

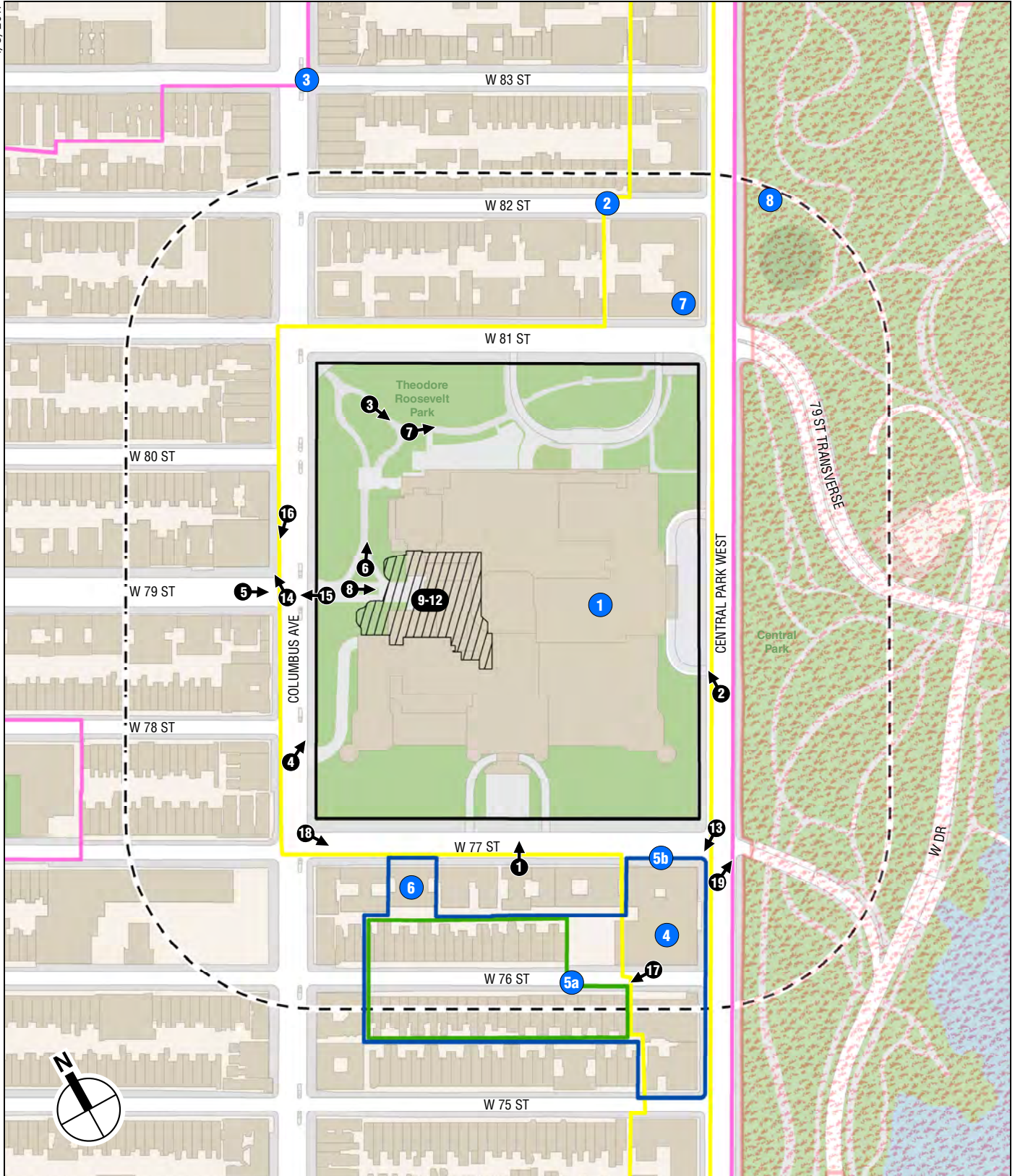
A. INTRODUCTION

Following the guidance of the 2014 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, this chapter considers the potential of the proposed project to affect architectural and archaeological resources on the project site and in the surrounding area. Designated architectural resources include: New York City Landmarks (NYCL), Interior Landmarks, Scenic Landmarks, New York City Historic Districts (NYCHD); resources calendared for consideration as one of the above by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC); resources listed on or formally determined eligible for inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR), or contained within a district listed on or formally determined eligible for listing on the Registers; resources recommended by the New York State Board for listing on the Registers; and National Historic Landmarks (NHL).

As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the proposed project would result in a new building, the Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation (the Gilder Center), in an approximately 105-foot-tall (five stories above grade; taking into account mechanical and elevator bulkheads, a portion of the rooftop would reach 115 feet), approximately 203,000 gross square foot (gsf) addition to the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH or the Museum). The site for the proposed project is on the west side of the Museum complex facing Columbus Avenue, within Theodore Roosevelt Park. Three existing buildings within the Museum complex would be removed to minimize the footprint on land that is now open space in Theodore Roosevelt Park, to about 11,600 square feet (approximately a quarter acre). The proposed project would also include approximately 42,000 gsf of renovations to existing Museum space and a redesign of approximately 75,000 square feet of the western portion of Theodore Roosevelt Park. AMNH is a NYCL and is S/NR-listed.

To evaluate potential effects due to on-site construction activities, and also to account for visual or contextual impacts, the study area for architectural resources is defined as extending 400 feet from the project site (see **Figure 5-1**). As defined in the New York City Department of Building’s (DOB) *Technical Policy and Procedure Notice (TPPN) #10/88*, adjacent construction is defined as any construction activity that would occur within 90 feet of an architectural resource.¹ The study area for archaeological resources is defined as the area where subsurface disturbance would occur.

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.



- Theodore Roosevelt Park
- Study Area (400-foot boundary)
- Building Site
- Photograph View Direction and Reference Number
- 1 American Museum of Natural History (S/NR, NYCL)
- 2 Central Park West Historic District (S/NR)
- 3 Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District (S/NR-eligible, NYCHD)
- 4 New-York Historical Society (S/NR, NYCL)
- 5a West 76th Street Historic District (S/NR)
- 5b Central Park West--76th Street Historic District (NYCHD)
- 6 Studio Building (S/NR, NYCHD)
- 7 Beresford Apartments (S/NR, NYCL)
- 8 Central Park (NHL, S/NR, NYCL)

AMNH Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation

**Architectural Resources
Figure 5-1**

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The proposed project would not adversely impact archaeological resources, as LPC and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) have determined that the project site does not possess archaeological significance.

The proposed scale, massing, and materials of the Gilder Center have been designed to respect the historic Museum setting and surrounding historic context that includes buildings within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District and other historic resources located within 400 feet of Theodore Roosevelt Park. The proposed Gilder Center would be consistent with the heights of adjacent Museum Building 8 and Building 17 (the 1931 power house) fronting on Columbus Avenue, with materials, such as granite, complementing the materials of historic buildings at the Museum and in the study area. The granite for the Gilder Center is expected to either be Milford pink granite, the granite used for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial main entry on Central Park West, or granite of a similar type and coloration to Milford pink. As described in greater detail below, the proposed Gilder Center would not obscure significant Museum façades or Museum façades that have not previously been obscured or partially obscured from view.

The proposed project would require the removal of three buildings on the site of the proposed Gilder Center and connections to, and renovations of, spaces in adjoining Museum buildings. The proposed Gilder Center would occupy approximately 11,600 sf of existing open space and would include improvements to adjacent portions of Theodore Roosevelt Park, including creating curving paths and planted areas that would be in keeping with the naturalistic character of the park.

Two of the buildings that would be removed on the site of the proposed Gilder Center are of recent construction and not historically significant (the Weston Pavilion built in 2000 and Building 15A, a 1965 conversion of the original one-story south adjoining Boiler House portion of Building 15, the Museum's original Power House). A third, Building 15, the original Power House, was built in the early 20th century but has subsequently been substantially altered including full interior renovations and recladding and removal of original façades. Since Building 15 was constructed as part of the 1874-1935 development of the Museum (although highly altered subsequently), demolition of this S/NR listed building would constitute a significant adverse impact on architectural resources. Therefore, a feasibility study was undertaken that evaluated the potential for avoiding the adverse impact in a manner that would allow the Museum to meet its program goals. This feasibility study was prepared in consultation with OPRHP. As described in greater detail below, there are no prudent and feasible alternatives, as the alternatives all pose one or more constraints on the Museum's ability to meet its program goals and certain of the alternatives perpetuate or exacerbate the existing deficiencies the Museum is seeking to rectify with the proposed project. Furthermore, certain of the alternatives would a) result in a loss of publicly accessible open space including open space that is of concern to the community, b) would require that the Museum acquire off-site property which the Museum does not own nor have rights to, and c) would result in other potential adverse impacts to the historic character of the Museum.

Demolition of the buildings in the project site, followed by site preparation and construction of the Gilder Center, could potentially result in inadvertent damage to nearby historic Museum buildings if adequate precautions are not taken. Therefore, a Construction Protection Plan (CPP) would be developed in coordination with LPC and OPRHP to protect nearby historic Museum buildings. Historic resources in the study area surrounding Theodore Roosevelt Park would not

be adversely affected by construction activities, as they are over 90 feet away from the proposed site of the Gilder Center.

Measures to partially mitigate the project's adverse impacts on architectural resources are set forth in a draft Letter of Resolution (LOR) to be executed among the Museum, OPRHP, and Empire State Development (ESD). The draft LOR is included as **Appendix A-1**. Because the project site is a NYCL, the proposed project has been reviewed by LPC under the New York City Landmarks Law. LPC issued a Binding Report on November 2, 2016, based on information provided by the Museum, including a *Historic Preservation Background Research Report* prepared by Higgins Quasebarth & Partners (see **Appendix A-2**). The Binding Report approved the proposed design of the Gilder Center and modifications to the existing Museum complex and site, subject to LPC's further review and approval of final DOB filing drawings. (see **Appendix A-3**). LPC's Binding Report is summarized below in section F "Probable Impacts of the Proposed Project."

B. METHODOLOGY

The historic resources analysis has been prepared in accordance with CEQR, the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980 (SHPA). These laws and regulations require that City and state agencies consider the impacts of their actions on historic properties.

Consistent with the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, in order to determine whether the proposed project could potentially affect architectural resources, this chapter considers whether the proposed project would result in a physical change to any resource, a physical change to the setting of any resource (such as context or visual prominence), and, if so, whether the change is likely to alter or eliminate the significant characteristics of the resource that make it important. More specifically, as set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, potential impacts to architectural resources may include the following:

- Physical destruction, demolition, damage, alteration, or neglect of all or part of an historic property;
- Changes to an architectural resource that cause it to become a different visual entity;
- Isolation of the property from, or alteration of, its setting or visual relationships with the streetscape, including changes to the resource's visual prominence;
- Introduction of incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements to a resource's setting;
- Replication of aspects of the resource so as to create a false historical appearance;
- Elimination or screening of publicly accessible views of the resource;
- Construction-related impacts, such as falling objects, vibration, dewatering, flooding, subsidence, or collapse; and
- Introduction of significant new shadows, or significant lengthening of the duration of existing shadows, over an historic landscape or on an historic structure (if the features that make the resource significant depend on sunlight) to the extent that the architectural details that distinguish that resource as significant are obscured.

The Museum is a NYCL and listed on the S/NR. Therefore, prior to making its determination, NYC Parks must obtain a report and approval from LPC, and ESD is required to undertake a historic preservation review in consultation with OPRHP. The study area for archaeological

resources is defined as the area where subsurface disturbance would occur. In letters dated February 9, 2016, March 3, 2016, and November 4, 2016, LPC determined that the project site is not archaeologically sensitive and in a letter dated November 28, 2016, OPRHP concurred (see **Appendix A-4**). Therefore, this chapter focuses on standing structures only.

C. DEVELOPMENT HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM

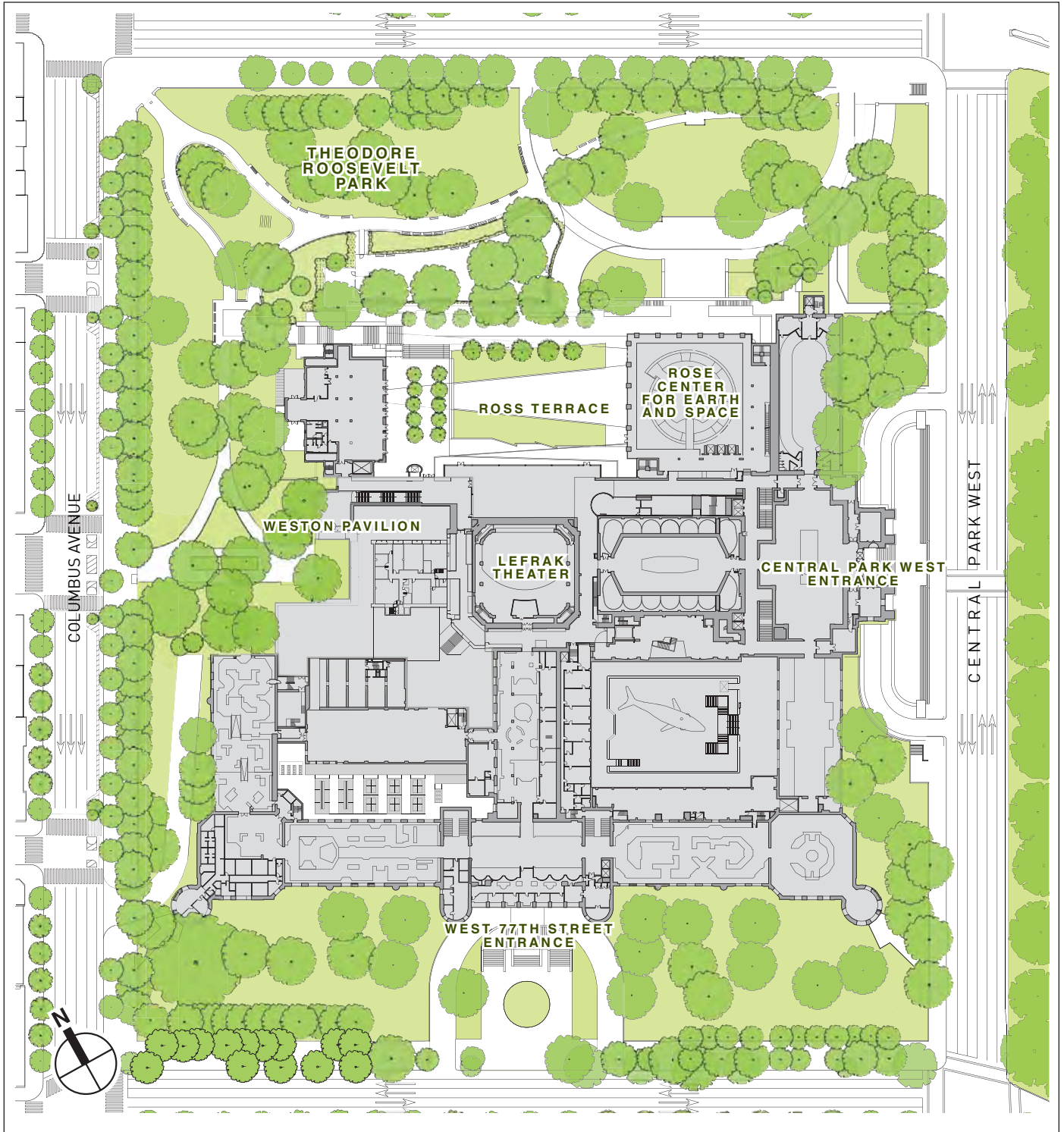
In 1869, the Museum was chartered by an act of the New York State legislature, through the initiative of the naturalist Albert S. Bickmore and a group of distinguished New Yorkers. In contrast to other museums of zoology and paleontology founded at universities during the 19th century, the Museum was envisioned as an institution for public education with the mission of “encouraging and developing the study of Natural Science; of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects, and, to that end, of furnishing popular instruction and recreation.”² The development of the Museum has taken place over many decades and continues to this day. The cornerstone for the first Museum building (Building 1, the Bickmore Wing) was laid in 1874 by President Ulysses S. Grant at the present site, formerly called Manhattan Square, provided by the Board of Park Commissioners. On the completion and opening of Building 1, the *New York Times* wrote that “It forms exactly one-twelfth of the entire museum structure, as proposed, which will probably not be finished for half a century or more” (see **Appendix A-5**).

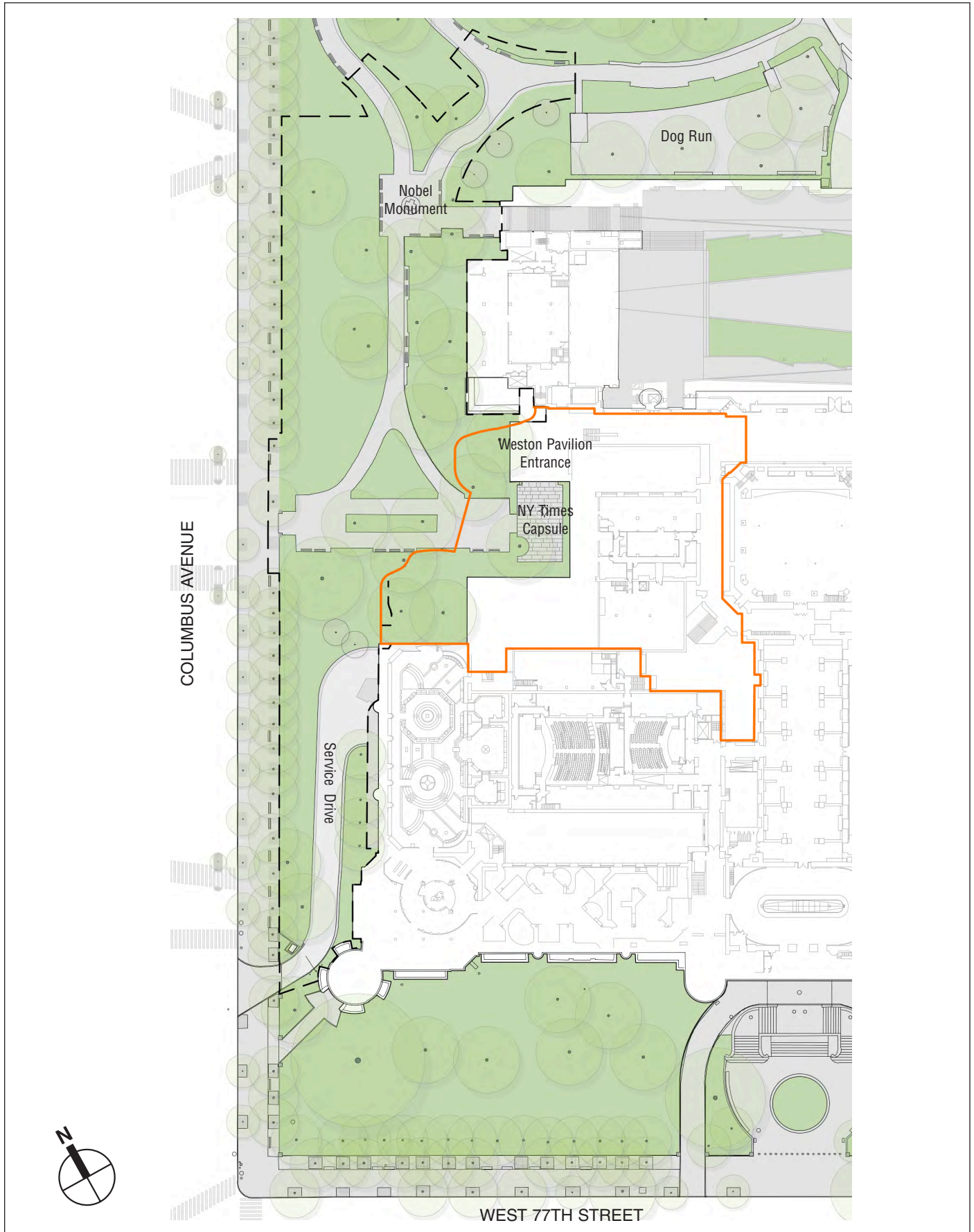
In the 1870s, Central Park architects Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould designed the Museum’s first building as well as a master plan for development of the entire site. The plan laid out an institutional-scale complex, square in plan, composed of 21 sections with four similar street façades (to be erected over time, as discussed in a May 30, 1874, *New York Times* article—see **Appendix A-5**). The original plan includes cross-axial circulation corridors, which connect the perimeter spaces and subdivide the interior footprint into four symmetrical open courts. The ground plan therefore consisted of a building with four equal sides, with a high tower envisioned to rise at the center of the square. In 1876, a State statute set aside Manhattan Square (now known as Theodore Roosevelt Park) for the Museum and authorized the City’s then Department of Public Parks to enter into a contract (the Museum’s lease) granting the Museum exclusive use of the buildings erected or to be erected in Manhattan Square.

In the early 1880s, the Museum was able to initiate an expansion plan overseen by the architectural firm of Cady, Berg & See. Adhering to the Vaux/Mould master plan, although changing the style from Victorian Gothic to Romanesque Revival, five sections of the Museum were constructed between 1890 and 1900, completing the entire southern façade. In addition, the firm designed and constructed the Lecture Hall (Building 7), which occupied the center of the site, and prepared a modified version of the Vaux plan for the remainder of the project that retained the concept of a rectilinear shape, with perimeter buildings on four sides, crossed in the center to create four inner courtyards.

Construction in the early years of the 20th century followed this basic plan. Charles Volz designed the south-west wing along Columbus Avenue as a continuation of the West 77th Street façade. A Power House, which is now the Ichthyology Building (Building 15), was built along the inner cross (see **Figures 5-2a and 5-2b**). Although the Trustees of the Museum set an interim goal of completing the building surrounding the two southern courtyards in time for the

² National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, American Museum of Natural History. August 24, 1967, Section 8, p. 1.





 Building Site  Park Improvement Boundary

Museum's 50th anniversary, subsequent construction took place not only surrounding, but within the courtyards. The Asiatic wing was constructed on Central Park West in the early 1920s, with the Oceanic and Education Halls built at about the same time within the southeast and southwest courts, respectively. The new architects for the Asiatic Wing and Oceanic and Education Halls were Trowbridge & Livingston. During this period, the park on site was renamed Theodore Roosevelt Park.

The next wave of Museum expansion took place in the 1930s, with development along the site's Central Park West side to approximately 80th Street. Five buildings were constructed, all designed by Trowbridge & Livingston. Of the new buildings, three continue the basic rectangle and cross of the original plan: Roosevelt Memorial Hall, which now serves as the Museum's main entrance (John Russell Pope designed this building with Trowbridge & Livingston); the East Transept (African Wing); and the Whitney Wing (north wing on Central Park West). Two were constructed in the remaining courtyard spaces; the Power House (Building 17) in the northwest court (see **Figure 5-2a**) and the Hayden Planetarium in the northeast court (no longer extant). Both of these buildings were built to be enclosed by continuation of the basic plan at a later time.

By 1935, the southern and eastern façades and related inner crosses were essentially completed; the western façade was only partially built; all four inner courts contained buildings; and the complex along West 81st Street and Columbus Avenue presented an unfinished edge toward the community. Since then, numerous other courtyard infill buildings and additions have followed, which has resulted in a mix of buildings with varying styles and scales at the interior of the complex. Most significantly, construction in the courts altered the original axial circulation patterns set forth in the master plan. Individual infill projects that have been completed include a 1965 conversion and expansion of the original one-story south adjoining Boiler House portion of Building 15 (the original Power House) to a two-story structure (Building 15A). In 2000, a plan to complete the northern edge of the Museum—the Rose Center and North Side project—was completed, providing, in addition to other improvements, a new planetarium (in the Rose Center for Earth and Space), parking garage (Building 16), publicly accessible open space (the Ross Terrace), and the Weston Pavilion built between Building 17 and Building 15 (see **Figure 5-2a**).

D. EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT SITE

The Museum is a NYCL and is individually listed on the S/NR. Theodore Roosevelt Park is included within the boundaries of the S/NR boundaries. The Museum, Theodore Roosevelt Park, and the site for the Gilder Center are also located within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District (NYCHD and S/NR eligible) and the S/NR listed Central Park West Historic District.

THE MUSEUM

As described above, the Museum has an asymmetrical footprint composed of numerous interconnected buildings in a variety of architectural styles and materials (see **Figure 5-2a**). The south (77th Street) façade was completed in 1900, and the National Register Nomination Form

calls it one of the outstanding examples of Romanesque Revival in the City³ (see **Figure 5-3, Photograph 1**). The east (Central Park West) façade was completed, except for its north corner pavilion, by the mid-1930s and includes Roosevelt Memorial Hall (see **Figure 5-3, Photograph 2**). However, the originally planned buildings along the north perimeter were not completed until the Rose Center, parking garage and, Ross Terrace were built along the north side of the museum complex in 2000 (see **Figure 5-4, Photograph 3**).

In contrast to the others sides of the Museum, only the southern wing of the west (Columbus Avenue) façade has been built. This six-story building, Building 8, was constructed in 1906-1908 to the designs of Charles Volz to match the Romanesque Revival style of the south façade (see **Figure 5-4, Photograph 4**). Its blank north wall is still waiting for the middle building, which would have provided the Columbus Avenue entrance (see **Figure 5-5, Photograph 5**). Therefore, the west side of the complex remains incomplete and unresolved programmatically and architecturally.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT PARK

As described above, the Museum was constructed in Manhattan Square, later renamed Roosevelt Park, which was designated as public parkland as part of the 1811 Commissioner's Plan. The Museum and its original buildings were created pursuant to New York State statutes passed between 1869 and 1875; then, an 1876 State statute set aside the entire site of Theodore Roosevelt Park for the Museum and authorized the City's then Department of Public Parks to enter into a contract (the Museum's lease) granting the Museum exclusive use of the buildings erected or to be erected in the park. In 1878, following completion of the Museum's first building (Building 1), Frederick Law Olmstead commented that initial improvements to the landscape were to be made with a view of keeping the unbuilt areas from being an "eyesore."⁴ It appears that the landscape for the park evolved informally as the Museum site was developed; originally there was no predetermined plan for the landscape. An 1897 rendering of the master plan for Museum by Cady, Berg & See depicts an expectation that the four street façades would likely be bordered by geometrical planting beds with low shrubs, although early historic images show the landscape developing informally with provisional path systems and plantings for recreation and circulation. By the mid-20th century the park had been re-landscaped a number of times, with its trees, plantings, paths, and other treatments in the style of a city park becoming similar to other City parks.

The wider northern and western portions of Theodore Roosevelt Park are divided by a paved path system lined by benches, fenced lawns and planted areas, and there is a dog run (see **Figure 5-5, Photograph 6 and Figure 5-6, Photograph 7**). Two Museum driveways paved in Belgian block cross through the Park, one from West 81st Street and the other, a service driveway, from Columbus Avenue. The Park is surrounded by a wrought iron fence marked by stone piers at the corners and at entrances and driveways to the Park, and by a wide sidewalk of hexagonal pavers lined with tall trees. The northwest section of the Park was renamed Margaret Mead Green in 1979. LPC's designation report for the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District includes the landscape and fixtures around the Museum as part of the historic district designation. However, when the northern section of the park was restored as part of the 2000

³ Ibid, Section 8, p. 7.

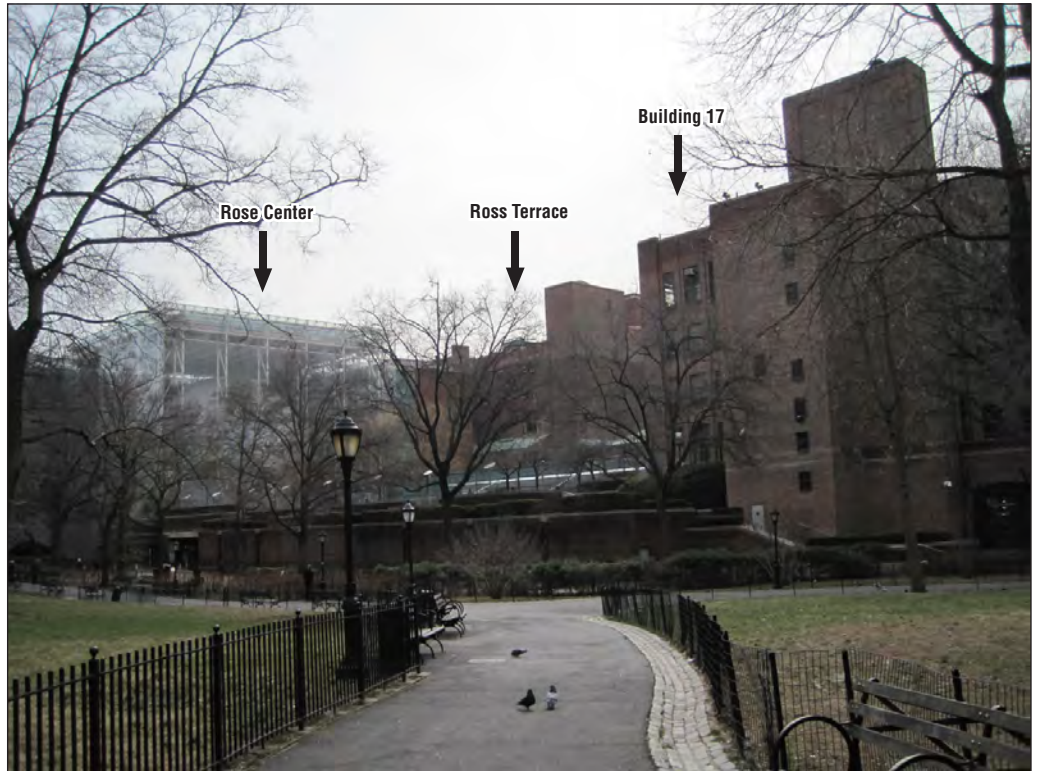
⁴ Higgins Quasebarth & Partners, *Historic Preservation Background Research Report*, September 1, 2016, p. 8 (see Appendix A-2).



View of the Museum's West 77th Street entrance 1



View of the Museum's Central Park West Entrance and buildings north of the Museum in the Central Park West Historic District and Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, including the Beresford Apartments at 211 Central Park West 2



View southeast in Theodore Roosevelt Park of the north side of the Museum, including the Rose Center, Ross Terrace and Building 17 (the 1931 Power House) **3**



View of the west (Columbus Avenue) façade of Building 8 (the European Wing) **4**



View east of the Museum from Columbus Avenue including the Weston Pavilion, Building 15 (the former power house), Building 15A, the north façade of Building 8, and the north façade of Building 11B

5



View north in Theodore Roosevelt Park. Building 17 is on the right

6

Architectural Resources—
American Museum of Natural History
and Theodore Roosevelt Park



View east in Theodore Roosevelt Park 7



View east of the Development Area, including the Weston Pavilion, Buildings 15 and 15A, and a portion of Theodore Roosevelt Park including *The New York Times Capsule* 8

Architectural Resources—
Theodore Roosevelt Park
and Project Site

Rose Center and North Side project, LPC clarified in its 1997 Binding Report for the project that the “existing landscape design is not historic to either the park or the museum.”⁵ Therefore, while the greenery surrounding the Museum is important to the history and setting of the Museum, the actual design layout of the landscape is not of particular historic significance.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECT SITE

The portion of the project site that is within the existing Museum footprint contains the Weston Pavilion, Building 15 (the first Power House) built in 1903-1904, Building 15A (a 1965 conversion and expansion of the original one-story Boiler House also built in 1903-04 adjoining the original Power House to the south), and adjacent corridors (see **Figure 5-2b**).

The Weston Pavilion, constructed in 2000, is a glazed and metal framed structure that has a Museum entry on its south façade (see **Figure 5-6, Photograph 8**). It contains circulation elements, including a staircase that provides access to adjacent corridors in the Museum and to the LeFrak Theater in Building 7.

Building 15, the original Power House built in 1903-1904, is a Romanesque Revival style three-story building that has been significantly altered, retains minimal character-defining features of its original style, and possesses low architectural integrity. The south façade is covered beneath the third story by Building 15A, a two-story 1965 conversion and expansion of the original one-story Boiler House in this location (see **Figure 5-7, Photograph 9**). Originally a plain brick façade, the west (Columbus Avenue) façade was fully re clad in stucco in 1988. The lower half of the north façade has been re clad in red brick; a portion of this façade had a three-story corridor structure that previously connected to Building 17, the 1931 Power House (see **Figure 5-7, Photograph 10**). The building has a gable roof with dormers with copper flashing; the westernmost dormer on the north façade has been enlarged and has a modern brick facing. The interior of the building has been fully altered and houses mechanical and IT services at the lower level with the upper two floors housing the Ichthyology offices, labs, and collections.

Building 15A is a plainly designed two-story building with a flat roof. It is unfenestrated and is clad in stucco (see **Figure 5-7, Photograph 9**). It constitutes an enlargement and conversion of the original one-story with gable roof Boiler House that adjoined the original Power House to the south.

The project site includes portions of the façades and interiors of certain Museum buildings where connections would be made with the Gilder Center. These include Building 17 (the 1931 Power House), where connections would be made on the south façade in locations where Building 17 presently connects with the Weston Pavilion. These consist of areas next to a freight elevator that contain circulation and service areas. A connection would also be made through the west façade of Building 1 at the first floor in the location of a window that has been sealed from the inside, as this location currently serves as part of the Northwest Coast Indians exhibition space. Connections would be made at the north façade of the six-story Building 8 at the different floor levels in the locations of existing window openings. This façade is unornamented and a number of the window openings have been sealed in brick with exhibition space created along the interior walls (see **Figure 5-5, Photograph 5**). Connection would also be made to Building 11B, an addition made to the Museum’s library in 1992, which is just south of Building 15A, across the service yard and behind Building 8 (see **Figure 5-5, Photograph 5**).

⁵ Ibid.



View east of Building 15, Building 15A, and a portion of the Museum's service yard 9



View of the north façade of Building 15 10

Also in the project site is a non-historic covered metal staircase on the east side of the Museum's service yard that provides access between Museum corridors and the service yard (see **Figure 5-8, Photograph 11**). The service yard itself is a paved area that includes the Museum's refuse/dumpster area (see **Figure 5-8, Photograph 12**).

The portion of the project site within Theodore Roosevelt Park includes walkways, seating areas, fenced lawns, trees, and plantings. *The New York Times* Capsule, designed by architect Santiago Calatrava, is located on a terrace adjacent to and south of, the Weston Pavilion (see **Figure 5-6, Photograph 8**).

STUDY AREA

There are eight designated architectural resources located in the 400-foot study area. These resources are described below, listed in **Table 5-1** and mapped on **Figure 5-1**. No additional potential architectural resources were identified within the study area; the study area is located fully within the boundaries of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District and Central Park.

CENTRAL PARK WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT (S/NR)

The Central Park West Historic District (S/NR) is a linear district that takes in the buildings on the west side of Central Park West between West 61st and West 96 Streets (see **Figure 5-1**). The district is composed primarily of high-rise apartment buildings, the majority of which were constructed in the early part of the 20th century in the Beaux-Arts style. Set amongst these luxury apartment buildings is AMNH, the New-York Historical Society, and the Universalist Church of New York City (originally the Church of the Divine Paternity), a Neo-Gothic style church built in 1898 at 4 West 76th Street (see **Figure 5-3, Photograph 2 and Figure 5-9, Photograph 13**).

UPPER WEST SIDE/CENTRAL PARK WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT (NYCHD, S/NR-ELIGIBLE)

The Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District (NYCHD, S/NR-eligible) is roughly bounded by West 62nd Street on the south, Amsterdam Avenue on the west, West 96th Street on the north, and Central Park West on the east. The Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District encompasses the vast diversity of the Upper West Side from its residential side streets, to its commercial strip along Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues, to the grand apartment buildings which line Central Park West. There are hundreds of row houses along the side streets of the Upper West Side designed in varied architectural styles including neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne and neo-Renaissance style homes between Central Park West and Amsterdam Avenue, while tenements and French flats occupy the stretches of Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues within the district. Across from the project site on Columbus Avenue and on West 79th Street, the buildings vary in age, height, and architecture, ranging from older brick tenements and larger brick and stone clad apartment buildings to more recently constructed residential towers (see **Figure 5-9, Photograph 14 and Figure 5-10**). These new residential buildings, including the 28-story condominium building at the northwest corner of Columbus Avenue and West 79th Street (101 West 79th Street) built in 1984 and an 18-story apartment building at 386 Columbus Avenue completed in 1985 across from Building 8 of the Museum, are of a contemporary design with brick veneer and large glazed window openings (both were



Staircase leading to the Museum's service yard at the lower level of the Museum 11



View west towards the Museum's refuse/dumpster area located in the service yard of the Museum 12



View southwest of the New-York Historical Society at 170 Central Park West and buildings to the south included in the Central Park West Historic District, Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, and West 76th Street Historic District **13**



View northwest on Columbus Avenue at West 79th Street in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District **14**



View west on West 79th Street from Columbus Avenue in the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District 15



View southwest on Columbus Avenue from West 79th Street in the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District 16

built prior to the designation of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District in 1990).

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY (NYCL, S/NR)

The New-York Historical Society (N-YHS) at 170 Central Park West is an individual NYCL and is a contributing building in the Central Park West Historic District (S/NR). It is also included within the boundaries of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District (NYCL, S/NR-eligible), and the smaller Central Park West - 76th Street Historic District (NYCHD). It occupies the full Central Park West blockfront between West 76th and 77th Streets. The N-YHS was founded in 1804 and the current building was built in two stages, the central portion was designed by York & Sawyer in 1903-08, and its end wings were later designed by Walker & Gillette in 1937-38. The four-story building is clad in grey granite with and capped by a hipped copper roof (see **Figure 5-9, Photograph 13**). As part of the 1937-38 renovations to the building, library stacks were added across the rear of the building on West 76th Street. The building was recently renovated including the creation of a new more transparent Central Park West entrance and modifications to its West 77th Street entrance including ADA access.

WEST 76TH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT (S/NR) AND CENTRAL PARK WEST – 76TH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT (NYCHD)

The West 76th Street Historic District (S/NR) encompasses forty-four row houses on the north and south sides of West 76th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue (see **Figure 5-11, Photograph 17**). All of the buildings were built between 1887 and 1900 as single family homes, and although the buildings have different details and materials, they possess a homogeneous scale and setback from the street. LPC recognizes a larger boundary for the Central Park West—76th Street Historic District, including the Central Park West blockfronts between West 77th and West 75th Streets and the Studio Building at 44 West 77th Street.

STUDIO BUILDING (S/NR, NYCHD)

The Studio Building at 44 West 77th Street is individually listed on the S/NR and also included within the boundaries of LPC's Central Park West - 76th Street Historic District and the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. This apartment house was designed by Harde & Short and combines 20th century functionalism, including extensive use of glass, with Neo-gothic detailing (see **Figure 5-11, Photograph 18**). It was built in 1907-09 and contains two-story artists' studios which are attached to duplex residential units.

BERESFORD APARTMENTS (NYCL, S/NR)

The Beresford Apartments building at 211 Central Park West is an individual NYCL and also included within the boundaries of the Central Park West Historic District and Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. This 22-story building occupies the full Central Park West blockfront between West 81st and 82nd Streets. Designed by Emery Roth and built in 1928-1929, the building is designed in the Italian Renaissance style, with three prominent octagonal towers extending above the roofline (see **Figure 5-3, Photograph 2**). The building has a three-story stone base with its upper stories clad in buff brick and ornamented with stone balconies and balustrades above the entrance on Central Park West and at the upper floors.



View of the south side of West 76th Street in the West 76th Street Historic District 17



View of the south side of West 77th Street from Columbus Avenue in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, including the Studio Building at 44 West 77th Street 18

CENTRAL PARK (NHL, S/NR, NYCL)

Central Park (NHL, S/NR, NYCL), bounded by Fifth Avenue and Central Park West, and 59th Street and 110th Street, was designed in 1858 by the landscape architecture partnership of Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux (see **Figure 5-12**). Central Park, the first large-scale public park to be created in the United States, has served as a successful model for public parks throughout the country. The park was constructed to provide city dwellers with a place of respite from busy city life, in a bucolic setting which includes a 33-acre Sheep Meadow, 1,200-foot-long Mall, and the Lake and Harlem Meer. Across from the Museum, the Park is bordered by a low stone wall. A bronze bust of German scientist, explorer, and naturalist Alexander von Humboldt is set on a tall granite pedestal at the vehicular entrance to the Park at West 77th Street.

Table 5-1
Designated Architectural Resources on the Project Site and in the Study Area

Ref. No. ¹	Name	Address	NYCL/ NYCHD	NHL	S/NR	S/NR-eligible
Project Site and Study Area						
1	American Museum of Natural History	175 Central Park West (block bounded by Central Park West, Columbus Avenue, and West 77th and 81st Streets)	X ²		X	
2	Central Park West Historic District	West blockfronts on Central Park West between West 62nd and West 96th Streets and including the AMNH block			X	
3	Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District	Roughly bounded by Amsterdam Avenue, Central Park West, West 62nd, and West 96th Streets	X			X
Study Area						
4	New-York Historical Society	170 Central Park West	X		X ³	
5a	West 76th Street Historic District	West 76th Street between Columbus Avenue and Central Park West			X	
5b	Central Park West - 76th Street Historic District	Roughly bounded by Columbus Avenue, Central Park West, West 75th, and West 77th Streets	X			
6	Studio Building	44 West 77th Street	X ⁴		X	
7	Beresford Apartments	211 Central Park West	X		X ⁵	
8	Central Park	Bounded by Central Park West, Fifth Avenue, 59th and 110th Streets	X	X	X	
Notes:						
NYCL = New York City Landmark; NHL = National Historic Landmark; S/NR = New York State and National Registers of Historic Places; S/NR-eligible = determined eligible for listing on the Registers.						
1. Corresponds to Figure 5-1 .						
2. Memorial Hall of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Building on Central Park West is also an interior landmark.						
3. The New-York Historical Society is an individual NYCL and included within the boundaries of the Central Park West Historic District and Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.						
4. The Studio Building is individually listed on the S/NR and is included within the boundaries of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District and the NYCHD Central Park West - 76th Street Historic District.						
5. The Beresford Apartments building is an individual NYCL and is included within the boundaries of the Central Park West Historic District and Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.						

E. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Absent the proposed project, it is assumed that the project site would not be substantially altered though, over time, minor improvements are expected to be made in the Museum. The Gilder



View northeast on Central Park West of Central Park 19

Center would not be constructed and the portion of the Theodore Roosevelt Park in front of the Weston Pavilion would retain its current design.

In the No Action scenario, the condition of other architectural resources within the study area could change. Architectural resources that are listed on the National Register or that have been found eligible for listing are given a measure of protection from the effects of federally sponsored or assisted projects under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Although preservation is not mandated, federal agencies must attempt to avoid adverse impacts on such resources through a notice, review, and consultation process. Properties listed on the State Register are similarly protected against impacts resulting from state-sponsored or state-assisted projects under the State Historic Preservation Act. Private property owners using private funds can, however, alter or demolish their properties without such a review process. Privately owned sites that are NYCLs, within New York City Historic Districts, or pending designation, are protected under the New York City Landmarks Law, which requires LPC review and approval before any alteration or demolition can occur. There are no planned development projects expected to occur in the architectural resources study area by 2021.

F. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

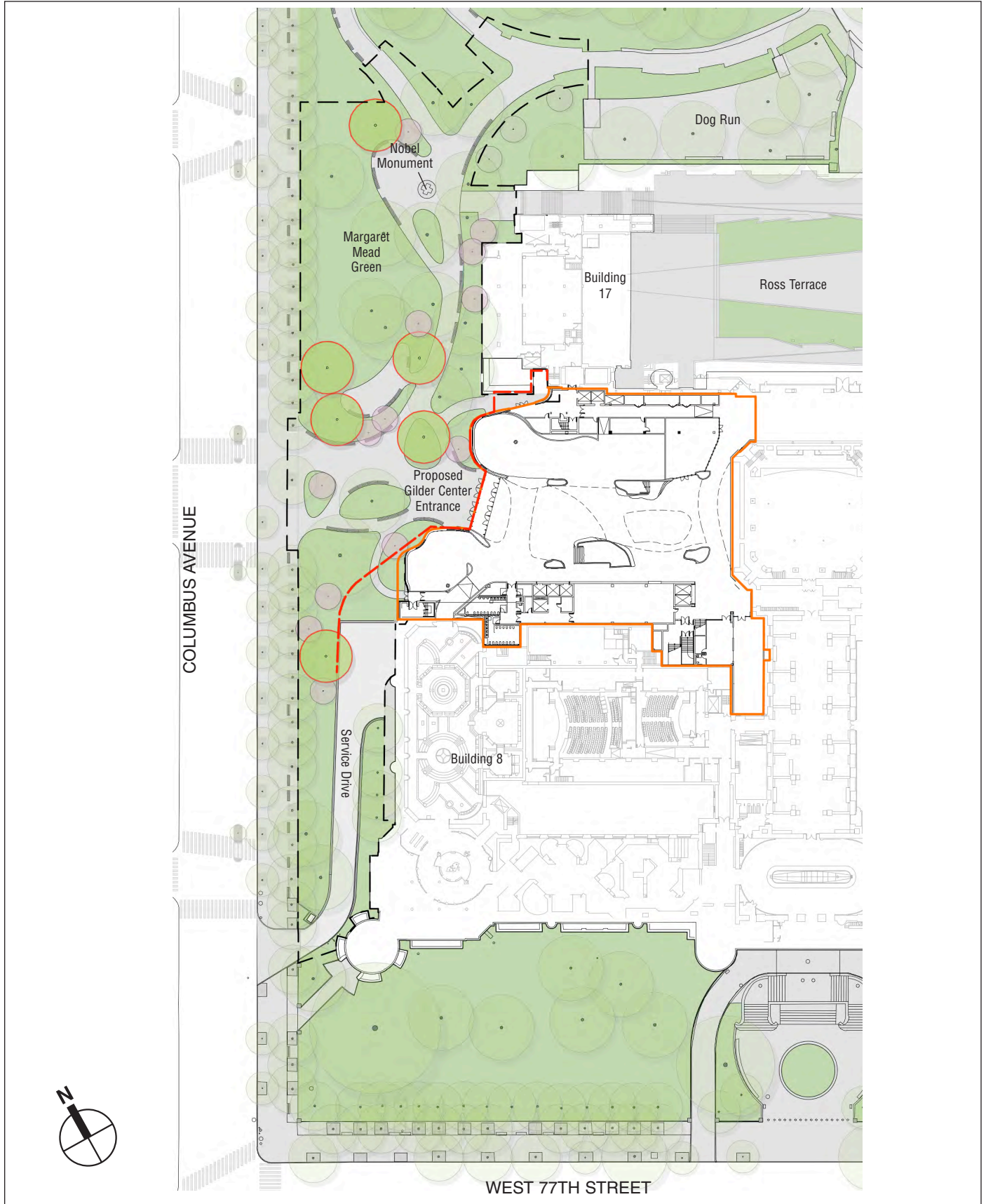
PROJECT SITE








PROPOSED GILDER CENTER

The proposed project would result in the removal of three buildings on the Museum's campus and construction of the Gilder Center, an approximately 203,000 gsf addition to the Museum (see **Figure 5-13**). The proposed project would also include approximately 42,000 gsf of renovations to existing space. As described in detail in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the proposed project is designed to provide an inter-disciplinary visitor experience that conveys the Museum's full, integrated mission of science, education, and exhibition. To that end, the proposed project would provide new modern spaces for exhibition, collections, education, and scientific research, among other functions.

The Gilder Center would be approximately 105 feet tall (five stories above grade; accounting for mechanical and elevator bulkheads, a portion of the rooftop would reach 115 feet), and one below-grade. The Gilder Center would occupy a site at the center of the Museum's Columbus Avenue façade at West 79th Street, where an entrance and focal point was originally called for as part of the Museum's master plan. The façade of the Gilder Center would include a mix of glass (with a range of opacity) and granite. The granite is expected to either be Milford pink granite, the granite used for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial main entry on Central Park West, or granite of a similar type and coloration to Milford pink. The new building would feature sculptural curvilinear forms on its façade with a height in keeping with Building 8 to the south and Building 17 to the north (see **Figures 5-14a and 5-14b**). At its highest point, the Gilder Center would be five feet lower than Building 8, respecting that building's prominence, and would undulate and step down to both meet the height of Building 17 and meet that buildings' west façade line.

The Gilder Center would be situated among buildings on the Museum campus of different heights and architectural styles, including the earliest building (Building 1) designed in the Victorian Gothic style and completed in 1877, and the Rose Center, a glazed and granite-clad contemporary building constructed in 2000. The Gilder Center would attach to the south façade



-  Building Site
-  Below-Grade Footprint
-  Park Improvement Boundary
-  Bench
-  Proposed Trees
-  Understory Tree
-  Canopy Tree

AMNH Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation

**Proposed Site Plan
Figure 5-13**



Note: Subsequent to initial design effort, below-grade service area and service drive modified with goal of preserving Pin Oak and English Elm labeled above.



Note: Subsequent to initial design effort, below-grade service area and service drive modified with goal of preserving Pin Oak and English Elm labeled above.

Illustrative Rendering of Proposed Project (Winter)
Figure 5-14b

AMNH Gilder Center

of Building 17, the 1931 Power House (taking the place of the Weston Pavilion); to the unornamented north façade of Building 8; to the west façade of Building 7 and the LeFrak Theater contained in Building 7 built in 1900 (taking the place of adjacent corridors); to the north façade of Building 11B, built in 1992; and to a portion of the west façade of Building 1. Approximately 30 connections would be made into ten buildings, including Building 17 at all floor levels, at the lower level and first floor levels of Building 1, and on most floors of Building 8.

The proposed Gilder Center would not obscure significant façades or façades that have not previously been obscured or partially obscured from view. These include the south façade of Building 17, which is largely obscured by the Weston Pavilion; the new design would continue to retain the visibility of the west section of south façade as in the existing condition. As described above, the north façade of Building 8 is of a plain, unornamented design, with a number of sealed windows, and, therefore, the connection of the Gilder Center to this façade would not obscure a significant façade, and the ornamented Columbus Avenue façade would remain unchanged. The Gilder Center would obscure a portion of the west façade of Building 1; however this building is mostly blocked from public view from the west by Building 15A, Building 11B, and a modern exterior stair that provides access to the Museum's service yard. However, the proposed Gilder Center design would contain a two-story glazed gallery at its rear southeast corner, adjacent to Building 1. The gallery design would leave the west newly restored façade of Building 1 exposed in this location and visible to museum visitors circulating through the gallery, which would provide connections to a café in the Gilder Center and other Museum buildings. The north façade of Building 11B, a 1992 structure, would be obscured from view but as a modern structure, this building does not contribute to the significance of the Museum.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT PARK RENOVATIONS

The proposed Gilder Center would occupy approximately 11,600 sf of area currently occupied by Theodore Roosevelt Park at Columbus Avenue, and would include improvements to nearby portions of Theodore Roosevelt Park. The landscaping in Theodore Roosevelt Park between Columbus Avenue and the Gilder Center would be composed of curving paths and planted areas that would be in keeping with the naturalistic character of the park, which is, as described above, designed with winding paths surrounded by trees and landscaping.

As discussed in Chapter 4, "Shadows," incremental shadows from the proposed Gilder Center would fall primarily on the adjacent Columbus Avenue entrance area of Theodore Roosevelt Park that would be re-landscaped and reconfigured as part of the proposed project. However—as has been discussed above, the landscape of Theodore Roosevelt Park has been redesigned and re-landscaped a number of times and as indicated in LPC's 1997 Binding Report for the restoration of park as part of the proposed 2000 construction of the Rose Center, garage, and Ross Terrace—the landscape design is not considered historic to the design of the Park or the Museum.

IMPACTS DISCUSSION

As described above, the buildings on the Museum campus to be demolished are:

- The Weston Pavilion, a glazed structure constructed in 2000 that provides an entry to the Museum and contains circulation elements and connections to certain other Museum buildings;

- Building 15, a former power house built in 1903-1904 that has been substantially altered on its exterior and converted to mechanical, IT services, and Ichthyology offices, labs and collections in its interior; and
- Building 15A, a two-story stucco-clad addition to Building 15 that constitutes a 1965 enlargement and conversion of the original one-story Boiler House that adjoined the original Power House to the south, and that is of no architectural or historic significance to the Museum complex.

In addition, connections would be made to several existing buildings on the Museum's campus, including Building 17, Building 8, Building 1, and Building 11B, a 1992 addition.

Buildings 15 and 15A are not mentioned specifically in LPC's 1967 designation report for the Museum. As the Museum and Theodore Roosevelt Park are designated by LPC, the proposed removal of these buildings, design of the Gilder Center, and modifications to Theodore Roosevelt Park have been reviewed by LPC. LPC issued its Binding Report on November 2, 2016, approving the proposed design of the Gilder Center and modifications to the existing Museum complex and site, subject to LPC's further review and approval of final DOB filing drawings (see **Appendix A-3**) as summarized below:

- The proposed demolition constitutes only a small percentage of the overall complex and consists of support services buildings;
- Buildings 15 and 15A were not among the more unique or elaborately design components of the Museum complex nor highly visible from public thoroughfares and have been highly altered;
- The Weston Pavilion is a simply designed building constructed in the later 20th century that is not integral to the Rose Center;
- Removal of materials at existing buildings to create connections between the existing Museum building and the proposed Gilder Center will be limited to a minimum amount necessary to create the connections;
- The proposed project will facilitate the objectives of the original Museum master plan including creating a large and dignified entrance on the Columbus Avenue side of the Museum, supporting the cross axial relationship of the Museum complex, and improving circulation throughout the Museum complex;
- The placement, height and massing of the Gilder Center will create a harmonious transition between the adjoining neighboring Museum buildings along Columbus Avenue;
- The undulating forms and massing of the Gilder Center recalls geologic formations that reference the purpose of the Museum and also recall the curved forms found on prominent Museum complex buildings;
- The proposed Milford pink granite matches the Central Park West entrance of the Museum and the proposed expanses of glazing will be in keeping with the materials at the more contemporary portions of the Museum complex;
- The changes to the pathways in Theodore Roosevelt Park will be consistent with the existing surrounding pathway system in terms of materials, finishes and curvilinear forms and that mature tree removal will be limited to only to the amount necessary to construct the Gilder Center and will not significantly reduce the number of mature trees in the Park;
- The cumulative effects of the proposed project will result in a physical articulation of the Museum's mission of science, education and exhibition and that the proposed project will

enhance the special architectural, historic and cultural significance of the Museum complex and Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Demolition of Building 15A, a non-descript 1965 expansion and conversion of an early one-story structure, and the Weston Pavilion, constructed in 2000, would not remove buildings that contribute to the historic development of the Museum campus. The 1967 National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form describes Building 15 as the old power station, a two-story structure built of brick and designed in 1903 by Charles Volz, and does not specifically list or describe Building 15A (originally a one-story Boiler House that was rebuilt as a two-story structure two years before the S/NR listing and non-contributing to the S/NR listing). However, as Building 15 was constructed as part of the 1874-1935 development of the Museum (although highly altered subsequently), demolition of this S/NR listed building would constitute a significant adverse impact on architectural resources.

Therefore, the Museum undertook a feasibility study to evaluate alternatives to avoid the adverse impact in a manner that would allow the Museum to meet its program goals. This feasibility study the “Alternatives Analysis,” contained in **Appendix A-6**, was prepared in consultation with OPRHP and is summarized below.

The Alternatives Analysis evaluated the feasibility of six alternatives for the retention of Building 15:

- Alternative A: No Action Alternative, which is mandated by SEQRA and CEQR, and is intended to provide the lead and involved agencies with a baseline assessment of the consequences of not approving the proposed project. The No Action Alternative assumes the Museum remains in its current condition.
- Alternative B: Reuse of Administrative Space Alternative, in which some of the project’s proposed program elements are located within existing administrative space rather than within newly constructed areas. In this alternative, a portion of the Museum’s administrative functions would have to be moved off-site.
- Alternative C: Expanded Footprint Alternative, which avoids the demolition of Building 15 by extending the development area farther into Theodore Roosevelt Park, beyond the proposed project’s development footprint.
- Alternative D: Infill Alternative, which would avoid the demolition of Building 15 and the loss of open space in Theodore Roosevelt Park by constructing above Building 17 and abutting Building 15.
- Alternative E: Ross Terrace Alternative, which would avoid the demolition of Building 15 and the loss of open space in Theodore Roosevelt Park by moving the development site to the Ross Terrace above the Museum garage; the existing publicly accessible open space at the Ross Terrace would be eliminated.
- Alternative F: Off-Site Alternative, in which the proposed project is constructed at an off-site location. This alternative is assumed to have a similar size and program as the proposed project. Since the Museum does not own or own a right to such a property, the location and characteristics of an alternative site are unknown.

The alternatives were determined not prudent and feasible, as they all pose one or more constraints on the Museum’s ability to meet its program goals and certain of the alternatives perpetuate or exacerbate the existing deficiencies the Museum is seeking to rectify with the proposed project. Furthermore, certain of the alternatives would result in a loss of publicly

accessible open space including open space that is of concern to the community (Alternatives C and E); would require that the Museum acquire off-site property which the Museum does not own nor have rights to (Alternatives B and F); and would result in other potential adverse impacts to the historic character of the Museum including blocking one or more of the façades of Building 15 that are not currently obstructed, constructing a building of a height and mass out of context with the historic Museum complex, and overbuilding Building 17 with inappropriate additions of three- to four-stories (Alternatives C, D, and E). In a letter dated April 25, 2017, OPRHP concurred that there are no prudent and feasible alternatives to demolition of Building 15 (see **Appendix A-4**). Demolition of the buildings on the project site, followed by site preparation and construction of the Gilder Center, could potentially result in inadvertent damage to nearby historic Museum buildings if adequate precautions are not taken. Therefore, a Construction Protection Plan (CPP) would be developed in coordination with LPC and OPRHP and implemented in consultation with a licensed professional engineer. This CPP would be prepared as set forth in Section 523 of the *CEQR Technical Manual* and in compliance with the procedures included in the DOB's TPPN #10/88 and LPC's *Guidelines for Construction Adjacent to a Historic Landmark* and *Protection Programs for Landmark Buildings*. The CPP would describe the measures to be implemented during construction of the Gilder Center to protect the historic Museum buildings, including monitoring the buildings for cracks and movement and installation of physical protection as appropriate at the buildings surrounding the building site (Building 17, 7, 1, and 8).

Measures to partially mitigate the project's adverse impacts on architectural resources would be implemented in consultation with OPRHP. As discussed in Chapter 17, "Mitigation," the mitigation measures include the restoration and reconstruction program ongoing at Building 1; a design that incorporates a contemporary architectural approach for the Gilder Center reflecting the time in which it is built and with the proposed scale, massing, and materials respecting the historic Museum setting including landscaping design in keeping with the naturalistic character of the Theodore Roosevelt Park; consultation with OPRHP regarding the proposed design of the Gilder Center and its connections to the surrounding Museum buildings including submission of the design plans at the preliminary (100% completion of Design Development) and pre-final (50% completion of Construction Documents) completion stages for their review and comment; submission to OPRHP of a development history narrative of the Museum complex and documentation of Building 15 per OPRHP's Recordation of Historic Structures standards; and preparation and implementation of the CPP. The mitigation measures are set forth in a draft Letter of Resolution (LOR) to be signed by the Museum, OPRHP, and ESD. The draft LOR is included as **Appendix A-1**.

STUDY AREA

DIRECT IMPACTS

Using the *CEQR Technical Manual* direct impact criteria noted above, the proposed project would not result in the replication of aspects of any of the architectural resources in the study area so as to cause a false historical appearance. The proposed project would also not introduce significant new shadows or significant lengthening of the duration of existing shadows over historic landscapes or structures. Central Park and historically significant buildings with sunlight sensitive features such as the Universalist Church of New York City at 4 West 76th Street (located within the Central Park West - 76th Street Historic District, Central Park West Historic District, and Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District), are located at too great a

distance to be affected by incremental shadows. With respect to potential construction-related impacts on architectural resources located within 90 feet of the building site, the closest resources are the buildings across Columbus Avenue in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. However, Columbus Avenue is 100-feet-wide, and therefore, the buildings on the west side of Columbus Avenue are outside the area of potential impact for construction related impacts.

INDIRECT IMPACTS

The *CEQR Technical Manual* criteria for indirect, contextual impacts are as follows:

- Isolation of a property from, or alteration of, its setting or visual relationships with the streetscape, including changes to the resource's visual prominence;
- Introduction of incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements to a resource's setting; and
- Elimination or screening of publicly accessible views of the resource.

Each of these criteria is discussed in more detail below, with respect to the architectural resources in the study area.

The proposed project would not isolate any architectural resource from its setting or visual relationship with the streetscape, or otherwise adversely alter a historic property's setting or visual prominence.

At approximately 105 feet tall (five stories above grade; accounting for mechanical and elevator bulkheads, a portion of the rooftop would reach 115 feet), the proposed Gilder Center would fall within the range of building heights of the architectural resources in the study area, including nearby buildings in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. It would be taller than the five-story tenement and apartments on Columbus Avenue and West 79th Street across from the project site, but would be shorter than the taller apartment buildings and more recently constructed residential towers on Columbus Avenue also across from the project site. The proposed Gilder Center would be consistent with the façade line of the Museum buildings—Buildings 17 and 8—facing Columbus Avenue. The façade of the Gilder Center would not extend farther west than do the existing Museum buildings on Columbus Avenue, and the proposed design would include an improved landscaped area in Theodore Roosevelt Park between the Museum and Columbus Avenue.

The design of the Gilder Center would be contemporary, but as discussed above, has been designed to relate in scale and materials to the existing Museum buildings and surrounding historic context. As described above, the historic buildings in the study area include a mix of older masonry structures with stone cladding or fully clad in stone (the New-York Historical Society is clad in granite) and more recently built buildings with brick curtain walls and large glazed window openings. The area surrounding the Museum and Theodore Roosevelt Park has existed in a context that includes the evolving design of the Museum, including the most recently constructed glazed Rose Center and the Ross Terrace, which also present contemporary street façades, as well as the construction of larger and taller apartment buildings of a more modern design within the historic district. The continuity of setting, including the setback of the Museum buildings behind landscaped areas and paths in Theodore Roosevelt Park and the proposed height of the proposed Gilder Center in keeping with the Museum buildings on Columbus Avenue, would respect the historic character of the surrounding area, and would not introduce

incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements to a resource's setting or isolate a resource's setting or visual relationships with the streetscape.

The proposed project would not eliminate or screen significant publicly accessible views of any architectural resources in the study area. As described above, the proposed Gilder Center would maintain a west façade in line with the façades of Buildings 17 and 8 of the Museum along Columbus Avenue. The proposed project would not affect views to architectural resources in the study area, including those historic buildings in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District on Columbus Avenue and West 79th Street across from the project site, which would continue to remain prominently visible on those streets.

In summary, beyond the Museum complex, the proposed project would not be anticipated to have any significant adverse impacts on architectural resources in the study area. *