

APPENDIX F:
Correspondence with the New York City
Department of Transportation



To: Owen Wells, Director
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

From: Naim Rasheed, Senior Director *Naim*
Traffic Engineering & Planning

Re: American Museum of Natural History
Final Environmental Impact Statement
CEQR No.: 16DPR004M

Date: September 5, 2017

The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) as City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) lead agency, on behalf of The American Museum of Natural History (AMNH or the Museum), is seeking discretionary approval of actions in connection with a proposed new building, the Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation (the Gilder Center). The Applicant is seeking discretionary approvals from the DPR, the NYC Public Design Commission (PDC) and NYC Landmarks Commission. Funding for the proposed project has been approved by the City of New York through the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) and the State of New York through the NYS Urban Development Corporation (d/b/a Empire State Development (ESD). The NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) will also review the proposed project.

The proposed Gilder Center is a five-story, approximately 203,000 gross-square-foot (gsf) addition located on the Columbus Avenue side of the Museum campus. Because the building would be integrated into the Museum complex, an additional approximately 42,000 gsf of existing space would be renovated to accommodate the program and make connections into the new building, for a total of approximately 245,125 gsf of new construction and renovation. Alterations would also be made to adjacent portions of Theodore Roosevelt Park. The Gilder Center, together with these other alterations, represents the proposed project. From Columbus Avenue, visitors would be able to access the Gilder Center through Theodore Roosevelt Park and enter a central exhibition Hall that would link the west side of the Museum to all other parts of the campus, which would enhance accessibility and simplify circulation.

The Museum is located on the superblock bounded by West 81st Street, West 77th Street, Central Park West, and Columbus Avenue, in the Upper West Side neighborhood of Manhattan. The Museum is located in Theodore Roosevelt Park, City-owned parkland under the jurisdiction of DPR. The site for the proposed project is on the west side of the Museum complex facing Columbus Avenue and it is located in Manhattan Community District 7. It is anticipated that the proposed project, if approved, would be built and operational by 2020, with its first full-year of operation in 2021. Therefore, the EIS analysis for the proposed project has been performed for 2021.

Operations

An assessment of the 79th Street Greenmarket was conducted for the Sunday peak hour to determine the traffic and pedestrian conditions with the proposed project during the Museum's Sunday operation hours. Since traffic was lower on Sunday than Saturday, traffic conditions in the study area on Sunday would be similar to or better than Saturdays, and any Saturday mitigation measures would suffice for Sunday, therefore, a Sunday traffic analysis was not warranted. Regarding the pedestrian 2021 With-Action Sunday analyses during the midday peak hour (12:45 to 1:45PM), it was determined that all sidewalk, corner reservoirs and crosswalks would continue to operate at Level-of-Service A, B or C during the Sunday midday peak hour and would not result in significant potential adverse pedestrian impacts.

The peak hours evaluated in the traffic analysis were determined for weekday Midday to be 1-2PM, the weekday PM is 5-6 and the Saturday Midday peak hour is 3:15-4:15PM. The NYCDOT has completed its review of the Environmental Impact Statement which identifies the need for mitigation measures at the following locations:

- Central Park West and West 81st Street: During the weekday PM peak hour and the Saturday Midday peak hour shift one second for green time from the westbound/eastbound phase to the westbound-left-turn/eastbound-left-turn phase;
- Columbus Avenue and West 81st Street: During the Saturday Midday peak hour shift one second of green time from the southbound through phase to the southbound through left-turn phase, widen the east crosswalk by one-foot; and
- Central Park West and 77th Street: During the Saturday Midday peak hour shift one second of green time from the eastbound phase to the northbound/southbound phase.

Construction

Construction trucks are expected to enter the construction project site via Columbus Avenue between West 79th and West 80th Streets, and exit the construction site onto Columbus Avenue south of West 79th Street. The Sunday pedestrian analysis was performed along the east side of Columbus Avenue between 77th Street and West 81st Street.

During the construction phase the following intersection was identified for the following proposed mitigation measure:

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- Columbus Avenue and West 81st Street: During the construction PM peak hour (3-4PM) shift one second of green time from the southbound permitted phase to the southbound protected left-turn phase.

The proposed mitigation measures appear reasonable and feasible. The applicant will be responsible for all costs associated with the design and implementation of proposed mitigation measures as well as project-related improvements. The applicant/lead agency should inform DOT six months prior to occupancy of the proposed project.

If there are any questions, I can be reached at (212) 839-7710, or you may contact Marjorie Bryant at (212) 839-7756.

c: Acting D/C E. Beaton, B/C L. Sanchez, E. Brunner (MOEC), S. Quinn, S. Barkho,
E. Athanailos, D. Nguyen, N. Ibrahim, S. Ahmed, M. Bryant, File

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