

**Appendix A:
Natural Resources Screening**

A natural resources assessment is conducted when a natural resource is present on or near the project site and when an action involves the disturbance of that resource. The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines natural resources as water resources, including surface water bodies and groundwater; wetland resources, including freshwater and tidal wetlands; upland resources, including beaches, dunes, and bluffs, thickets, grasslands, meadows and old fields, woodlands and forests, and gardens and other ornamental landscaping; and built resources, including piers and other waterfront structures. The project site is in a fully developed area of Manhattan and contains limited natural resources.

Because the Project Area is not located within a designated Sole Source Aquifer, and groundwater within New York City is not utilized as a potable water source, the Proposed Project would not have the potential to adversely affect groundwater.

The Project Area is not within the 1 percent annual chance or 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain, based on a review of the FEMA preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), therefore the Proposed Project would not have the potential to adversely affect flood risk within or adjacent to the Project Area.

Habitat within the Project Area is limited to buildings, paved city streets with street tree pits, and the occasional ornamental plantings. Vegetation includes trees, shrubs, and herbaceous species common to areas of high human disturbance. All work would be performed in compliance with Local Law 3 of 2010 and NYC Parks Tree Protection Protocol, to minimize potential significant adverse impacts. Any required replacement and/or restitution of trees removed as a result of the project would be provided in compliance with Local Law 3 and Chapter 5 of Title 56 of the Rules of the City of New York. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have the potential to adversely affect ecological communities.

Habitat for wildlife in the Project Area is limited to building, streets, and other impervious surfaces, and street trees and occasional ornamental plantings around the edges of buildings. As such, wildlife with the potential to occur within the Project Area is primarily limited to mostly non-native, invasive species that are ubiquitous throughout the heavily developed areas of New York City, such as house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), rock pigeon (*Columba livia*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), and Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*). Any disturbance to the Project Area would not be capable of reducing habitat availability for the common, urban-adapted species that could occur in the area, or have any potential to otherwise adversely affect their populations.

During spring and fall, migrating birds commonly occur within New York City for brief periods of rest and refueling before continuing on to the north or south. They are most abundant in the City's large natural areas and parks, but also occur in much smaller green spaces and to a lesser extent, even where habitat is limited to small clusters or rows of street trees and ornamental plantings in fully developed areas like the Project Area. In such situations where migrating birds are in close proximity to buildings that feature windows or other glass coverings on their façade, there is the potential for collisions to occur. The vast majority of bird collisions with buildings in

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New York City and elsewhere occur near ground level and during the daytime, as a result of the glass reflecting images of vegetation or sky that birds cannot distinguish from the real thing. Nighttime collisions with tall buildings are relatively uncommon (Gelb and Delacretaz 2006, 2009; Klem et al. 2009; Loss et al. 2014).

The Proposed Project would be required to adhere to Section 1403.8 of the New York City building code which was updated effective January 10, 2021 to specify bird-friendly design and construction requirements in accordance with Article 103, Section 36, of Title 28 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York. The new code requires new buildings to use “bird-friendly glass” for a minimum of 90 percent of all exterior glazing on the lowest 75 feet of the building and on the 12 feet above any green roof system. One hundred percent of all exterior glazing on all glass balcony railings, all parallel glass and all glass corners also must consist of “bird-friendly glass.” Bird-friendly glass is defined as “glass or glazing that has, or has been treated to have, a maximum threat factor of 25 as defined by the Bird Collision Threat Rating Calculation Spreadsheet created by the American Bird Conservatory and adopted as pilot credit SSp55 by the United States Green Building Council based upon the Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) credit system.” Bird-friendly glass types typically have low reflectivity, surface markings like etched or fritted lines, dots, or other markings, or reflect ultraviolet light that birds can see and enables them to recognize the glass as a solid barrier to avoid. Building materials for the Proposed Project have yet to be selected, but the Proposed Project will be designed to be in full compliance with Section 1403.8 of the New York City building code to minimize the potential for bird collisions. With those measures in place, the Proposed Project would not represent a significant collision hazard to resident or migratory birds.

A review of the NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper¹ indicates records of one rare animal species (yellow bumble bee [*Bombus fervidus*]) and one New York State-endangered animal species (peregrine falcon [*Falco peregrinus*]) in the vicinity of the Project Area. The peregrine falcon has been proposed by NYSDEC for down-listing two levels from endangered to special concern due to the dramatic increase in the state's population in recent years. There are no federally listed, candidate, or proposed species listed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) System² as occurring in New York County. Peregrine falcons build nests on high ledges, often on city buildings, bridges, and other tall, artificial structures. They are highly urban-adapted and tolerant of human disturbance, and now nest in many locations around the New York metropolitan area. Construction of the Proposed Project would not have the potential to reduce habitat availability in the city for peregrine falcons, reduce their prey base (primarily rock pigeons), disrupt their breeding activity, or otherwise impact the species at the individual or population level. Prior to demolition of buildings within the project site, the New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) would be contacted with respect to peregrine falcon nesting in the project site and measures would be implemented in coordination with NYSDEC as necessary. The yellow bumble bee is an unlisted species that is considered to be critically imperiled at the state level by the New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP). Yellow bumble bees are generalist foragers that nest both above and below ground (NYNHP 2020). Within the Project Area, the yellow bumble bee would have the potential to occur

¹ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Environmental Resource Mapper. (Accessed on April 23, 2020. Available at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/gis/erm/>)

² United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPAC) IPAC System (Accessed on April 23, 2020. Available at: <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>)

in Greeley Square Park and Herald Square Park where there are ample vegetation and flowering plants for foraging and nesting.

In summary, the Proposed Project is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts to natural resources, and no further assessment is warranted.

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