STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW
NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF
TARGETED FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: December 18, 2024

SEQR PROJECT NO.: 24-008

LEAD AGENCY: New York City School Construction Authority
25-01 Jackson Avenue
Long Island City, New York 11101-3045

Pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law) and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto (6 NYCRR Part 617), a Targeted Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been prepared covering the actions described below. Pursuant to §1730.2 of the Public Authorities Law, the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) is SEQR Lead Agency. The Targeted FEIS is available for public inspection at the office of the SCA, as well as on the SCA's website (http://www.nycsca.org/Community/New-School-Sites).

A Targeted Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed project was issued on August 12, 2024. A public hearing on the Targeted DEIS was held on August 29, 2024 where the public was invited to comment on the environmental issues identified for consideration in the Targeted DEIS. The public hearing was held as a hybrid meeting, in-person at the New Richard H. Hungerford School at 715 Ocean Terrace, Staten Island, New York 10301 and simultaneously via Zoom. The public comment period remained open for twenty (20) days following the hearing and closed on September 18, 2024.

NAME OF ACTION: Redevelopment of the former
St. John Villa Campus, Staten Island

LOCATION: 57 Cleveland Place, Staten Island
Block 3087, Lots 1 & 59

SEQR STATUS: Type I

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

On behalf of the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) proposes to create three new school facilities, an athletic field with an approximately 700-seat bleacher section, a maintenance building, and an internal driveway network with two parking lots, all of which will be located on Block 3087, Lot 1, as well as a separate parking lot on Block 3089, Lot 59 (the "proposed project") on the former St. John Villa campus at

57 Cleveland Place in the Arrochar section of Staten Island (the "project site"). The three new schools will consist of an approximately 764-seat Gifted and Talented primary/intermediate school (PS/IS) and two separate, independently operated intermediate/high schools (IS/HS) that will collectively provide 1,350 seats. The two IS/HS will share a gymnasium, auditorium, kitchen, and lobby. The PS/IS will serve students in grade levels pre-kindergarten through eight throughout New York City. Each IS/HS will serve students in grade levels six through twelve in the Borough of Staten Island. All three schools will also serve special education students enrolled in a District 75 program[1] in the Borough of Staten Island. The proposed schools will collectively introduce approximately 2,114 new school seats to the project site.

The project site comprises the former St. John Villa campus, which was previously occupied by the former St. John Villa Academy, a private Roman Catholic school that supported educational facilities for approximately 724 students in grades pre-kindergarten through twelve until its closure in 2018. The buildings associated with this former use remain on the project site and consist of a former convent building ("Villa"), Former Elementary School, Chapel Building, Former Annex, Garage, Former High School and Addition, and Former Pre-K Center. The existing buildings are in poor condition and cannot feasibly accommodate the modern school functions that the proposed project is intended to achieve. All but the Chapel Building will be removed in order to construct the proposed schools and athletic field. The Chapel Building will be maintained for school uses. Given the topography of the site, extensive grading will likely be necessary to accommodate the proposed school facilities.

Funding for site preparation, design, and construction of the proposed project (collectively, the "proposed actions") will be provided by DOE's Five-Year Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2025-2029. Construction will be phased beginning in the first quarter (Q1) of 2025 and will conclude in Q2 2030. Therefore, 2030 is assumed for the analysis year ("build year").

The proposed project's purpose is to provide additional permanent public primary, intermediate, and high school capacity in the Borough of Staten Island in order to address forecast changes in future student enrollment and to support DOE's policies regarding class size reduction. Staten Island faces overcrowding in many schools across the borough. District 31 (Staten Island) currently has only 24 percent of classes in compliance with the new Class Size Reduction Law; this is the third-lowest percentage in compliance among the City's 32 school districts. The compliance rate of District 31 is also significantly lower than the Citywide average of approximately 40 percent. These data points are a clear indicator for the need for additional classrooms in District 31. Moreover, the Class Size Reduction Law

[1] District 75 programs provide Citywide special education services for students in need of intensive or specialized services. The proposed project will include approximately 96 District 75 seats in the PS/IS and approximately 96 District 75 seats in the proposed shared facility for two IS/HS, for a total of 192 District 75 seats.

mandates a very tight timeframe for its implementation, which requires the SCA/DOE to maximize capacity creation on any given site. In addition, it is a cost-effective use of taxpayer funds to provide ample school seats on a large property, rather than to acquire and develop additional parcels at additional taxpayer expense.

POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

An Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) and Supplemental Environmental Studies report, completed on May 1, 2024, established that the proposed project will not result in significant adverse impacts to Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy; Socioeconomic Conditions; Community Facilities and Services; Open Space; Urban Design and Visual Resources; Natural Resources; Hazardous Materials; Solid Waste and Sanitation Services; and Energy. As a result, these technical areas do not require further analysis in the Targeted FEIS. The findings of the EAF and Supplemental Environmental Studies, which were prepared in accordance with the New York *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, can be accessed on the SCA's website (http://www.nycsca.org/Community/New-School-Sites). The FEIS is deemed "Targeted" in that it focuses on the potential for impacts related to a select set of analyses, which consist of Shadows, Historic and Cultural Resources, Water and Sewer Infrastructure, Transportation, Air Quality, Noise, Public Health, Neighborhood Character, and Construction-Related Impacts.

Of the analyses presented in the Targeted FEIS, the proposed actions have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts related to Historic and Cultural Resources (Architectural Resources), Transportation (Traffic and Transit), Noise (Mobile Sources), and Construction (Traffic, Transit, Noise, Architectural Resources). While all efforts have been made to mitigate these impacts, certain impacts related to Transportation (Traffic), Noise (Mobile Sources), and Construction (Traffic, Noise, Architectural Resources) will be unmitigatable. The impacts and proposed mitigation measures are outlined in greater detail below.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES (ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES)

The proposed project will require that the majority of the existing on-site structures be demolished to accommodate the project's new uses. Of the existing buildings, only the Chapel Building will remain. The existing St. John Villa Academy on the project site has been determined eligible for listing in the S/NRHP. As such, under Section 14.09 of the State Historic Preservation Act of 1980 (SHPA), demolition of a S/NRHP-eligible resource will result in an adverse impact to the historic resource. As required under Section 14.09, consultation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) was undertaken by the

SCA as part of the proposed project. OPRHP, in its letter of March 1, 2021, responded to the SCA's request to initiate the formal consultation process regarding the redevelopment of the project site for school use. In their response, OPRHP confirmed that the proposed project will constitute an adverse impact on the eligible S/NRHP resource and recommended that the SCA consult with their office on ways to mitigate the adverse impact.

Information about the existing conditions of the St. John Villa Academy campus buildings and the ability of these buildings to meet the proposed project goals was presented in the project's Master Plan, Volume 2, published in 2019. In continued consultation with the OPRHP, the SCA used the data in the Master Plan to develop a Letter of Resolution (LOR) in 2023 that confirms the necessity of demolishing the majority of the St. John Villa Academy buildings and addresses the mitigation of the adverse impact to the S/NRHP-eligible resource.

As part of the LOR, OPRHP recognizes that:

- The oldest buildings on the project site, the Villa and the Former Elementary School, have undergone several modifications to their original design, affecting their architectural style and significance;
- The access to and entrances of existing buildings do not meet current standards for accessibility and negatively impact safe access to and circulation around the project site;
- The existing buildings do not meet current building and safety code requirements for egress and accessibility and require significant alterations to provide the required number and width of exits and required elevators, thereby reducing the available area for educational spaces;
- The existing buildings' structural systems cannot be adapted into contemporary instructional spaces because the existing building widths and column grids cannot accommodate and are not compatible with the SCA's standards for classrooms;
- Several of the existing buildings exhibit compromised structural systems, including cracked exterior façades and foundation walls, and a portion of the Former Annex's first floor has collapsed and is currently supported by temporary shoring;
- The existing buildings exhibit water infiltration from cracked and detached face brick façades, deteriorating brick facing, and corroded windows; and
- Staten Island has a demonstrated need for new educational facilities that the proposed project will provide, with few alternative sites for an academic campus.

As part of the LOR, the SCA has agreed to:

- Preserve the Chapel Building in consultation with OPRHP;
- Preserve or reconstruct the existing stone wall, iron fencing, and gates located at a portion of the site's perimeter, depending on condition;

- Continue to consult with OPRHP on the designs of new buildings and site work so that the proposed project will aim to reflect existing visual cues, massing, and scale of the historic buildings currently existing on the project site;
- Compile photo documentation of the Villa, Former Elementary School, Former High School and Addition, Former Pre-K-Center, Former Annex, and Garage;
- Provide drawings of the existing buildings for archive in an electronic database; and
- Install interpretive panels in the Chapel Building that may include photos of the existing former St. John Villa campus.

The LOR agreed to by both the SCA and OPRHP establishes the course of action necessary for successful mitigation of the potential adverse impacts of the demolition of the Villa, Elementary School, High School, Pre-K Center, Annex, and Garage at the St. John Villa Academy in accordance with Section 14.09 of the SHPA. As the proposed project moves forward, the SCA will implement the terms of the LOR to mitigate the adverse impact to the St. John Villa Academy S/NRHP-eligible historic resource. Following completion of the proposed project, the SCA will certify in writing that they have completed the conditions specified in the LOR and will provide any additional documentation regarding the proposed project at the reasonable request of OPRHP.

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic

Intersections/Driveways

Traffic conditions were evaluated for the weekday AM and PM peak hours at 25 intersections and six driveway locations, and for the Saturday midday peak hours at seven intersections and one driveway location in the traffic study area, where additional traffic resulting from the proposed project will be most heavily concentrated. Traffic impact analysis indicates the potential for significant adverse impacts at nine intersections during one or more analyzed peak hours:

- The Narrows Road South eastbound movement at Fingerboard Road will worsen from LOS D to LOS F during the PM peak hour. The Fingerboard Road northbound shared through/right-turn movement and the southbound left-turn movement at Narrows Road South will worsen from LOS D to LOS F conditions during the AM peak hour.
- The Fingerboard Road northbound left-turn movement at Narrows Road North will worsen from LOS D to LOS F conditions during the AM peak hour and worsen from LOS E to LOS F conditions during the PM peak hour. The northbound through movement will worsen from LOS D to LOS E during

the PM peak hour. The Narrows Road North westbound movement will worsen from LOS E to LOS F conditions during the AM and PM peak hours and worsen from LOS D to LOS F during the Saturday midday peak hour.

- The West Fingerboard Road eastbound movement at Hylan Boulevard will deteriorate within LOS F conditions during the AM peak hour.
- The McClean Avenue eastbound left-turn movement at Lily Pond Avenue will deteriorate within LOS F during the AM peak hour and the eastbound approach will deteriorate with LOS F during the PM peak hour. The Lily Pond Avenue northbound through movement at McClean Avenue will deteriorate within LOS E conditions during the AM peak hour.
- The Hylan Boulevard northbound left-turn movement at Narrows Road North will deteriorate within LOS F conditions during the AM peak hour and worsen from LOS D to LOS F conditions during the PM peak hour.
- The Narrows Road South eastbound through movement at Hylan Boulevard West will deteriorate within LOS E conditions during the AM peak hour.
- The School Road eastbound left-turn movement at Bay Street will deteriorate from LOS D to E conditions during the AM peak hour.
- The Cleveland Place westbound shared left-turn/right-turn movement at Fingerboard Road will worsen from LOS B to LOS F in the AM and PM peak hours.
- The Landis Avenue northbound right-turn movement at Chicago Avenue will deteriorate from LOS A to LOS F conditions in the AM and PM peak hours.

Implementation of traffic engineering improvements, including modification of traffic signal phasing/timing and/or intersection approach lane reconfiguration will fully mitigate impacts at all intersections except for:

- Fingerboard Road at Narrows Road South (weekday AM and PM peak hours)
- Fingerboard Road at Narrows Road North (weekday AM, PM, and Saturday midday peak hours)
- Lily Pond Avenue at McClean Avenue (weekday AM and PM peak hours)
- Hylan Boulevard East at Narrows Road North (weekday AM and PM peak hours)

These four intersections will constitute unavoidable significant adverse traffic impacts as a result of the proposed project.

Highway Analysis

Significant adverse impacts were also identified at the following I-278 freeway/service road segments during one or more analyzed peak hours:

- The I-278 eastbound diverge segment at Exit 14, basic highway segment between Exits 14 and 15, and diverge segment at Exit 15, which currently operate at LOS F during the weekday AM peak hour, will deteriorate within LOS F in the No-Action and With-Action scenarios.
- The I-278 westbound weaving segment, which currently operates at LOS E in the weekday AM and Saturday Midday peak hours and at LOS F in the weekday PM peak hour, will operate at LOS F during the No-Action scenario and deteriorate within LOS F in the With-Action scenario for all analysis peak hours.
- The I-278 westbound basic highway segment between the on-ramp at Hylan Boulevard and Exit 13A, which currently operates at LOS F during the weekday PM peak hour, will deteriorate within LOS F in the No-Action and With-Action scenarios. During the Saturday midday peak hour, this segment currently operates at LOS D; it will worsen to LOS E in the No-Action scenario and worsen to LOS F in the With-Action scenario.
- The Narrows Road North westbound weaving segment, which currently operates at LOS E during the weekday PM peak hour, will deteriorate within LOS F in the No-Action and With-Action scenarios.

These highway impacts will constitute unavoidable significant adverse traffic impacts as a result of the proposed project.

Transit

The proposed project will result in a capacity shortfall for the S79-SBS bus route during the weekday PM peak hour for the southbound direction. As a result, the S79-SBS bus route will experience a significant adverse impact based on *CEQR Technical Manual* criteria. This significant adverse impact could be fully mitigated by the addition of approximately one standard bus in the PM peak hour.

NOISE (MOBILE SOURCE)

The proposed project will result in significant adverse mobile-source noise impacts at three locations:

- Hastings Street, Major Avenue, and Landis Avenue
- Landis Avenue and Chicago Avenue
- Hastings Street and Narrows Road South

Measures to reduce or eliminate the proposed project's mobile-source noise impacts were explored by the SCA between the Targeted DEIS and Targeted FEIS. The SCA determined that noise mitigation measures, such as window wall attenuation measures and sound-barrier walls, are infeasible and insufficient to mitigate against the mobile nature of these impacts. The SCA did not identify any other potential mitigation measures. Therefore, the proposed project will result in

unmitigated significant adverse mobile-source noise impacts at these three locations.

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS

Traffic

Intersections/Driveways

The proposed project will result in a significant adverse traffic impact at one study area intersection – Fingerboard Road at Narrows Road North – during the 2025 (Q4) construction analysis for the 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM construction peak hour. No significant adverse impacts are expected during the 6:00 AM to 7:00 AM construction peak hour. The impact at this intersection will remain unmitigated during this peak quarter for construction activities.

During the 2030 (Q1) cumulative construction and operational analysis, the proposed project is projected to result in significant adverse traffic impacts at eight study area intersections during the 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM and 2:15 PM to 3:15 PM operational peak hours:

- Fingerboard Road and Narrows Road South
- Fingerboard Road and Narrows Road North
- Hylan Boulevard and West Fingerboard Road
- Lily Pond Avenue and McClean Avenue
- Narrows Road North and Hylan Boulevard East
- Narrows Road South and Hylan Boulevard West
- School Road and Bay Street
- Landis Avenue and Chicago Avenue

During the 2030 (Q1) No Action scenario, five of these eight intersections will operate with one or more lane groups at an unacceptable LOS E or F. The impacts at four intersections could be mitigated through the implementation of traffic engineering improvements, including modification of traffic signal phasing/timing and/or intersection approach lane reconfiguration. The significant impacts at the remaining four intersections will remain unmitigated, as follows:

- Fingerboard Road and Narrows Road South
- Fingerboard Road and Narrows Road North
- Lily Pond Avenue and McClean Avenue
- Narrows Road North and Hylan Boulevard East

Highway Analysis

During the 2030 (Q1) cumulative construction and operational analysis, significant adverse impacts from cumulative incremental construction and operational trips were identified at the following freeway segments:

- **I-278 Eastbound:** The diverge segment at Exit 14, basic segment between Exits 14 and 15, and diverge segment at Exit 15 will deteriorate within LOS F conditions during the AM peak hour.
- **I-278 Westbound**: The basic segment and the weaving segment between the on-Ramp at Hylan Boulevard and Exit 13A will deteriorate within LOS F conditions during the PM peak hour.
- **Narrows Road North:** The weaving segment between Exit 13B and the on-Ramp at Hylan Boulevard will deteriorate within LOS F conditions during the PM peak hour.

These impacts will constitute unavoidable significant adverse traffic impacts as a result of the proposed project.

Transit

During the 2030 (Q1) peak analysis period for cumulative construction and operational bus demand, there will be reduced adverse impacts during the operational peak hours than during the Q3 2030 operational peak hours with full occupancy, as the number of bus trips will be fewer during the construction phase. Most of the proposed project will be completed by this time, and significant adverse bus impacts are expected during the operational peak hours. Therefore, the mitigation measures for 2030 operational bus impacts will also be effective at mitigating any potential impacts from construction transit trips during the 2030 (Q1) peak quarter for cumulative construction and operational travel demand.

Given ongoing MTA passenger monitoring programs, it is expected that comprehensive service plans will be generated to respond to specific, known needs with capital and/or operational improvements where fiscally and operationally practicable to mitigate the significant adverse impact generated by the projected bus ridership demand.

Noise

Construction activities associated with the proposed project will result in significant adverse impacts related to mobile-source and stationary-source noise. However, these impacts will be temporary, as elevated noise levels related to construction will be relatively short-term in nature given that high-noise-intensity activities will not last for extended periods of time. As construction activities move throughout the project site, no one location will be affected consistently. Once the highest noise-generating construction activities (requiring equipment such as excavators

and dozers) are completed, noise levels from other construction activities and equipment, such as generators or front-end loaders, may occasionally still result in an exceedance of noise criteria levels; however, it is anticipated that overall construction noise levels will decrease over time. Finally, it is expected that higher noise levels will be mitigated by the use of construction industry best practices for noise reduction.

Even with the implementation of mitigation measures, noise levels from construction activities and equipment may still occasionally result in an exceedance of noise criteria levels; however, it is anticipated that overall construction noise levels will decrease at all affected receptors over time. To the extent that mitigation measures proposed as part of the proposed project may not be effective at fully mitigating the construction-period noise impacts, then the proposed project may result in unavoidable significant adverse impacts.

Further details about the specific construction-period noise impacts are described below.

Mobile Sources

2025 Q4 Analysis

During the AM peak construction traffic hour, a maximum noise level increase of 10 dBA is predicted along Hastings Street. For the PM peak construction traffic hour, a maximum noise level increase of 4 dBA is predicted along Cleveland Place. Increases in noise levels by at least 5 dBA will be clearly noticeable to receptors. In locations where a noise level increase of 10 dBA or more is predicted, a doubling in sound levels will occur and considered significant during the 2025 Q4 construction period. As such, there will be mobile-source noise impacts during the 2025 Q4 construction period with the proposed project.

Stationary Sources

2025 Q4 Analysis

The proposed project will result in significant adverse stationary-source noise impacts during the 2025 Q4 construction period. These noise level increases assume that all pieces of equipment will be working concurrently and in the same location to evaluate a worst-case scenario. Actual construction noise levels will vary and depend on distance from the work, the types and quantities of equipment working concurrently, location of sensitive receptors (i.e., inside or outside), and natural and/or man-made features (e.g., barriers, berms, existing buildings) between the work and sensitive receptor that will provide shielding.

2030 Q1 Analysis

The proposed project will result in significant adverse stationary-source noise impacts during the 2030 Q1 construction period. As described above, these noise level increases assume that all pieces of equipment will be working at the same time and location to determine a worst-case scenario. Actual construction noise levels will vary and depend on distance from the work, the types and quantities of equipment working concurrently, location of sensitive receptors (i.e., inside or outside), and natural and/or man-made features (e.g., barriers, berms, existing buildings) between the work and sensitive receptor that will provide shielding. The analysis assumes that foundation work for the PS/IS will occur during this phase and not concurrently during Phase 3-1 foundation work. However, noise levels during 2030 Q1 could be reduced at the two IS/HS if all foundation work were to be completed during 2025 Q4 construction, when the school is not in operation.

Cumulative Effects

2025 Q4 Analysis

The proposed project will result in significant adverse cumulative noise impacts during the 2025 Q4 construction period. However, this significant increase in noise levels will be temporary and transient and will only occur during peak construction in Q4 2025. Noise attenuation recommendations to ensure the interior noise levels of the two IS/HS remain below the maximum allowable interior L_{10} noise exposure level of 45 dBA when the campus is fully operational.

2030 Q1 Analysis

The proposed project will result in significant adverse cumulative noise impacts during the 2030 Q1 construction period. Peak-period noise exposure levels in the two IS/HS are considered "Clearly Unacceptable" per the *CEQR Technical Manual*. However, this significant increase in noise levels will be temporary and transient and only occur during construction. Noise attenuation recommendations to ensure that interior noise levels in the two IS/HS remain below the maximum allowable interior L_{10} noise exposure level of 45 dBA when the campus is fully operational.

Architectural Resources

Due to the proximity of construction activities to the S/NRHP-eligible Chapel Building, a construction protection plan (CPP) is warranted. Such a plan could include measures to minimize potential impacts by developing and implementing vibration-monitoring protocol. This will establish vibration thresholds that are not to be exceeded by construction. If excavation equipment is limited to a backhoe, vibrations are likely to remain at a low level. No pile driving will be required during

construction. If jackhammering is required, then vibration control measures could be implemented to minimize, as much as possible, the vibration levels at the historic buildings within the study area. With the CPP in place, the potential impacts to the S/NRHP-eligible Chapel Building will be fully mitigated.

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS

The proposed project will facilitate the construction of three new public schools that will serve to alleviate significant overcrowding in Staten Island schools. The proposed redevelopment will reestablish the project site's former use as an academic campus and be undertaken in a manner that provides modern academic facilities while also preserving elements of the project site's historic features through implementation of the terms of the LOR agreed to with OPRHP. Further, in addition to providing a needed community facility according to the terms agreed to with OPRHP, the proposed project will also provide construction jobs as well as permanent jobs at the three new schools.

For further information, contact:

Contact: Callista Nazaire
Senior Management Specialist,
Real Estate Services

Address: New York City School Construction Authority
25-01 Jackson Avenue
Long Island City, New York 11101-3045

Telephone: (718) 472-8985

Nina Kubota
President and CEO

December 18, 2024
Date