



Central Park West Skyline Potential Futures

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What is now referred to as the “Central Park West Skyline” was created serendipitously by the buildings constructed along the western perimeter of Central Park since 1870. Among these buildings are many of New York’s most iconic landmarks including The Dakota Apartments (West 72nd Street), the American Museum of Natural History (between West 77th and 81st Streets) and the soaring twin-towered apartment buildings of the 1920s and 30s.

The Central Park West Skyline as a whole has a powerful presence both physically and psychologically. Its distinctive, undulating high-rise/low-rise silhouette defines New York City as resonantly as the Chrysler Building, Grand Central Station or the Statue of Liberty.

Created by happenstance, the Central Park West Skyline is now a treasured New York City landmark. The stretch from West 62nd to 96th Streets was designated as part of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District in 1990. However, historic district status, even coupled with contextual zoning (applied here in 1984), does not necessarily protect the skyline as we know it. In fact, existing regulations create development opportunities, especially over low-rise sites, that could tip the balance and transform this quintessential part of New York.

This study was undertaken to provide a technical framework to aid the community, developers, architects and relevant city agencies in analyzing and guiding the future in this portion of the Historic District to assure that any development is compatible with the existing skyline silhouette and the surrounding built context.

Recent and recurring proposals for redevelopment on lots facing Central Park within the Historic District make this project particularly timely. Periodic downturns in the economy and real-estate market relieve development pressures only temporarily on this perennially valuable asset. Now is the time to establish a long-range vision for the future of Central Park West.

**This study is dedicated to the memory of Norman Marcus—
friend, neighbor, colleague, teacher.**

March 2009



View from atop Central Park South, looking northwards along Central Park West

Landmark West! is a non-profit award-winning community group working to preserve the best of the Upper West Side’s architectural heritage from 59th to 110th Street between Central Park West and Riverside Drive. Since 1985, we have worked to achieve landmark status for individual buildings and historic districts and to safeguard the integrity of the New York City Landmarks Law.

Today Landmark West! is the proud curator of the area’s nearly 2,700 designated landmarks (up from only 337 in 1985), and continues to promote awareness of these architectural treasures and the urgent need to protect them against insensitive change and demolition.

Public education is central to our mission. *Central Park West Skyline: Potential Futures* is a direct outgrowth of our efforts to promote informed discussion about the future of our city’s landmarks. Other projects seeking similar goals include our successful youth education program, Keeping the Past for the Future, and our ongoing study of the environmental benefits of privately-owned open space such as exists on the interior of rowhouse blocks.

Weisz + Yoes Architecture is an award-winning multidisciplinary practice specializing in the realization of innovative architectural and environmental work in challenging contexts. Weisz + Yoes is celebrated for its agility, designing critically acclaimed visitor centers, schools and parks as well as private projects. Our in-depth responses to all aspects of program, site and technical requirements result in inventive solutions, creating objects and spaces that enrich our clients’ experiences of the places we inhabit.

Acknowledgements For invaluable guidance and careful review, our thanks go to late Norman Marcus, former General Counsel of the NYC Department of City Planning whose generous support made this study possible. Special support was generously provided by Gerard George, zoning consultant; Sheldon Fine, former Chair of Manhattan Community Board 7; Klari Neuwelt and Lenore Norman, Co-Chairs of the Parks & Preservation Committee of Manhattan Community Board 7; and many other members of the community-at-large.

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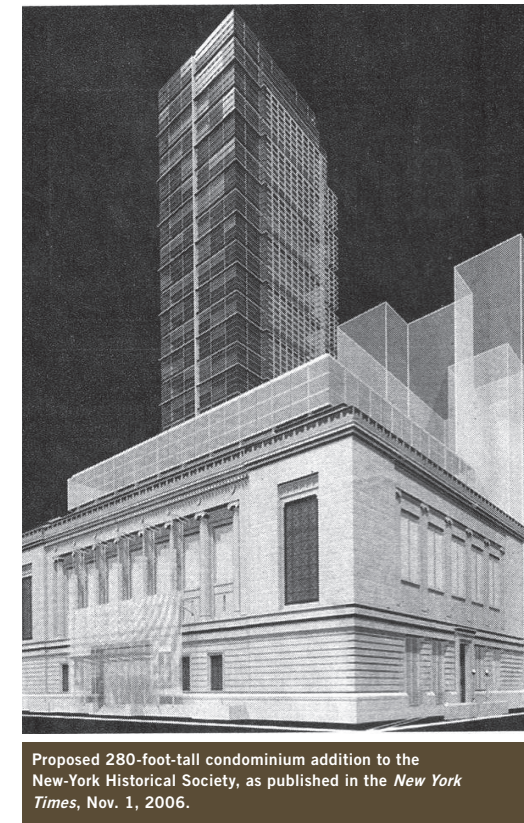
1. Introduction

Foreword

Landmark West!, the grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to preserving the architectural heritage of Manhattan's Upper West Side, commissioned Weisz + Yoes Architecture to investigate the future of development on Central Park West. Several recently proposed projects, including a tower atop the New-York Historical Society (between 76th and 77th Streets) and a building adjacent to Congregation Shearith Israel (on West 70th Street), had alerted Landmark West! to the possibility that landmarked properties along Central Park West not currently developed to their full zoning potential could become the source of insensitive development on lots on or adjacent to these landmarked properties. While Landmark West! and many others believed that these specific proposals were not in the best interest of the community—in terms of the impact on the historical skyline, the mostly low-rise brownstone midblocks, and Central Park itself—it was the absence of a cohesive vision for Central Park West, not a hard-line position against any and all new development, that propelled this study. Advocates found themselves repeatedly confronting the same issues on various sites in roughly 10-year cycles, driving home the fact that although Central Park West is landmarked, its preservation remains uncertain.

Recognizing that little planning attention had been given to Central Park West since the area was contextually rezoned in 1984, Landmark West! asked Weisz + Yoes to take a holistic view and determine if towers such as those proposed by the New-York Historical Society and Congregation Shearith Israel represent a long-term trend that could result in the transformation of the historic and treasured skyline silhouette of Central Park West.

Towards this end, we have identified potential soft sites and development trends and then mapped and modeled potential development along Central Park West from 60th to 110th Street. In these projections we have sought to model the kind of development that we have actually seen in New York over the last several years. We have therefore used more expansive soft site criteria and development assumptions than those typically used by the Department of City Planning as it seeks to understand the effects of proposed rezonings. Finally we built a 3-D digital model of the entire area so that we could demonstrate the overall effect of this potential development on the skyline of Central Park West.



Proposed 280-foot-tall condominium addition to the New-York Historical Society, as published in the *New York Times*, Nov. 1, 2006.



View looking north at the Central Park West Skyline

By comparing development that could take place under the existing zoning with development that is possible under special permit and variance scenarios, Landmark West! will be prepared to move pro-actively to protect the architecture and urbanism of Central Park West, using preservation and planning strategies that may include landmark guidelines, appropriate rezonings or the establishment of a “development rights conservancy” (taking inspiration from models set by open space preservation organizations). We have formulated a set of recommendations intended to guide Landmark West! and the community-at-large in honing a vision for the future of the Central Park West skyline silhouette.

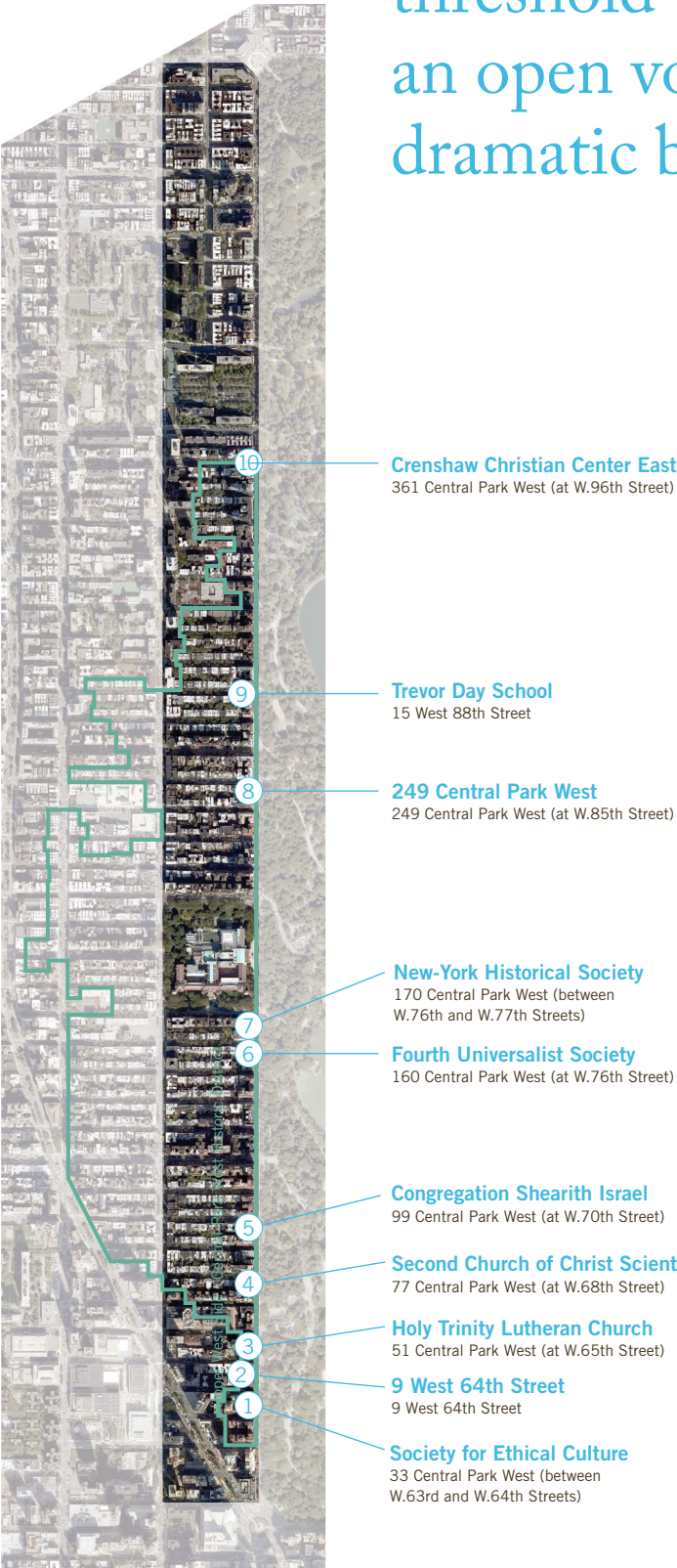
This study limits its scope to the buildings that have an immediate presence on the western edge of Central Park and therefore have a direct visual impact on the skyline silhouette as seen from the city's greatest public room. Similar studies of the other three “walls” of this room could help communities on all sides of Central Park and the City as a whole understand the future of these skylines and their impact on the Park. In addition, Landmark West! believes that a future study focused on potential development in the mid-blocks between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue would be equally fruitful. Here the comparison of development under current zoning and possible special permit and variance scenarios would help determine if the architecture and urbanism of the characteristic low-rise townhouse streets of the Upper West Side are also threatened.

Executive Summary

This study concerns itself with Central Park West not as a grand avenue or an exclusive residential address, but as an identifiable skyline and profile. It is at once a beloved “wall” of the great metropolis’ grandest room—Central Park—and an iconic landmark in its own right, a “grand proscenium” (to quote the Landmarks Preservation Commission’s 1990 Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District designation report) marking the threshold between park and city, between an open volume and the city’s dramatic built mass. As viewed from the Park, in long views from the track around the Reservoir or from the middle of the Great Lawn or the roof garden on the Met, or in looming glimpses from Belvedere Castle or the Lake, Central Park West’s skyline is an essential part of New York and its future is a city-wide concern.

Our study seeks to answer an important and pressing question, are there new towers in the future of this skyline? One example is the New-York Historical Society, which has floated a proposal for a 23-story glass apartment tower above its neoclassical landmark building—allowing a \$40 million renovation of its museum and library. Is this an isolated incident where a highly-respected public institution along Central Park West is taking advantage of existing development rights to support its facilities and operations? After careful study of the development potential along Central Park West, with particular attention to the unique possibilities created by low-rise public institutions with landmark designation, we have determined that there are ten major development sites, stretching from the Society for Ethical Culture on West 63rd Street to the Crenshaw Christian Center on West 96th Street. These ten sites, seven of them below West 77th Street if developed as aggressively as possible with residential towers have the potential to transform the existing skyline into something completely new. Perhaps counter-intuitively, it is the area at the heart of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District that is the most threatened by potential development. North of 97th Street, the potential for major development along Central Park is minimal.

“Central Park West is a grand proscenium marking the threshold between park and city, an open volume and the city’s dramatic built mass.”



This effort by Landmark West! to understand the potential futures of the western edge of Central Park is not only an urban design study but also a model for community planning. The Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Board of Standards and Appeals consider each of the projects that come before them on its own merits. They do not have the resources or even the authority to look ahead to what the cumulative effect of their decisions might be. Using the tools usually commanded by developers—massing studies and projected development scenarios—Landmark West! seeks to inform the community and the regulatory agencies in their efforts to plan for the future of the Central Park West profile and its treasured park.

Once we identified the most likely development sites along Central Park West, we needed to project development on these soft sites in order to understand how any new buildings might affect the city’s profile as it meets the western edge of the park. We modeled the development of each soft site under two different scenarios: First, as-of-right development strictly governed by the contextual zoning and fairly conservative assumptions about what the Landmarks Preservation Commission would approve and then secondly, tower development assuming special permits (74-711) or variances (BSA) that would allow the violation of height and bulk regulations combined with more immoderate ideas about what the Landmarks Preservation Commission might allow.

“Are there new towers in the future of the Central Park West skyline?”

As a community planning exercise, our study suggests several possible directions for further exploration:

Landmarks Guidelines promulgated in collaboration with the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The guidelines would help the Commission evaluate individual proposals in the context of the entire skyline as a landmark, just as the 1990 Historic District designation report suggests. There is precedent in this respect. The Landmark Preservation Commission has developed finely tuned rules for special areas such as Jackson Heights in Queens, where open space is an important aspect of the district’s significance.

Innovative Rezoning developed with the Department of City Planning and the Landmark Preservation Commission might be a way to put some further limits on the use of special permits. For example, it is worth considering the elimination of Section 74-711 special permits for landmarks within historic districts just as Section 74-79 (Transfer of Development Rights from Landmark Sites) is not permitted in historic districts. Alternately, amendment of Section 74-79 is also possible to restrict the scope and number of development rights transfers. In addition, there is the possibility of creating a new special-purpose district, along the lines of the Upper East Side’s Special Park Improvement District, to provide more fine-grained protection of Central Park West than contextual zoning offers by itself.

Institutional Landmark Conservancy, which would create some kind of a land trust to preserve the light and air over buildings or literally buy the development rights from institutions along the model of rural open space conservancies. Mechanisms would need to be created for generating capital to purchase air rights or otherwise incentivizing participation in a “vertical” open space trust.

Architectural Guidelines for surrounding new development that attempt to consider and evaluate appropriate relationships to historic buildings. Certain architectural elements, such as the glass tower proposal by the New-York Historical Society, have sparked questions regarding its relative appropriateness as well as the reflection of light into the park and light pollution in Central Park at night.

Central Park’s other Skylines all need similar attention to determine how development might change them; the northern edge of the park, which, because of its low-rise buildings, is the last side to preserve anything like the original feel of the Park as completely cut-off from the City, will almost certainly see a tremendous transformation in the next few decades.

2. Central Park and its Skylines

Introduction

From its inception in 1857, Central Park was intended by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux to present a marked contrast to the surrounding city. The sinuous curves of its paths and carriage-ways set it apart from the orthogonal rationality of the surrounding grid, and the park derives its unique character from the play of these opposites.

As the city developed around the park and pushed skyward, this contrast pushed into three dimensions, creating what is perhaps the world’s grandest urban “room.” It is the “walls” of this room—the built edges of Central Park West, Fifth Avenue, Central Park South (59th Street), and Central Park North (110th Street)—as much as the park landscape itself that define Central Park’s particular qualities.

Indeed Central Park, by carving a volume from the city’s dramatic built mass, provides a unique vantage point on its defining skylines. From the park, one sees the city from within, in cross section. Each of the park’s four edges has a distinct skyline, and each contributes to the character of the park.



Skyline to Fifth Avenue across Reservoir

Fifth Avenue

Fifth Avenue’s skyline along Central Park is distinguished above all by its consistency. Early twentieth-century apartment buildings predominate, repeatedly expressing the building envelope defined by the 1916 Building Zone Ordinance: A consistent cornice line at 125 feet, above which a series of terraced setbacks express the mandated sky exposure plane. These buildings, typically one or two per block, provide a clear and rhythmic expression of the street grid. This pattern is interrupted here and there by surviving 19th-century mansions, some of which occupy only a single 25-foot lot, and thus have a minimal impact on the skyline’s form. Most blocks along Fifth Avenue, like those along Central Park West, include a finer-grained townhouse fabric on the side streets, with the result that few buildings east of Fifth Avenue are visible on the skyline.



View looking south down Fifth Avenue on eastern side of Central Park



Central Park North (110th Street)

Of the four Central Park skylines, Central Park North is the lowest in scale and potentially the most susceptible to future redevelopment as Harlem becomes an increasingly coveted residential area. The newest addition to this skyline is a 17-story apartment building at 111 Central Park North, which is, according to *New York Sun* architectural critic James Gardner, “the tallest thing ever conceived along Central Park North, not counting the two Schomburg Towers at Fifth Avenue.” In his review on September 12, 2006, Gardner offers a glimpse of the future:

“In other words, 111 CPN is the first attempt to exploit this huge expanse of park views in the name of development. Unless the city or some community board steps in with other ideas, this doorman building will be the first step in a process that, within a matter of decades, will transform the northern edge of the park, heretofore hardly even on the map, into an area every bit as desirable as Central Park South, Central Park West and Fifth Avenue.”

With its mostly low-rise buildings of 6 stories or less, Central Park North for the moment still preserves the closest approximation of the open-sky views from the bucolic oasis of Central Park envisioned by Olmsted and Vaux.

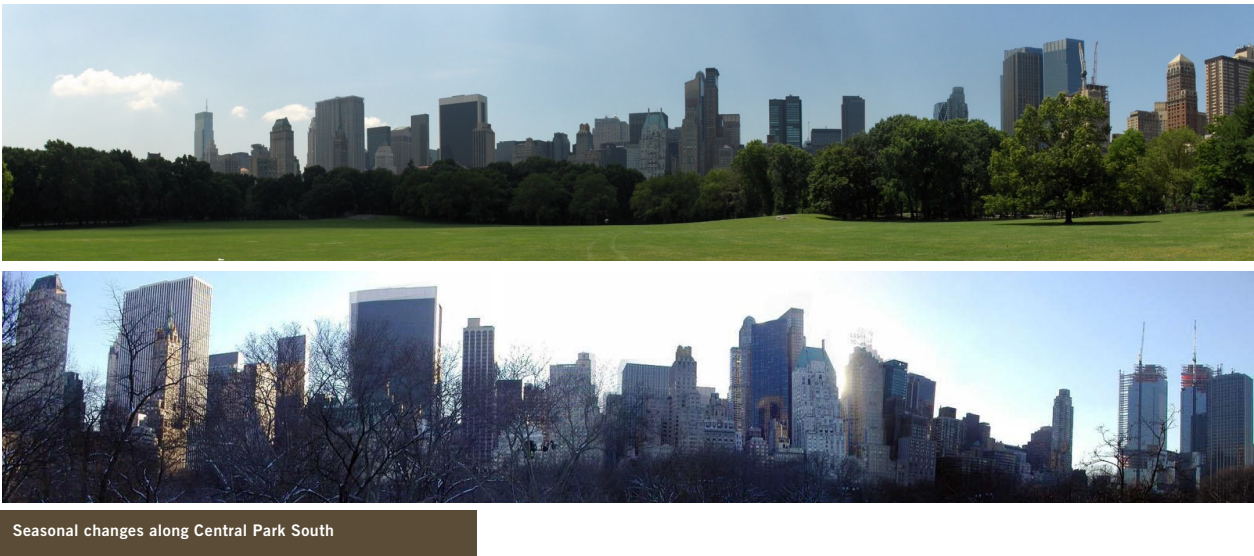


View along 110th Street



Central Park South

Central Park South is the face of Midtown, whose soaring towers and eclectic architecture provide a striking visual anchor from almost any part of Central Park. The buildings along the park—including landmarks like the Plaza Hotel and Hampshire House—define an uninterrupted streetwall in a range of architectural expressions, but represent only the opening statement of the brash and explosive assemblage that rises behind. In addition, the midtown skyline is in constant flux, defined as much by its constant reinvention as by its insistent verticality. It was aptly described by historian Jacques Barzun as, “The most stupendous unbelievable manmade spectacle since the hanging gardens of Babylon.”



Central Park West

In contrast to the rhythmic consistency of Fifth Avenue and the exuberant mayhem of Central Park South, Central Park West presents a skyline that is both complex and distinctive. Its pattern is defined by the interplay of three main elements: a strong mid-rise streetwall, its punctuation by lower institutional structures, and repeated sets of paired towers. With the prominent exception of the Dakota (1880-84), the grand apartment buildings on Central Park West date primarily from the turn of the 20th Century through 1931. While their architectural styles vary from pre-WWI Beaux Arts to 1920s Neo-Renaissance to early-Depression Art Deco, they have in common a full build-out of the streetwall. The streetwall height varies somewhat, especially in the earlier buildings, but creates a consistent plane. Those built after the 1916 Building Zone Resolution present a consistent 150-foot streetwall, above which they are set back within that policy’s sky exposure plane. The terraced setbacks are articulated by balconies, varied massing, and decorative treatment of utilities such as water towers and elevator mechanisms, adding visual interest to the skyline.



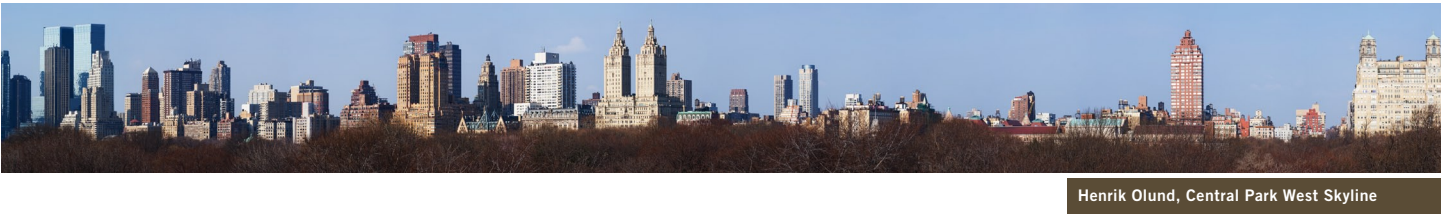
Central Park West’s consistent streetwall is punctuated by a series of lower institutional and religious buildings, most prominently the American Museum of Natural History between 79th and 81st Streets. The Museum and its associated open space provide a sort of grand pause in the skyline’s rhythm. More typically, these buildings, including the Society for Ethical Culture, Congregation Shearith Israel, the New-York Historical Society, and others, provide much briefer modulation of the streetwall, creating a complex rhythm at the street level and the cornice-line.

Finally, and most iconically, are the four sets of paired towers that soar above: The Century, The Majestic, The San Remo, and The El Dorado. These grand structures were made possible by the 1929 Multiple Dwelling Law that allowed towers up to three hundred feet. They each sit on an entire block face—eight standard lots—and hold the streetwall with a 150-foot base, surmounted by two matching towers set back from the adjoining streets. These towers, each designated individual landmarks, are unique to Central Park West and fundamental to the iconography of the park.

The 1990 Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District designation pointedly asserts the significance of the Central Park West skyline as a resource in itself, a “grand proscenium” marking the threshold between park and city. It calls out the interplay of “low-scale institutional buildings, medium-scale apartment buildings, and soaring twin-towered apartment buildings” as defining characteristics.

“The Historical Society is one of a series of public buildings erected at the turn of the century on Central Park West which in concert form a chain of monumental gateways to the West Side.”

From a letter by architect and historian Robert A.M. Stern, dated January 13, 1984, in reaction to a 23-story apartment tower then proposed above the New-York Historical Society



3. Central Park West Profile

Historical Development

Introduction and Overview

The Upper West Side, and Central Park West in particular, primarily took shape over a fifty-year period from 1880 to 1930. Successive waves of development, driven by the economic and physical expansion of New York City and the northward extension of transit lines into the area, contributed to the district’s characteristic physical pattern and architectural vocabulary.

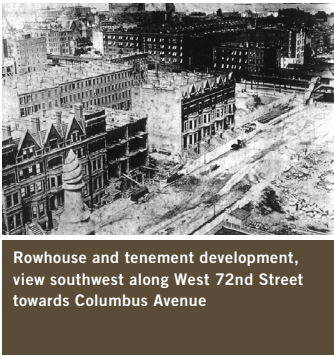
The 1880s and 90s brought single-family rowhouses, primarily grouped on the side streets, and tenements and flats along the avenues. While many of these structures still exist, others gave way to the grand apartment buildings that were constructed in the first decades of the 20th century. These came in two waves, before and after World War I, each bringing a new scale and stylistic evolution to the district.

Because of its high land values, Central Park West was late to develop, and was only built out once larger and more profitable building types came on the scene at the turn of the century. Luxury apartment buildings were constructed before World War I in the ornate Beaux Arts style, and afterward, at an increasing scale, in the Renaissance Revival and Art Deco styles. The period culminated in the construction of the four iconic “twin tower” apartment buildings that distinguish the West Side skyline.

Bloomingdale

Before its urbanization began in the 1870s, the area that would become the Upper West Side was known as Bloomingdale (after the Dutch “Bloemendaal”). It remained largely agricultural for sixty years after the Commissioners’ grid of 1811 established the pattern of streets, blocks and lots that would guide its eventual development.

Significantly, the Commissioners’ Plan did not include two of the Upper West Side’s major form-givers: Broadway, extant at the time as Bloomingdale Road, and Central Park, planned in 1857 between 59th and 110th Streets and 5th and 8th Avenues, the latter avenue renamed Central Park West in 1883. However, the plan did include Manhattan Square, an 18-acre park between 79th and 81st Streets and 8th and 9th (now Columbus) Avenues that became the site of the American Museum of Natural History and an early fashionable address in the district.



Rowhouse and tenement development, view southwest along West 72nd Street towards Columbus Avenue

The establishment of Olmsted and Vaux’s 1857 Greensward Plan for Central Park, combined with the extension of the 8th Avenue horsecar line north to 84th Street in 1864, produced a flurry of real estate speculation that presaged a boom in residential development in the century’s final decades.

Rowhouse and Tenement 1880-1910

Although some rowhouses were developed on the Upper West Side in the early 1870s, the financial panic of 1873 interrupted speculative development, which did not resume in earnest until decade’s end, spurred by the arrival of the 9th (now Amsterdam) Avenue elevated railway in 1879.

The 1880s saw an explosion of residential development in the area, particularly in the vicinity of the Elevated stops, at 72nd, 81st, 93rd, and 104th Streets. Three- and four-story rowhouses, set back behind stoops, were built largely (though not exclusively) on the side streets, while four-to-six-story tenements and flats, many with ground-floor commercial spaces, predominated on the less-desirable avenues.

Although property on Central Park West commanded the highest prices in the speculative horse-trading that preceded this building boom, it remained largely undeveloped until the turn of the century, when a new class of luxury apartment building could provide adequate economic returns. Notable exceptions include the Dakota (1880-84), which became a defining residential landmark, and the American Museum of Natural History (begun 1874) the first of what would become a series of cultural and religious institutions fronting the park.

Rowhouse development—the last in Manhattan—would continue at a diminished pace through the first decade of the new century, when rising property values throughout the district decreased the number of potential buyers and pushed developers toward housing types with a greater economic return. Although many rowhouses would fall to subsequent waves of development, the basic pattern established in this period—rowhouses lining the side streets and larger, multi-family dwellings on the avenues—remains the Upper West Side’s defining characteristic to this day.



The Beresford (West 81st Street & CPW), Emery Roth, 1928-29

The Luxury Apartment 1900-1931

As Manhattan’s population and land values soared, it became infeasible for all but the very wealthy to afford single-family dwellings, and the need emerged for new models of middle and upper-middle class family housing. Affluent Parisians and Viennese had been living in elegant flats for some decades, but the stigma of overcrowded tenements limited the appeal of apartment living in New York. Several new types emerged in the 1890s, including studio buildings, which paired living and working spaces, and apartment hotels. But by the turn of the century, spurred by the arrival of electricity in 1896 and speculative anticipation of the IRT subway (completed in 1904) the grand, purpose-built, elevator apartment building had arrived on the Upper West Side.

These large apartment buildings, typically between six and twelve stories, appeared along Broadway and the avenues, and to a lesser extent along the crosstown streets before World War I. Central Park West was finally developing in earnest.



The Majestic (West 72nd Street and Central Park West), Irwin S. Chanin, 1930-31

The 1916 Building Zone Resolution established height limits as a multiple of the street width (1.5 times on the Upper West Side), above which a setback was required. Provisions of the existing Tenement House Law generally precluded such setbacks on apartment buildings. The effect was to regularize building heights, contributing to a more consistent fabric. The resolution also regulated use, formally limiting commercial activity (initially) to Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, and Columbus Avenue.

In the 1920s, economic expansion combined with anticipation of the IND subway (completed in 1932) and produced a wave of new apartment construction, often through the acquisition and demolition of existing structures. Between 1919 and 1931, nearly ninety new buildings appeared on the Upper West Side, particularly along Central Park West. These new buildings were larger—between twelve and seventeen stories—and some occupied up to eight standard lots—an entire avenue block face. Among these was the Beresford at 81st and Central Park West (1928-29). Smaller ceiling heights and reduced unit sizes substantially increased densities.

The final burst of development on Central Park West took place between 1929 and 1931, and produced some of its most iconic structures. The Multiple Dwelling Law of 1929 increased allowable heights for residential buildings, and in particular allowed towers up to three times the street width (or 300 feet) on buildings with very large footprints. This produced a series of distinctive “twin tower” apartment buildings that became defining features of the Central Park West skyline. Four of these structures—the Century, Majestic, San Remo, and El Dorado—were constructed between 1929 and 1931, when the effects of the Great Depression drastically curtailed new development.



1961 Zoning produced buildings like 80 Central Park West (at West 68th Street), Paul Resnick & Harry Green, 1965-7

Protection and Preservation

1961 Zoning

In 1961 the New York City Zoning Code was updated. Drawing on such precedents as Lever House (1952) and the Seagram Building (1957) it sought to encourage the provision of privately-owned public plazas and accommodate curtain-wall construction, defining buildable area by Floor Area Ratio rather than the more rigid street wall-and-setback scheme of the 1916 Building Zone Resolution. It introduced “incentive zoning,” granting density bonuses to developers who provided public plazas or retail arcades at the ground floor. In doing so, it precipitated a shift in the built form of the city, away from clearly defined streetwalls and toward towers set back in plazas. Few were built on Central Park. 80 Central Park West is one rare example.

1984 Contextual Rezoning

By the 1980s, it had become clear that the 1961 zoning code created incentives for development types that eroded the traditional building pattern of neighborhoods like the Upper West Side. Although towers were prohibited by the code, it did encourage setbacks along the Central Park street line. Along with the 1961 zoning, federal Urban Renewal projects had resulted in wholesale clearance and redevelopment, much of it on the Upper West Side, on the “towers-in-the-park” model. As development pressure increased and examples of the zoning code's impact proliferated, many residents and planners became convinced of its incompatibility with the neighborhood's existing residential fabric. The result was the 1984 contextual rezoning, which created distinct zoning districts for Central Park West (R10A) and the low-rise mid-block portions of crosstown streets (R8B). The contextual zoning limits heights, allows more lot coverage and requires new development to hold the street wall, reinforcing the continuity of the district's built form.

1990 Historic District Designation

In 1990, the historic preservation movement on the Upper West Side reached a milestone when 60 blocks were included in a consolidated Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. Not only did this ensure that the existing historic fabric was protected—older buildings could no longer be torn down and replaced with modern without the review of the Landmarks Preservation Commission—but any new development, renovations or proposed additions in the district would also have to receive the blessing of the Commission.

The combination of the contextual zoning district and Landmark District status should have meant that any new development along Central Park West between West 62nd Street and West 96th Street would have to be contextual in two ways—its massing would have to match the traditional apartment buildings and its design would have to be deemed appropriate for the historic district by the Commission. However, the real and perceived financial challenges of non-profit institutions has led them to test their zoning potential through special permit and variance applications.



279 Central Park West (at West 88th Street), Costas Kondylis & Partners, 1988

Regulatory Framework
Zoning, Landmarks Designation & Variances

New York City is shaped by a complicated set of zoning and building regulations—interacting with building technologies, the economics of development and political realities of course—but these regulations provide a framework for all development taking place in the five boroughs. The shape and size of buildings, the types of activities taking place on each floor, the density and character of neighborhoods—all are governed by this regulatory framework. For this study, in order to understand potential development, we need to concern ourselves with Zoning, Landmarks Designation, and Variances.

Zoning: Department of City Planning

The Zoning Resolution—weighing in at just over 2,691 pages as of January 1, 2008—allows New York City to control the physical development of its land by setting rules for the bulk of buildings, allowable population densities and the types of uses allowed. The myriad mapped Zoning Districts determine the development possibilities for each individual property in every single neighborhood in New York City. The Department of City Planning is responsible for the city’s physical planning. It publishes the Zoning Resolution and its associated Maps, advises the City Planning Commission, and reviews all proposals for zoning map and text amendments as well as applications for various special permits described in the Resolution.

Most property in the City can be developed as-of-right, meaning the planned development on a particular site adheres strictly to the rules promulgated in the Zoning Resolution. This kind of as-of-right development needs to go through the appropriate administrative process—usually filing for the required permits from the Department of Buildings—but it does not need to submit to any public review. This study has modelled the as-of-right development potential along Central Park West. What could be built on the various soft sites we identified without any special permits or variances? The answer provides a baseline and clearly demonstrates the power of contextual zoning to control the heights of the buildings. However, the question remains, is contextual zoning by itself enough to protect a skyline that is defined not by its uniformity, but by its irregularity?

Another important concept for the purposes of this study is the zoning lot merger, which allows developers to transfer unused development rights from one zoning lot to another, again as-of-right, i.e. without public review. Unused development rights transferred in this way are often referred to as “air rights.” We have assumed that a developer would use zoning lot mergers to assemble individual zoning lots into a larger, more advantageous site and shift air rights across that site as needed. A merger allows a developer to use the development rights from multiple lots even if some of the lots are already occupied by treasured historic buildings.

Landmarks Designation: Landmarks Preservation Commission

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is responsible for protecting important physical elements of the City’s history. The Commission was established in 1965 in the wake of the destruction of the architectural treasure that was historic Pennsylvania Station. It identifies and designates both individual landmarks and entire historic districts. The Commission also regulates any change to designated buildings as well as any new development or renovation in historic districts. So any new development in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District or any change to individually designated landmarks would have to pass muster in front of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. This is an additional layer of regulation over and above the Zoning Resolution. In this sense any development involving a landmark or historic district is not as-of-right; it requires review by a public body of 11 Commissioners appointed by the Mayor.

The presence of landmark-designated buildings opens up the possibility for development that does not have to follow the zoning rules. Zoning Resolution Section 74-711 outlines a special circumstance in which the presence of a designated landmark or location within an historic district allows the transfer of air rights without a zoning lot merger. More importantly, it allows for the City Planning Commission to modify the bulk regulations if the Landmark Preservation Commission certifies that allowing the proposed modification will contribute to the preservation of the landmark in question and will relate harmoniously to the existing building or historic district. So, for example, the Landmark Preservation Commission can initially consider and then, subject to ratification by the Central Planning Commission allow a building to break the contextual zoning height limit if it determines that allowing a taller building would help preserve a landmark property and would have no detrimental effect on adjacent landmarks. Therefore at present Zoning Resolution Section 74-711 allows development which, paradoxically, may assist an individual landmark but works counterproductively against the historic district ensemble. In this study, we assume that this Section 74-711 special permit provides a potential mechanism for the appearance of a series of new towers on Central Park West. Obviously any development under this section would have to be thoroughly reviewed and approved by the Landmark Preservation Commission, as well as vetted by the City Planning Commission via the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). However, we looked at the outside range of what would be possible if developers are able to make successful presentations to the Commissions.

Variances: Board of Standards and Appeals

There is one other mechanism that would allow a proposed development to break the height and setback requirements of the contextual zoning districts along Central Park West: a zoning variance through the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA). This Board, five Commissioners appointed by the Mayor, was established to provide “relief” from the Zoning Resolution in those special circumstances in which the regulations are unduly restrictive. The BSA may grant a variance—or exception—to the Zoning Resolution if it can certify that a proposed development complies with a checklist of findings, the “five findings” outlined in Zoning Resolution Section 72-21. These findings relate to the physical uniqueness of property, financial hardship, the proposed variance’s impact on community value, whether



the hardship was self-created, and whether the minimum variance is being sought. Our study assumes that BSA variances provide another potential mechanism for the development of towers along Central Park West. Any development seeking a variance would initially require a signoff from the Landmarks Preservation Commission if it involves property with a landmark designation. Variance findings are stricter and less malleable than special permit findings.

The following illustrations show examples of recent proposals for 74-711 special permits and BSA variances. While not all were approved, these examples demonstrate the kinds of waivers sought by developers. In addition to these examples, it was understood that the New-York Historical Society was planning to pursue a 74-711 special permit for the tower published in the *New York Times* in November 2006.



General Theological Seminary, 175 Ninth Avenue
74-711 special permit not approved



980 Madison Avenue
74-711 special permit not approved.



Museum of Modern Art,
West 53rd Street



37 East 4th Street
74-711 special permit approved.



505 Greenwich Street
Bulk variances approved.



Former YWCA site,
610 Lexington Avenue,
adjacent to the Seagram Building
74-711 special permit approved.

Public Review: Community Board

BSA Variances and Section 74-711 Special Permits would also require a development to submit to a public review by the Community Board. However, the Community Board is advisory, not regulatory. So although the public debate at a Community Board review of proposed developments is important, the decision to grant a variance or special permit is ultimately with the BSA and Landmarks Preservation Commission/City Planning Commission. Community Board review does provide an additional mechanism through which the public is able to weigh in on proposed development.

Our study looks at both as-of-right development, driven by the contextual zoning envelope controls and height limits, and development using 74-711 special permits or BSA variances to achieve the kind of towers that residential developers would find most attractive.



View from across the Reservoir looking at the El Dorado
Apartments on the Central Park West Skyline

4. Potential Development

Soft Site Criteria

The first step in projecting future development is identifying which sites along Central Park West are likely to be redeveloped—in other words which sites would be attractive to developers. These “soft sites” are generally larger lots or assemblages of lots that are either undeveloped or have buildings that do not take full advantage of the available development rights. We adapted the soft site criteria preferred by the Department of City Planning in rezoning studies to this circumstance—looking to imagine which sites creative developers looking to create substantial residential projects along the park would find attractive. We also paid special attention to landmarked institutional buildings as the potential source of development rights and the justification for special permits and variances. Using this modified soft site criteria, we identified 10 soft sites along Central Park West that we believe represent the most likely locations for future development. The criteria and the process that led us to these ten sites are described below.

Step 1. First we narrowed our study area to lots within 200’ of Central Park West. Since our primary interest is understanding the impact of new development on the profile as seen from the City’s “great room,” Central Park, we felt that focusing our attention on sites that would produce buildings that had a presence on the Park was important. We used 200’ as the limit even though the high-density, R10A zoning along most of Central Park West extends only 125’ or 150’ from the Avenue. By including sites up to 200’ away from Central Park West, we sought to test the outside limit of development that would affect the Park and the profile of the buildings along its western edge.

Step 2. Within that 200’ band along the Park, we identified lots that are developed to less than 50% of their permitted Floor to Area Ratio (FAR). So, for example, in the R10A zoning district, which normally allows development up to FAR 10, this means we singled out lots that had development of less than FAR 5.

Step 3. Within this world of “underdeveloped” lots along the Park, we selected only lots or assemblages of lots with at least 5,000 SF and at least 50,000 SF available for new development. We always assumed that any assemblage that could happen, would happen, even if the lots currently had different ownership. We used these criteria to ensure that we were looking at all of those sites along Central Park that could produce the kind of substantial development that might affect the skyline silhouette. Smaller sites with more modest development potential would not be as attractive to developers and would be more likely to fade into the existing context.



View at Night, from across the Reservoir looking at the Central Park West Skyline

Step 4. Within this world of “underdeveloped” but substantial sites along the Park, we eliminated all cooperative or condominium residential buildings and all rental residential buildings with 10 or more rent stabilized units. While cases to the contrary exist, the assumption here is that these are unlikely development sites because the owners of the former would be unlikely to agree to major redevelopment and the latter’s leases would be too difficult to terminate.

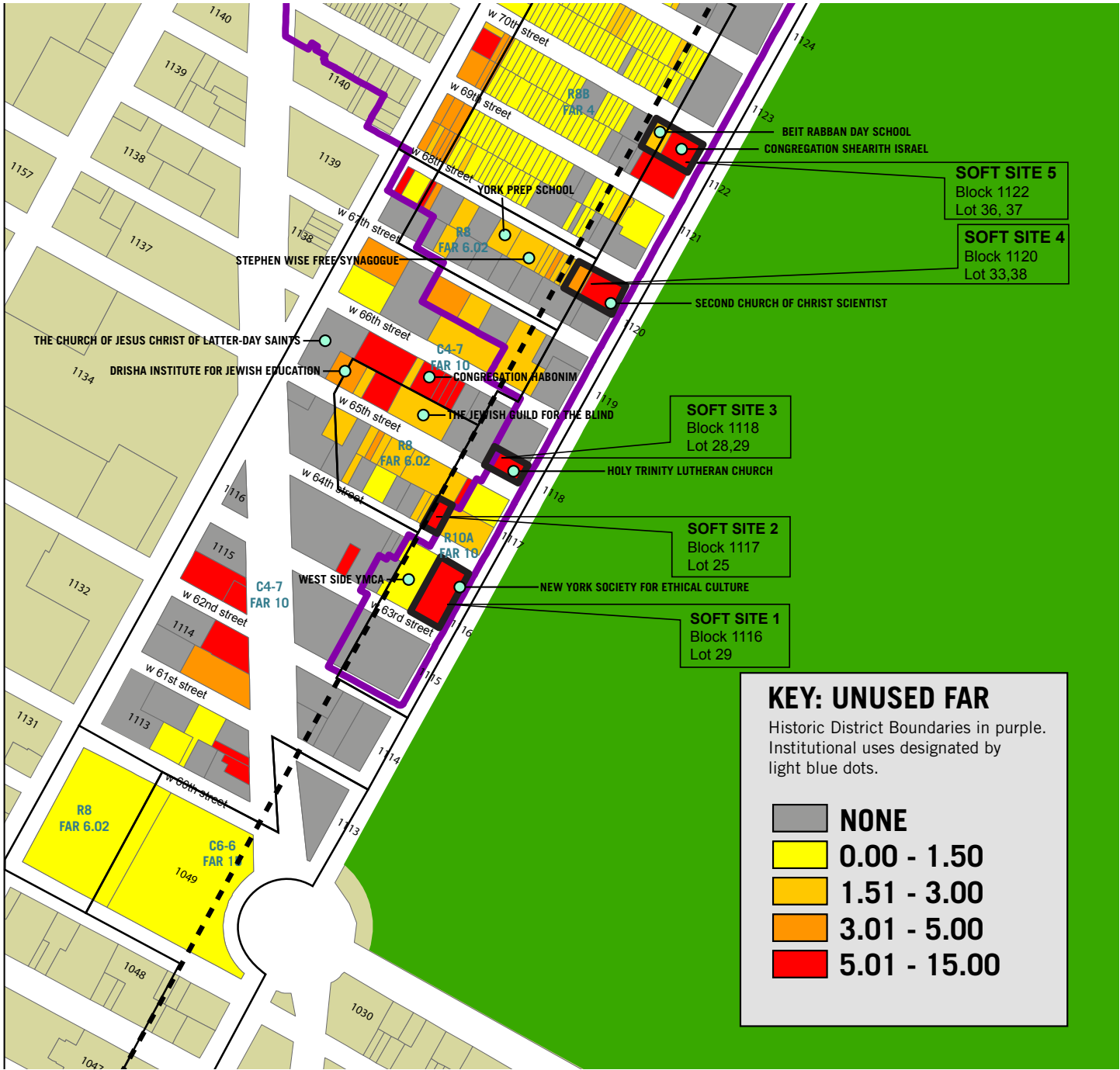
Step 5. Finally, we looked at the institutional uses in our study area to ensure we were not overlooking any potential sources of development rights or any potential to use them as the justification for the variances and special permits needed for the more radical development schemes. Central Park West is home to a number of important public institutions—many of them housed in beautiful landmarked buildings. The series of towers proposed atop the New-York Historical Society and adjacent to Congregation Shearith Israel over the past few decades are clear indications of the importance of taking a close look at the development potential of institutional sites.

Soft Site Criteria Summary

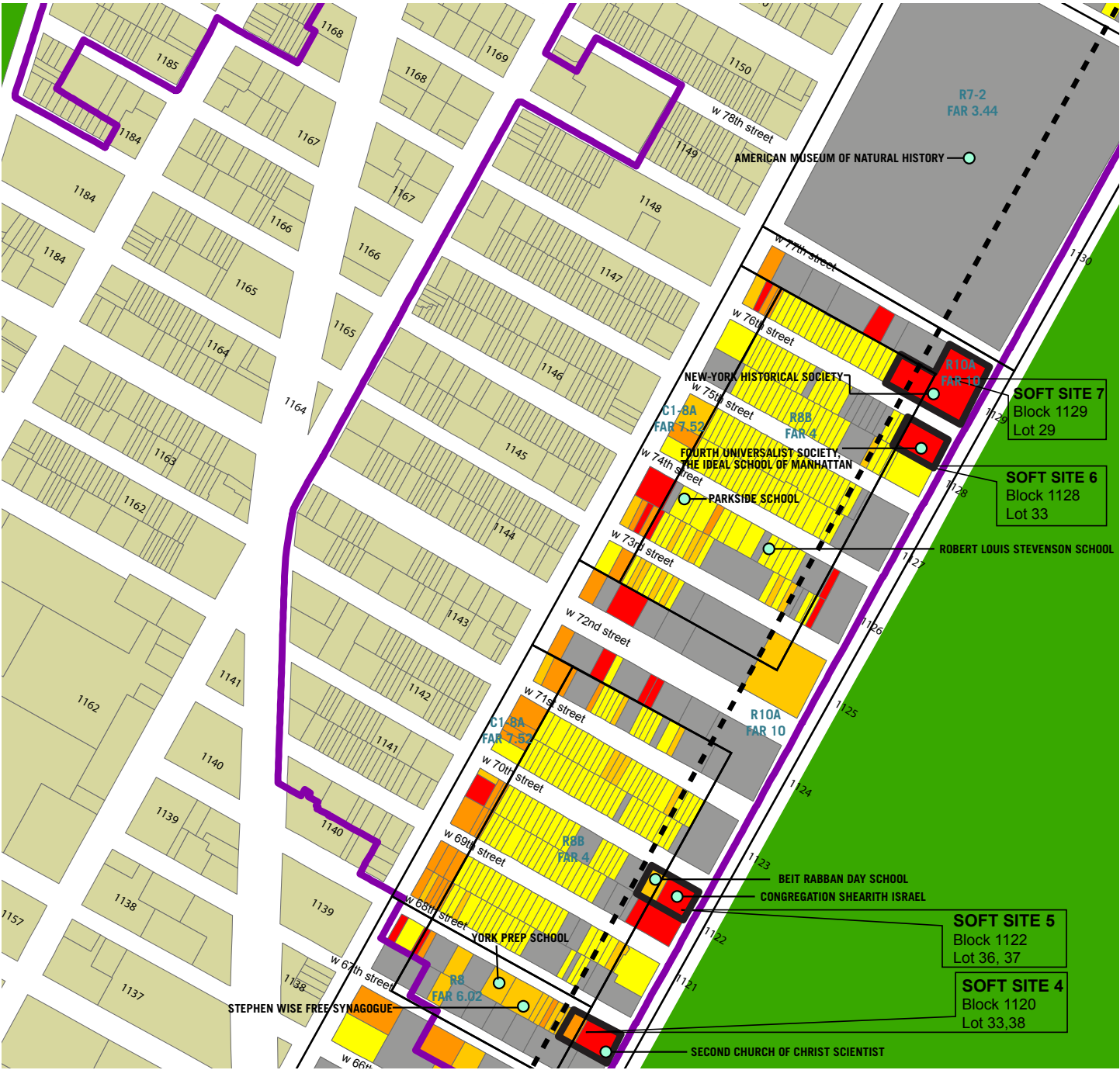
- Within 200’ of Central Park West
- Lots developed to less than 50% of their permitted FAR
- Lot or assemblage of lots over 5,000 SF
- Substantial SF available (50,000 SF plus)
- Non-residential use or rental building with fewer than 10 rent stabilized units

Additional Factor: Landmarked institutional use as source of FAR and potential for special permits and variances

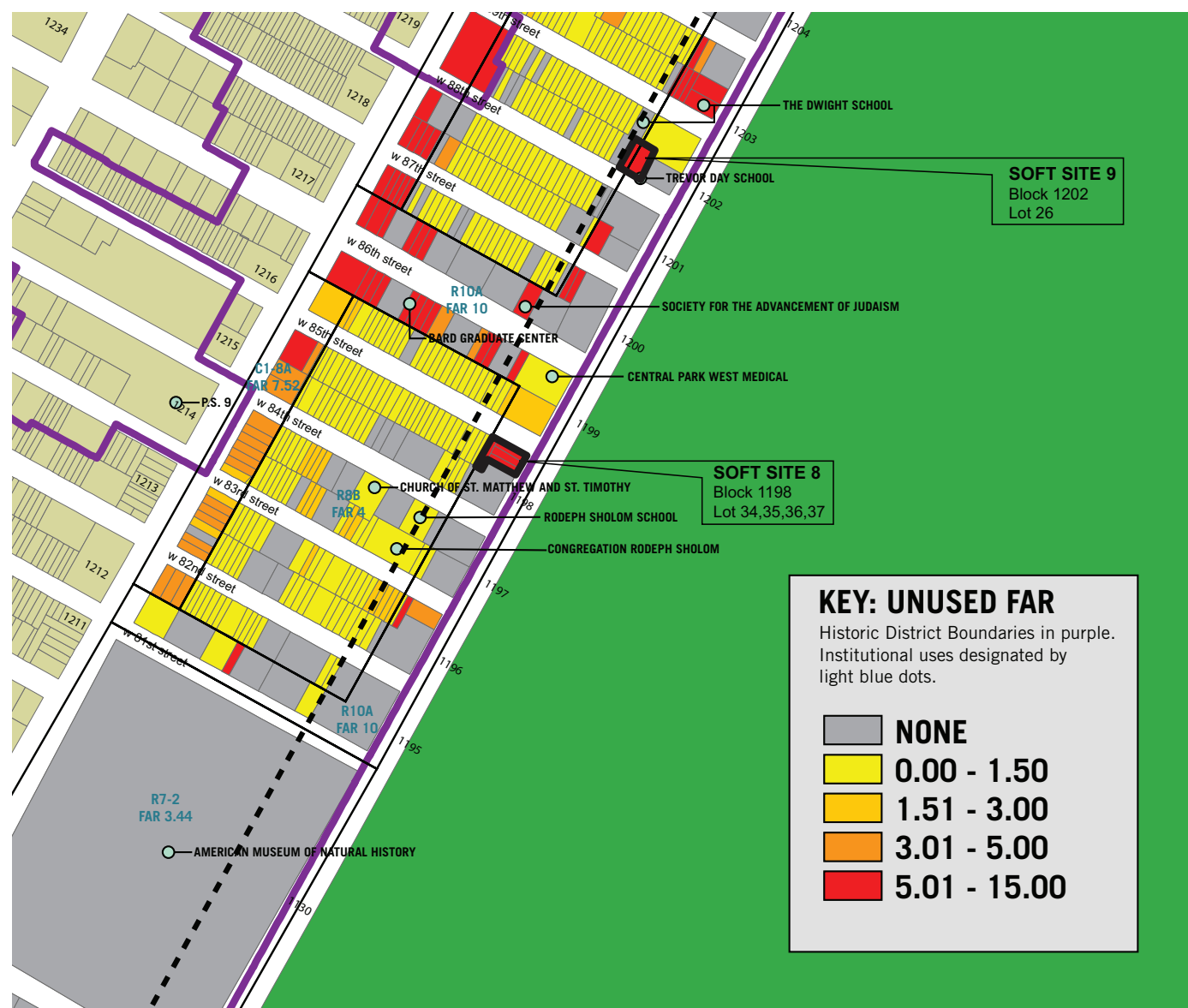
Soft Sites



Soft sites: W 59th St. to W 70th St.



Soft sites: W 68th St. to W 78th St.



Soft sites: W 78th St. to W 89th St.



Soft sites: W 89th St. to W 100th St.



Soft sites: W 94th St. to W 106th St.

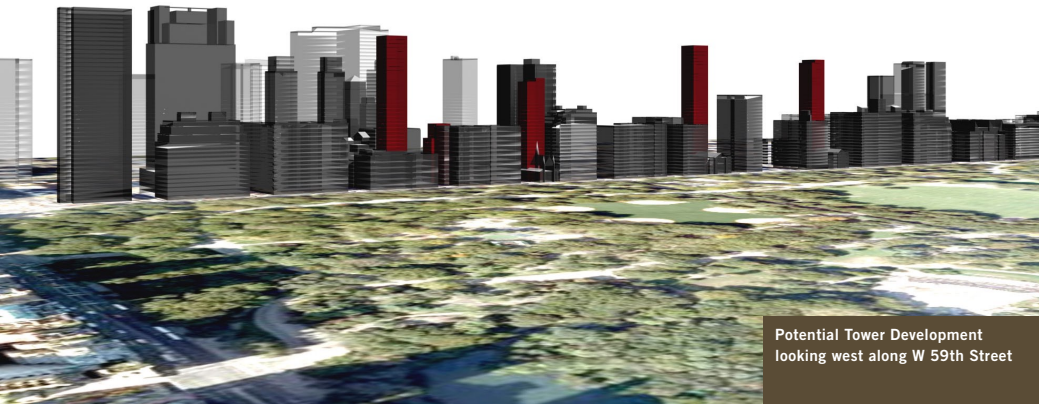


Soft sites: W 100th St. to W 110th St.

Development Scenarios

Once we identified the most likely development sites along Central Park West, we needed to project development on these soft sites in order to understand how any new buildings might affect the city’s profile as it meets the western edge of the park. We modeled the development of each soft site under two different scenarios: First, as-of-right development strictly governed by the contextual zoning and fairly conservative assumptions about what the Landmarks Preservation Commission would approve and, second, tower development assuming special permits (74-711) or variances (BSA) that would allow the violation of height and bulk regulations combined with more immoderate ideas about what the Landmarks Preservation Commission might allow.

The massing diagrams included in the Appendix lay out the specific zoning calculations and assumptions behind the projections and provide detailed illustrations of each individual building. We also built a three-dimensional digital model of Central Park West from West 60th to West 110th Streets so that we could put these two projected development scenarios into the existing context. The profile views and elevations of this model on the next few pages allow us to show the potential futures of Central Park West. We have also produced some simple photomontages that accurately insert the projected development into the existing cityscape.



Scheme A: As-of-Right

The purpose of the as-of-right development scenario is to provide a baseline to illustrate the shape and mass of the buildings that the existing zoning regulations would generate as-of-right on soft sites. Wherever possible we imagined building either on top of an existing building (e.g. Ethical Society or New-York Historical Society) or immediately adjacent to an existing building (e.g. Second Church of Christ Scientist or Congregation Shearith Israel). If the particular circumstances did not allow a reasonable as-of-right building without significantly disrupting an existing landmark then we did not model it. We do not mean to imply that any of these as-of-right buildings would be economically attractive. We also do not assume that any existing building is torn down.



Scheme B: Tower

For the towers we approached the same sites from the diametrically opposed direction—as a developer looking to maximize the value of a residential development and take full advantage of the invaluable view over Central Park. We sought to portray the most aggressive development scenario—what if a developer could use all of the available air rights on a particular site even if it meant building a tower that broke all of the height and setback regulations of the underlying zoning district? In this regard the development at One Madison Park—the 60-story, 60’ by 60’ condominium tower currently going up at the southern terminus of Madison Avenue—was used as a model for a residential tower in close proximity to a landmark park. Ultra-tall towers with relatively small floorplates are apparently practical if the address and views are worth enough. We do not mean to imply that any of these towers will be built, just that they could be in the right economic and regulatory conditions.

Development Scenario Assumptions

- Maximum reasonable assemblages
- Maximize development of institutional properties
- Transfer rights to neighboring non-institutional lot (74-711)
- Add tower to existing building
- Gut renovation preserving facade and other historical elements
- Show two scenarios:
 - As-of-right, following contextual zoning
 - Tower, assuming a variance or special permit

Central Park West Profile Views

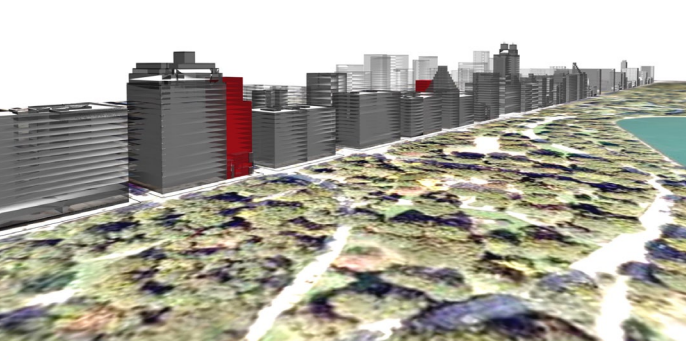
North from 64th Street of Potential As-of-Right Development



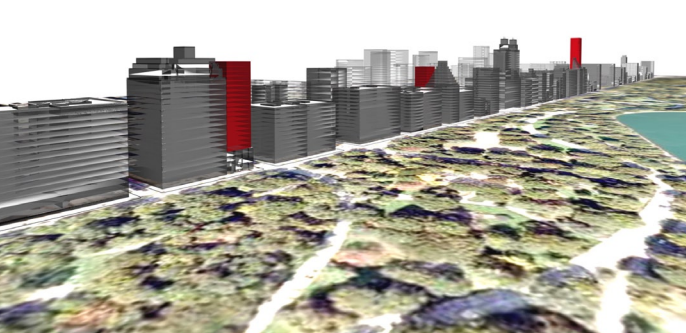
North from 64th Street of Potential Tower Development



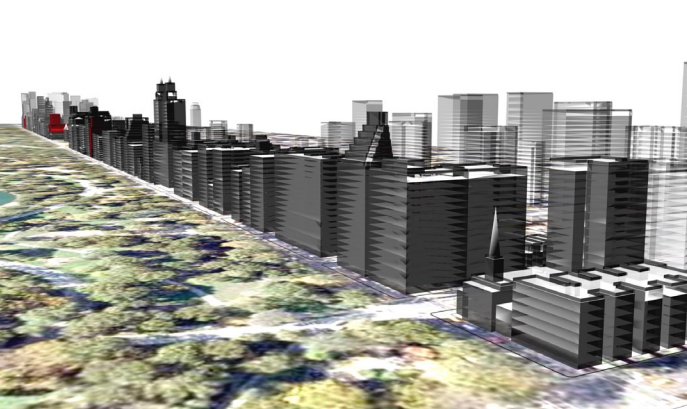
Looking North from 84th Street with Potential As-of-Right Development



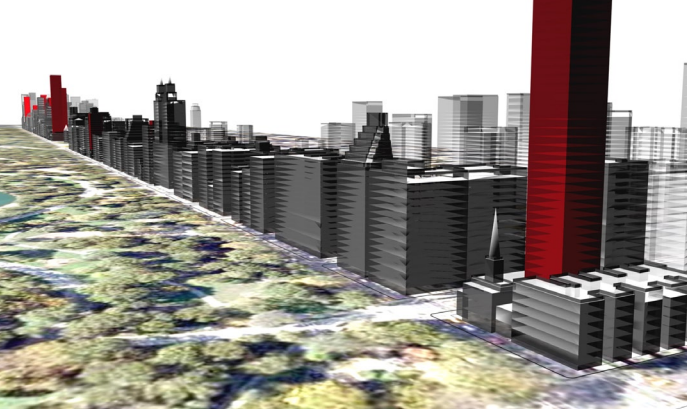
Looking North from 84th Street with Potential Tower Development



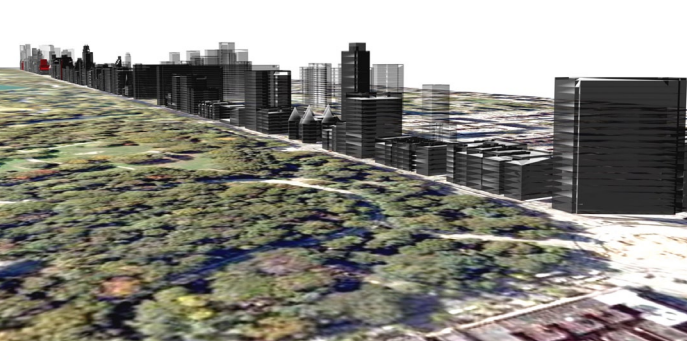
Looking South from 96th Street with Potential As-of-Right Development



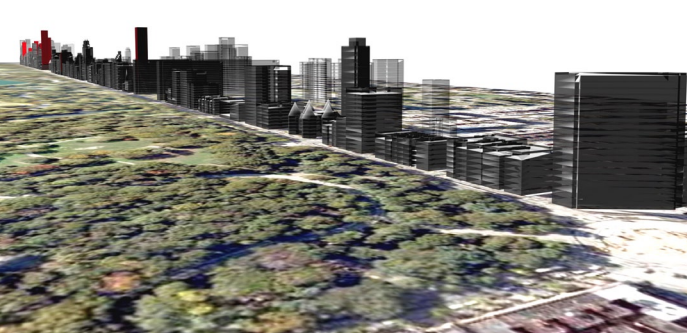
Looking South from 96th Street with Potential Tower Development



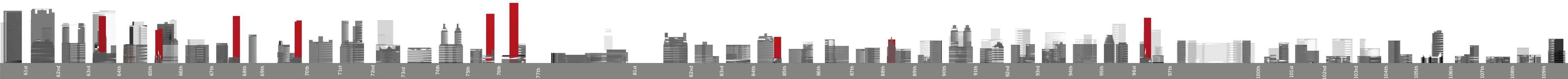
Looking South from 110th Street with Potential As-of-Right Development



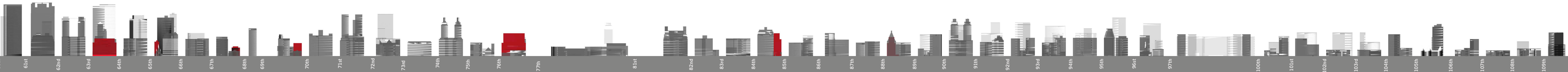
Looking South from 110th Street with Potential Tower Development

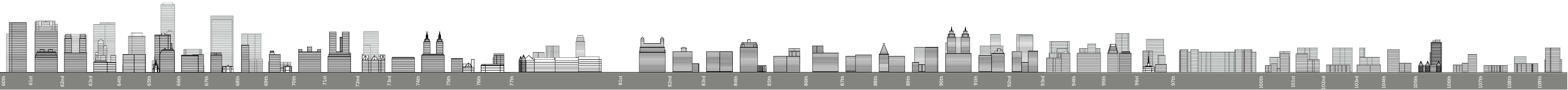


Elevation of Central Park West Skyline with Potential Tower Development

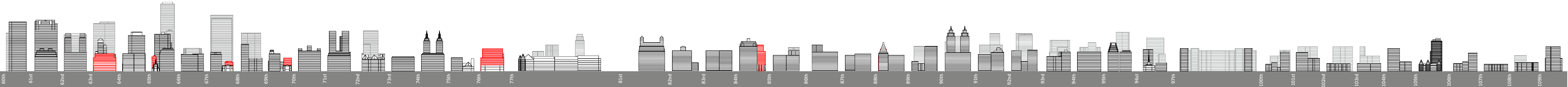


Elevation of Central Park West Skyline with Potential As-of-Right Development

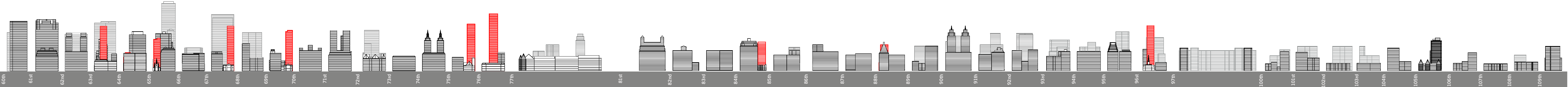




Existing Site Conditions 60-110th Street



As-of-Right Potential 60-110th Street



Potential Towers 60-110th Street

5. Conclusions

This study set out to answer the question, “Are there new towers in the future of this skyline?”
The answer is “Potentially, yes.”

After careful study of the development potential along Central Park West, with particular attention to the unique possibilities created by low-rise public institutions with landmark designation, we have determined that there are ten major development sites between West 62nd and 96th Streets, seven of them below West 77th Street, in the heart of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Analysis of these soft sites demonstrates that existing regulations, including zoning, landmark designation and special permit and variance provisions, create potential for the development of towers that could transform the skyline:

- **Contextual zoning** provides strong height controls, but it also allows for some potential development on top of or adjacent to low-rise institutional buildings, creating a more uniform, mid-rise base height in contrast to the up-and-down variety that has historically defined Central Park West.
- Meanwhile, **landmark designation** does not prohibit development altogether and, in the case of **Zoning Resolution Section 74-711 special permits**, can even promote development that does not follow the zoning rules.
- **BSA Variances** provide another potential mechanism for the development of towers along Central Park West.

Development along the western edge of Central Park has been a recurrent source of controversy for the Upper West Side community and the city at large. To help guide Landmark West! and the community in honing a vision for the future of the Central Park West skyline silhouette, we have formulated the recommendations outlined on page 6, to investigate the potential for:

1. [Landmarks Guidelines](#)
2. [Innovative Rezoning](#)
3. [An Institutional Landmark Conservancy](#)
4. [Architectural Guidelines](#)

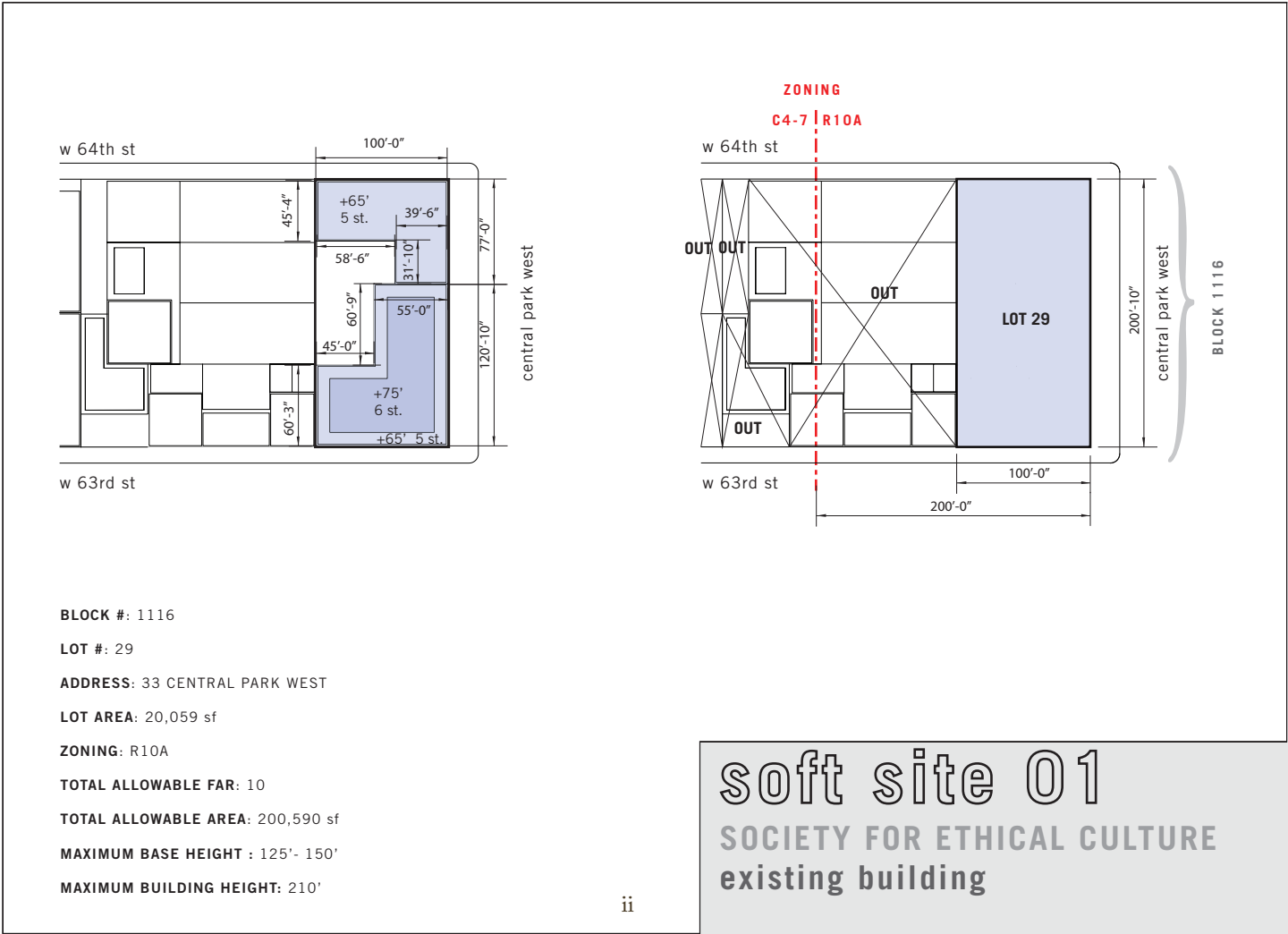
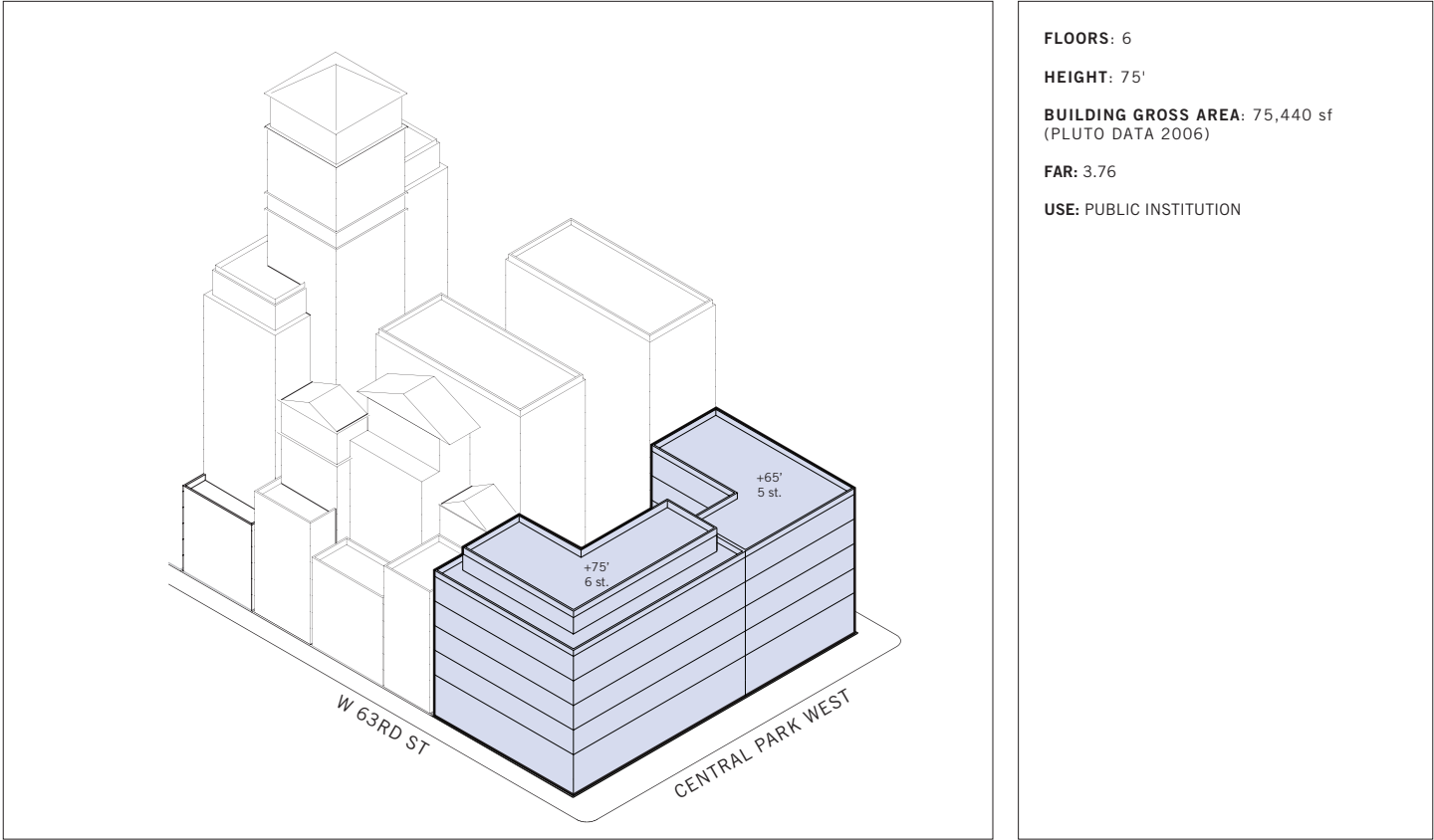
We believe this study and continued visioning for the Central Park West skyline can serve as a model for responsible community-based planning throughout New York City.

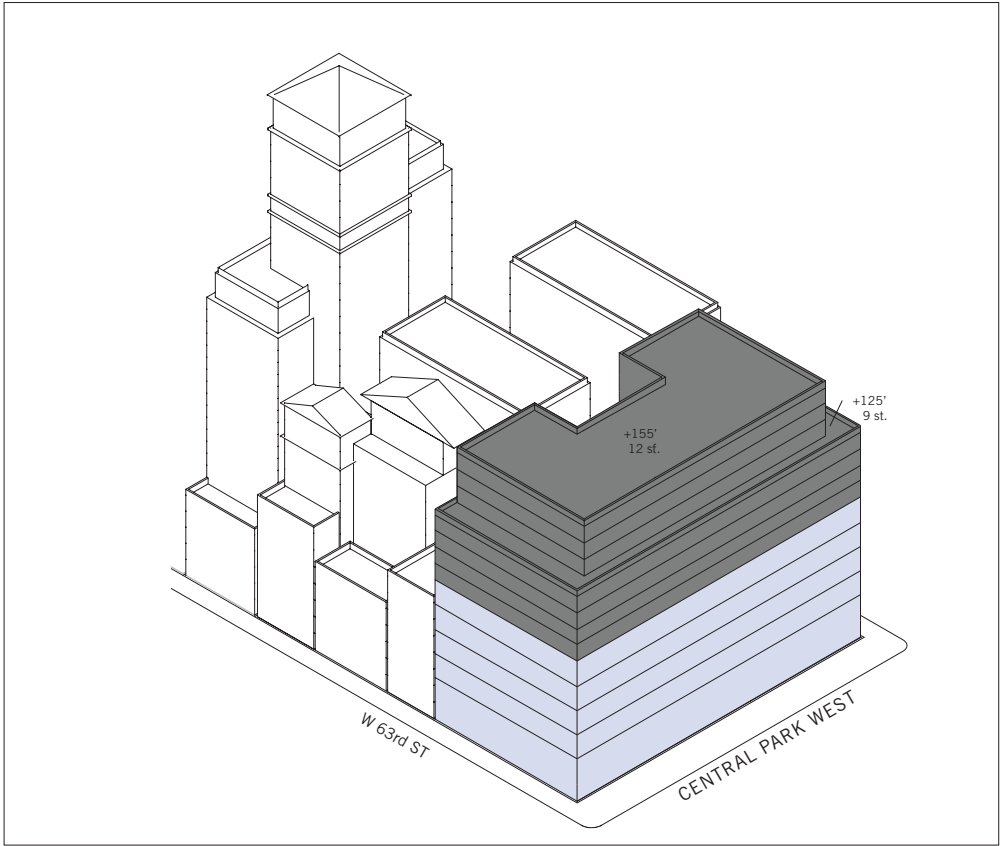


6. Appendices: Massing Diagrams

To better understand the potential futures of the Central Park West skyline, we have identified the most likely development sites along Central Park West and projected potential development scenarios for these “soft sites.” We modeled development on each of the 10 soft sites under two different scenarios: first, as-of-right development strictly governed by the contextual zoning and fairly conservative assumptions about what the Landmarks Preservation Commission would approve and then second, tower development assuming special permits (74-711) or variances (BSA) that would allow the violation of height and bulk regulations combined with more immoderate ideas about what the Landmarks Preservation Commission might allow.

In each scenario, zoning data (building area, building height, density and floor plate information) is presented alongside a site plan (lower left drawing), lot and zoning diagram (lower right) and a building axonometric (upper left).



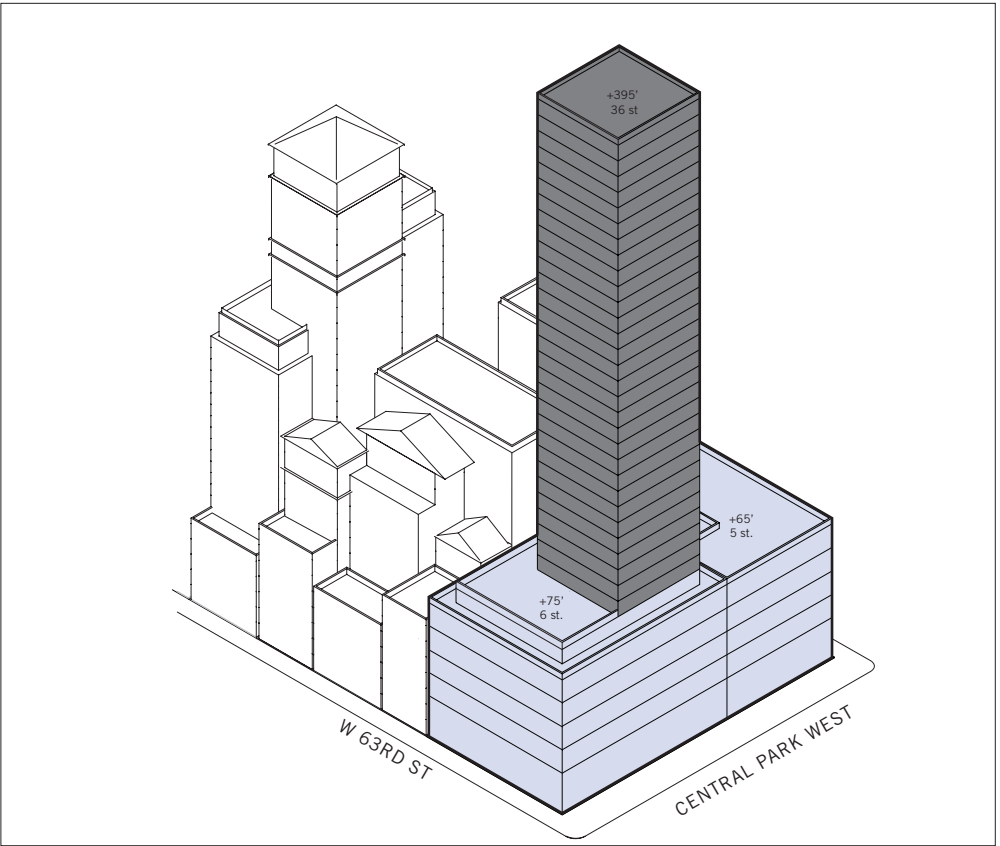


FLOORS: 12

HEIGHT: 155'

BUILDING AREA: 198,171 SF
(97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	18,200 sf	25'
2-5	18,200 sf	15'
6-9	18,200 sf	10'
10-12	13,500 sf	10'
GROSS	204,300 sf	155'

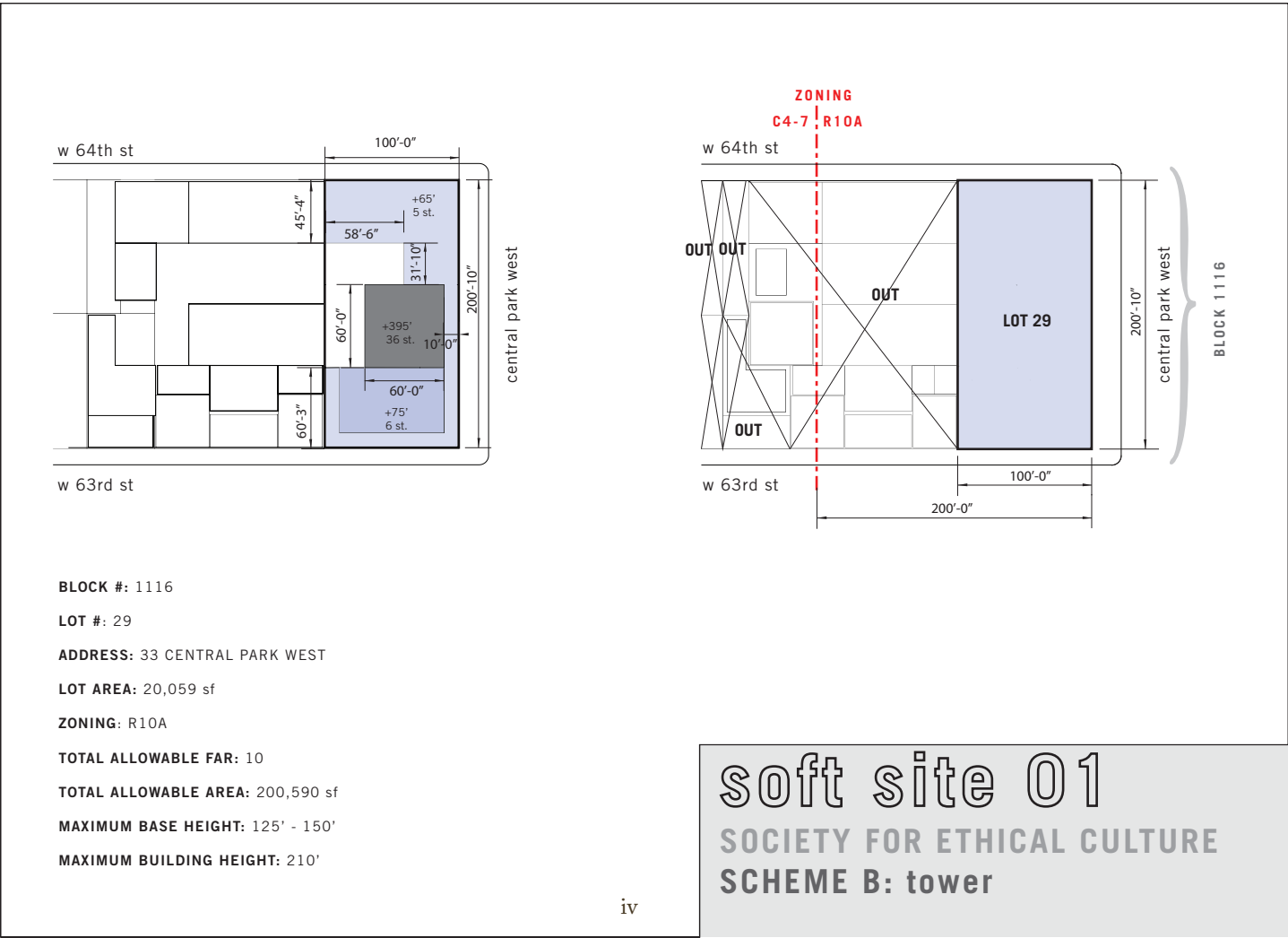
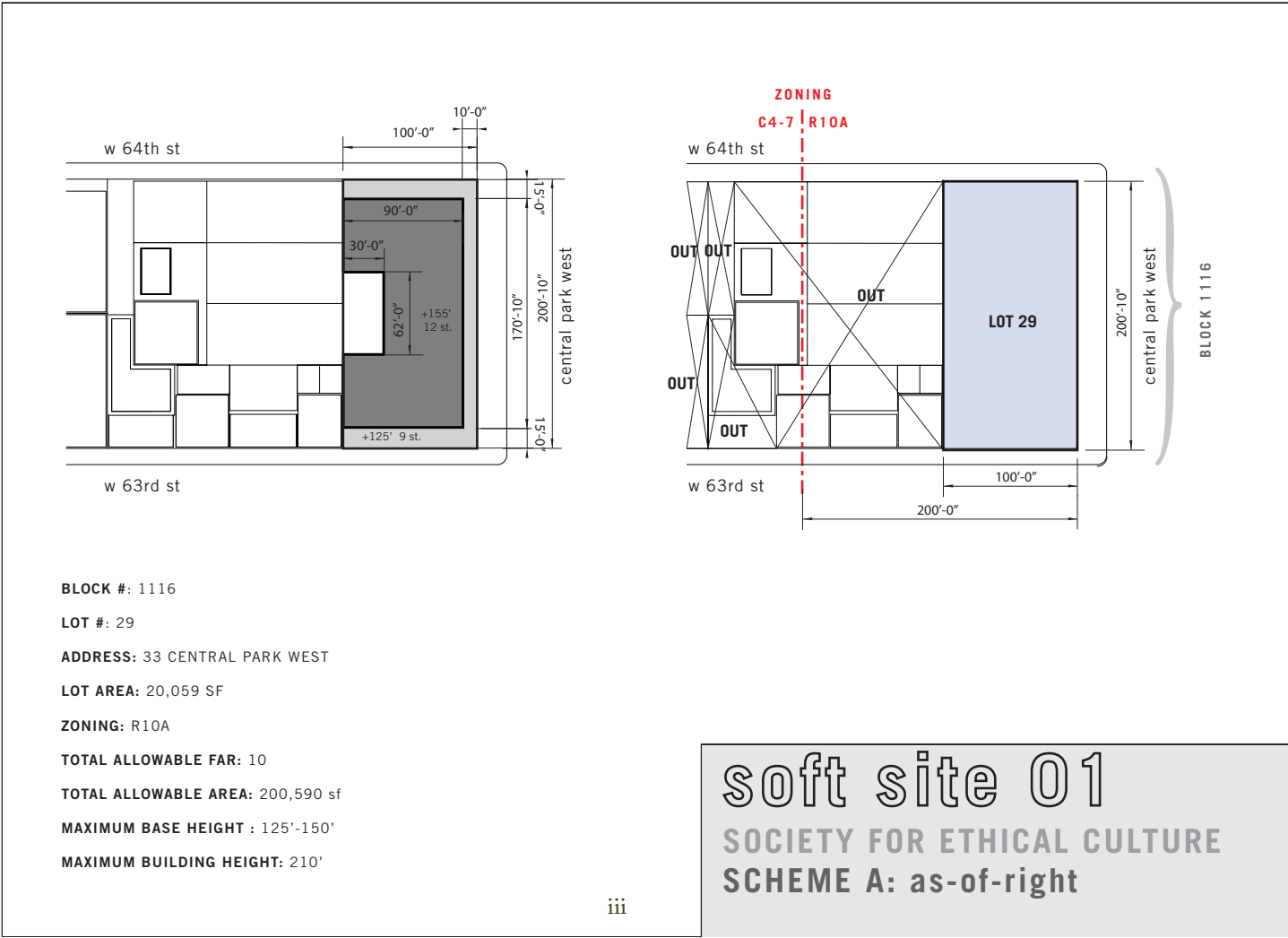


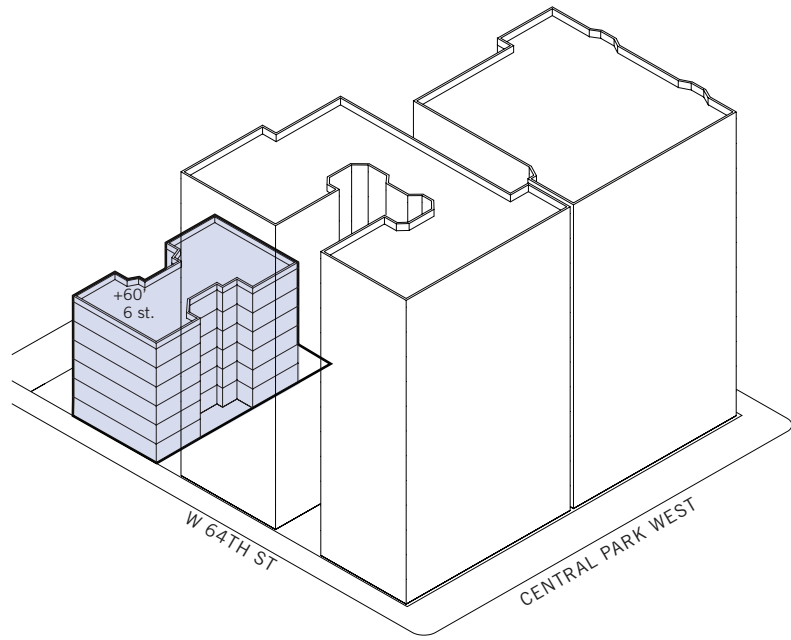
FLOORS: 36

HEIGHT: 395'

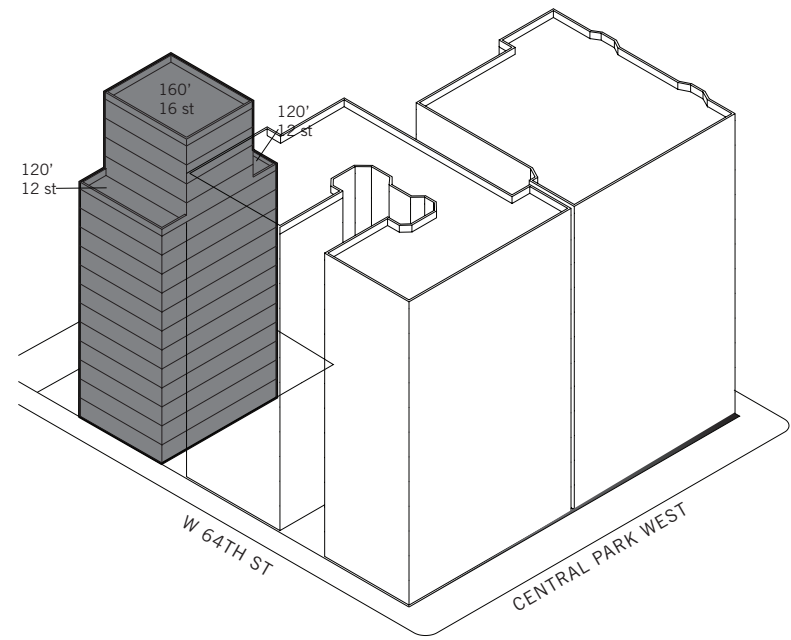
BUILDING AREA: 199,820 sf
(97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	18,200 sf	25'
2-5	18,200 sf	15'
6	7,000 sf	10'
7-36	3,600 sf	10'
GROSS	206,000 sf	395'



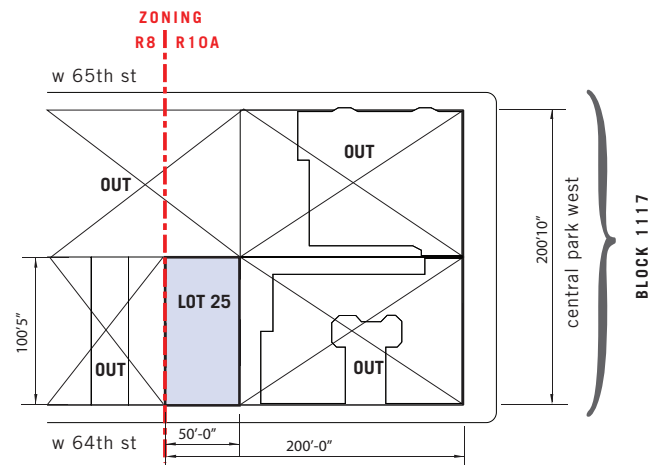
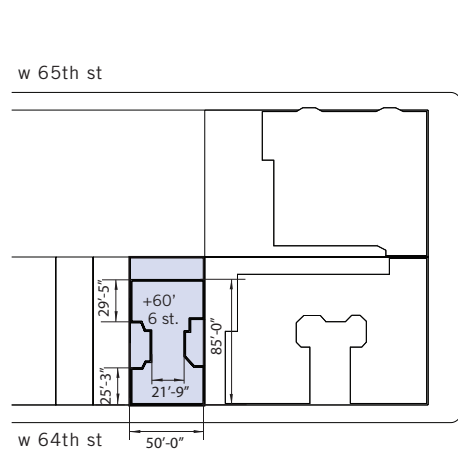


FLOORS: 6
HEIGHT: 60'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 21,528 sf
 (FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 4.29
USE: RENTAL APARTMENT BUILDING



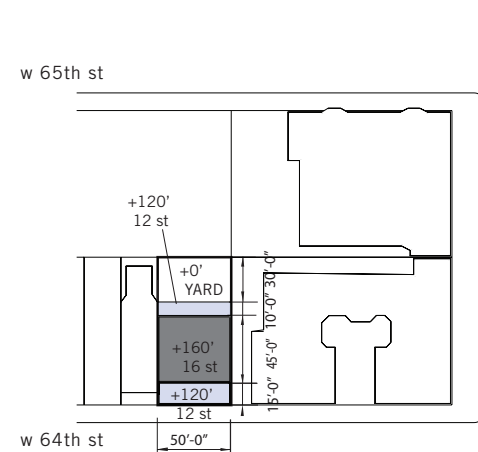
FLOORS: 16
HEIGHT: 160'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 49,470 sf
 (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1- 12	3,500 sf	10'
13- 16	2,250 sf	10'
GROSS	51,000 sf	160'

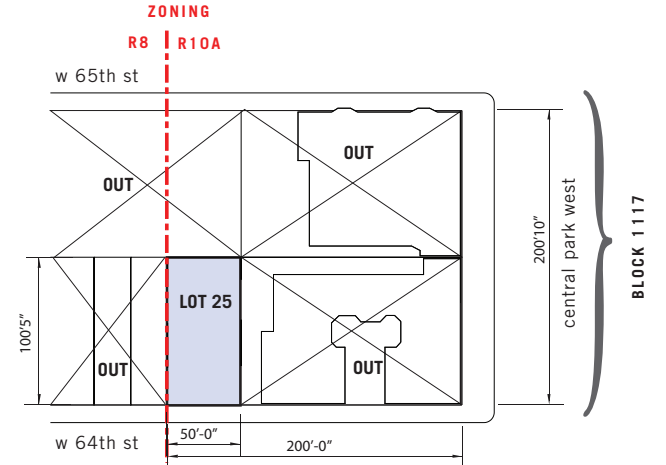


BLOCK #: 1117
LOT #: 25
ADDRESS: 9 WEST 64 STREET
LOT AREA: 5021 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 50,210 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60' - 125'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185'

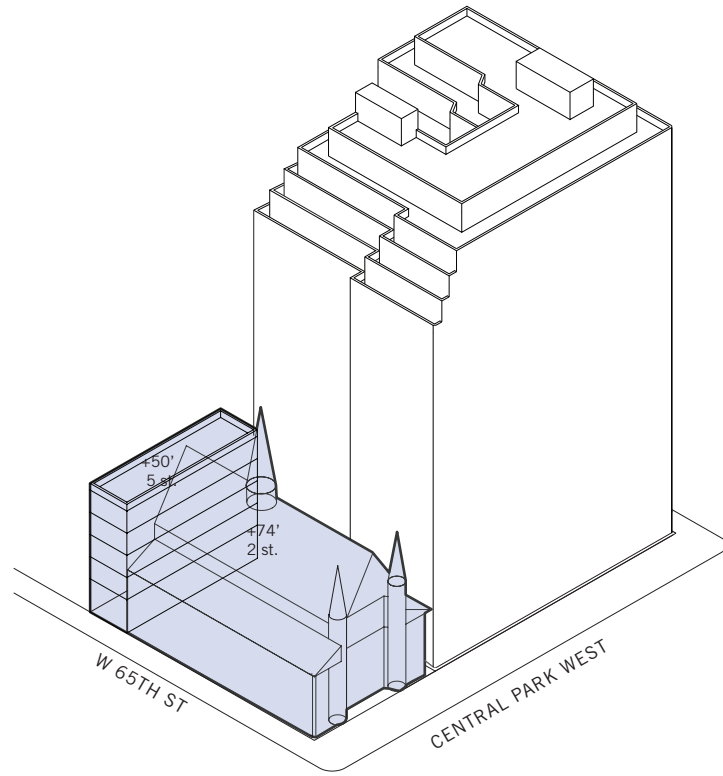
soft site 02
 9 WEST 64 STREET
 existing building



BLOCK #: 1117
LOT #: 25
ADDRESS: 9 WEST 64 STREET
LOT AREA: 5021 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 50,210 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60' - 125'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185'

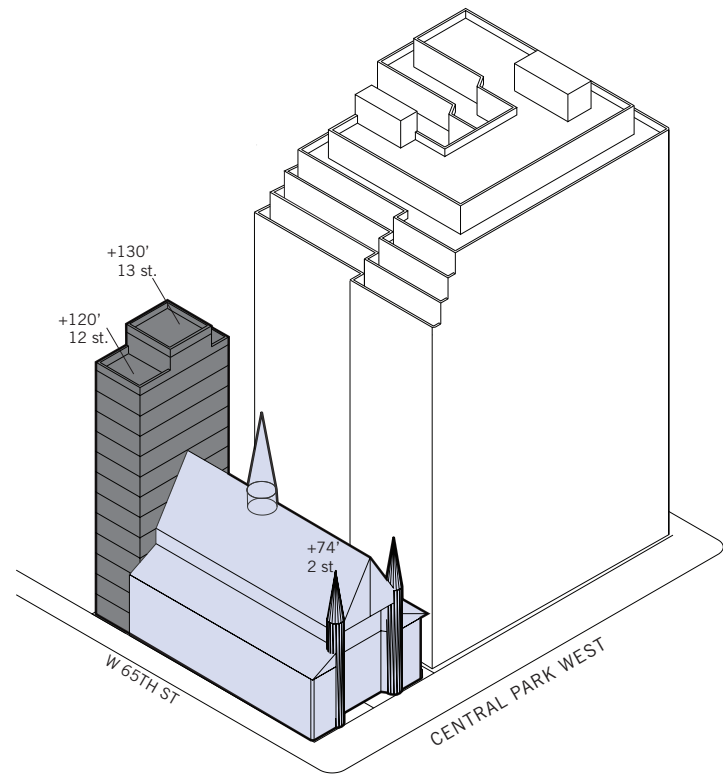


soft site 02
 9 WEST 64 STREET
 SCHEME A: as-of-right



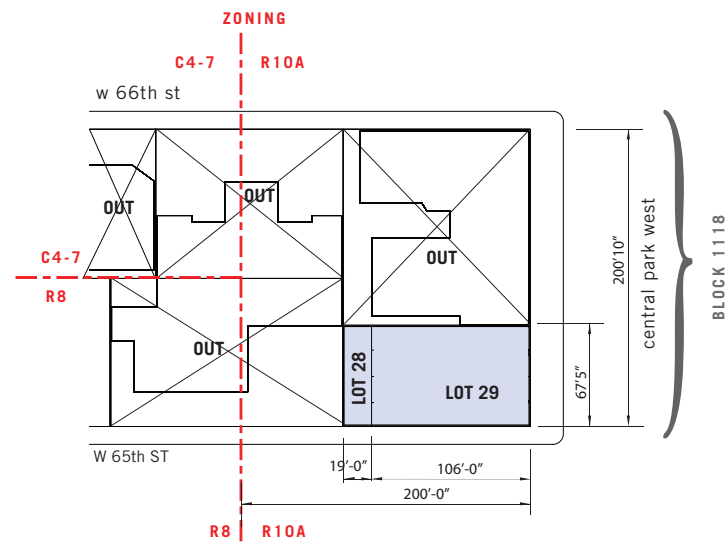
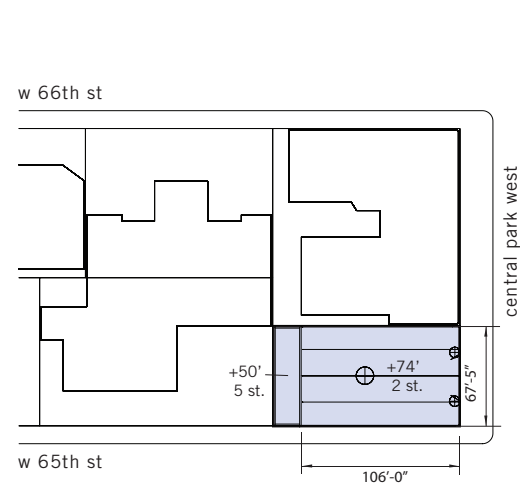
LOT:29
FLOORS: 2
HEIGHT: 74'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 7,421 sf
 (PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 1.04
USE: CHURCH

LOT:28
FLOORS: 5
HEIGHT: 50'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 7,680 sf
 (PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 6
USE: RECTORY AND COMMUNITY HOUSE



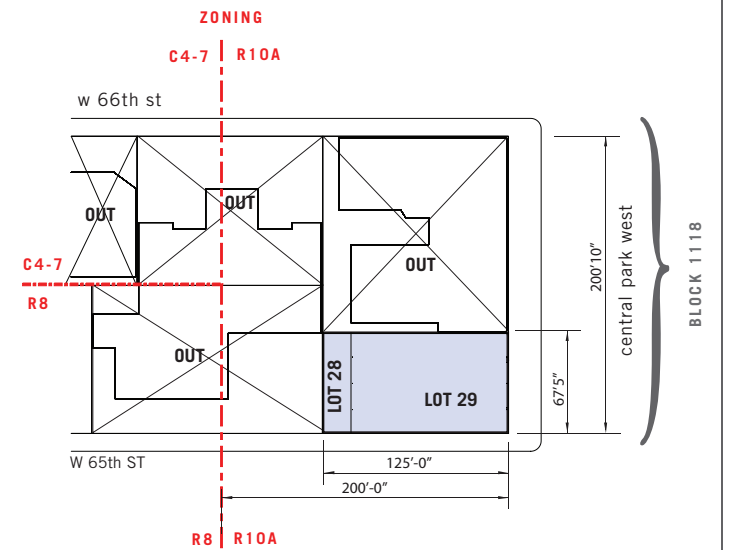
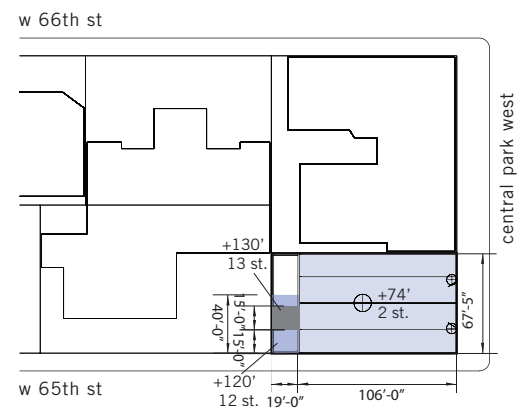
FLOORS: 13
HEIGHT: 130'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 13,973 sf
 (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	5,760 sf	10'
2-12	7,60 sf	10'
13	285 sf	10'
GROSS	14,405 sf	130'



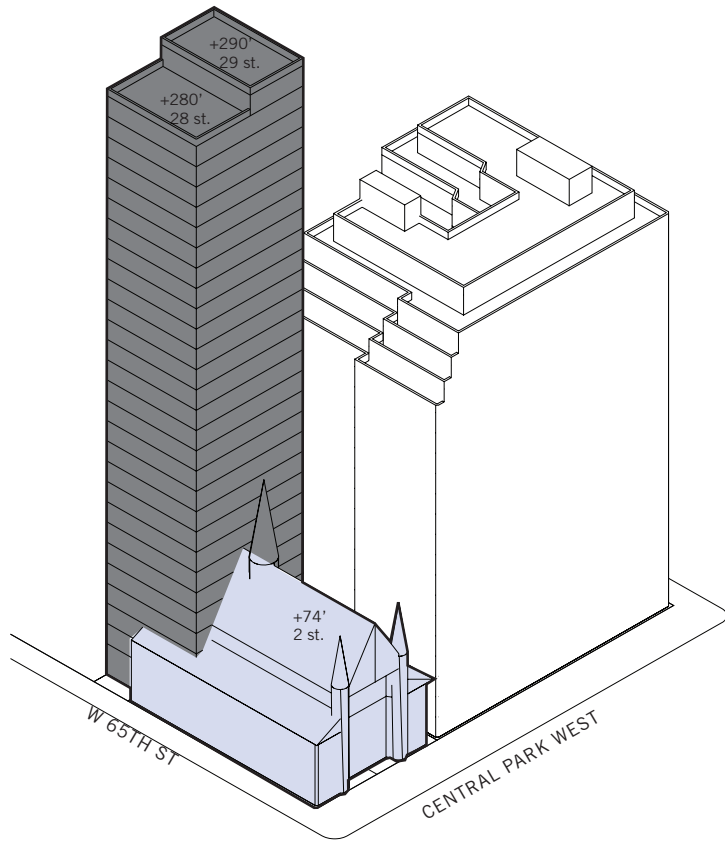
BLOCK #: 1118
LOT #: 28, 29
ADDRESS: 51 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 8436 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 84,360 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60'-125' AND 125'-150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185' AND 210'

soft site 03
 HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
 existing building



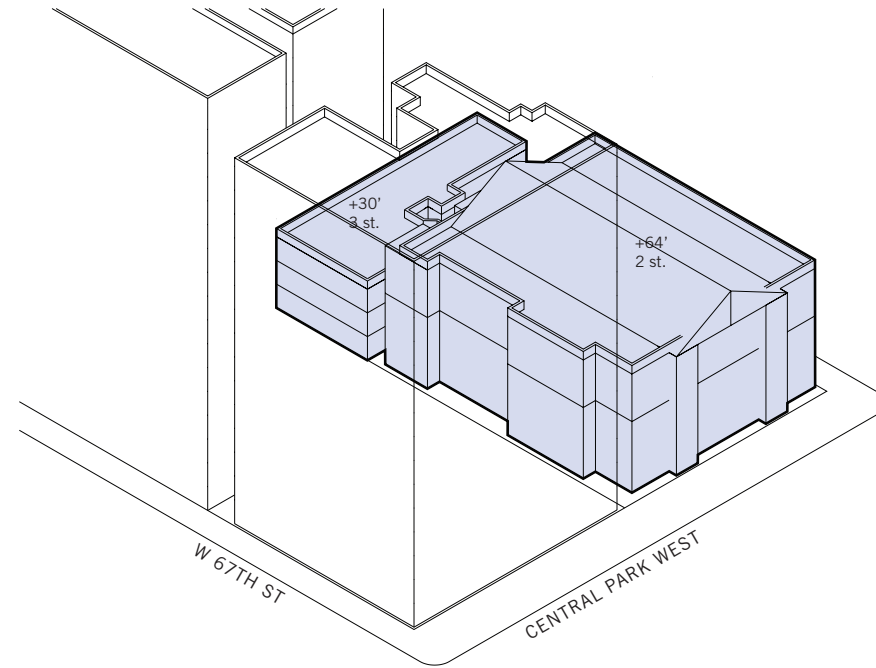
BLOCK #: 1118
LOT #: 28, 29
ADDRESS: 51 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 8,436 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 84,360 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60' -125' AND 125'-150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185' AND 210'

soft site 03
 HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
 SCHEME A: as-of-right



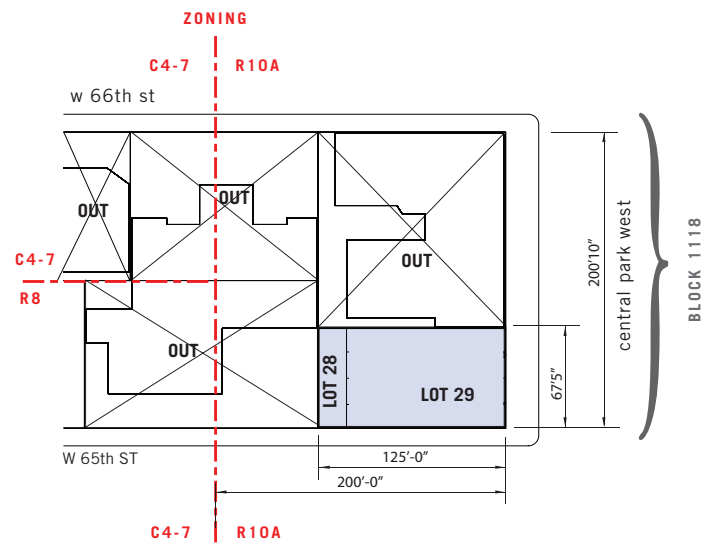
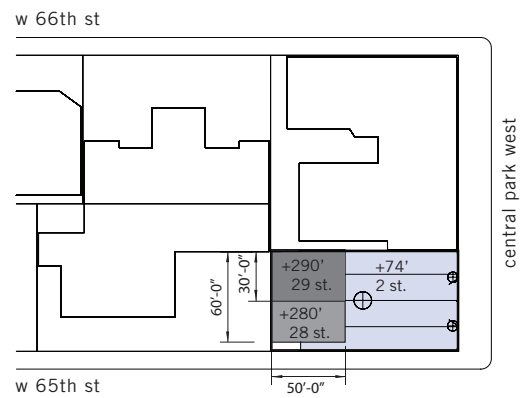
FLOORS: 29
HEIGHT: 290'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 84,177 sf
 (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	8,000 sf	74'
2-3	1,140 sf	10'
4-28	3,000 sf	10'
29	1,500 sf	10'
GROSS	86,780 sf	290'



LOT 38
FLOORS: 3.75
HEIGHT: 30'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 10,438 sf
 (PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 1.89
USE: RESIDENTIAL

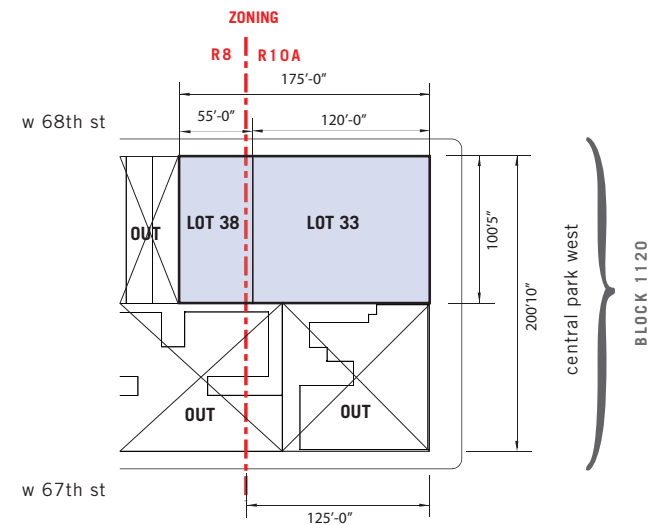
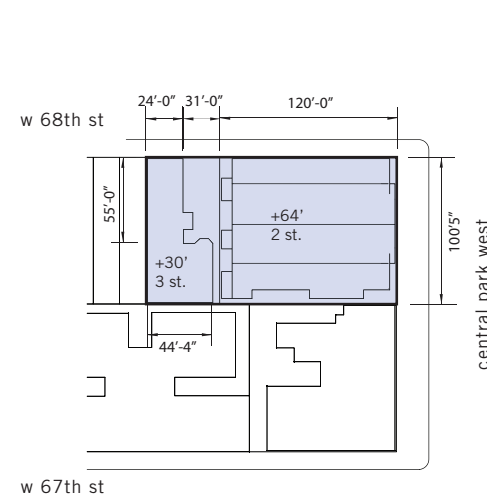
LOT 33
FLOORS: 4
HEIGHT: 64'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 11,755 sf
 (PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 0.97
USE: CHURCH



BLOCK #: 1118
LOT #: 28, 29
ADDRESS: 51 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 8,436 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 84,360 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60'-125' AND 125'-150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185'-210'

soft site 03
 HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
 SCHEME B: tower

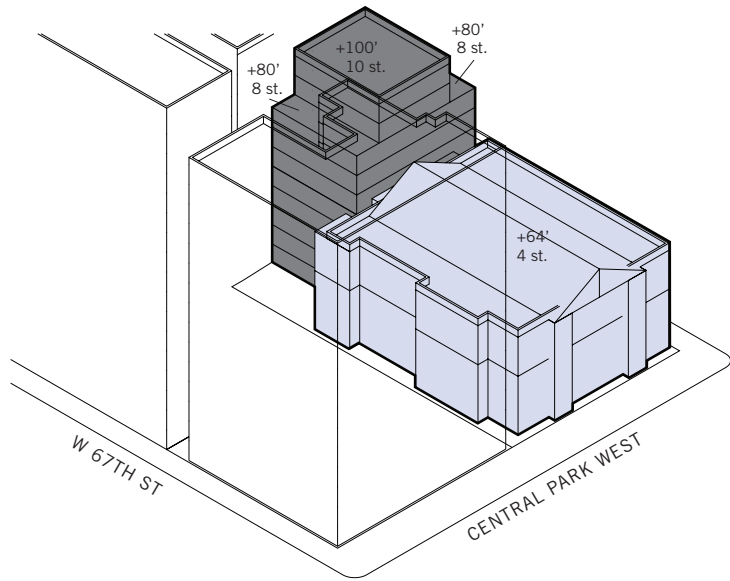
ix



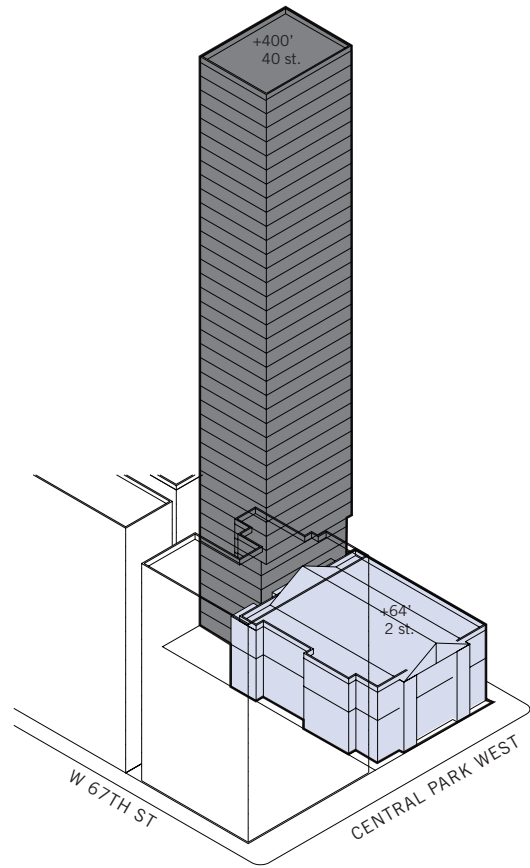
BLOCK #: 1120
LOT #: 33, 38
ADDRESS: 77 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 17,583 sf
ZONING: R10A, R8
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 8.86
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 155,836 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R8) NA, (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'- 150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R8) NA, (R10A) 185' AND 210'

soft site 04
 SECOND CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST
 existing building

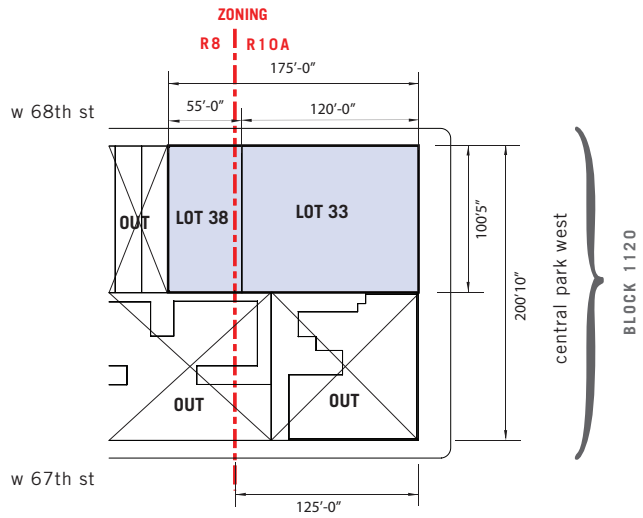
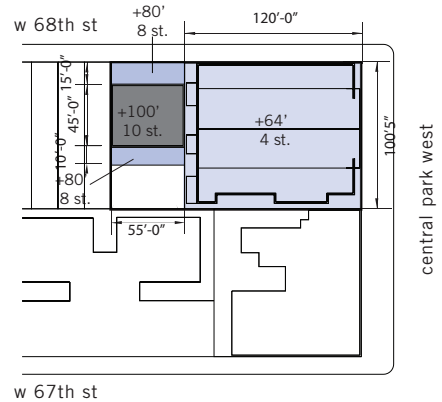
x



FLOORS: 10		
HEIGHT: 100'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 46,080 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	15,605 sf	10'
1-8	3,850 sf	10'
9-10	2,475 sf	10'
GROSS	47,505 sf	100'

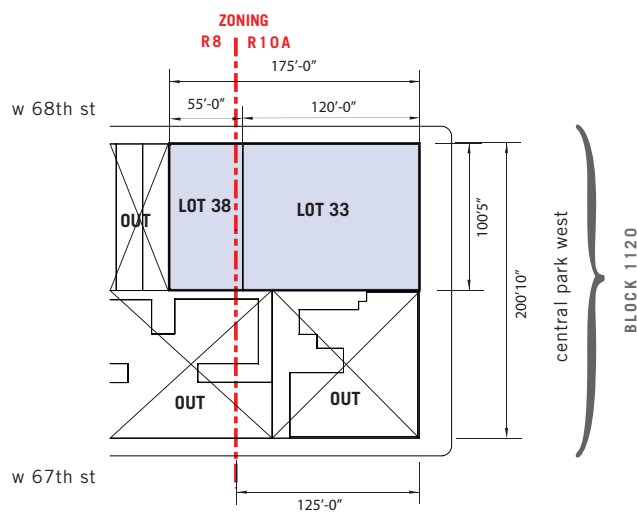
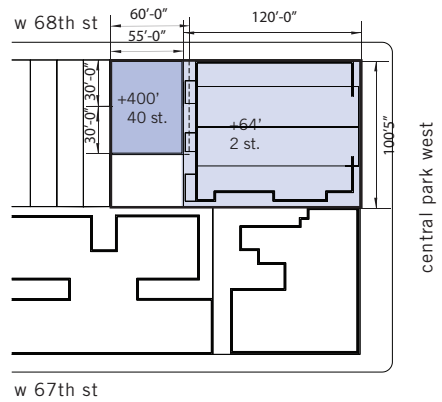


FLOORS: 40		
HEIGHT: 400'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 149,045 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	15,055 sf	10'
2-7	3,300 sf	10'
8-40	3,600 sf	10'
GROSS	153,655 sf	400'



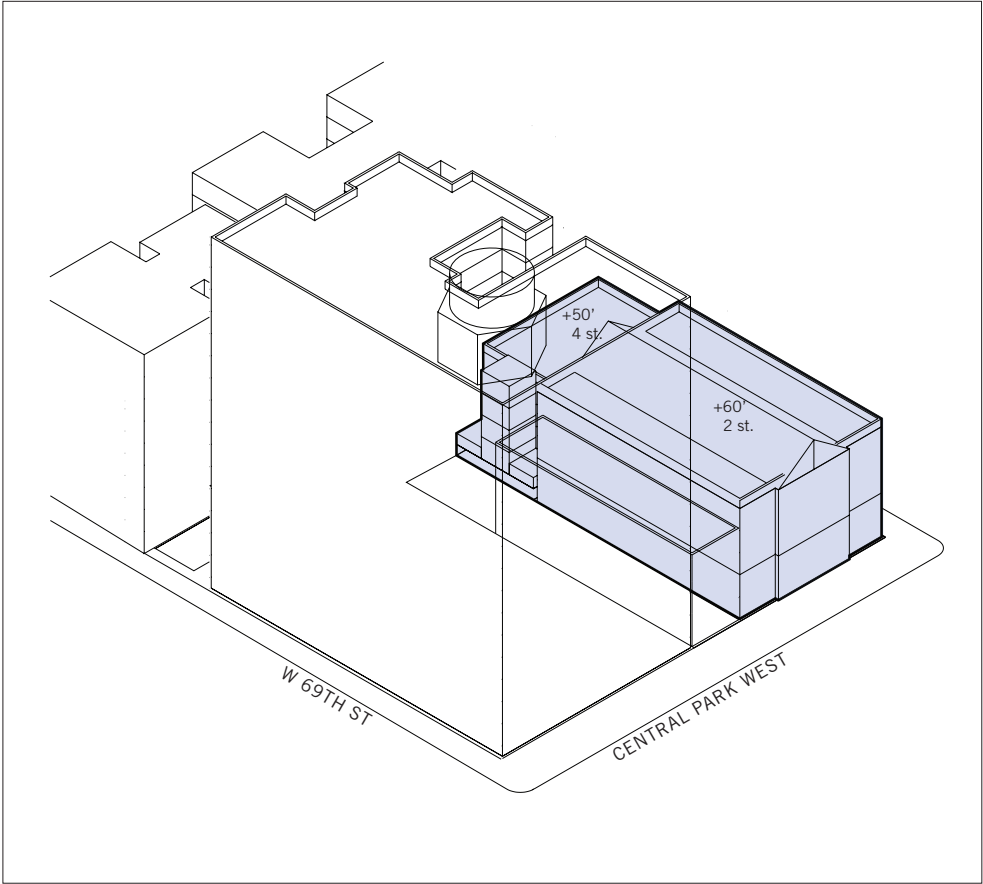
BLOCK #: 1120
LOT #: 33, 38
ADDRESS: 77 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 17,583 sf
ZONING: R10A, R8
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 8.86
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 155,836 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R8) NA, (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'- 150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R8) NA, (R10A) 185' AND 210'

soft site 04
SECOND CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST
SCHEME A: as-of-right



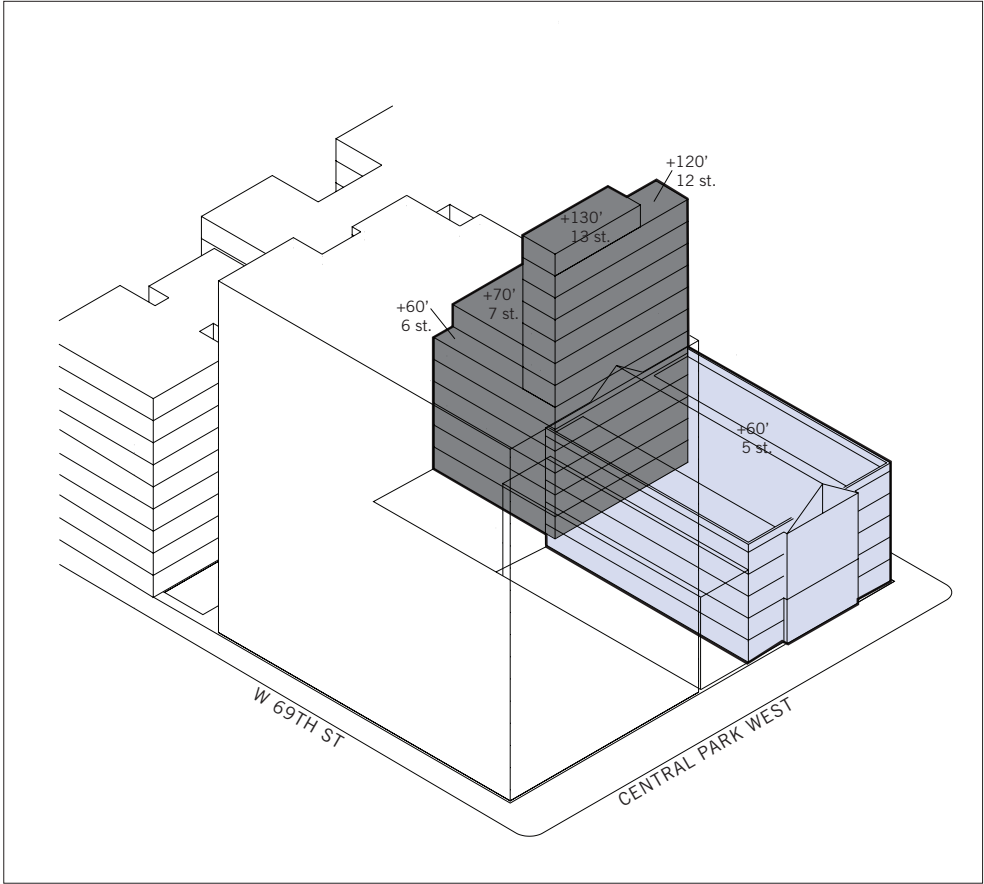
BLOCK #: 1120
LOT #: 33, 38
ADDRESS: 77 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 17,583 sf
ZONING: R10A, R8
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 8.86
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 155,836 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R8) NA, (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'- 150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R8) NA, (R10A) 185' AND 210'

soft site 04
SECOND CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST
SCHEME B: tower



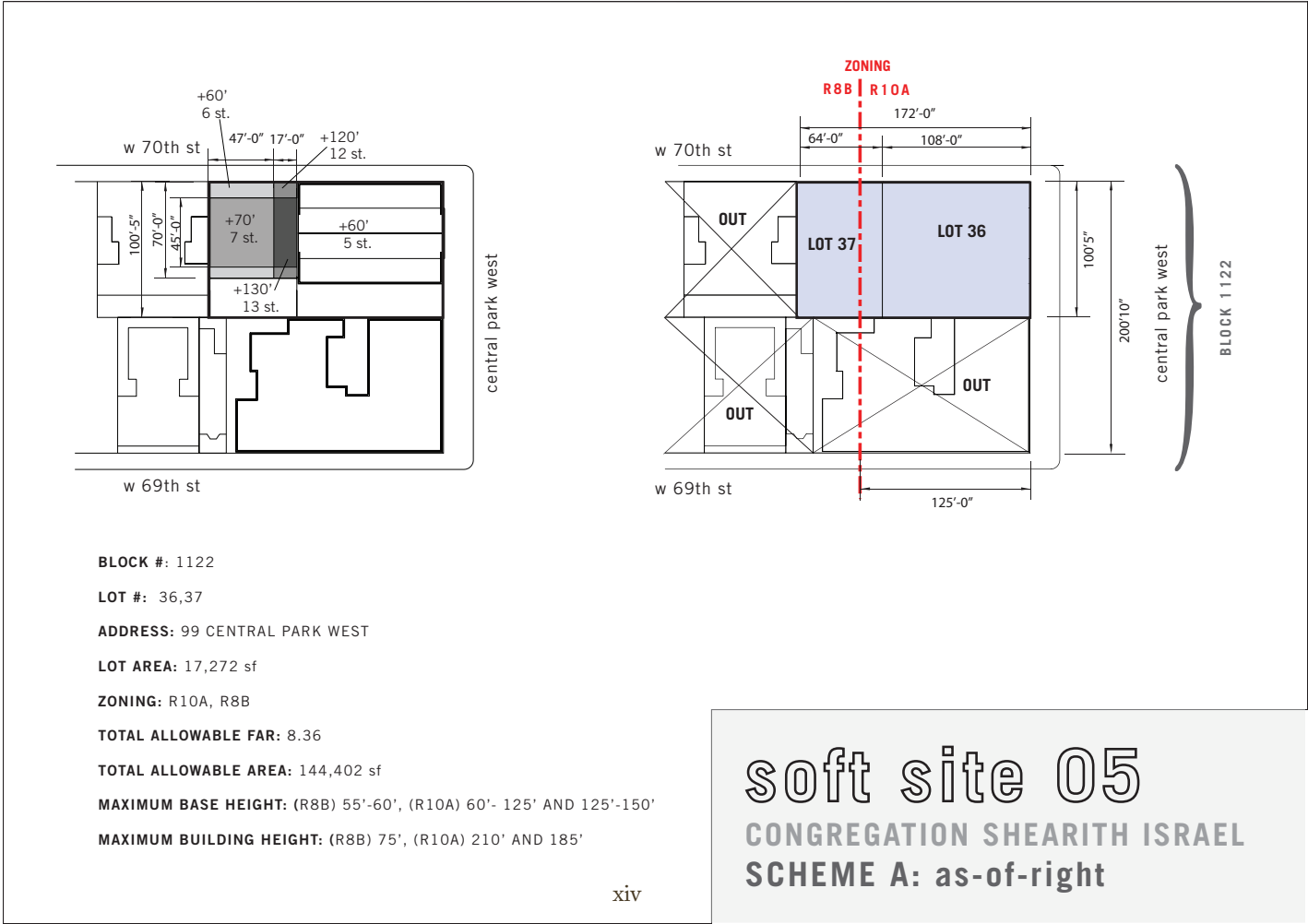
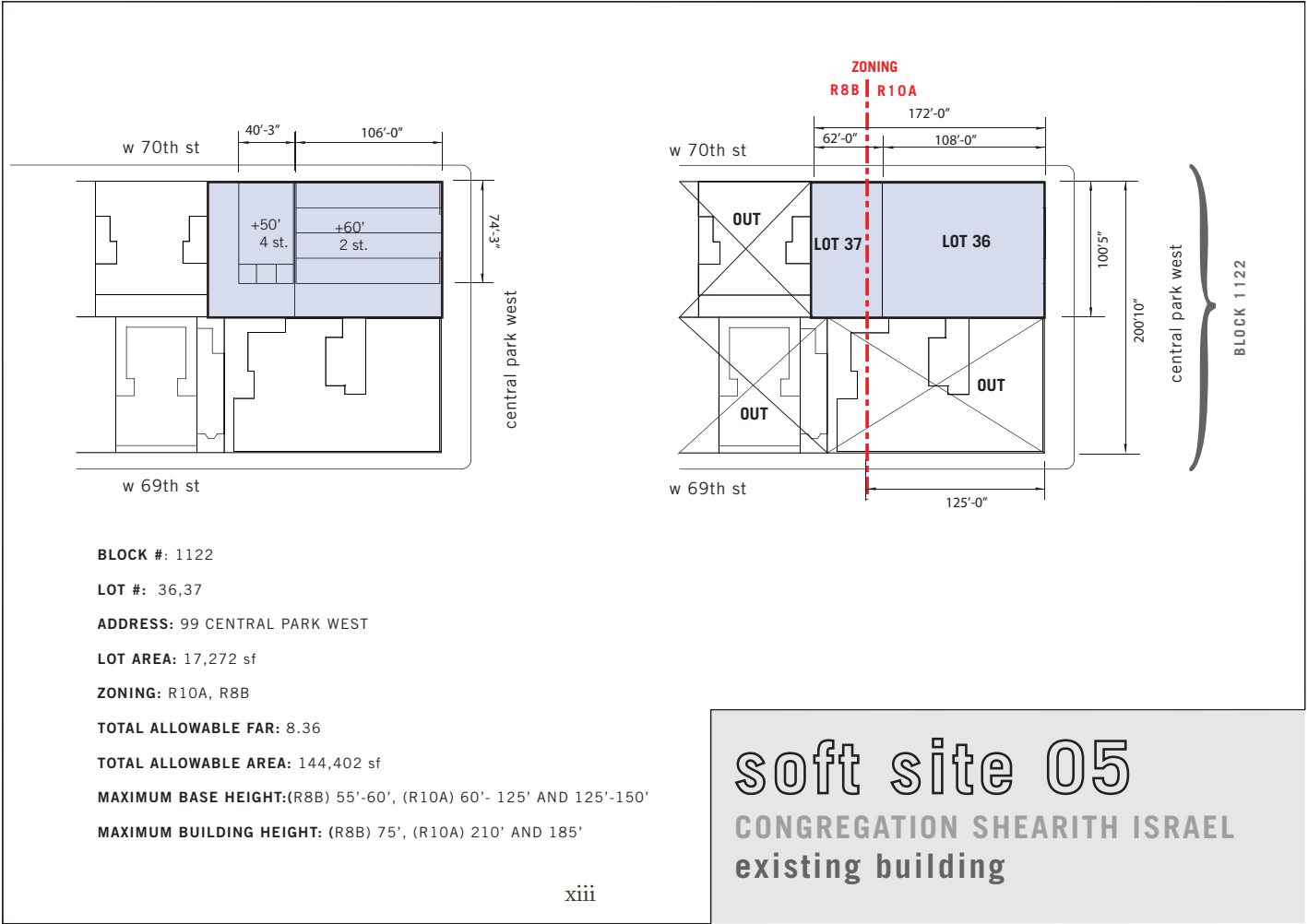
LOT 36:
FLOORS: 2
HEIGHT: 60'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 19,485 sf
(FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 1.8
USE: INSTITUTION

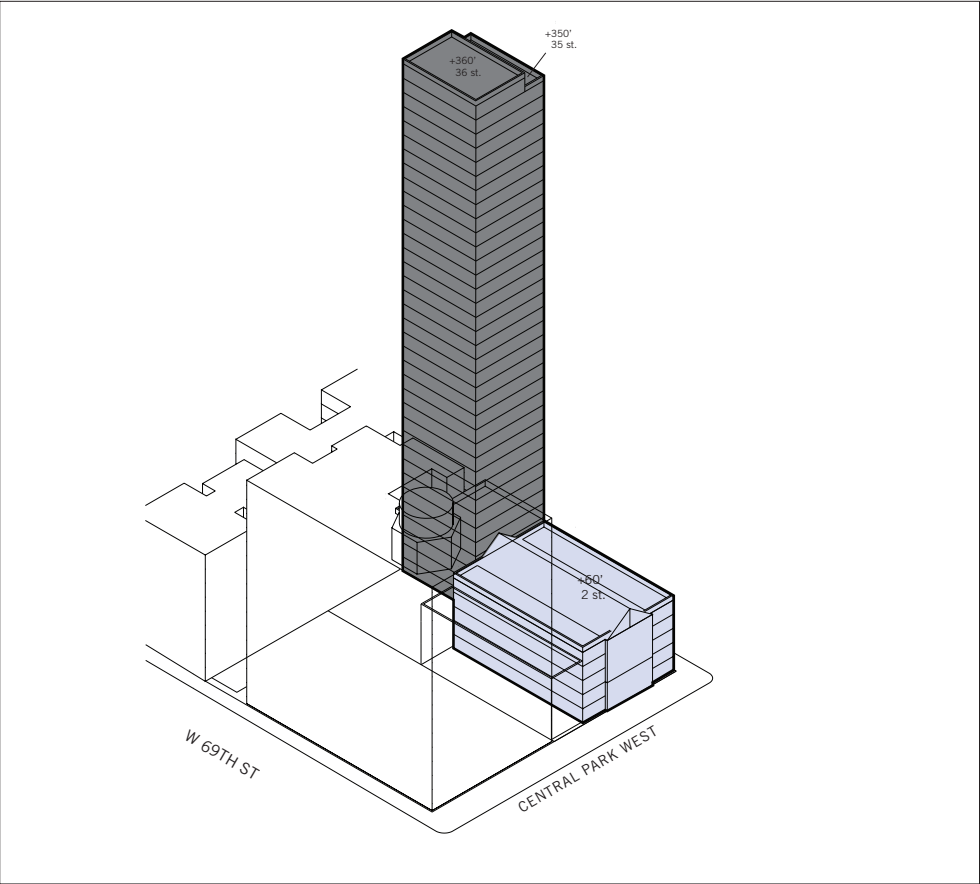
LOT 37:
FLOORS: 4
HEIGHT: 50'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 14,474 sf
(FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 2.25
USE: INSTITUTION



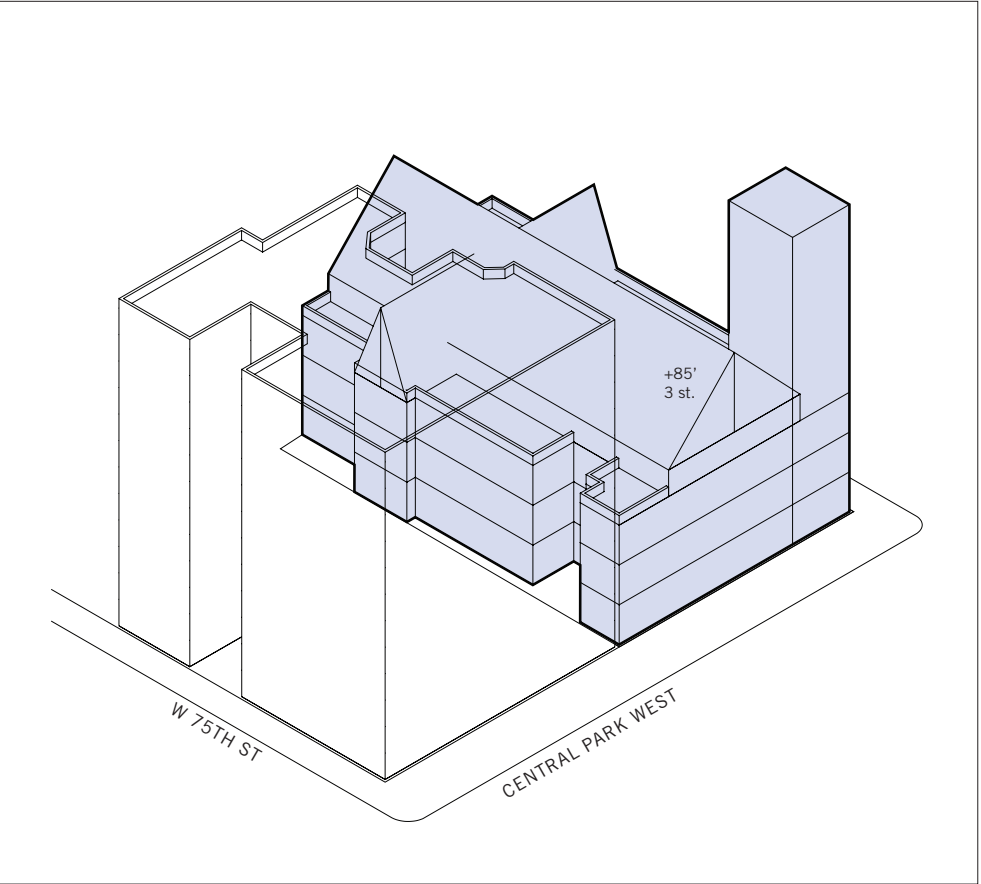
FLOORS: 13
HEIGHT: 130'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 54,693 sf
(97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1-2	14,223 sf	10'
3-6	4,480 sf	10'
7	3,305 sf	10'
8-12	1,190 sf	10'
13	765 sf	10'
GROSS	56,385 sf	130'





FLOORS: 36		
HEIGHT: 360'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 144,205 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1-2	13,583 sf	15'
3-35	3,600 sf	10'
36	2,700 sf	10'
GROSS	148,665 sf	360'



FLOORS: 3	
HEIGHT: 85'	
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 15,920 sf (FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)	
FAR: 1.04	
USE: INSTITUTIONAL	

BLOCK #: 1122

LOT #: 36,37

ADDRESS: 99 CENTRAL PARK WEST

LOT AREA: 17,272 sf

ZONING: R10A, R8B

TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 8.35

TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 144,402 sf

MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R8B) 55'-60', (R10A) 60'- 125' AND 125'-150'

MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R8B) 75', (R10A) 210' AND 185'

soft site 05

CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

SCHEME B: tower

XV

BLOCK #: 1128

LOT #: 33

ADDRESS: 160 CENTRAL PARK WEST

LOT AREA: 15,326 sf

ZONING: R10A, R8B

TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 9.0

TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 137,934 sf

MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R8B) 55'-60', (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'-150'

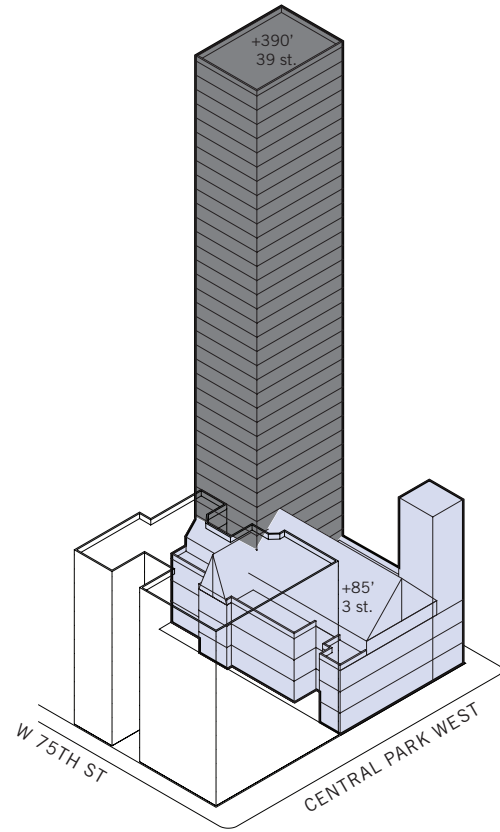
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R8B) 75', (R10A) 185' AND 210'

soft site 06

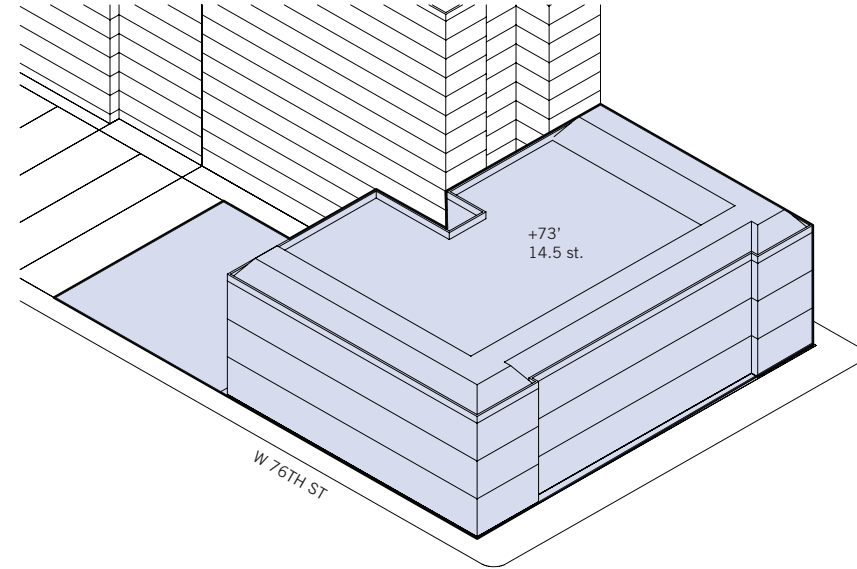
FOURTH UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY

existing building

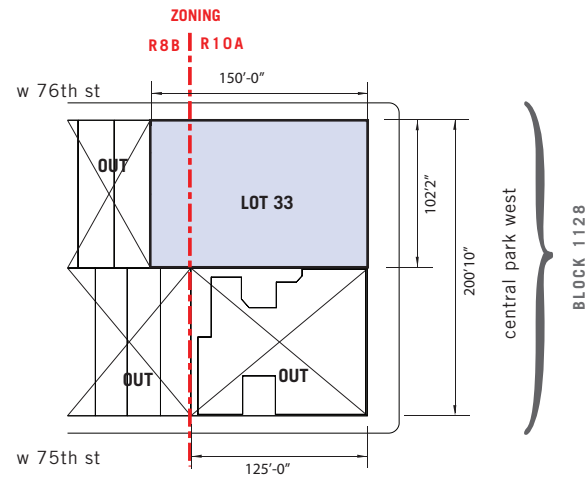
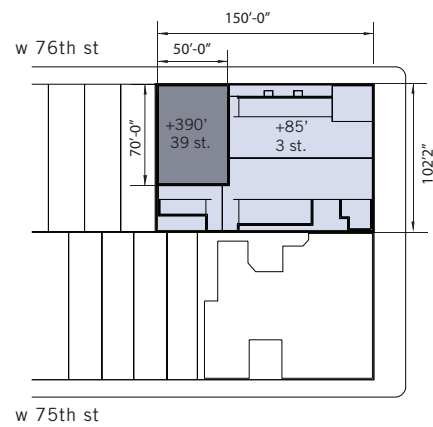
xvi



FLOORS: 39		
HEIGHT: 390'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 137,662 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	12,000 sf	15'
2	3,000 sf	15'
3	920 sf	15'
4- 39	3,500 sf	10'
GROSS	141,920 sf	390'

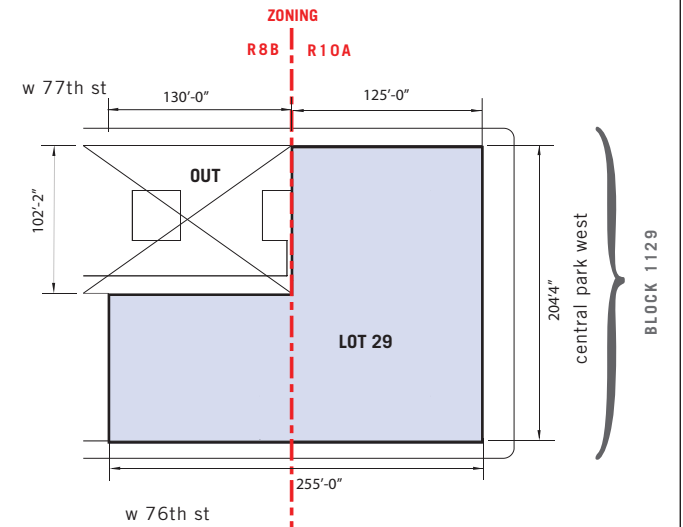
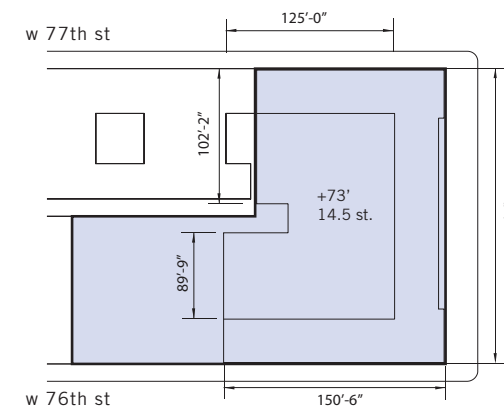


FLOORS: 14.5	
HEIGHT: 73'0"	
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 105,000 sf (FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)	
FAR: 2.42	
USE: INSTITUTION	



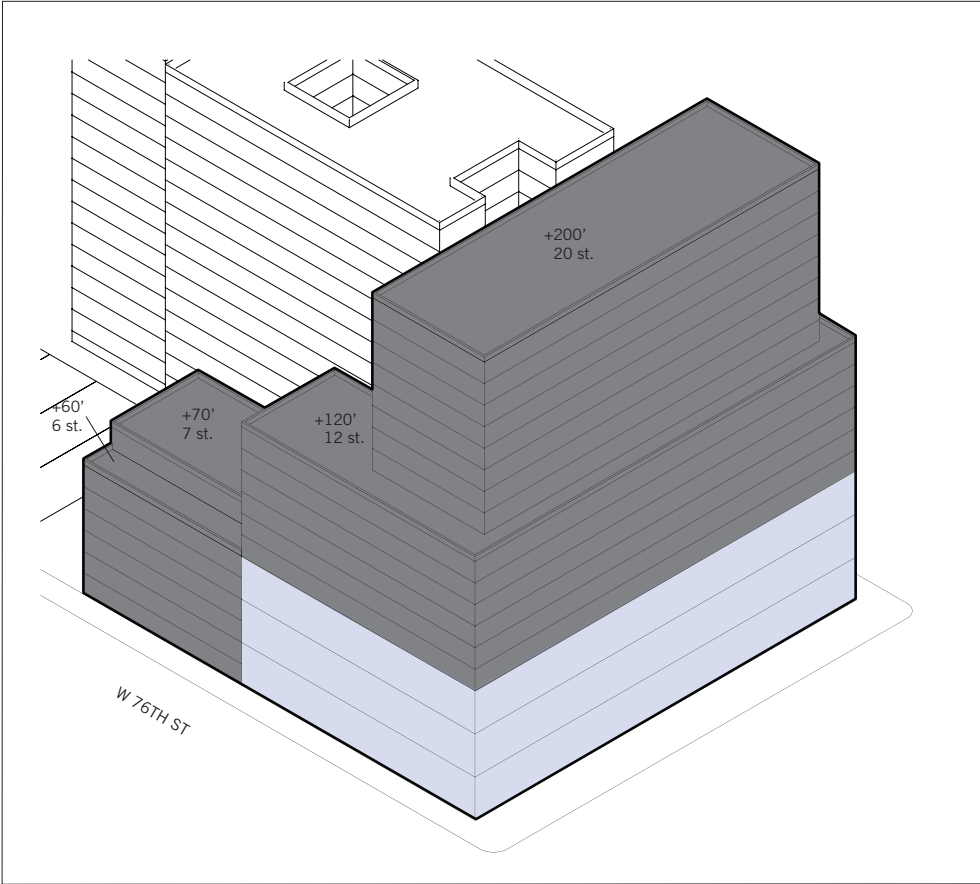
BLOCK #: 1128
LOT #: 33
ADDRESS: 160 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 15,326 sf
ZONING: R10A, R8B
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 9.0
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 137,934 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R8B) 55'-60', (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'-150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R8B) 75', (R10A) 185' AND 210'

soft site 06
 FOURTH UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
 SCHEME B: tower



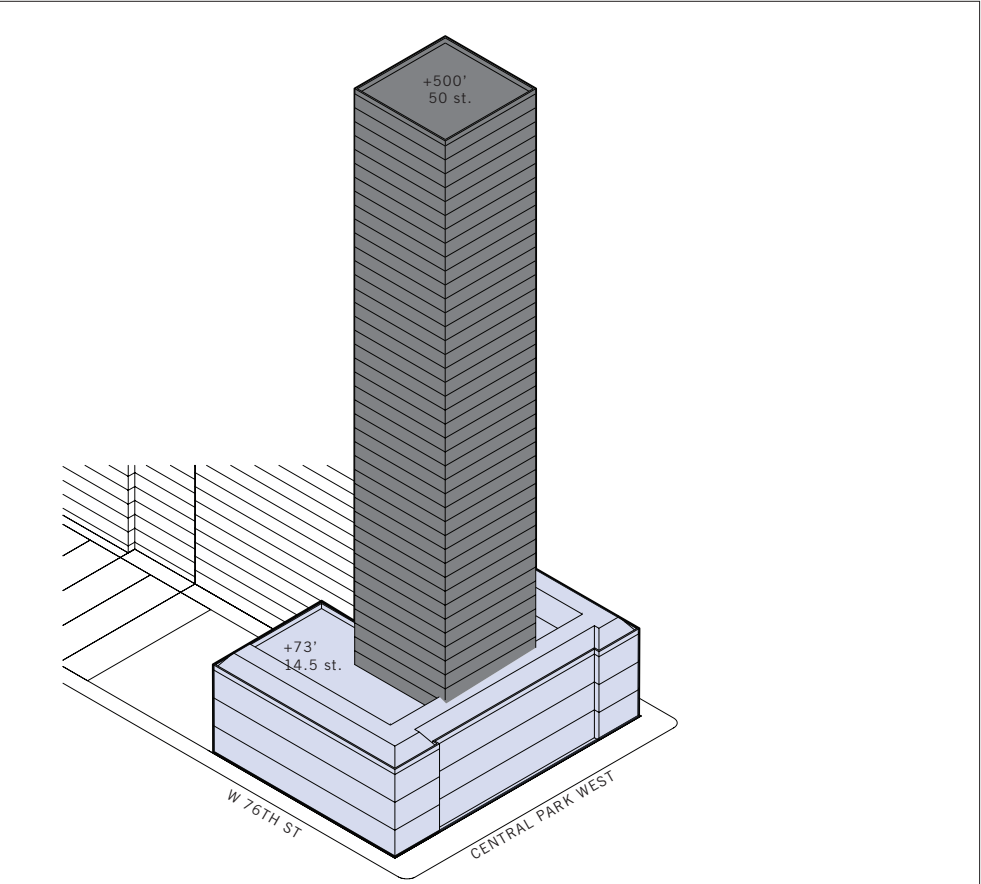
BLOCK #: 1129
LOT #: 29
ADDRESS: 170 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 43,421 sf
ZONING: R10A, R8B
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 7.88
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 342,260 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R8B) 55'-60' (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'-150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R8B) 75', (R10A) 185' AND 210'

soft site 07
 NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 existing building



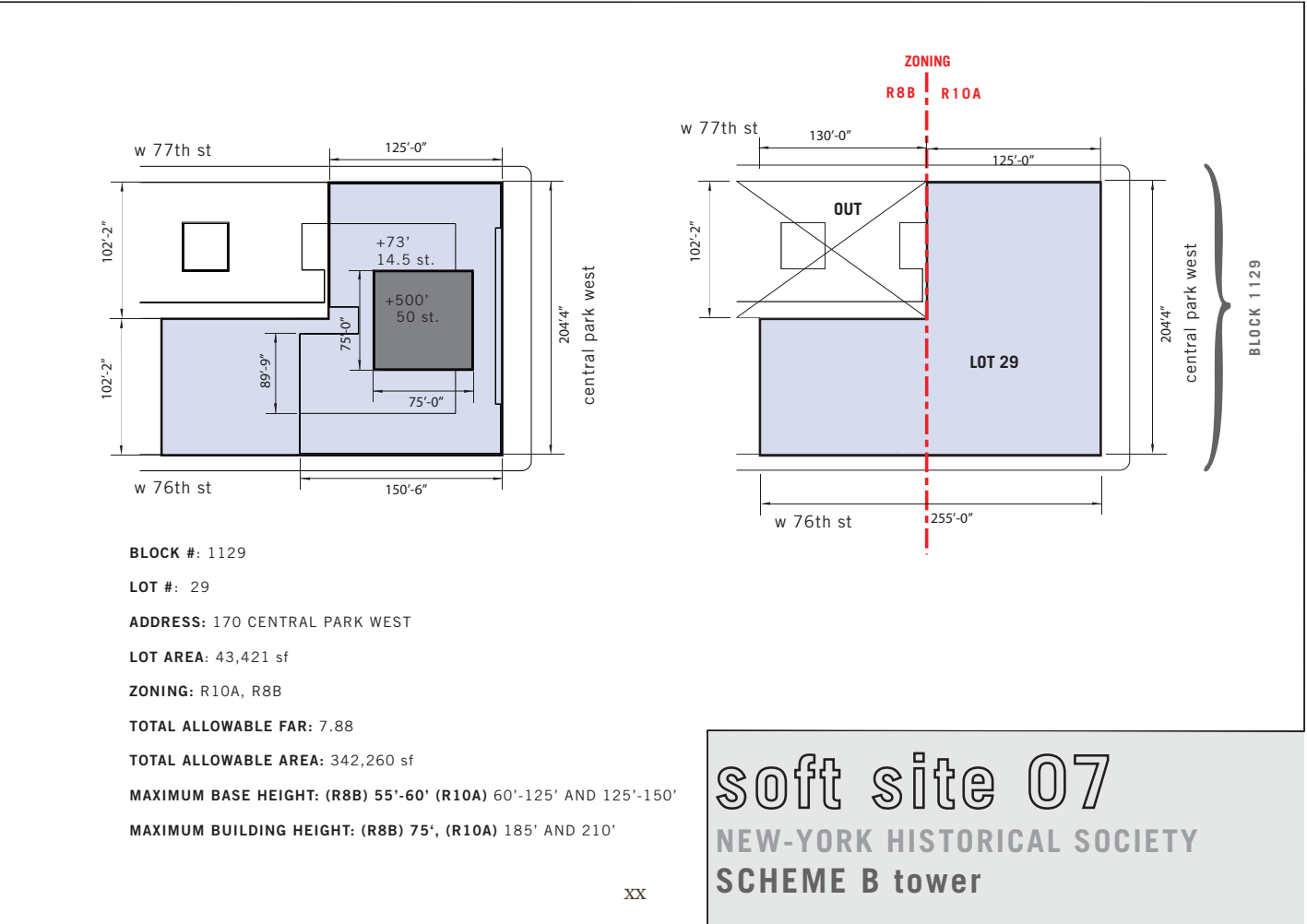
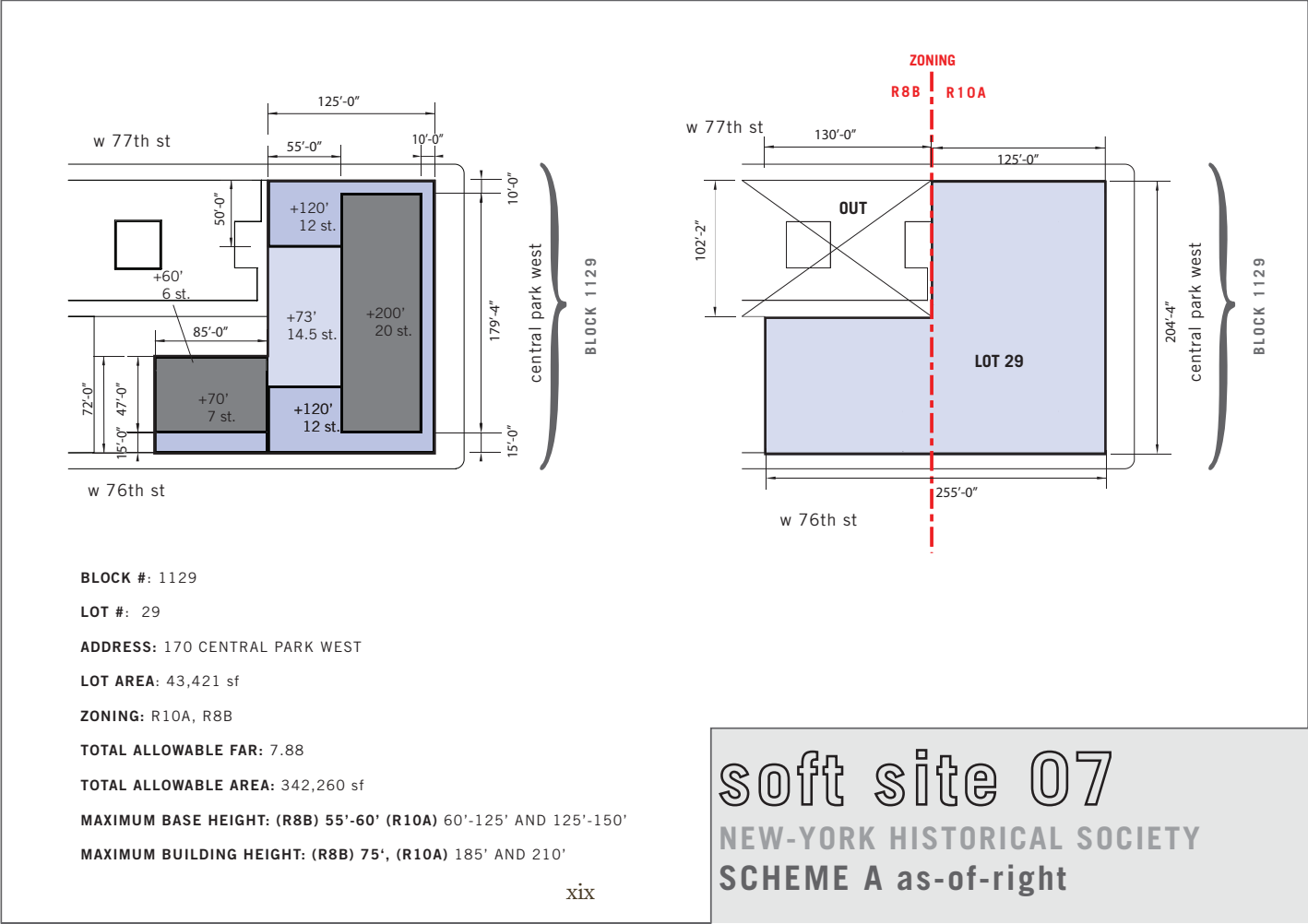
FLOORS: 20
HEIGHT: 200'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 300,312 sf
(97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

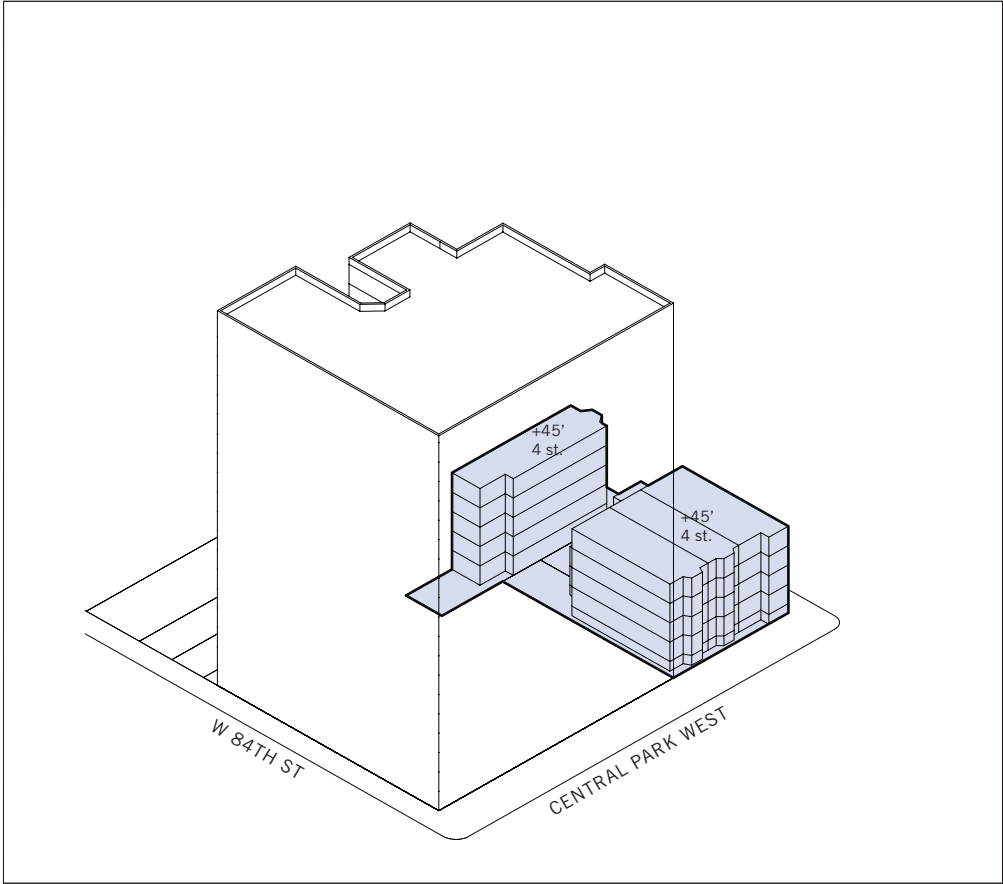
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1- 3	47,240 sf	20'
7	23,775 sf	10'
8- 12	19,780 sf	10'
13- 20	10,740 sf	10'
GROSS	309,600 sf	200'



FLOORS: 50
HEIGHT: 500'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 341,925 sf
(97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1- 3	35,000 sf	20'
7- 50	5,625 sf	10'
GROSS	352,500 sf	500'



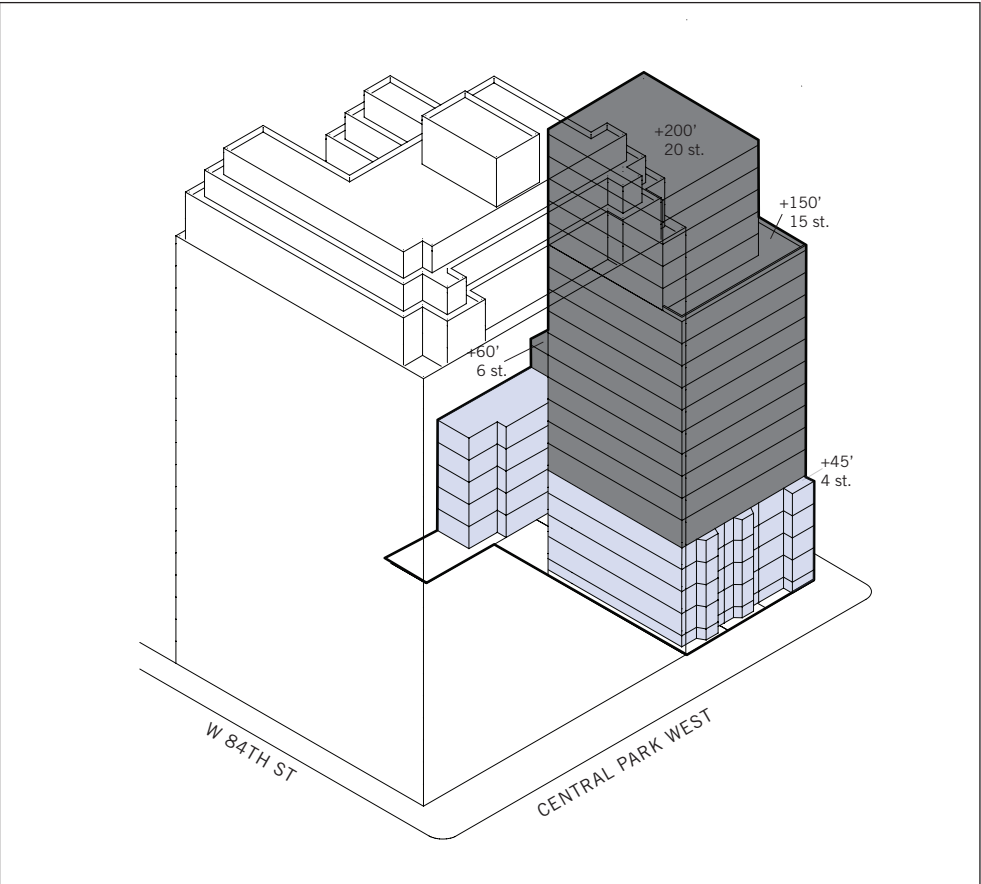


LOT 34
FLOORS: 4
HEIGHT: 50'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 5,382 sf
(FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 2.43
USE: RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

LOT 35
FLOORS: 4
HEIGHT: 50'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 6,685 sf
(FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 3.34
USE: RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

LOT 36
FLOORS: 4
HEIGHT: 50'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 7,914 sf
(FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 3.17
USE: RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

LOT 37
FLOORS: 4
HEIGHT: 50'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 6,413 sf
(FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 2.99
USE: RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS



FLOORS: 20		
HEIGHT: 200'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 87,882 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1- 6	5,775 sf	10'
7-15	4,550 sf	10'
16-20	3,000sf	10'
GROSS	90,600 sf	200'

BLOCK #: 1198
LOT #: 34, 35, 36, 37
ADDRESS: 249 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 8863 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 88,630 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60' - 125' AND 125' - 150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185' AND 210'

soft site 08

existing building

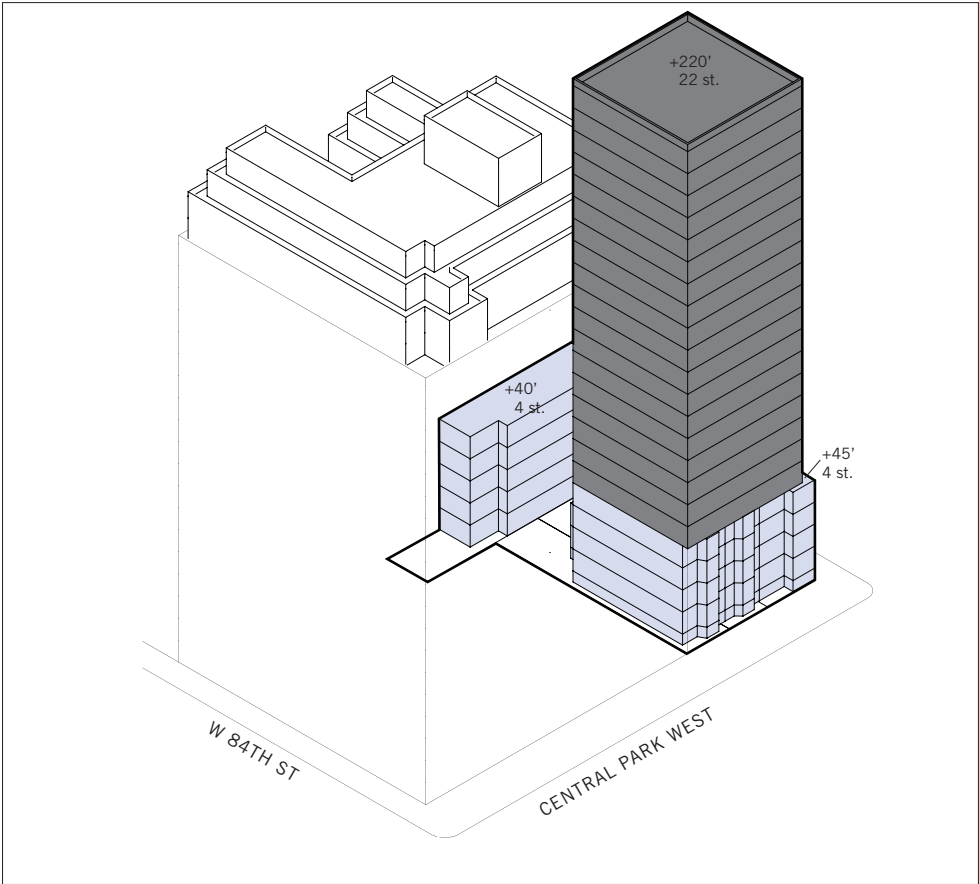
xxi

BLOCK #: 1198
LOT #: 34, 35, 36, 37
ADDRESS: 249 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 8863 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 88,630 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60' - 125' AND 125' - 150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185' AND 210'

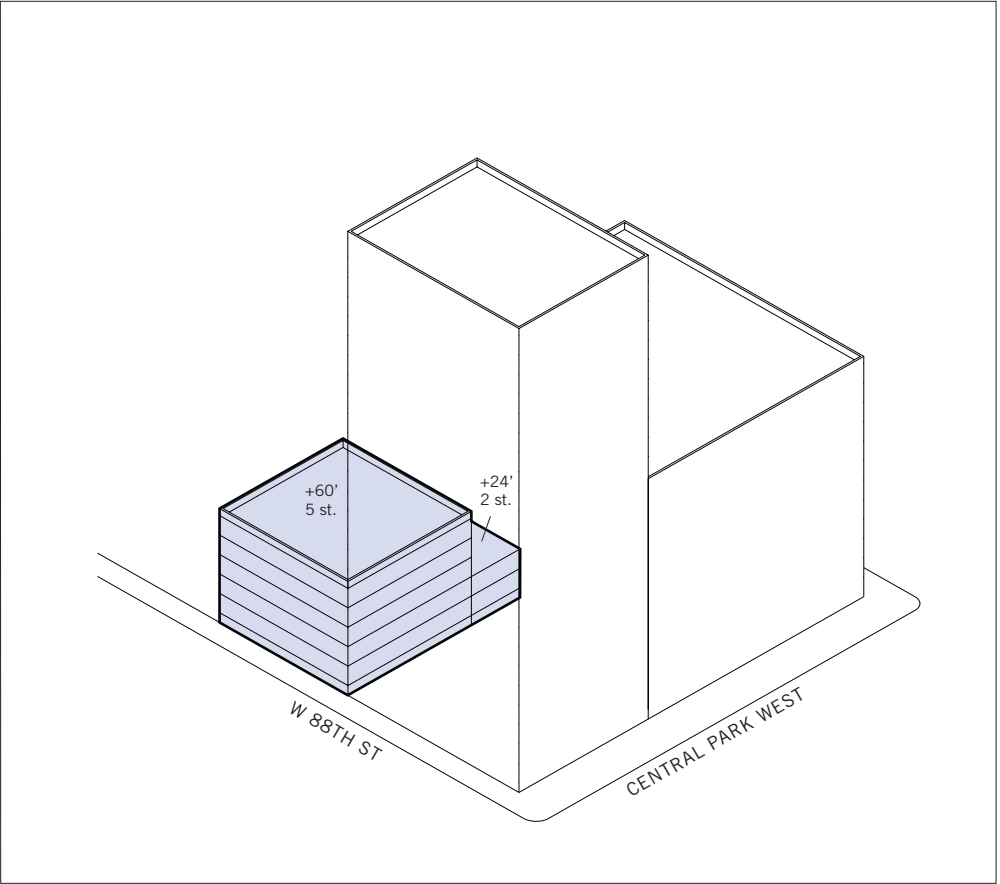
soft site 08

SCHEME A: as-of-right

xxii



FLOORS: 22		
HEIGHT: 220'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 88,458 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1- 4	6,599 sf	10'
5-22	3600 sf	10'
GROSS	91,194 sf	220'



FLOORS: 5		
HEIGHT: 60'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 31,541 sf (FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)		
FAR: 4.18		
USE: SCHOOL		

BLOCK #: 1198

LOT #: 34, 35, 36, 37

ADDRESS: 249 CENTRAL PARK WEST

LOT AREA: 8863 sf

ZONING: R10A

TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10

TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 88,630 sf

MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: 60' - 125' AND 125' - 150'

MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: 185' AND 210'

soft site 08

SCHEME B: tower

xxiii

BLOCK #: 1202

LOT #: 26

ADDRESS: 15 WEST 88 STREET

LOT AREA: 7,552 sf

ZONING: R10A, R7-2

TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 7.81

TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 66,709 sf

MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R7-2) 60', (R10A) 60'-125'

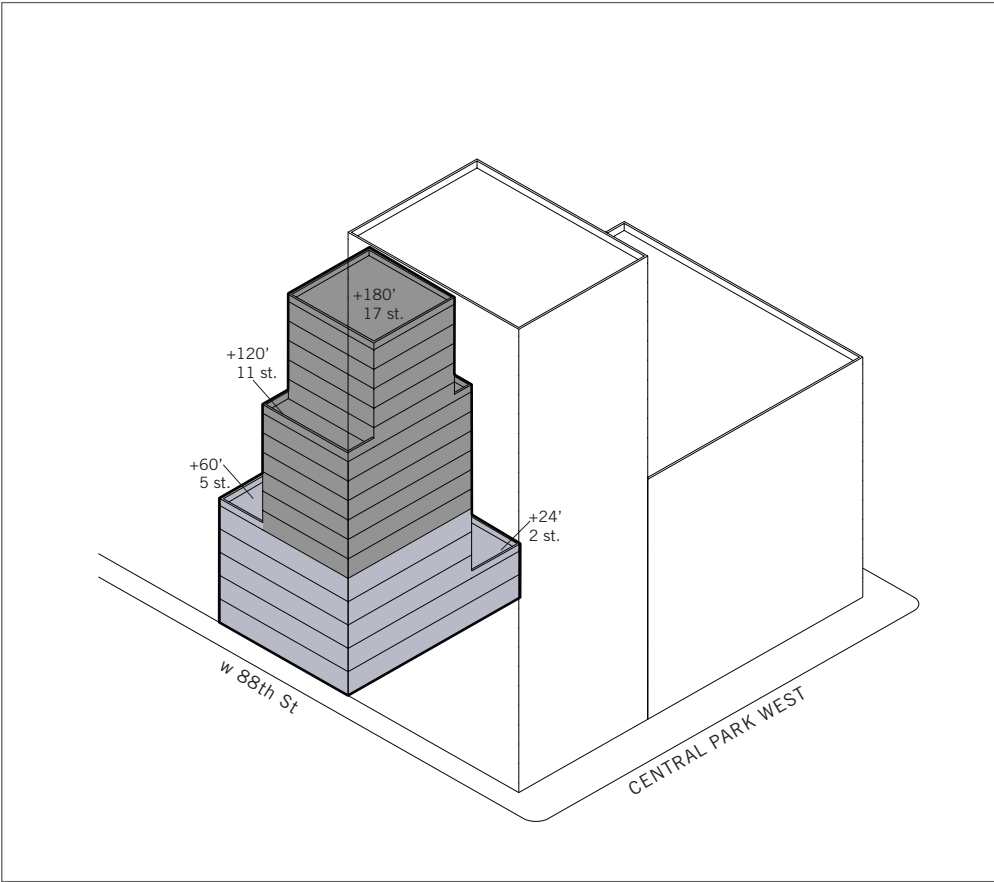
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R7-2) GOVERNED BY SKY EXPOSURE PLANE, (R10A) 185'

soft site 09

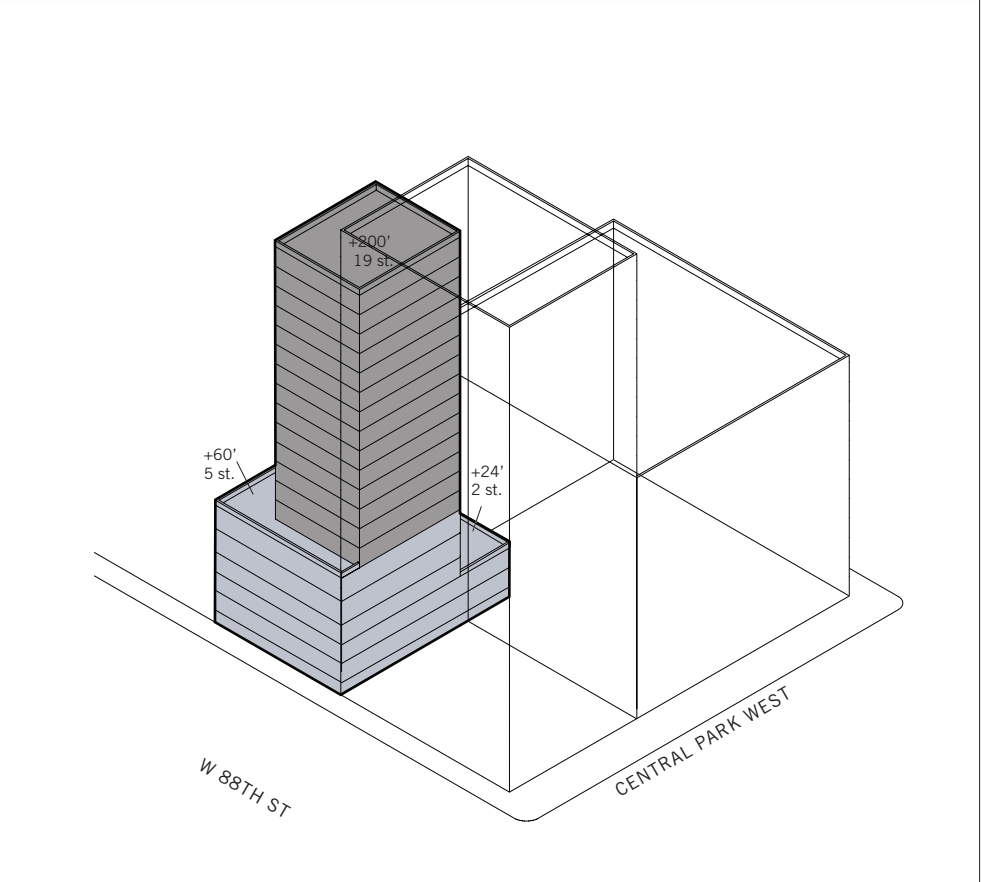
TREVOR DAY SCHOOL

existing building

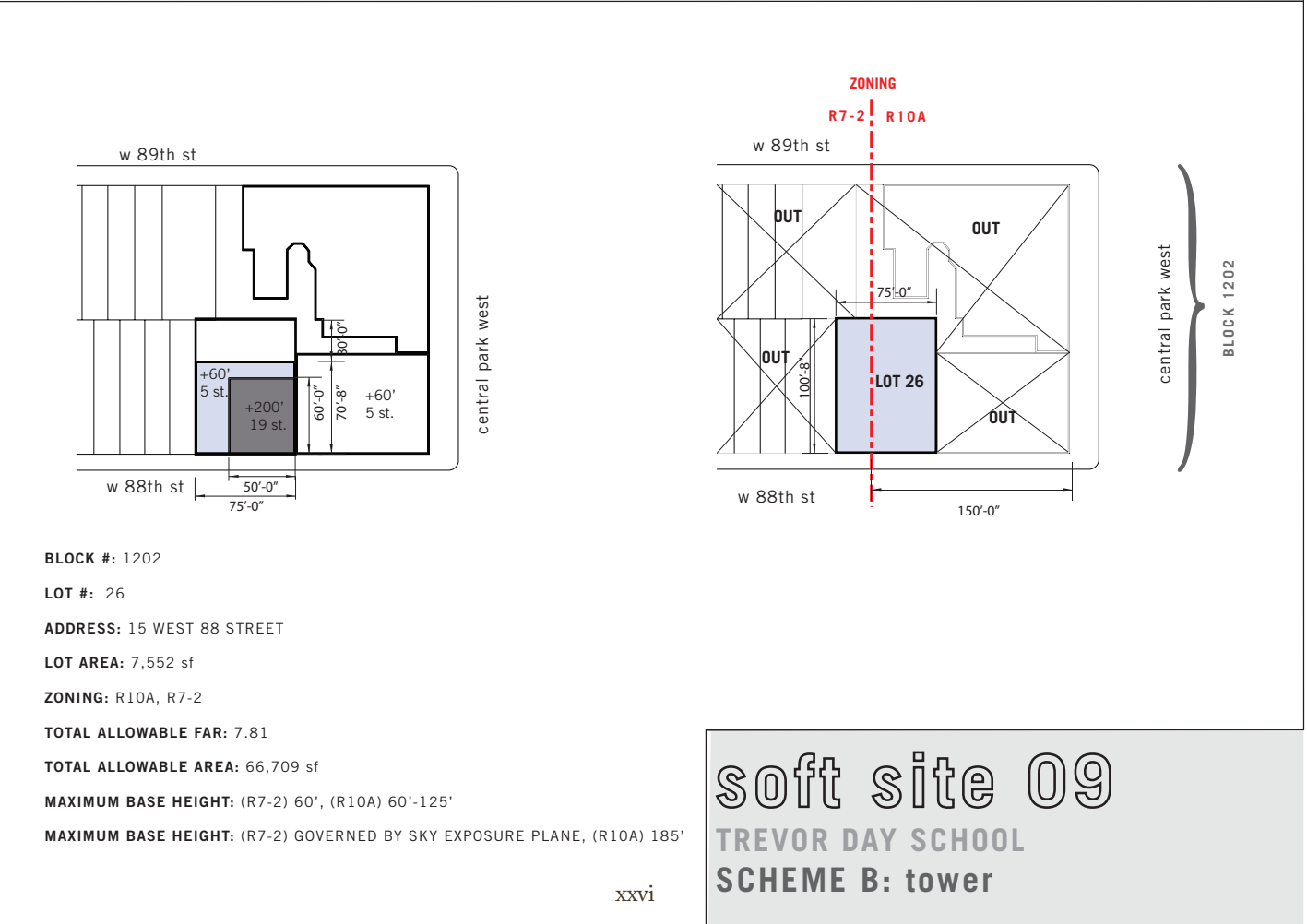
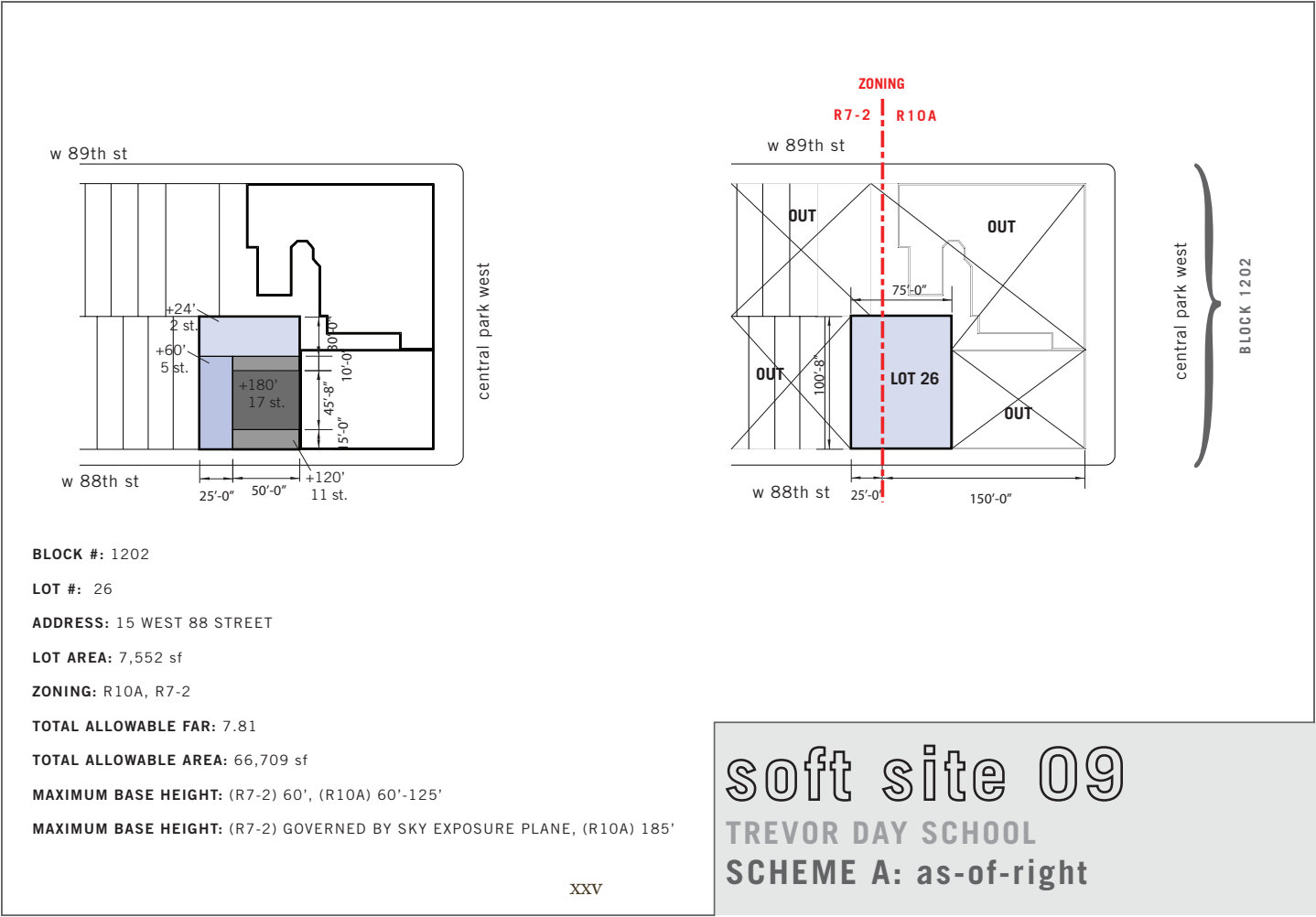
xxiv

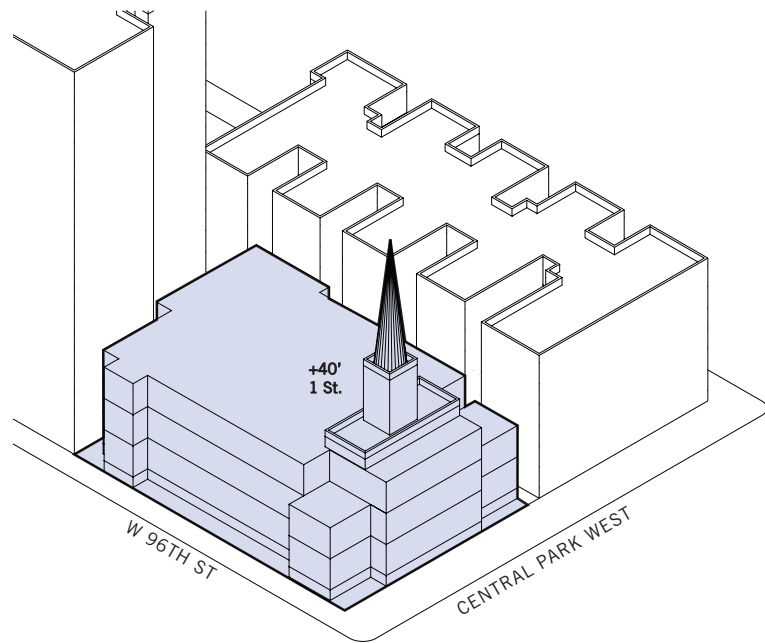


FLOORS: 17		
HEIGHT: 180'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 63, 930 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1-2	7,552 sf	10'
3-5	5,300 sf	10'
6-12	3,534 sf	10'
13-17	2,284 sf	10'
GROSS	65,907 sf	180'

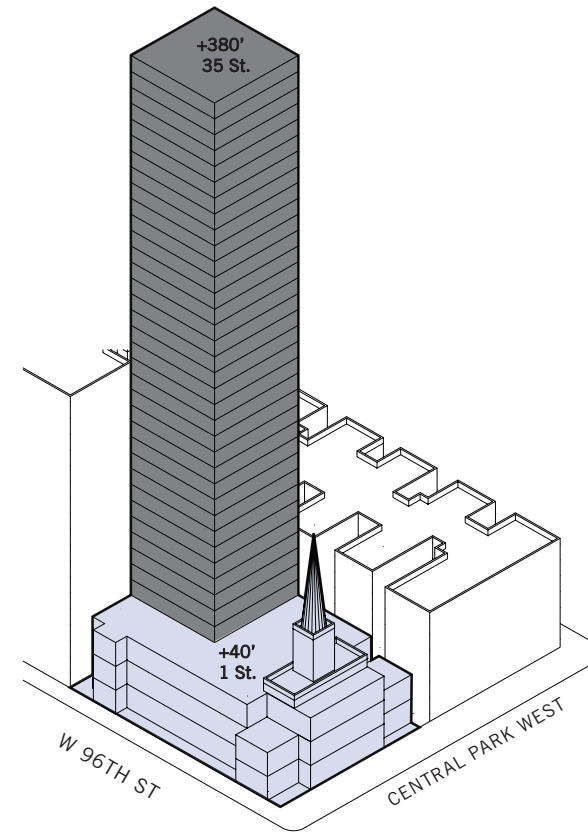


FLOORS: 19		
HEIGHT: 200'		
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 66,446 sf (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)		
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1-5	5,300 sf	12'
6-19	3,000 sf	10'
GROSS	68,501 sf	200'



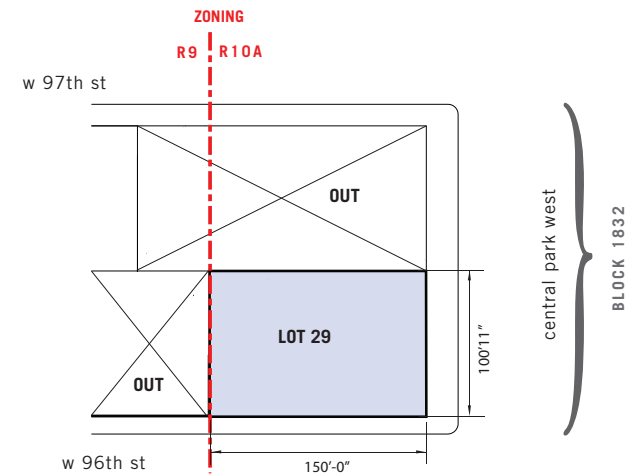
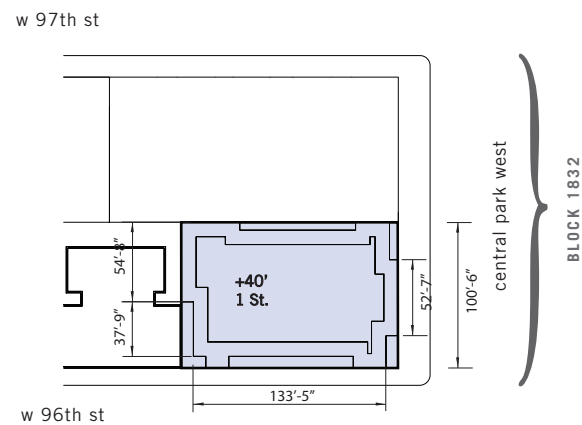


LOT:29
FLOORS: 1
HEIGHT: 40'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 33,011 sf
 (FROM PLUTO DATA 2006)
FAR: 2.18
USE: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INSTITUTION



FLOORS: 35
HEIGHT: 380'
BUILDING GROSS AREA: 150,749 sf
 (97% OF GROSS FLOOR AREA)

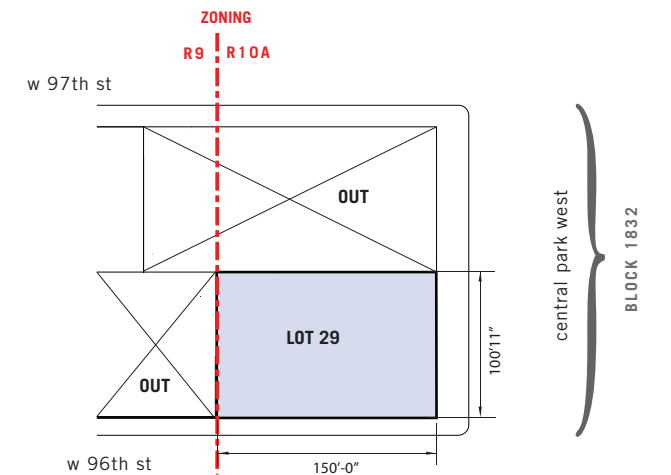
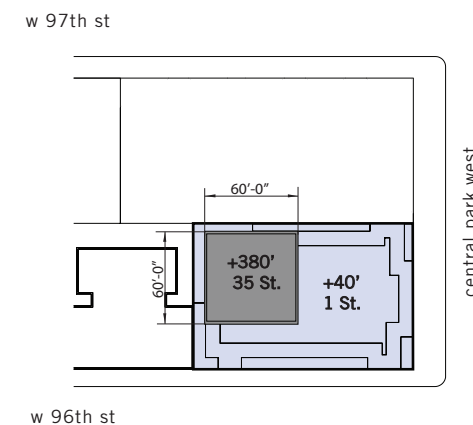
FLOORS	AREA	FLOOR-TO-FLOOR
1	33,011 sf	40'
2-35	3,600 sf	10'
GROSS	155,411 sf	380'



BLOCK #: 1832
LOT #: 29
ADDRESS: 361 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 15,138 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10.0
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 151,380 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'- 150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R10A) 185' AND 210'

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soft site 10
 CRENSHAW CHRISTIAN CENTER EAST
 existing building



BLOCK #: 1832
LOT #: 29
ADDRESS: 361 CENTRAL PARK WEST
LOT AREA: 15,138 sf
ZONING: R10A
TOTAL ALLOWABLE FAR: 10.0
TOTAL ALLOWABLE AREA: 151,380 sf
MAXIMUM BASE HEIGHT: (R10A) 60'-125' AND 125'- 150'
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: (R10A) 185' AND 210'

xxviii

soft site 10
 CRENSHAW CHRISTIAN CENTER EAST
 SCHEME B: tower

7. Appendix 2: Stakeholders Consulted

