Chapter 21: Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the potential impacts of the proposed Lenox Hill Hospital (LHH) Redevelopment project (the Proposed Project) on the loss of environmental resources, both in the immediate future and in the long term, and identifies whether the Proposed Actions forecloses future options or involve trade-offs between short- or long-term environmental gains and losses. According to the 2021 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, environmental resources include human-made and natural resources.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," Lenox Hill Hospital (the Applicant) is requesting a series of discretionary actions from the City Planning Commission (CPC) to facilitate the enlargement and modernization of the existing LHH on Block 1411, Lots 1 and 113 (Projected Development Site 1), bounded by Park and Lexington Avenues and East 76th and East 77th Streets in Manhattan. The Proposed Project would include a new building fronting on Lexington Avenue, as well as additions and modifications to portions of the existing hospital complex on Projected Development Site 1 and connections between the new hospital building and the renovated buildings. Two building envelopes are proposed, each of which would accommodate the Proposed Project's program. Envelope 1 would include a new approximately 771,000-gross-square-foot (gsf) building on Lexington Avenue and 56,000 gsf of additions to the existing hospital. Envelope 2 would include a new approximately 867,000-gsf building and 8,000 gsf of additions to the existing hospital. With the existing buildings to remain, the overall gross floor area of the Proposed Project on Projected Development Site 1 would be approximately 1.4 million gsf with either envelope. The program, project population (staff, patients, visitors), site access, zoning actions, and construction duration would be the same for both Envelope 1 and Envelope 2.

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) also considers the as-of-right development of a building with hospital support functions at 111-115 East 77th Street between Lexington and Park Avenues (Block 1412, Lots 9, 10, and 11) (Projected Development Site 1a) as part of the Proposed Project. It would be connected to Projected Development Site 1 by a utility tunnel under East 77th Street. In addition, the Applicant proposes to provide improvements to the 77th Street subway station of the Lexington Avenue (No. 6) line, providing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to the downtown platform and improving sidewalk conditions in the immediate area.

B. ASSESSMENT

Resources, both natural and built, would be expended in the construction and operation of the Proposed Project. These resources include the materials used in construction; energy in the form of fuel and electricity consumed during construction and operation of the Proposed Project; and the human effort (i.e., time and labor) required to develop, construct, and operate various components of the project.

The resources are considered irretrievably committed because their reuse for some purpose other than the construction of the Proposed Project under either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 would be highly unlikely. The Proposed Project under either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 constitutes an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the Project Site as a land resource, thereby rendering land use for other purposes infeasible, at least in the near term.

These commitments of land resources and materials are weighed against the benefits of the Proposed Project. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Proposed Project is the development of a 21st century, state-of-the-art hospital complex with single-bedded patient rooms, new and improved operating suites, and an expanded emergency department (ED) on Projected Development Site 1. Under either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the Proposed Project would also include additions and modifications to portions of the existing hospital complex on Projected Development Site 1 and connections between the new hospital building and the renovated buildings. Projected Development Site 1a would be redeveloped with a new building to house hospital support functions, including educational and administrative space and below grade utility/mechanical functions. A utility tunnel under East 77th Street would connect it to the main hospital on Projected Development Site 1.[1] Additionally, improvements to the Lexington Avenue 77th Street subway station would be made. The purpose and need for the Proposed Project are grounded in improving health outcomes for patients and ensuring that the hospital will remain a resource for the community and New York City (NYC) for years to come. A revitalized hospital would allow LHH to continue providing top-tier care to all of its patients. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," benefits of the Proposed Project under either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 include the following:

- The Proposed Project's single-bedded rooms would result in improvements to patient care, a reduction in the risk of cross infection, more privacy for the patient and their family and loved ones, and greater flexibility in operation.
- New operating rooms (ORs) would accommodate state-of-the-art equipment and would provide maximum flexibility across surgical platforms, facilitating improved patient access to procedures, reduced turn-over time, and increased overall efficiency throughout the hospital.
- An ED with an increased number of treatment positions (from 34 to 48, all of which would be 150-square-foot (sf) hard-walled positions rather than curtained positions) would create space to isolate infectious or immuno-compromised patients and would offer patients more comfort and privacy.
- The creation of a Mother-Baby Hospital, designed to separate non-infectious patients from all other services provided at LHH, would improve the experience of expectant families.
- A new ambulance bay on East 77th Street would allow six ambulances to park and discharge patients under the building in a weather-protected space off the street. This would improve both the patient experience arriving to the hospital and the flow of traffic on the street.
- New truck docks would allow four additional trucks to be accommodated at the same time. The new truck docks would also be long enough and angled to allow all the trucks using them to be off the street and off the sidewalk. The new docks would also provide for the separation

[1] While the tunnel would require a revocable consent from the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), the building on Projected Development Site 1a would be as-of-right under existing zoning. This related project may occur independent of the Proposed Project; however, for a conservative analysis, it is analyzed as part of the Proposed Project.

of clean and soiled materials. Loading activities would be off the street and sidewalk and would no longer interfere with pedestrian and vehicular movement on East 76th Street.

As described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," the Proposed Project under either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 would also be consistent with, and supportive of, the public policies applicable to the Project Site and the study area. ✷