

A. INTRODUCTION

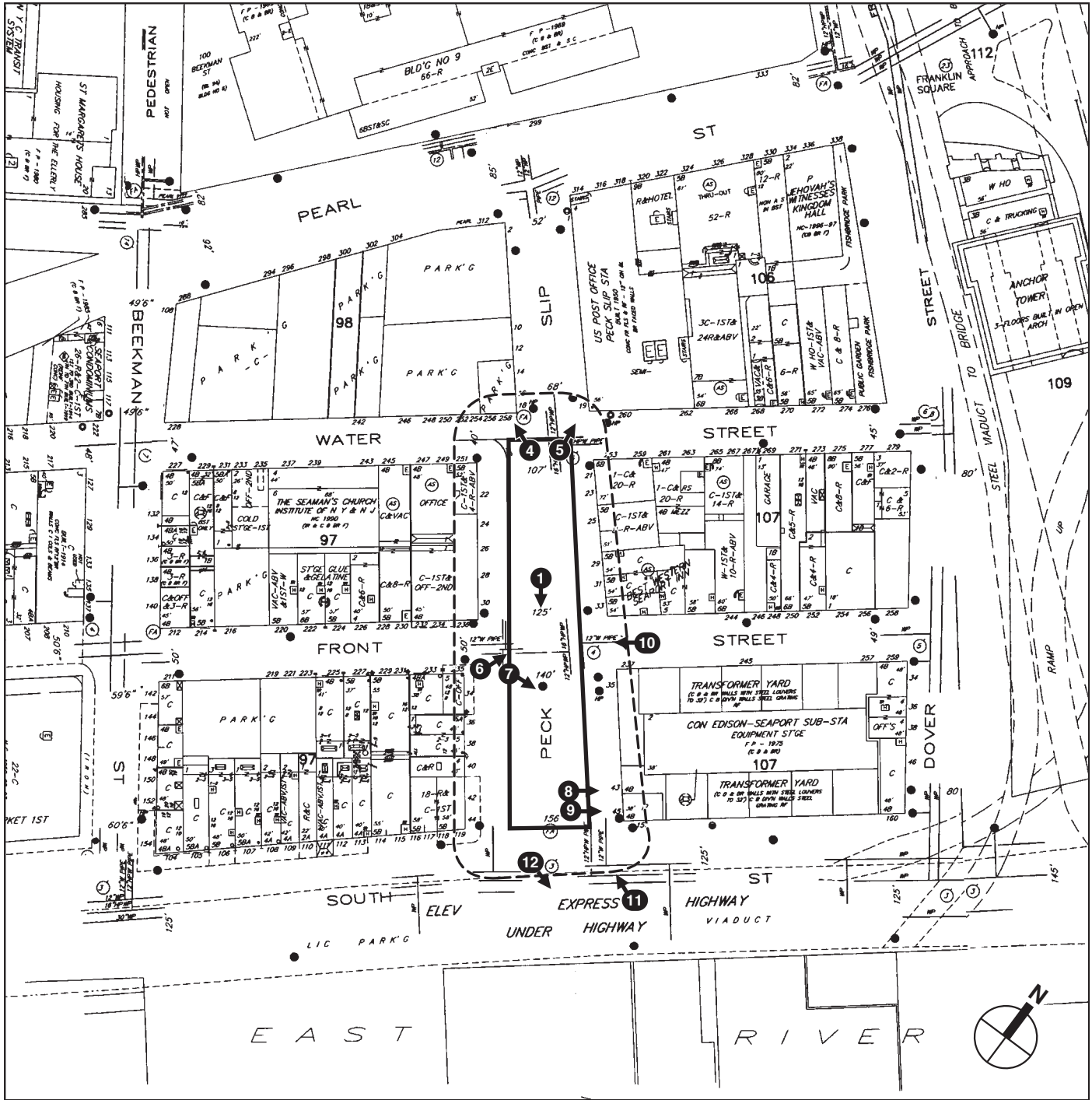
This attachment considers the potential of the proposed East River Waterfront Access Project at Peck Slip to effect urban design and visual resources on the project site and in the surrounding area. The Proposed Action would remove the existing Belgian block- and asphalt-paved centrally-oriented surface parking from the project site, close Front Street through Peck Slip, and formalize Peck Slip's street geometry by creating a landscaped open space on a median in the slip.

Since views to the project site are generally limited to the immediately surrounding streets, and the elements of the proposed plaza would be small scale and relatively low to the ground, the study area has been defined as the block fronts facing Peck Slip between Water and South Streets (see Figure 2C-1).

As defined in the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, urban design and visual resources determine the "look" of a neighborhood—its physical appearance, including the size and shape of buildings, their arrangement on blocks, the street pattern, and noteworthy views that may give an area a distinctive character. The following analysis addresses each of these characteristics for the project site and study area by describing the existing conditions and future conditions without the proposed actions and assessing probable impacts of the proposed actions for the year 2010, when the project is to be completed.

As discussed below, this analysis concludes that the Proposed Action would not be expected to have any adverse impacts on the urban design or visual resources of the study area. The Proposed Action would improve the urban design of the project site and study area by replacing an unattractive surface parking area with a new publicly accessible open space with landscaping and a seating area that would improve physical and visual access to the East River waterfront and the surrounding South Street Seaport, a visual resource. The Proposed Action would not change any natural features, block shapes, building uses, bulk, or arrangements in the study area. The Proposed Action would de-map a short segment of Front Street that extends through the project site. This would alter the street pattern in the study area closest to the project site, however, the proposed project design would maintain views to and through the project site and would not be considered adverse. The Proposed Action would involve the removal and reinstallation of the existing granite Belgian block pavers into the proposed project design. The proposed project components would change some aspects of the urban design of the project site and study area but these changes would not be considered adverse as they would improve the appearance of the project site and study area and would relate to the urban design of the project site and surrounding study area. Overall, the Proposed Action is not expected to adversely affect urban design or visual resources.

6.19.07



- Peck Slip Project Boundary
- Study Area Boundary
- Photo View Direction and Reference Number



Urban Design and Visual Resources View Locations

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT SITE

URBAN DESIGN

The project site is the central area of Peck Slip between Water and South Streets (see Figure 2C-1). This section of Peck Slip is a wide, Belgian block- and asphalt-paved corridor whose central area is occupied by surface parking. The only differentiation between the project site and the adjacent Peck Slip roadbed is the presence of parked cars on the project site (see Views 1 and 2 of Figure 2C-2). The only structure on the project site is a small parking attendant kiosk in the area northwest of South Street. Atop and alongside the kiosk are billboards advertising the project site's parking. A segment of Front Street extends northeast-southwest through the project site (see Figure 2C-1). The entire Peck Slip project site is within the South Street Seaport, an area characterized by four- to six-story early 19th century commercial buildings, most of which have masonry facades.

VISUAL RESOURCES

As the project site is characterized by a Belgian block- and asphalt-paved area with parked automobiles, there are no visual resources on the project site.

STUDY AREA

The discussion below focuses first on the area's urban design—basic layout and structures—and then describes its visual resources.

URBAN DESIGN

There are no natural features in the study area. Just outside the study area to the southeast is the East River, a natural feature that defines the eastern shoreline of Manhattan.

The project site is flanked by two roadways that abut the project site (see Figures 2C-1 and 2C-2). There is no distinction between the boundary of the project site's surface parking area and the adjacent Peck Slip roadbeds. The roadbed abutting the northeast edge of the project site carries one-way traffic traveling northwest; the roadbed flanking the project site's southwest edge carries one-way traffic traveling southeast.

The portions of Water, Front, and South Streets in the study area follow a grid-like pattern but the streets have varying widths. Water and Front Streets are both approximately 50 feet wide. The portion of the Peck Slip roadway that extends northwest of the project site between Water and Pearl Streets is approximately 68 feet wide. The section of South Street in the study area is approximately 125 feet wide and extends below the elevated FDR Drive. The FDR Drive is an elevated roadway that is perpendicular to the project site. It extends above the southeastern portion of the study area, with some of its footings extending onto this area of South Street.

Water and Front Streets are both one-way streets whereas both South Street and the portion of Peck Slip northeast of the project site carry two-way traffic. The portion of Peck Slip between Water and South Streets carries one-way traffic divided by the centrally-located surface parking area whereas the section of Peck Slip between Pearl and Water Streets carries two-way traffic.



View southeast across project site 1



View northwest across project site 2

The blocks northeast and southwest of the project site are rectangular with their narrow ends along Peck Slip. The blocks northwest of Water Street are irregularly shaped by the curve of Pearl Street that creates their northwest boundary.

The streetscape in the study area is generally characterized by a mix of older and newer four- to six-story buildings that are built to the streetwall (see View 3 of Figure C2-3 and Views 4 and 5 of Figure C2-4). The buildings in the study area include commercial and residential buildings with ground floor restaurants and commercial space, a hotel, a Con Edison substation building, and a post office.

The southwestern blockfront between South and Front Streets includes five four- and five-story buildings (see View 3 of Figure C2-3). These buildings, except the building at 36 Peck Slip, are older buildings faced in red brick. The building at 36 Peck Slip is a newer building faced in tan brick, though most of its façade is characterized by large glass windows. It has an awning at the ground floor. The buildings at each corner of this block have wide awnings that extend over the sidewalks.

Two buildings comprise the southwestern blockfront between Front and Water Streets (see View 2 of Figure 2C-2 and View 3 of Figure 2C-3). The building at 24-30 Peck Slip is a newer five-story building that has a similar appearance to 36 Peck Slip. 24-30 Peck Slip's southern portion is mostly faced in glass and exposed steel beams. A wide, flat awning extends along most of the building's Peck Slip façade. A similar awning extends along the building's Front Street façade. The building's two northern bays are faced in tan brick like the building at 24-30 Peck Slip. This building has a one- and two-story rooftop component that is visible from the street. Northeast of this building is an orange brick, older five-story building with arched entrances at the ground floor.

The blockfront northwest of the project site is a surface parking lot with parked automobiles (see View 4 of Figure 2C-4). The blockfront facing the project site to the northeast is occupied by a modern four-story orange brick-faced post office building with banded windows along its Peck Slip façade and wide, multi-paned windows along its Water Street façade set above garage entrances (see View 5 of Figure 2C-4).

Facing the project site on the northeast blockfront between Water and Front Streets are three older red brick-faced five- and six-story buildings (see View 6 of Figure 2C-5). They are all built to the streetwall. The tallest of these buildings, at 21-23 Peck Slip located at the corner of Peck Slip and Water Street, has ground floor arched entrances and similarly arched windows on the upper floors. Next to this building is a five-story building with ground floor garage entrances with metal screens. The building's southeastern bay has fire escapes extending from the second through the fifth floor. The building at the corner of Peck Slip and Front Street has five floors and has elevations on both Peck Slip and Front Street. This building, now occupied by a hotel, has regularly spaced windows on the upper floors. The ground floor windows and entrances have green awnings contributing to the building's uniform appearance.

The buildings facing the project site in the block between Front and South Streets include the Con Edison substation at the corner of Front Street and Peck Slip. This building occupies most of the block but is set back from the Peck Slip streetwall by a fence-enclosed area. The building's southwestern wall, the façade along Peck Slip, has a decorative mural depicting two building facades and the Brooklyn Bridge (see View 7 of Figure 2C-5). The other two buildings on this blockfront are both four-story red brick buildings. The building at 43 Peck Slip has few decorative elements and most of its windows have louvers instead of glass (see View 8 of Figure



South Street Seaport Historic District and Extension - southwest side of Peck Slip 3



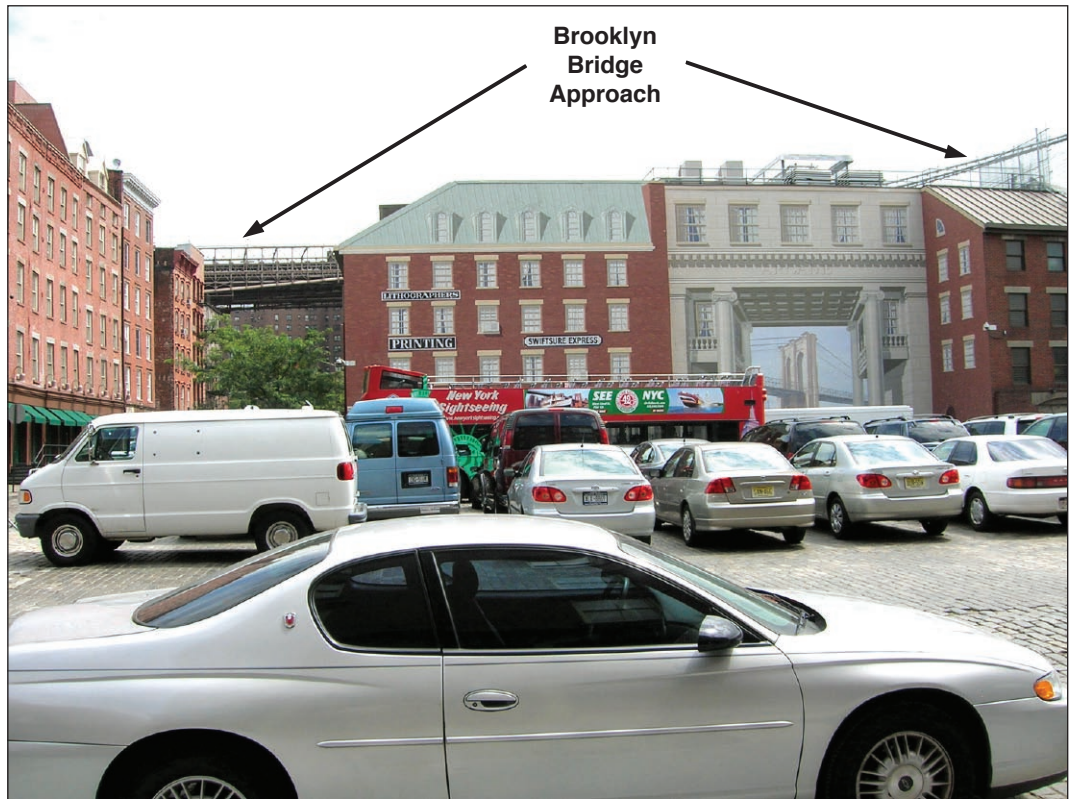
Parking lot northwest of the project site 4



Post Office northeast of the project site 5



Northeast side of Peck Slip 6



Northeast side of Peck Slip near Front Street 7

East River Waterfront Access: Peck Slip

2C-6). The building 45 Peck Slip, at the corner of South Street, has a pitched roof and a ground floor restaurant with banners and signage painted onto the building. The building's South Street elevation has fire escapes on the second through fourth floors (see View 9 of Figure 2C-6).

Some buildings in the study area, both older and newer buildings, have wide awnings that extend over the sidewalk. The awnings of other buildings are visible in views along Front, Water, and South Streets (see Views 10 and 11 of Figure C2-7). In addition to the surface parking lot in the study area northwest of the project site, this is also a surface parking lot in the area below the FDR Drive southeast of the project site (see View 12 of Figure C2-8). Sidewalks line both sides of the streets in the study area, and there are parked cars along the streets. There are cobra head street lights and fire hydrants. The street furniture in the study area is limited. There are three benches and a row of black bollards on the sidewalk along Peck Slip near the Con Edison substation building. Some of the restaurants in the study area have seasonal outdoor seating areas on the sidewalks.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Views northwest from the project site include the portion of Peck Slip that is in the study area, a 68-foot-wide roadway paved in Belgian block and asphalt with two-way traffic and curbside parked cars. West of this roadway is a surface parking lot. Because there are no buildings in these sections of the study area, views northwest from the project site include views to a wide, six-story brown brick residential building perpendicular to Peck Slip and other taller buildings in Lower Manhattan, including the Woolworth Building, a visual resource described below (see View 2 of Figure C2-2). Views from South Street toward the project site include the parked automobiles that characterize the project site. Some views to the northwest and northeast from the project site and the study area include some of the taller buildings in Lower Manhattan that are at a greater distance from the project site but are visible because they are much taller than most of the buildings in the study area and other buildings closest to the project site. Views southeast from the project site are partially obstructed by a portion of the elevated FDR Drive that extends along Manhattan's East River waterfront. At street level, views southeast include surface parking and, depending on proximity to the FDR Drive, views from closer to this structure extend beyond the FDR Drive and include the Brooklyn skyline (see View 1 of Figure C2-2). These structures and views are not considered visual resources.

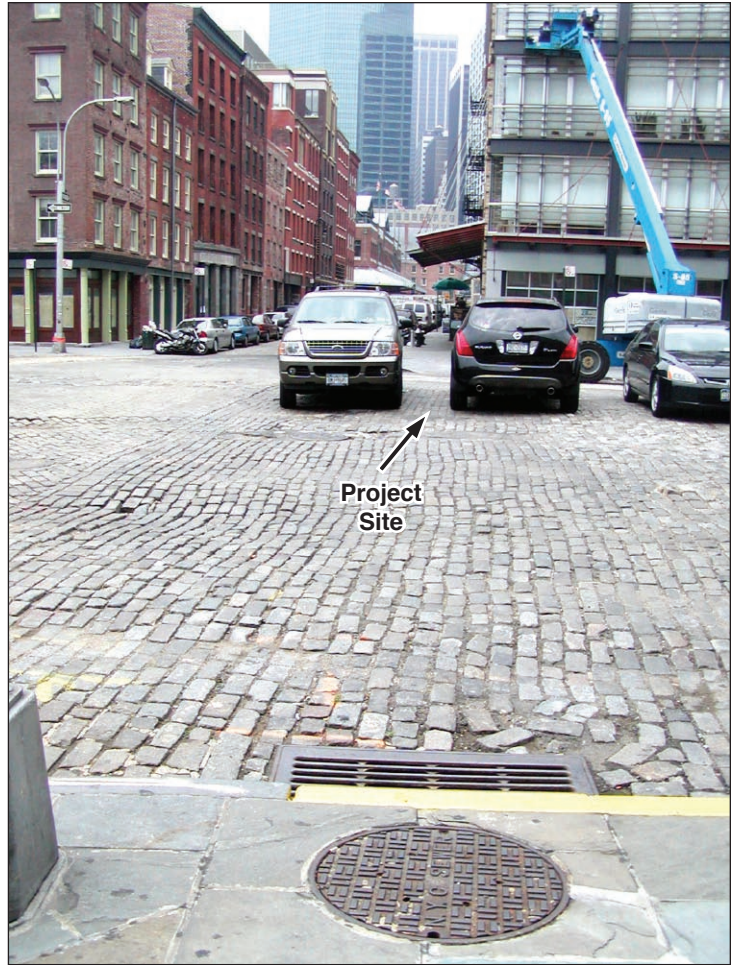
There are three visual resources in the study area—the collection of buildings at the South Street Seaport, the Brooklyn Bridge, and the Woolworth Building. The section of the South Street Seaport within the study area includes four- to six-story masonry-faced 19th century commercial buildings. Views along Water, Front, and South Streets include views to other areas of the visual resource (see Views 10 and 11 of Figure C2-7). Sections of the Brooklyn Bridge's elevated approach ramps are visible in views northeast along Water, Front, and South Streets (see View 7 of Figure C2-5). The bridge's expanse across the East River is visible from vantage points in the study area closest to South Street (see View 12 of Figure C2-8). The Woolworth Building, a 60-story terra cotta-faced skyscraper at 233 Broadway, is a visual resource that can be seen in views northwest from the study area (see View 2 of Figure C2-2).



43 Peck Slip 8



45 Peck Slip 9



View southwest along Front Street 10



View southwest along South Street 11



View toward the Brooklyn Bridge across surface parking lot 12

C. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION

PROJECT SITE

Absent the Proposed Action it is assumed that NYCDOT would remove the Belgian block pavers, reconstruct the site, and upgrade utilities.

STUDY AREA

Absent the Proposed Action, the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) will upgrade utilities below the streetbeds of Peck Slip between Water and South Streets in the areas immediately adjacent to the project site. NYCDOT will also undertake utility upgrades in Water Street between Beekman and Dover Streets, Front Street between Peck Slip and Dover Street, Beekman Street between Water and South Streets, and Peck Slip between Pearl and Water Streets (see Figure 2B-2). The NYCDOT project will involve repaving the streetbeds of the affected streets.

At 250 Water Street, a 175,000 square foot institutional building with 300 dwelling units will be developed northwest of the project site on a lot currently used as surface parking.

OUTSIDE THE STUDY AREA

Southeast of the project site, the East River Esplanade project will involve physical improvements to a two-mile segment of the East River waterfront comprising both the riverside esplanade and several piers between Whitehall Ferry Terminal and East River Park. As part of this project the surface parking areas below some sections of the FDR Drive, including the area adjacent to the current project's study area, will be removed and will provide unobstructed views from points northwest of this area. Physical improvements will generally consist of pavers, street furniture, landscaping, and some small structures. These structures will be located so as not to obstruct views along existing streets northwest of the East River Esplanade project site.

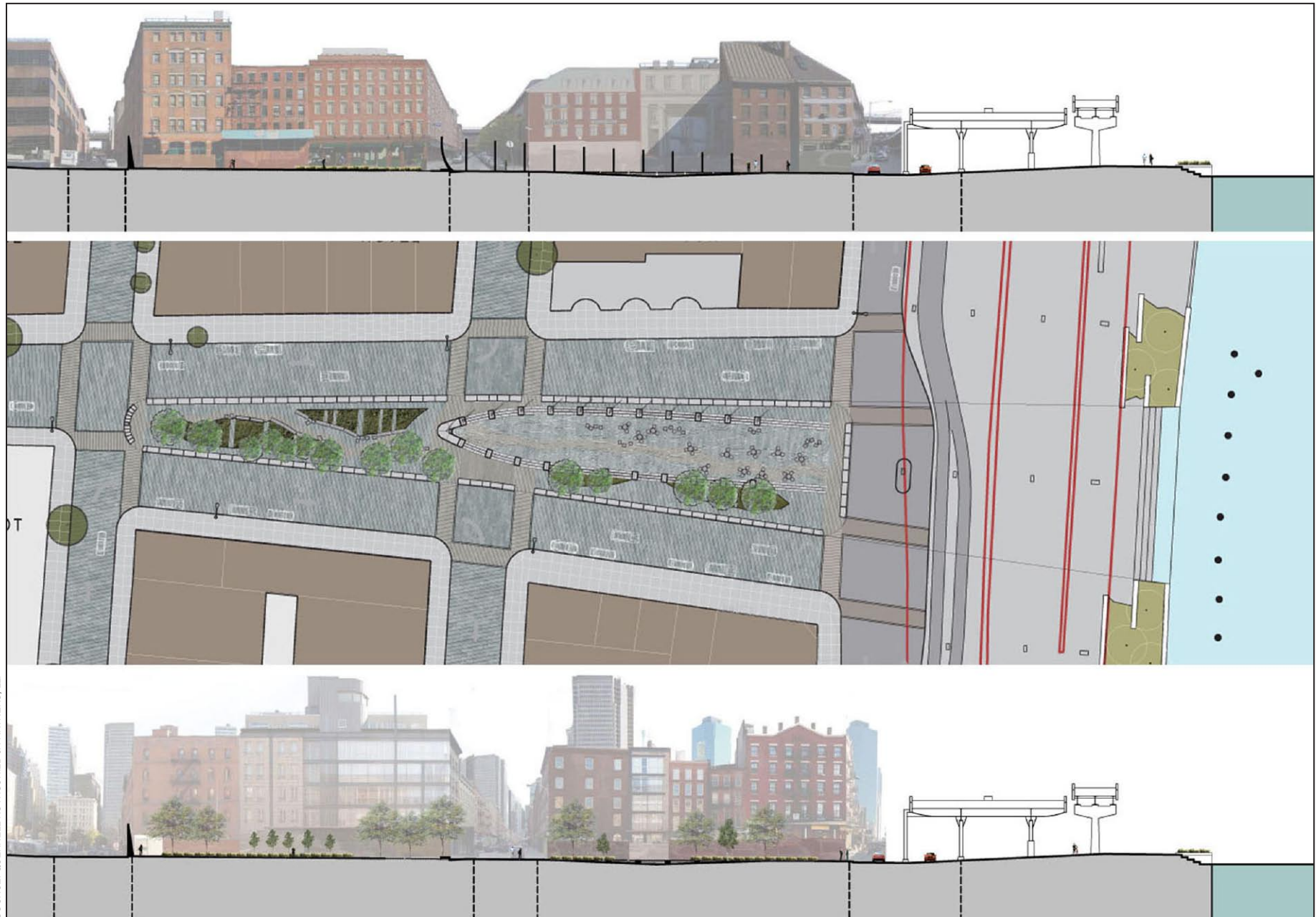
D. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

PROJECT SITE

URBAN DESIGN

The Proposed Action would remove the existing Belgian block- and asphalt-paved centrally-located surface parking from the project site and would formalize Peck Slip's street geometry by creating a median that would be an open space at the same elevation as the surrounding street and defined by new, low granite slab curbs. Since the project site is within the boundaries of the South Street Seaport Historic District, the project's design is being developed in consultation with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to be appropriate to the context of the historic district.

As currently planned, the project site would have two distinct areas. The portion of the project site between Water and Front Streets would be redeveloped as a landscaped open space paved with salvaged Belgian block. It would have metal benches and granite block seating areas, trees and other landscaped design components, and a vertical stone element with a mast light near Water Street (see Figures 2C-9 and 2C-10). The portion of the project site from Front Street to South Street would also be redeveloped with a Belgian block-paved open area, landscaping, and



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East River Waterfront Access: Peck Slip

trees. It would have moveable granite block and wood crate seating and metal café tables and chairs. This section of the open space would include an oblong-shaped area reminiscent of the shape of a ship. This area would have salvaged granite pavers that laid in a ripple pattern reminiscent of the flow of water. The northern edge of the boat-like feature would be outlined with granite slabs punctuated with vertical steel and wood rib-like elements similar to the ribs of a ship, thereby evoking the waterfront history of this area of Manhattan. These vertical design elements would range in height from 16 feet near Front Street and would incrementally decrease in height to 9 feet near South Street. The southern edge of this boat-like feature would have granite elements spaced at the same interval as the bases of the rib-like elements at the northern edge. These design components could be used as seating. A water feature with a vertical granite rib-like element with a water feature would be located within the intersection of Front Street and Peck Slip.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The proposed project components would not affect any visual resources on the project site as the project site does not include any such resources.

STUDY AREA

URBAN DESIGN

The Proposed Action would not change any natural features, block shapes, building uses, building bulk, or building arrangements in the study area. It would alter the street pattern by closing the portion of Front Street across Peck Slip, however, this change would not be considered adverse since this is not a major roadway through the study area. Further, the proposed project components would visually maintain Front Street's route across this portion of the project site.

The Proposed Action would affect the streetscape of the study area by removing a surface parking area and replacing it with a new landscaped open space, as described above. The proposed project components—including landscaping and trees, a water feature, seating areas, vertical granite rib-like elements, and Belgian blocks pavers arranged in a ripple pattern—would improve the context of the study area.

The Proposed Action would be coordinated with NYCDOT's planned streetbed reconstruction project at Peck Slip, further improving the context of the project site and the urban design of the study area. The project site would also be developed in the context of the improvements that will be made to the East River Esplanade and Piers southeast of the project site, a portion of which would be within the project site's study area.

The Proposed Action would change some aspects of the urban design of the study area but these changes would not be considered adverse, as they would improve accessibility to the East River waterfront and would relate to the urban design of the surrounding study area, including the South Street Seaport Historic District and Extension.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Action would improve the context of the South Street Seaport Historic District and Extension, a visual resource, by replacing an unattractive surface parking area with a new, landscaped open space that would be designed to be appropriate within the context of this

resource. The proposed project design would incorporate a boat-like form for a portion of the proposed open space and would use Belgian block granite pavers, a water feature, seating areas, and vertical rib-like components using steel and wood. These design elements would complement the context of the study area.

Because of their distance from the project site and the small scale of the proposed project components, the context of the Brooklyn Bridge and the Woolworth Building would not be affected by the proposed project. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not be expected to result in any adverse impacts to these visual resources.

Overall, the proposed redevelopment of the project site with a new attractive landscaped open space would improve the urban design of the project site and study area. The proposed project design would improve physical and visual access to the East River waterfront. Although the proposed project components would alter some views in the South Street Seaport Historic District and Extension, a visual resource, the project would improve many such views with new landscaping elements and would maintain views to the study area's other visual resources, the Brooklyn Bridge and the Woolworth Building. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not be expected to have any adverse effects on urban design or visual resources.