 feet of the development site (see **Figure 8-1**).

CRITERIA AND REGULATIONS

Once the study area was determined, an inventory of officially recognized ("designated and eligible") architectural resources was compiled. Criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places are in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 63, and LPC has adopted these criteria for use in identifying architectural resources for CEQR review. Following these criteria, districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects are eligible for the National Register if they possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and: (1) are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history (Criterion A); (2) are associated with significant people (Criterion B); (3) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, possess high artistic value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (Criterion C); or (4) may yield information important in prehistory or history. Properties that are younger than 50 years of age are ordinarily not eligible, unless they have achieved exceptional significance. Official determinations of eligibility are made by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP).

In addition, LPC designates historically significant properties in New York City as NYCLs and/or Historic Districts, following the criteria provided in the Local Laws of the City of New York, New York City Charter, Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapter 3. Buildings, properties, or objects are eligible for landmark status when a part is at least 30 years old. Landmarks have a special character or special historical or aesthetic interest or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or nation. There are four types of landmarks: individual landmark, interior landmark, scenic landmark, and historic district.

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

Within the study area, architectural resources that were analyzed include properties determined eligible for S/NR listing (S/NR-eligible) and properties determined eligible for landmark status (NYCL-eligible). In addition, a survey of the study area was undertaken to identify any buildings that could meet S/NR and NYCL eligibility criteria ("potential architectural resources"). In an Environmental Review letter dated **February 26, 2016**, LPC commented on the list of architectural resources identified in the study area that were assessed in this chapter (see LPC comments in **Appendix C, "Agency Correspondence"**).

Once the architectural resources in the study area were identified, the proposed actions were assessed for both direct physical impacts and indirect visual and contextual impacts on architectural resources. The analysis presented in this chapter considers historic and cultural resources for existing conditions, the No Action condition, and the With Action condition for the development site and the study area for the analysis year of 2024, when the full build out of the proposed project is expected to be completed.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

DEVELOPMENT SITE

The four-story St. John's Terminal Building[2] was built in 1934 as a freight terminal and warehouse that served as the terminus for the elevated rail line that ran along the west side of Manhattan. This long rectangular building extends approximately 860 feet north-south and is approximately 280 feet wide at its north end and approximately 210 feet wide at its south end. The building has frontages on Route 9A/West Street, Washington Street, and Clarkson Street. The building's ground floor is interrupted at West Houston Street, which passes below the building's upper floors (see **Figures 8-2 and 8-3**).

The St. John's Terminal Building is constructed of steel and concrete and faced in buff-colored brick with few decorative elements. Brick infill and non-original windows characterize the facades. At the ground floor, the building's east and west facades have vehicular entrances opening onto the adjacent sidewalks. These vehicular entrances were originally continuous on the east and west facades, however, many have been altered with brick in-fill and the installation of non-original garage doors. The building's second floor originally connected to the elevated rail line at the north façade, with openings for trains to enter the terminal building. By 1960, the tracks connecting to the building were demolished. All of the openings have been infilled with windows and brick. The building's east and west façades at the second and third floors originally had regularly-spaced window openings. These window openings have been altered with non-original dark tinted plate glass windows, brick infill, and ventilation components. The building's fourth floor was a later addition and is faced in tan brick that contrasts the buff-colored brick of the original building. Due to the building's lack of architectural integrity, this building is not eligible for S/NR listing or NYCL designation. On November 5, 2015, LPC found that the development site has no architectural significance. Further, in 2002 the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) determined that the building is not S/NR-eligible.

[2] Information in this section is summarized from www.railroad.net/articles/railfanning/westside, accessed August 2015.



Eastward view to the northern portion of the St. John's Terminal Building's west façade **1**



Southeast view to the St. John's Terminal Building's west façade from Clarkson Street **2**

Historic and Cultural Resources
Development Site Photographs
Figure 8-2



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**

GRANTING SITE

Pier 40 is an approximately 15-acre, three-story pier structure with a hollow square design. Pier 40 is located over the Hudson River, directly west of the development site across Route 9A/West Street. The pier is located within Hudson River Park, and is under the jurisdiction of the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT). The pier was built between 1958 and 1962 and served passengers and cargo ships until 1983. Pier 40 currently contains a public parking facility, athletic fields and other recreational uses, and offices for HRPT. Sections of the pier's roof have deteriorated significantly and its steel piles are in need of repair (see View 5 of **Figure 8-4**). Due to Pier 40's lack of integrity, this building is not eligible for S/NR listing or NYCL designation.

STUDY AREA

KNOWN ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

The **Hudson River Bulkhead** (S/NR-eligible) extends from the Battery to West 59th Street along the Hudson River. The bulkhead and its associated structural systems were built between 1871 and 1936 by the New York City Department of Docks. Design of the bulkhead was the responsibility of George B. McClellan, a Civil War general, who became the first Engineer-in-Chief of the Department of Docks. The majority of the construction consisted of masonry walls on a variety of foundation systems, with quarry-faced ashlar granite block forming the visible face along most of the armored frontage. While some parts of the bulkhead are buried (i.e., adjacent to Battery Park City in Lower Manhattan), the section that extends through the study area is visible from the piers of Hudson River Park and the Hudson River (see View 6 of **Figure 8-5**).

The nine-story warehouse at **120 Leroy Street** (S/NR-eligible)[3] was constructed in 1917 from plans by Renwick, Aspinwall and Tucker (see View 7 of **Figure 8-5**). The building occupies a corner site, with frontages on Leroy Street and Greenwich Street. The building's windows have been replaced with single light, non-operable windows. The façades have been stuccoed and a large mural has been added to the north façade. Storefront windows and entrances have been added at the ground floor.

The 16-story building at **341 Hudson Street** (S/NR-eligible, NYCL-eligible)[4] is an Art Deco commercial and manufacturing building that was designed by Benjamin H. Whinston and built by Trinity Church in 1930 (see View 8 of **Figure 8-6**). The building's primary façade is on Hudson Street, with secondary facades on Charlton and King Streets. The building is faced in tan brick and has 10 window bays on its primary façade that contain narrow windows grouped in threes. Above the 13th floor are a series of setbacks on the building's Hudson Street façade that create turreted components that are detailed with limestone panels and Art Deco-style motifs. The building's original windows have previously been replaced and the ground floor storefronts are non-original.

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[3] The building at 120 Leroy Street was determined S/NR-eligible by LPC in comments issued on November 15, 2007 as part of the 2008 *Hudson Square North Rezoning EAS*.

[4] The building at 341 Hudson Street was determined S/NR-eligible and NYCL-eligible by LPC in comments issued on April 25, 2012 as part of the 2013 *Hudson Square Rezoning FEIS* and in an Environmental Review letter dated February 26, 2016 for the current project (see **Appendix C, "Agency Correspondence"**).



Southwest view from Hudson River Park to the north façade of Pier 40 **5**

Historic and Cultural Resources
Granting Site Photographs
Figure 8-4



Hudson River Bulkhead, portion visible from south of Pier 40 **6**



120 Leroy Street **7**

Historic and Cultural Resources
Known Architectural Resources
Figure 8-5



341 Hudson Street **8**



39 Clarkson Street **9**

Historic and Cultural Resources
Known Architectural Resources
Figure 8-6

Just outside the study area to the northeast is the six-story tan brick-faced building at **39 Clarkson Street** (NYCL-eligible[5]). It was built in 1910 as a warehouse from plans by Charles C. Haight. The building has a large metal awning at the ground floor that spans above three loading docks with rusticated arched openings. The building has three window bays, with a fire escape at the central window bay. The building's roof line is defined by a parapet wall with projecting pilasters (see View 9 of **Figure 8-6**). The words "KOPPER'S CHOCOLATE," are painted on the building's exposed east façade advertising the specialty chocolate company that occupied the building from circa 1986 through 2015.

The study area contains a portion of an area that was identified by LPC in the 2003 *Hudson Square Rezoning EIS* as a potentially eligible **Graphic Arts Historic District**. The identified historic district was determined by LPC to be both potentially S/NR-eligible and NYCL-eligible. To date, it has not been listed on the Registers, nor designated as a New York City Historic District. The potential district is bounded by Leroy, West Houston, Greenwich, Broome, and Varick Streets, and Seventh Avenue South. A small portion of the eastern edge of the study area is within the potential district boundary, including 341 Hudson Street, described above, and 375 Hudson Street. In addition, the 2013 *Hudson Square Rezoning FEIS*, which underwent environmental review by LPC as part of CEQR, also did not consider the Graphics Arts Historic District as a historic resource. As LPC has not pursued this potential historic district, including determining specific boundaries or contributing buildings, it is not assessed in this EIS.

POTENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

Two potential architectural resources were identified in the study area—43 Clarkson Street and 100 Vandam Street. In an Environmental Review letter dated February 26, 2016, LPC determined that these two buildings do not appear significant. Therefore, there are no potential architectural resources in the study area (see LPC comment letter in **Appendix C, "Agency Correspondence"**).

D. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

DEVELOPMENT SITE

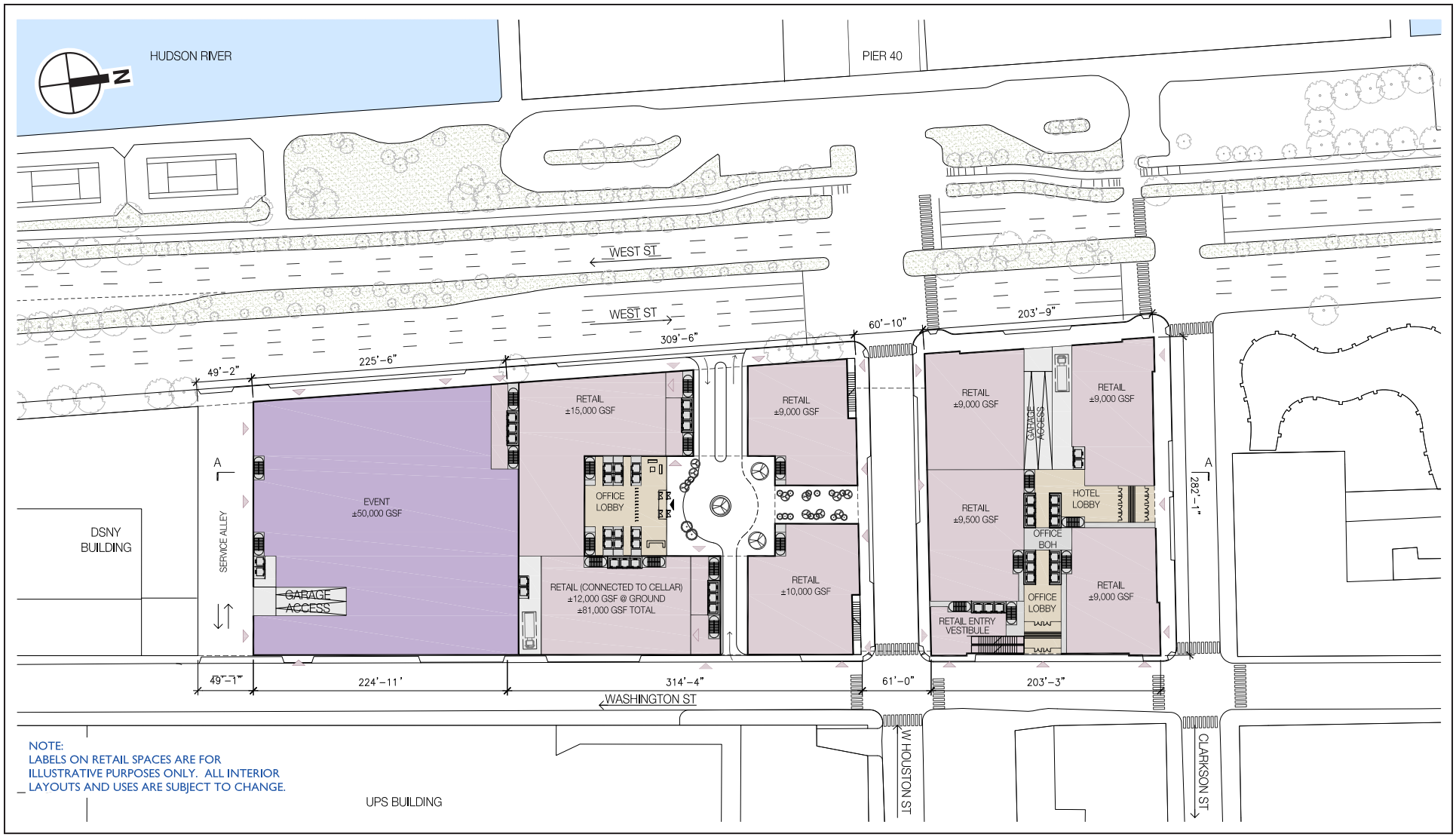
In the future without the proposed actions, the existing St. John's Terminal Building will be demolished. The North Site is expected to be redeveloped with a 48-story (approximately 630-foot-tall) hotel tower with offices and retail in the five-story base and accessory parking in the basement. This new building will have a glass and steel curtain wall. A private open space for the building tenants will be developed on the existing platform structure that spans above West Houston Street. The Center and South Sites will be redeveloped with a new three- and four-story building with approximately the same square footage as the existing building. It will contain offices, event space, and retail. Accessory parking will be located in the cellar (see **Figures 8-7 and 8-8**).

GRANTING SITE

Absent the proposed actions, Pier 40 will continue to operate as a public parking facility with athletic fields and other recreational amenities, and offices for HRPT. However, in the future

[5] The building at 39 Clarkson Street was determined NYCL-eligible by LPC in comments issued on November 15, 2007 as part of the 2008 *Hudson Square North Rezoning EAS*.

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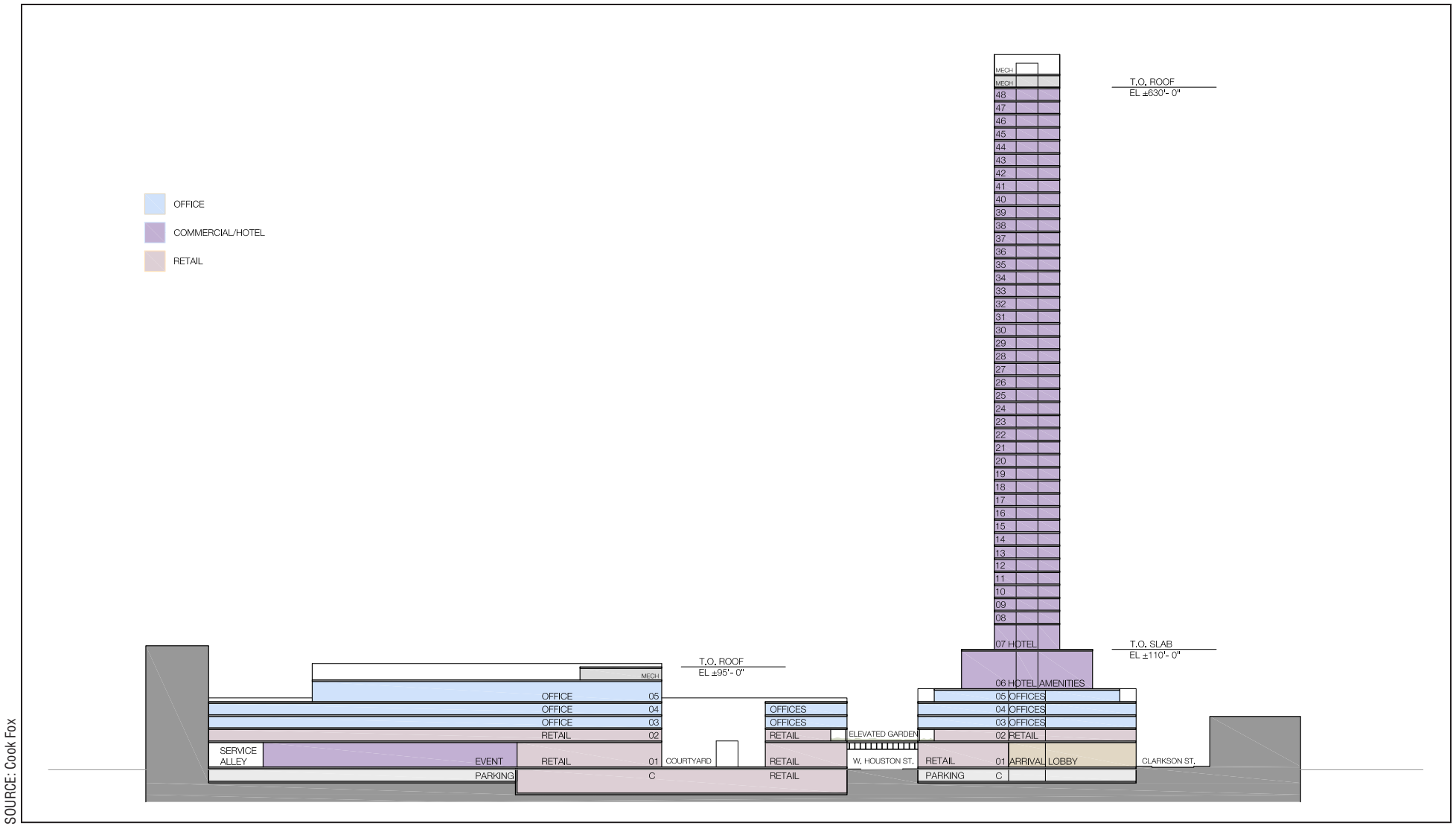


SOURCE: Cook Fox

550 WASHINGTON STREET

No Action Ground Floor Plan

Figure 8-7



SOURCE: Cook Fox

NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

No Action Section View Looking West

Figure 8-8

without the proposed actions, the condition of Pier 40—which is in need of critical infrastructure repairs to its roof, electrical infrastructure, and supportive piles—will continue to deteriorate due to lack the funding to make the needed renovations. Because Pier 40 is not a known or potential architectural resource, the continued deterioration of the pier will not result in any significant adverse impacts to historic architectural resources.

STUDY AREA

Several development projects are expected to be built within or adjacent to the 400-foot study area by 2024 when the full build out of the proposed project is expected to be complete (see Chapter 2, "Analytical Framework"). To the immediate south of the development site, the Department of Sanitation of New York (DSNY) garage, including space for a UPS facility, is nearing completion. To the north of the development site, on the block bounded by Clarkson, Leroy, West, and Washington Streets, demolition has begun in anticipation of a new primarily residential building approximately 15 stories tall. Other No Build projects are located east of the development site, beyond the block with the one- to three-story (26- to 52-foot tall) UPS building. At 537 Greenwich Street, a new 26-story residential building is proposed. Just outside the study area to the southeast, at 92 Vandam Street and 523 Greenwich Street, are two additional No Build projects. The 92 Vandam Street project will involve an addition to the existing five-story building, expanding the building with 78 residential units. The project at 523 Greenwich Street will be redeveloped with a building containing 68 residential units.

One historic architectural resource in the study area—341 Hudson Street—is located adjacent to a No Build project and could be directly impacted by construction of the No Build project or indirectly impacted by the changes to their context.

It is possible that some architectural resources in the study area could deteriorate, while others could be restored. In addition, as described above, future projects could affect the settings of architectural resources, or accidentally damage such resources through adjacent construction.

Privately owned properties that are NYCLs, within New York City Historic Districts, or pending designation as NYCLs, are protected under the New York City Landmarks Law, which requires LPC review and approval before any alteration or demolition permits can be issued, regardless of whether the project is publicly or privately funded. Publicly owned resources are also subject to review by LPC before the start of a project. However, LPC's role in projects sponsored by other City or State agencies generally is advisory only.

Provisions of the 2014 New York City Building Code provides protection measures for all properties against accidental damage from adjacent construction by requiring that all buildings, lots, and service facilities adjacent to foundation and earthwork areas be protected and supported. Further, Building Code Chapter 3309.4.4 requires that "historic structures that are contiguous to or within a lateral distance of 90 feet…from the edge of the lot where an excavation is occurring" be monitored during the course of excavation work.

E. THE FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

DEVELOPMENT SITE

As with the No Action scenario, the North Site would be redeveloped. There would be two residential towers compared to the single 48-story tower that would be developed in the No Action condition. With the proposed actions, the east tower would be approximately 360 feet tall, and the west tower would be approximately 430 feet tall. Similar to the No Action building,

the proposed project would have a base containing retail on the first, mezzanine, and second floors, and accessory parking in the basement. A new approximately 20,750-sf outdoor publicly accessible open space, compared to the private open space in the No Action condition, would be constructed on the platform that spans West Houston Street at the building's second floor. Residential entrances would be located on Washington and Clarkson Streets, and there would be retail entrances on each street. There would be a garage entrance on Route 9A/West Street. Access to the publicly accessible open space would be from stairs at the southwest and southeast corners and the elevator at the southeast corner.

Two new primarily residential buildings would be built on the Center Site. The building to the west would begin to set back above the tenth floor with a tower rising approximately 320 feet. The building to the east would have a nine- and ten-story base with two 21-story tower components, reaching an overall height of approximately 240 feet. The two buildings would be separated by an interior courtyard at-grade providing a visual benefit for the buildings' residents. Both buildings would be built to the lot line. These two buildings would include retail at the cellar, ground, mezzanine, and second floors. Retail entrances would be from West Houston Street and residential entrances would be from Washington Street and the through-block east-west access drive. There would also be a garage entrance from the drive. The drive would have street trees and a drop off/pick up area adjacent to the South Site building, which is described below.

The South Site would be redeveloped with a hotel (or office) building, with either a height of 240 feet to the roof (hotel) or 144 feet to the roof (office). The building would include event space at the ground floor and parking in the cellar.

In contrast, the No Action building would be three to four stories tall, would not have towers, and would not create a through-block east-west access drive.

Altogether, the full build out of the proposed project would include new buildings with tower components and ground floor retail, and the creation of an access drive.

As there are no architectural resources on the development site, neither the proposed project nor the No Action development would result in any adverse impacts to architectural resources on the development site.

STUDY AREA

The proposed actions would not impact any architectural resources in the study area. The proposed project would not replicate aspects of these architectural resources to create a false historical appearance. The proposed project also would not result in any construction period impacts to historic architectural resources, as there are no historic architectural resources within 90 feet of the development site.

The proposed project's potential to result in indirect, or contextual, impacts was also evaluated. Indirect impacts could result from blocking significant public views of a resource; isolating a resource from its setting or relationship to the streetscape; altering the setting of a resource; introducing incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements to a resource's setting; or introducing shadows over a historic landscape or an architectural resource with sun-sensitive features that contribute to that resource's significance, such as a church with notable stained glass windows.

The proposed actions would not adversely impact the portion of the Hudson River Bulkhead located in the study area as the bulkhead is located approximately 230 feet west of the

development site. Further, because the bulkhead is at the waterfront, is only visible from locations immediately adjacent to the Hudson River, and does not include any components visible from the development site, there is no meaningful physical or visual relationship between the development site and the Hudson River Bulkhead. In addition, the bulkhead would not be affected by construction-related activities on the development site due to distance. The proposed project would not adversely affect the Hudson River Bulkhead.

The building at 120 Leroy Street is located in the northeastern portion of the study area approximately 320 feet from the development site. In addition, 39 Clarkson Street is located just outside the study area at approximately 410 feet from the development site. All three buildings are separated from the development site by intervening buildings in the study area. As such, the proposed project would not adversely affect the setting of these architectural resources because these historic architectural resources do not have a meaningful physical or visual relationship with the development site. Although portions of the proposed project would be tall and would be visible from certain limited vantage points near 39 Clarkson Street, the historic relationship between this building and the development site are extremely limited by intervening buildings. Further, views to these two architectural resources would continue to be available from nearby public vantage points. The proposed project would not adversely affect the buildings at 120 Leroy Street or 39 Clarkson Street.

The architectural resource at 341 Hudson Street is located east of the development site. 341 Hudson Street is approximately 380 feet to the east, with its primary façade on Hudson Street. This 16-story building has large window openings on each of its facades, including its west façade, which is oriented toward the development site. However, due to distance, intervening buildings, and the building's primary façade orientation, the 341 Hudson Street building does not have a meaningful relationship with the development site. This historic architectural resource would not be adversely affected by the proposed project.

None of the historic architectural resources in the Historic and Cultural Resources study area have sunlight-sensitive features. Therefore, incremental shadow from the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on any study area architectural resources. Further, as described in Chapter 7, "Shadows," architectural resources with sunlight-sensitive features are located at greater distances from the development site, within the larger study area considered in the Shadows analysis. ✷