Chapter 18: Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

A. INTRODUCTION

Unavoidable significant adverse impacts are defined as those that meet the following two criteria:

- There are no reasonably practicable mitigation measures to eliminate the impacts; and
- There are no reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that would meet the purpose and need of the action, eliminate the impact, and not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts.

As detailed in Chapter 17, "Mitigation," a number of the potential impacts identified for the Proposed Project could be mitigated. However, in some cases Proposed Project impacts would not be fully mitigated. As described below, unmitigated significant adverse impacts would remain in the areas of transportation and construction noise. These significant adverse impacts cannot be fully mitigated while still allowing the Proposed Project to meet the State's development objectives for the Project Sites. The following is a summary of those "Unavoidable Adverse Impacts."

B. TRANSPORTATION

The analysis in Chapter 11, "Transportation" finds that the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse impacts on the local street network, the highway network, and bus service, as well as potential impacts to parking. An extensive set of proposed mitigation measures have been developed to address these impacts, consisting of a new Elmont Station that would be added to the LIRR Main Line; implementation of a comprehensive Transportation Management Plan (TMP); standard traffic engineering improvements; and adjustments to bus service.

LOCAL STREET NETWORK

Of the 38 intersections analyzed on the local street network, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at six intersections during the weekday AM peak hour, six intersections during the weekday PM peak hour, nine intersections during the Saturday Midday peak hour, six intersections during the Saturday PM peak hour, and two intersections during the Saturday night peak hour. The mitigation analyses indicate that the majority of the intersections with significant adverse traffic impacts could be fully mitigated via implementation of standard traffic engineering improvements such as: the installation of new traffic signals at currently unsignalized intersections; modification of signal phasing and timing at currently signalized intersections; deployment of traffic enforcement agents (TEAs) before arena events, implementation of turn prohibitions where needed; geometric improvements at specific intersections to provide improved channelization; lane re-striping; and/or new lane designations. With such measures, significant adverse traffic impacts would be fully mitigated at all but three traffic movements at one intersection during the weekday AM peak hour, one traffic movement at one intersection during the weekday PM peak hour, six traffic movements at two intersections

during the Saturday Midday peak hour, and two traffic movements at one intersection during the Saturday PM peak hour.

In the absence of the application of additional mitigation measures, the impacts at those two intersections would not be considered fully mitigated. Given that there are no identified reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project that would meet the State's development objectives, eliminate the impacts, and/or not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts, these impacts would be unavoidable.

HIGHWAY NETWORK

Of the 37 highway segments analyzed on the northbound and southbound Cross Island Parkway between the Southern State Parkway and Jamaica Avenue, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts to six highway segments during the weekday AM peak hour, 15 highway segments during the weekday PM peak hour, 24 highway segments during the Saturday Midday peak hour, 22 highway segments during the Saturday PM peak hour, and 21 highway segments during the Saturday night peak hour. Of the five merge and weaving segments analyzed at the interchanges of the Cross Island Parkway with the Long Island Expressway and Grand Central Parkway, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at one weaving segment during the Saturday Midday peak hour and two merge segments during the Saturday PM peak hour. Additionally, micro-simulation analyses performed for the Cross Island Parkway showed that the Proposed Project would result in substantial increases in "unserved" vehicles (unmet demand) that could not be processed during the weekday PM and Saturday PM peak hours.

The identification of significant adverse impacts on the highway network is not unusual for projects of this scale. Many of these highway segments operate at congested or near-congested conditions in at least one direction during some of those peak periods under existing conditions; the Cross Island Parkway is in immediate proximity to the Project Sites, and it is projected to be used by up to 90 percent of those driving to the Proposed Project. Widening of the Cross Island Parkway is neither practical nor reasonably feasible, and has been precluded as an option. However, an extensive set of proposed mitigation measures has been developed to minimize and reduce the magnitude of these impacts consisting of the addition of a new LIRR Elmont Station on the LIRR Main Line and implementation of a comprehensive TMP, which contains a suite of transportation demand management strategies aimed at reducing the volume of project-generated peak hour vehicular trips, changing travel patterns to redistribute traffic away from key segments of the Cross Island Parkway, and shifting demand from auto to alternate modes of transportation (including the LIRR, shuttle buses, and charter buses).

The proposed mitigation measures would reduce the level of additional congestion on the Cross Island Parkway by eliminating all of the unmet demand in both the northbound and southbound directions during the weekday PM peak hour and in the southbound direction during the Saturday PM peak hour. The proposed mitigation measures would also substantially reduce the unmet demand in the northbound direction during the Saturday PM peak hour, and the use of demand management strategies in the TMP could further reduce or eliminate the remaining unmet demand by redirecting some of the arena patrons to approach the Project Sites via the southbound direction of the parkway by using a partnership with a navigation app provider.

With these measures in place, unmitigated impacts would be reduced to 3, 11, 22, 20, and 14 highway segments along the northbound and southbound Cross Island Parkway between the Southern State Parkway and Jamaica Avenue during the weekday AM, weekday PM, Saturday

Midday, Saturday PM, and Saturday night peak hours, respectively. One unmitigated impact would remain at one highway segment at the interchange of the Cross Island Parkway with the Long Island Expressway during the Saturday Midday peak hour. In the absence of the application of mitigation measures, the impacts would be not be considered fully mitigated. Given that there are no identified reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project that would meet the State's development objectives, eliminate the impacts, and/or not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts, these impacts would be unavoidable.

C. CONSTRUCTION NOISE

Chapter 15, "Construction," finds that construction of the Proposed Project would have the potential to result in significant adverse construction noise impacts at residential locations immediately adjacent to Site B. As a result of the construction noise levels that would occur at these locations over an extended duration, residences along Huntley Road, both sides of Wellington Road between Hempstead Turnpike and 109th Avenue, the west side of Wellington Road between 109th Avenue and Hathaway Avenue, and the north side of Hathaway Avenue west of Wellington Road would have the potential to experience significant adverse construction noise impacts. All construction noise impacts identified at these residential receptors (with respect to interior noise levels) could be mitigated (see Chapter 17, "Mitigation"). For the outdoor spaces (e.g., yards, decks) of these receptors, there would be no feasible or practicable measures to eliminate the construction noise impacts. Outdoor spaces could still be used without the effects of construction noise outside of the hours that construction would occur, i.e., during the late afternoon, night time, and on most weekends. However, during periods of construction, the identified impacts to outdoor spaces with the aforementioned areas immediately adjacent to Site B would not be fully mitigated. Given that there are no identified reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project that would meet the State's development objectives, eliminate the impacts, and/or not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts, these impacts would be unavoidable. ✶