Chapter 19: Alternatives

A. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project, as set forth in the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, is to provide the decision makers with the opportunity to consider practicable alternatives that are consistent with the project's purpose, and that could potentially reduce or eliminate significant adverse environmental impacts identified in the EIS.

Consideration of a No Action Alternative is mandated by the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and CEQR, and is intended to provide the lead and involved agencies with an assessment of the consequences of not selecting the proposed actions. Consistent with these requirements, this chapter examines a No Action Alternative (the No Build Alternative) to the proposed project. The technical chapters presented in this EIS have described the No Build Alternative (referred to in previous chapters as "the future without the proposed project") and have used it as the basis to assess the potential impacts and associated mitigation for the proposed project. Under the No Build Alternative, the proposed commercial building would not be built and the existing bus parking facility will remain on the site.

CEQR also recommends the examination of alternatives that would substantively reduce or eliminate impacts of a proposed action while meeting the goals and objectives of a proposed action. As the proposed actions would result in unmitigated significant adverse traffic impacts, this chapter analyzes an alternative that would not result in any significant adverse impacts.

B. NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative, the proposed commercial building would not be constructed. The project area would continue to be occupied with a bus parking facility. As with the proposed project, this alternative would not result in adverse impacts on land use, zoning, and public policy, socioeconomic conditions, community facilities, open space, shadows, historic and cultural resources, urban design and visual resources, natural resources, hazardous materials, water and sewer infrastructure, solid waste and sanitation services, energy, transit and pedestrians, air quality, greenhouse gases, noise, public health, neighborhood character, and construction impacts. Unlike the proposed project, no additional traffic trips would be generated and therefore, no adverse impacts would occur at five intersections during the weekday midday peak hour, six intersections during the weekday PM peak hour, and seven intersections during the Saturday PM peak hour.

LAND USE, ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY

Under the No Build Alternative, the project site would remain in its current state. The buildings on the project site would continue to be occupied by a bus storage company. As with the proposed project, there would be no significant adverse impacts with respect to land use, zoning,

or public policy. However, the No Build Alternative, unlike the proposed project, would not result in the development of an active new commercial retail facility with approximately 2.4 acres of public waterfront access areas.

The No Build Alternative would not result in new development within the New York City Coastal Zone, and would not fulfill the Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) policy of encouraging commercial and residential redevelopment in appropriate coastal zone areas. Unlike the proposed project, this alternative would not include restoration of shoreline in the littoral zone, nor would it include infrastructure improvements to improve water quality, minimize environmental degradation from hazardous materials, and create new open space within the coastal zone. Since this alternative would not provide for new open space, it also would not address the policy of improving public access in the coastal zone.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Like the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would not result in either direct or indirect business or residential displacement impacts, and would not have any adverse effects on specific industries. However, this alternative would not result in the creation of new construction jobs and permanent jobs, and would not provide additional shopping opportunities for local residents. Neither the proposed project nor the No Build Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts on socioeconomic conditions.

SHADOWS

Under this alternative, there would be no new development on the project site and therefore there would be no incremental changes to shadows cast from the site. However, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse shadow impacts.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The urban design and visual character of the project site would remain unchanged under the No Build Alternative. The project site would retain its existing appearance as an underutilized lot, and the waterfront would remain inaccessible to the public. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in any significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Under the No Build Alternative, it is assumed that there would be no change to the use of the project site. The project site would remain a developed industrial waterfront site featuring buildings, paved parking areas, and minimal vegetation and natural resources. The nearly vertical shoreline of the site would continue to erode, causing fill material, construction and demolition debris, and solid waste to fall into Gravesend Bay. By comparison, the proposed actions may have an overall positive effect on natural resources and environmental conditions on the project site by removing mixed-fill construction and demolition debris and solid waste from the waterfront, and improving the quality and reducing the rate of stormwater runoff through a reduction of impervious surfaces and installing stormwater filtration devices, among other measures. Overall, the proposed actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts on terrestrial natural resources, wetlands, aquatic resources, endangered species, threatened species, or species of special concern.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Soil and groundwater sampling at the site confirmed that petroleum-contaminated soil/groundwater is present, and there are numerous underground storage tanks (USTs) and aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) on the eastern portion of the property. The project sponsor has obtained approval from the New York State Department of State Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) of a Solid Waste Mitigation and Soil Management Plan and a Beneficial Use Determination (BUD), and the proposed actions would include the measures to ensure there would be no significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials. In addition, the project sponsor would enter into an NYSDEC Restrictive Declaration (a legally enforceable recorded document) to ensure continued implementation of certain engineering and institutional measures including: providing notice to future property owners of environmental conditions and development restrictions; inspecting and maintaining the site cover and monitoring systems; notifying the NYSDEC before certain types of ground-intrusive work; and reporting to NYSDEC. The project sponsor will also enter into a New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) Restrictive Declaration that is consistent with the NYSDEC measures.

Under the No Build Alternative, there would be no requirement to perform this remediation beyond specific regulatory requirements. However, a Remedial Action Work Plan has been submitted and approved by NYSDEC, which will address the removal of abandoned USTs and petroleum-impacted soil to the extent practicable.

WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

As no development would occur on the project site, there would be no additional demand for water and no additional wastewater or stormwater generated at the site under the No Build Alternative. Like the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would have no significant adverse infrastructure impacts.

SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION SERVICES

Under the No Build Alternative, there would be no additional solid waste generated at the site. Like the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would not be expected to adversely affect solid waste streams or recycling in the City.

ENERGY

Under the No Build Alternative, there would be no additional energy demand generated at the site. Like the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would not result in any significant adverse energy impacts.

TRANSPORTATION

The No Build Alternative itself would not generate new vehicular traffic, but there would be increased volumes from background growth and other proposed development projects in the vicinity of the project site. The increased traffic levels with the No Build Alternative would result in congested service conditions at a number of intersections in the study area. The No Build Alternative would result in service constraints (intersections operating at mid-Level of Service [LOS] D or worse) at one intersection during the weekday midday peak hour, no intersections during the weekday PM peak hour, and 3 intersections during the Saturday PM

peak hour, as compared to the proposed project which would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at five intersections during the weekday midday peak hour, six intersections during the weekday PM peak hour, and seven intersections during the Saturday PM peak hour. Furthermore, as described in Chapter 18, "Unavoidable Adverse Impacts," the proposed actions would result in unmitigated traffic impacts at the intersection of 20th Avenue and 86th Street. The No Build Alternative would not result in this unmitigated significant adverse traffic impact, and would therefore result in fewer unmitigated significant adverse traffic impacts as compared with the proposed actions.

Under the No Build Alternative, there would be no demand for parking generated at the site. Like the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would not result in any significant adverse parking impacts.

Under the No Build Alternative, there would be no additional peak hour person trips at any transit facility or pedestrian element. Like the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would not result in any significant adverse transit or pedestrian impacts.

AIR QUALITY

As with the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would not have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts on air quality from stationary or mobile sources.

Maximum predicted carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations with either the proposed project or this alternative would be less than the corresponding ambient air standard, and would therefore be consistent with the New York State Improvement Plan for the control of CO.

NOISE

With the No Build Alternative, the slight increase in noise resulting from the proposed actions would not occur; however, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse noise impacts.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Neither the No Build Alternative nor the proposed project would result in potentially significant adverse impacts on public health. It is expected that under both this alternative and the proposed project, no air quality impacts as a result of increases to vehicular traffic or emissions from stationary sources would result. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in significant adverse noise impacts, and neither would result in significant hazardous materials impacts or other impacts that would adversely affect human health.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

It is assumed that there would be no change to the use of the project site under the No Build Alternative. The buildings on the project site will remain occupied with a bus storage facility, and the site will remain inaccessible to the public. Neither this alternative nor the proposed actions would result in a significant adverse impact on the combined elements contributing to the neighborhood character of the study area. With the proposed action, mitigation measures would be implemented to fully mitigate the significant adverse traffic impacts at all but one intersection. As no other significant adverse impacts would result, the proposed actions would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The No Build Alternative would avoid the temporary construction impacts attributable to the proposed actions, such as increases in truck traffic and construction-related noise. However, in addition to being relatively short-term, the construction impacts of the proposed project would be addressed (e.g., through dust-control measures and adherence to noise regulations), and would not result in any potentially significant adverse impacts.

C. NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ALTERNATIVE

As described in Chapter 11, "Transportation," the proposed project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at five intersections during the weekday midday peak hour, six intersections during the weekday PM peak hour, and seven intersections during the Saturday PM peak hour. However, all but one of the potential impacts identified for the proposed project could be fully mitigated. In this alternative, the proposed commercial use on the project site would be small enough to eliminate the traffic impacts associated with the proposed project.

To eliminate the traffic impacts associated with the proposed project, the commercial uses on the project site would have to be reduced by approximately 97 percent. Such a reduction may result in a commercial building on the site that is approximately 6,000 square feet in size. With the exception of traffic, the impact conclusions for this alternative would be the same as those for the proposed project—there would not be significant adverse environmental impacts for any of the technical areas described in this EIS.

In addition, this alternative would include the same measures as the proposed project to ensure there would be no significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials.

An alternative which eliminates all unmitigated traffic impacts would require reducing the proposed actions' commercial program to such a substantial degree that is not financially feasible and would be inconsistent with the goals and objectives of the project sponsor to economically redevelop the site. ✷