Proposed P.S. 557, 4302 4th Avenue, Brooklyn

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW
FINDINGS STATEMENT

Pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law (State Environmental Quality Review Act [SEQRA]) and 6 NYCRR Part 617, the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), as lead agency under SEQRA, makes the following findings.

Name of Action: Proposed P.S. 557

Project Location: The project site includes two private lots, Lots 34 and 36 on Block 728, located at 4302 Fourth Avenue and 364 43rd Street in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn, within Community District 7. The project site is situated at the southwest corner of 4th Avenue and 43rd Street and has approximately 125 feet of frontage on 43rd Street and 100 feet of frontage on 4th Avenue. The project site is located at the eastern end of the block bounded by 43rd Street to the north, 44th Street to the south, 4th Avenue to the east, and 3rd Avenue/Gowanus Expressway (elevated) to the west. The project site is approximately 0.29 acres (12,521 square feet) in area.

The western portion of the site (Lot 34) is an unpaved vacant lot currently used for private parking. The eastern portion of the site (Lot 36) contains the approximately 25,000 square foot (sf) former 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable, which are currently vacant. This existing facility includes the station house, which stands three stories, plus cellar, at the corner of 4th Avenue and 43rd Street, and also an accessory two-story stable building and one-story jail building. The former 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable, built in 1886, are a designated New York City Landmark and are listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP).

Description of Action: On behalf of the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) proposes the acquisition of two private lots located at 4302 4th Avenue and 364 43rd Street, which includes the former 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable, to construct a new primary school facility accommodating approximately 332 students. The proposed PS facility, currently known as P.S. 557, would serve students in grade levels pre-kindergarten through five within Community School District (CSD) No. 15.
Funding for site acquisition, design, and construction of the proposed school facility would be provided by DOE’s Five-Year Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2015-2019. It is anticipated that the new school would open in September 2022.

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SEQR Status: Type 1
SEQR Project No: 17-024

Facts and Conclusions in the FEIS Relied Upon to Support the Decision:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed action would entail the acquisition of two lots (Lots 34 and 36) on Block 728 for construction of an approximately 332-seat primary school facility.

In accordance with the SCA’s Program of Requirements (POR), the preliminary design program for the new school facility would provide approximately 332 seats for grade levels pre-kindergarten through five, and would include the following: classrooms for grade levels pre-kindergarten through five; special education classrooms; reading and speech resource classrooms; project and music classrooms; gymnasium; library; student and staff support areas; storage spaces; administration; “cafetorium” with stage; kitchen and servery complex; lobby; and custodian’s office, locker room, and workshop/storage space.

Based on the formal consultation process between the SCA and OPRHP, OPRHP has identified a preferred redevelopment scenario for the proposed school facility. This preferred redevelopment scenario, “Option RS2F,” would accommodate a student capacity of 332 students. In this redevelopment scenario, the main facades of the existing three-story station house on both 4th Avenue and 43rd Street would be preserved and stabilized, while the balance of the existing station house would be demolished (this scenario was referred to as the “proposed project” in the FEIS). As such, the majority of the new construction would be arranged in a five-story “L” shape behind the original footprint of the station house and would be set back from both 4th Avenue and 43rd Street. Based on this preliminary design, the proposed new school facility would be a three- to five-story building, plus cellar, and would contain approximately 30,060 sf. The school’s main entrance would be located on 4th Avenue. The proposed action would also provide an approximately 3,550 sf rooftop playground on the third floor above the gymnasium in the new school facility; the rooftop playground would be located at the northeastern corner of the site at the corner of 4th Avenue and 43rd Street.

It is estimated that approximately 33 teachers and staff would be employed at the new school facility. The new PS would operate during normal school hours, from September to June.
PURPOSE AND NEED

The new public school facility would serve primary school students and special education students within CSD No. 15. Construction of the new PS facility has been proposed to provide additional public school capacity in CSD No. 15.

According to school capacity and utilization data for the 2015-2016 school year, CSD No. 15’s primary school facilities collectively operated at 122 percent of their target capacity. DOE’s Five-Year Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2015-2019 allocates capital funding for the creation of a total of 1,794 additional seats at the primary school level in CSD No. 15 to address existing overcrowding and forecast changes in student enrollments, and also to support DOE’s policies regarding class-size reduction, transition from the use of TCUs, and the expansion of pre-kindergarten classroom capacity in the City. CSD No. 15 includes the areas of Sunset Park, Park Slope, Carroll Gardens, Gowanus, and Red Hook.

PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The FEIS identified environmental effects of the proposed action, as described below.

LAND USE, ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY

LAND USE

The proposed project involves the acquisition of two lots (Lots 34 and 36), demolition of the existing structures on Lot 36 (while maintaining the street-facing facades of the station house), and construction of a new school facility. OPRHP identified a preferred redevelopment scenario for the proposed school facility, “Option RS2F,” which would involve preserving and stabilizing the main facades of the existing three-story station house building on both 4th Avenue and 43rd Street, while the balance of the existing station house building would be demolished. As such, the majority of the new construction would be arranged in a five-story “L” shape behind the original footprint of the station house and would be set back from both 4th Avenue and 43rd Street. Based on this preliminary design, the proposed new school facility would be a three- to five-story building, plus cellar, and would contain approximately 30,060 sf. The school’s main entrance would be located on 4th Avenue. The project would also provide an approximately 3,550 sf rooftop playground on the third floor above the gymnasium in the new school facility.

The proposed school would be consistent with surrounding uses in the study area, which are predominantly residential, institutional, and mixed use buildings. The proposed project would replace a vacant lot and a vacant, former community facility use (used historically as a police station and, most recently, as a Youth Center) with a compatible community facility use (school facility). It would be a different building form and active, rather than vacant, but the new school would be compatible with surrounding land uses. No significant adverse impacts to land use would result from the proposed PS 557.

ZONING

The proposed school facility would conform to the requirements of the R6B and R7A zoning districts with respect to use, as schools (Use Group 3) are permitted as-of-right in residential districts. It is expected that, with the proposed design, some zoning overrides would be
required for zoning bulk non-compliances and these zoning overrides would be requested by the SCA from the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development. As the zoning overrides would pertain only to the project site, no significant adverse impacts to zoning would occur.

PUBLIC POLICY
The proposed project would be consistent with the 197-a plan applicable to Brooklyn CD 7. Therefore, no impacts to public policy would be expected as a result of the proposed project.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS
The proposed school would be constructed on a vacant lot, currently used for parking, and a lot containing vacant buildings. The proposed project would introduce approximately 332 primary school students and a total of approximately 32 teachers, administrators, and support staff to the project site. The proposed PS would not result in the displacement of any residents or businesses, as the existing building is currently unoccupied. Additional jobs for teachers and support staff would be created as a result of the new school.

Although the proposed project would result in new construction, the construction activities generally would be contained within the site. In addition, the construction of the new school building would be a localized activity of limited duration, without the potential to affect a larger area or the conditions of any specific industry. Significant adverse impacts to socioeconomic conditions from the proposed project would not result.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES
The proposed action would create a new public school facility on a site currently comprised of a vacant unpaved lot, currently used for private parking, and a lot containing vacant institutional buildings. The proposed PS would serve approximately 332 students in grades pre-kindergarten through five within CSD No. 15. The proposed project would not introduce new residents to the area, therefore creating little new demand for community facilities and services.

Further, the proposed new school facility would provide an additional community resource for area residents and expand the public school capacity in CSD No. 15; however, the new PS would not change the service area of this school district. No significant adverse impacts to community facilities and services would occur as a result of the proposed project.

OPEN SPACE
The construction of a new school facility on the project site would not have any direct or indirect impacts on open space. The need for physical education at the school would be met within the project site itself with the provision of a gymnasium within the proposed school building and an approximately 3,550 sf rooftop playground on the third floor roof above the gymnasium. Therefore, the open space needs of the students and staff associated with the proposed PS 557 would be met on site, and the new school facility would not result in any significant adverse impacts to open space resources.
Based on the preliminary design currently under consideration, the proposed PS 557 building would include a three-story portion that would stand in the place of a portion of the existing station house, together with an attached "L"-shaped volume that would comprise the remainder of the project site on the southern and western sides of the three story portion. The L-shaped portion of the proposed PS 557 would stand five-stories with cellar and would have an estimated height of 75 feet, and therefore represents new building height with potential to cast shadow that would not otherwise be present in the future without the proposed project. (The shorter, three-story portion of the proposed PS 557 would be constructed behind the historic facades of the three-story station house, and therefore would not cause any substantial new shadow.)

Tier 1 and Tier 2 Shadow Screening Analyses were performed in accordance with the guidelines of the CEQR Technical Manual in order to identify potential sunlight sensitive resources that could be reached by the maximum shadow length of the L-shaped volume of the proposed PS 557 building. Based on these tiers of analysis, it was determined that the expected maximum shadow cast by the proposed PS 557 building – attributable to the five-story part of the building – would reach a maximum shadow length of approximately 323 feet.

The four potentially sunlight sensitive resources of concern that are located within 323 feet of the project site and potentially within reach of this maximum shadow, include the following: St. Michael’s R.C. Church complex (church and school buildings) and the open space area at the northern edge of the complex; the (former) Sunset Park Court House; and a portion of the Sunset Park Historic District.

A detailed shadow screening analysis was conducted, in accordance with the CEQR Technical Manual, in order to determine whether any of these potentially sunlight sensitive resources would experience a significant adverse impact as a result of shadows cast by the proposed PS 557. Specifically, the detailed analysis considers the presence of existing buildings in the context of the potentially sunlight sensitive receptors, as well as shadows they cast, to determine whether there would be a greater extent of shadow ("incremental shadow") that would be specifically attributable to the proposed PS 557, alone.

The detailed shadow screening analysis considers shadows that would be cast on four days determined to be representative of the variability of shadows throughout the year: December 21 (winter solstice), either March 21 or September 21 (equinoxes), June 21 (summer solstice), and either May 6 or August 6 (midway between equinoxes and solstices). The analyses are performed for these days over a time period beginning 1.5 hours after sunrise and ending 1.5 hours before sunset. The results of the detailed shadow analysis are described following for each of the potentially sunlight sensitive receptors:

St. Michael’s R.C. Church complex – school buildings (PS 516) - The two school buildings, which are part of the St. Michael’s R.C. Church complex, are located south of the church building. They stand adjacent to one another and are located directly north of the project site, on the north side of 43rd Street. Based on the detailed shadow analysis, incremental shadows from the proposed PS 557 would extend to these school buildings on three of the analysis dates: March 21st, June 21st, and August 6th.
Because sunlight is not necessary to maintain character-defining features of these buildings, as there is no stained glass or unique sculptural feature to the façade that may depend on sunlight for particular aesthetic effect, the incremental shadow attributable to the proposed PS 557 would not result in a significant adverse impact to these buildings.

**St. Michael's R.C. Church complex – church building** - Based on the detailed shadow analysis, incremental shadows from the proposed PS 557 would extend onto the paved area immediately east of the church, but not onto the church building itself, on December 21st.

As the incremental shadow would last for a short duration (approximately 11 minutes) and would not extend to any sunlight sensitive portion of the church building (such as stained glass windows) or sunlight sensitive landscaping, it would not result in a significant adverse impact to St. Michael's Church.

**St. Michael's R.C. Church complex – open space** - The detailed shadow analysis determined that no incremental shadow attributable to the proposed PS 557 would reach this open space area on any analysis date. Therefore the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse impact to this open space area.

**Former Sunset Park Court House** - Based on the detailed shadow analysis, there would be incremental shadows from the proposed PS 557 on three of the analysis dates, March 21st, June 21st, and August 6th.

Because sunlight is not necessary to maintain character-defining features of the (former) Sunset Park Court House, as there is no stained glass or unique sculptural feature to the façade that may depend on sunlight for particular aesthetic effect, the incremental shadow that would be cast by the proposed PS 557 would not result in a significant adverse impact to the (former) Sunset Park Court House, and no further analysis is warranted.

**Sunset Park Historic District** - Based on the detailed shadow analysis, the proposed PS 557 would cast incremental shadows onto parts of the Sunset Park Historic District on two of the analysis dates, June 21st and August 6th.

Because incremental shadows that reach the historic district on these dates would not be substantial or cast on sunlight-sensitive vegetation or character-defining architectural features of any buildings that may depend on sunlight for particular aesthetic effect, the proposed PS 557 would not result in a significant adverse impact to the Sunset Park Historic District.

**HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**
A Preliminary Assessment/Disturbance Record study was completed for the proposed project site in September 2016 to address the archaeological sensitivity of the project site.

It was determined that no further research and study of archaeological resources is warranted, based on a low sensitivity for both precontact and historical period archaeological resources, coupled with significant disturbance to the original ground surface on the project site.
Construction of the proposed new school facility on the project site would not result in significant adverse impacts to archaeological resources.

**HISTORICAL RESOURCES**
The existing (former) 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable, built in 1866, are a designated New York City Landmark (in 1983) and are also listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places (in 1982). The police precinct facility, designed by the architect George Ingram, is an important example of Romanesque Revival Style architecture. The facility includes a three-story (plus cellar) station house, two-story stable building, and one-story jail building. The structures are vacant and have experienced extensive deterioration.

The study area also includes St. Michael's R.C. Church complex (church and school buildings), which has been determined eligible for inclusion in the State and National Registers of Historic Places by OPRHP, and the (former) Sunset Park Court House, which is a designated New York City Landmark and is listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places by OPRHP. The project site is not located within a historic district; however, the project site is located directly west of the Sunset Park Historic District, which comprises a large portion of the study area to the east. The Sunset Park Historic District is listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places by OPRHP.

The proposed project would require that a majority of the existing on-site structures be demolished to accommodate the minimum Program of Requirements (POR) required for a new primary school facility. As described above, the existing former police precinct facility on the project site is a designated New York City Landmark and is also listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places. As such, under Section 14.09 of the State Historic Preservation Act of 1980 (SHPA), this is likely to result in an adverse effect to the historic resource, and may constitute a significant adverse impact to historic resources. 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 development of a new public school facility on the project site. OPRHP, in its letter of September 2, 2016, 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 commented that they had "very serious concerns" about the potential for these buildings to be demolished and stated that if the proposed project included the demolition, or partial demolition, of the station house and stable that OPRHP would determine that the project would have an adverse impact on the site. OPRHP also recommended that the SCA explore all alternatives to avoid the adverse impact and outlined the items that should be included as part of the alternatives analysis. Upon OPRHP's review of the Test-Fit SHPO Report (February 6, 2017), OPRHP commented in its letter of February 24, 2017, that the interior of the on-site police precinct building is in terrible condition and is deteriorated beyond repair but that the exterior walls do not demonstrate wholesale material deficiencies. OPRHP concurred that there are two viable options that meet the project goals: "Option RS2F" (the proposed project) and "Option RS3C" (Full Demolition Alternative), and that the SCA move forward with "Option RS2F," which includes the preservation of the station house main facades on both 4th Avenue and 43rd Street. OPRHP stated that considering that this building is an important architectural landmark in the neighborhood, retaining these two facades provides important continuity at this corner and preserves much of the architectural art of the façade. OPRHP further stated that the project would result in an Adverse Impact upon historic resources and suggested that the SCA develop a Letter of Resolution (LOR) to document the alternatives considered and to
Include the mitigation provided in the preferred redevelopment scenario, "Option RS2F." The SCA has developed a draft LOR outlining the agreement between the SCA and OPRHP to which OPRHP has responded with recommendations and indicated that minor edits may be forthcoming but that the intent of the existing stipulations outlined in the LOR would not be altered or added to. In the draft LOR between the SCA and OPRHP, it is stated that the proposed project may proceed subject to the following stipulations: (1) The historic building shall be photographically documented in accordance with the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Level II Documentation Standards (HABS); (2) The SCA shall continue to consult with OPRHP regarding the design of the new public primary school facility, in accordance with Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law; and (3) Any party to the LOR may propose that the LOR be amended, whereupon the signatories shall consult with each other to consider such an amendment.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The proposed development of the project site as a new school, in accordance with the preliminary design currently considered and the stipulations outlined in the draft LOR between the SCA and OPRHP (dated April 21, 2017), would improve the urban design of the study area and visual quality of the surrounding streetscapes. It would contribute to the urban form characteristic of the 4th Avenue streetscape and be consistent with the nearby institutional uses and visual resources; further, it would result in the improvement of the derelict site, while also preserving and stabilizing the existing street-facing facades of the station house building so that it would contribute to the aesthetic character of the streetscape in a positive way. Therefore, the proposed PS 557 would have a positive effect with regard to the proposed design for the project site; no significant adverse impact to urban design and visual quality would result with the proposed project.

NATURAL RESOURCES

There are no known natural resources (e.g., terrestrial ecological features, wetlands, water bodies, streams, or special flood hazard area) on or adjacent to the project site, and none would be affected by the proposed project. The site is part of a well-developed urban context. Furthermore, the proposed project would not have any impact on endangered or threatened wildlife species, since none are known to inhabit or visit the site. No significant adverse impacts to natural resources would result.

SOILS AND GROUNDWATER

Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), Phase II Environmental Site Investigations (ESIs), and a Phase I ESA Update were completed for the proposed project site between April 2010 and July 2016. The Phase I ESAs, Phase II ESIs, and a Phase I ESA Update were completed to evaluate the environmental conditions at the proposed project site (identified as Block 728, Lots 34 and 36). A Phase I ESA and Phase II ESI were previously conducted for each lot on behalf of the SCA by Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, P.C. (Langan) in April 2010 and July 2010, respectively. A Phase I ESA Update of the site was completed by AKRF Engineering, P.C. (AKRF) on behalf of the SCA in July 2016.
The eastern lot (Lot 36) was vacant until the construction of the existing buildings between circa 1888 and 1906, and was used historically as the 68th Precinct Police Station until approximately 1970, and subsequently as a Youth Center. The western lot (Lot 34) contained a private dwelling from circa 1888 to 1970, and has been vacant and/or used for surface parking since at least 1976. The adjacent properties have included St. Michael’s School (currently PS. 516) to the north, and primarily residential and institutional uses on the surrounding blocks, with street-level retail establishments and two drycleaners on the south-adjacent block.

Langan’s 2010 Phase I ESAs identified on-site recognized environmental conditions (RECs) related to a potential fuel oil storage tank and a potential historic automotive garage, and off-site RECs, including petroleum storage tanks, dry cleaning facilities, a metals company, industrial facilities, an automobile repair facility, and manufacturing facilities. Suspect asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), and polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB)-containing materials were identified as environmental concerns. Based on the findings of the 2010 ESAs, Langan completed a Phase II ESI on the lots that included the advancement of soil borings with the collection of soil, groundwater, and soil vapor samples for laboratory analysis.

Based on observations during the 2010 Phase II ESIs, the site is underlain by fill material consisting of fine- to medium-grained sand with some clay, and fragments of brick, concrete, and wood from surface grade to approximately 15 feet below ground surface (bgs), followed by apparent native soil consisting of brown fine- to medium-grained sand with some clay and gravel. Groundwater was encountered between approximately 30 and 37 feet bgs and was assumed to flow in a westerly direction.

The analytical results of Langan’s investigations indicated lead and chromium in soil at concentrations above their New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) 6 NYCRR Part 375 Soil Cleanup Objectives for Unrestricted Use (UUUCO) and were noted to be attributable to fill materials. Groundwater analytical results for both lots identified VOCs and metals below their respective NYSDEC Class GA Ambient Water Quality Values (AWQVs). Soil vapor analytical results identified trichloroethene (TCE) in a sub-slab vapor point collected on Lot 36 at a concentration above its current New York State Department of Health Air Guidance Value (AGV) of 2 micrograms per cubic meter (μg/m³). Tetrachloroethene (PCE) was detected in five soil vapor samples on Lot 36 and two samples on Lot 34 at concentrations above its current AGV of 30 μg/m³. Additional VOCs were detected in soil vapor at concentrations above the published background levels. These detections are attributable to off-site sources.

The 2016 Phase I ESA Update revealed no new RECs or environmental concerns in connection with the site since the original Phase I ESAs, and concluded that the RECs were adequately investigated during Langan’s Phase II ESIs.

For the site to be suitable for use as a public school, a vapor barrier and sub-slab depressurization system should be incorporated into the building renovations, and any exposed areas should be covered with two feet of environmentally clean soil. Any dewatering should be minimized during construction to avoid potential off-site contaminated groundwater from migrating toward the site. All soil excavated during building construction should be properly managed in accordance with all applicable regulations. Any
Underground or aboveground petroleum storage tanks should be properly closed/removed in accordance with applicable regulations. Also, any ACM, LBP and/or polychlorinated biphenyl PCB-containing building components affected by the renovation and construction activities should be identified and properly managed during such activities. In addition, to minimize the potential for exposure by construction workers and the surrounding public, standard industry practices, including appropriate health and safety measures, would be utilized.

WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

The project site is located within the Owls Head Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) drainage area, which serves portions of Brooklyn. This WWTP is permitted to treat 120 million gallons per day (mgd). The proposed school would include approximately 332 seats and 33 faculty and staff, and thus, daily water usage would be approximately 3,320 gpd for students and 330 gpd for staff, for a total of 3,650 gpd. The proposed school building would contain approximately 30,060 sf, and thus, would consume an additional 5,110 gpd for air conditioning, for a total of 8,760 gpd during the cooling season. No significant adverse impacts to water supply would result.

SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION SERVICES

The new school facility, with a total of approximately 332 students and 33 faculty and staff, would generate approximately 1,425 pounds of solid waste per week, or 6,107 pounds per month. The New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) is responsible for collecting and disposing of solid waste from residences and public facilities, including schools. The typical DSNY collection truck for commercial carters typically carries between twelve and fifteen tons of waste material per truck. Therefore, with 1,425 pounds of solid waste per week, or 6,107 pounds per month, to be generated by occupants of the proposed school facility, there would be no significant adverse impact anticipated with solid waste collection and disposal.

ENERGY

It is expected that the new school building would be substantially more energy efficient than the adjacent buildings in the neighborhood. The proposed project would comply with the New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code. The proposed project would also incorporate energy conservation measures.

The proposed project would be designed following the NYC Green Schools Rating System (guidelines specific to the design, construction and operation of New York City public school buildings) and be in compliance with site-related credits to achieve a LEED-certified or higher rating.

The estimated annual usage of energy for the proposed approximately 30,060 sf school facility would be approximately 7.5 billion British Thermal Units (BTUs), or 5.7 billion BTUs for the nine-month academic year. It is expected that no significant adverse impacts would
TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

With the proposed project, significant adverse traffic impacts would be expected at two intersections and a pedestrian impact would be expected at two corners and one crosswalk near the proposed school. Improvement measures are recommended to mitigate the significant traffic impacts at the intersections of 43rd Street at 3rd and 4th avenues. These improvement measures include signal timing adjustments and “daylighting” (i.e., temporary removal of parking adjacent to the curbs) to provide a peak period turn lane.

The pedestrian impacts to the south crosswalk at 4th Avenue and 43rd Street may be mitigated by signal timing adjustments. Six-foot curb extensions are recommended at the northwest and southwest corners of 4th Avenue and 43rd Street, extending the corner quadrants into 4th Avenue, subsequently shortening the crosswalk distances and increasing the available corner reservoir space for pedestrians waiting to cross the street.

No significant transit impacts would be expected. Less than 200 incremental peak hour transit trips would be generated by staff, students, and accompanying adults; therefore, the proposed school is unlikely to create a significant transit impact.

No significant parking impacts would be expected. The proposed changes to the school would increase the parking demand by 14 vehicles, which would increase the shortfall in available on-street parking from 42 to 43 percent on the most restrictive days; however, this shortfall may not be considered a significant impact for this project due to the availability and proximity of transit in the area.

AIR QUALITY

Based on the air quality screening procedures described in the CEQR Technical Manual, the proposed school would not result in a significant number of project-induced traffic, and therefore it would not adversely affect surrounding mobile source air quality conditions. In addition, existing stationary source emissions in the immediate vicinity of the project site would not have a detrimental effect on the health of students or staff at the proposed school nor would the school’s operations result in stationary source impacts within the surrounding community.

The proposed school would be considerably smaller in size than 350,000 sf and is subsequently not considered an energy-intense source, per the guidance of the CEQR Technical Manual. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impact.

NOISE

Mobile Source Noise - The CEQR Technical Manual recommends a detailed technical assessment of potential traffic-related noise impacts if a potential action would result in the doubling of existing passenger car equivalent (PCE) values at any intersection during the
peak traffic hour. PCEs are used to account for the different types of motor vehicles (i.e., cars, trucks, buses) and their varying levels of sound. Based on the data obtained from the traffic studies associated with this project, the number of PCEs generated by this project would not double existing PCE values at any location. As a result, traffic-related noise impacts would not occur.

Playground Noise - As part of the proposed project, a rooftop playground area would be provided on the northeast portion of the third floor of the proposed school building. However, based on the geometry of the proposed building, the only noise sensitive property that would have a direct line-of-sight to the proposed playground would be the top floor windows of the former St. Michael's School building at 4222 4th Avenue, which is currently occupied by PS 516 (Sunset Park Avenues Elementary School). The former St. Michael's School building is located across 43rd Street, approximately 57 feet from the northern edge of the proposed rooftop playground at PS 557. As a result, potential future school-related noise impacts related to the proposed school rooftop playground were examined.

Based on the overall playground assessment, the increase in the future project noise levels at the former St. Michael's School building would not exceed the five dBA SCA impact criteria during the Midday period. As a result, noise impacts related to the proposed rooftop playground affecting any surrounding sensitive noise receptors are not anticipated.

School Interior Noise Levels - Based on noise monitoring measurements, the maximum L_{10} noise exposure level in the project area was found to be 72.5 dBA along 4th Avenue. This noise level includes the effect of traffic noise from local streets. As a result, based on the CEQR noise exposure standards, the school's exterior noise exposure would be within the "Marginally Acceptable" category. To reduce the exterior noise exposure level to the required interior noise level of 45 dBA or below, attenuation measures (e.g., double-glazed windows), which are a standard feature of new facilities, would be incorporated into the school building's design and construction. Standard double-glazed windows are available which would result in the required attenuation value of 31 dBA. The walls and doors of the proposed school building would also have to attain a minimum attenuation value of 31 dBA. With these measures, the proposed school building would meet NYCDEP interior noise level requirements, and would not experience any noise exposure impacts.

The proposed school's HVAC equipment, along with any other project-related mechanical devices, would be designed to meet the NYC Noise Code standards.

PUBLIC HEALTH

No impacts related to air quality, water quality, or noise are anticipated as a result of the proposed project. Hazardous materials are anticipated to be present on site, based on the Phase I ESAs and Phase II ESIs prepared for each lot in 2010, and the Phase I ESA Update prepared for the project site in 2016. However, with the existing on-site contamination appropriately addressed through proper handling and disposal, and other measures, no public health issues are expected with the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts to public health.
NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The construction of the proposed PS 557 would be an appropriate land use, and its design would contribute to the established urban design of the study area and the 4th Avenue corridor, in particular. It would introduce a community facility use that would be consistent with neighboring community facility uses along 4th Avenue. Its height and massing would be generally consistent with other community facilities in the area, including the identified visual resources within the study area that include the (former) Sunset Park Court House and St. Michael’s R.C. Church complex. Though its overall footprint and street frontage would be less than the (former) Sunset Park Court House and St. Michael’s R.C. Church complex, the proposed PS 557 would reinforce the established urban design of the study area and improve the pedestrian experience.

The proposed school would enliven the streetscape in a manner similar to the neighboring institutional uses and it would be in keeping with the residential context to the west and east of the project site. Further, as it would retain the existing street-facing facades of the historic police precinct facility, the proposed school site would likely reinforce a sense of historic identity that may be shared by residents in the study area and surrounding neighborhood. As stipulated in the LOR between the SCA and OPRHP, the SCA would continue to coordinate with OPRHP regarding the design of the new school facility and the use of materials sympathetic to the original station house.

Technical analyses have concluded that with the recommended measures in place, the proposed school at this location would not result in significant adverse impacts related to traffic, air or noise conditions that would alter the character of the neighborhood.

Finally, the proposed new school would introduce new capacity in the school district, thereby representing an improvement to neighborhood character in terms of improved community facilities and services. As such, the proposed PS 557 would be a positive attribute to the educational opportunities in the neighborhood, as well as an improvement to the physical design and character of the project site and surrounding area. Therefore, the proposed PS 557 would have a positive effect on neighborhood character; no significant adverse impact to neighborhood character would result with the proposed project, and no further analysis is warranted.

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS

The anticipated construction period for the proposed project is expected to include two phases, with Phase 1 estimated to be a period of approximately six to ten months and Phase 2 estimated to be a period of approximately 24 months. Phase 1 would include demolition of the existing structure, and stabilization of existing building façades necessary for preserving the station house historical facades along 4th Avenue and 43rd Street. Phase 2 of construction would include the physical construction of the school (i.e., foundation, superstructure, mechanical installations, and interior finishing work). Impacts that may result from construction of the proposed project include temporary traffic and parking congestion, increased noise from construction activities, fugitive dust and mobile source emissions, soil erosion and sedimentation, and disturbance of potentially hazardous
materials. Construction impacts would be temporary and to the extent practicable would be related to the proposed school site.

Construction activities may result in temporary disruptions to the surrounding community. Various measures would be implemented in order to minimize the temporary disruptions and to ensure the safety of the community during construction. Therefore, it is expected that no significant adverse impacts would occur with construction of the proposed project.

MITIGATION MEASURES AND UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

The FEIS identifies mitigation measures, where practicable and feasible, for the significant adverse impacts described in the FEIS.

Historic Resources
The SCA has undertaken consultation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) regarding the proposed project and will continue, through the consultation process, to identify ways of partially mitigating any impact. Upon OPRHP’s review of the Test-Fit SHPO Report (February 6, 2017), OPRHP concurred that there are two viable options that meet the project goals: "Option RS2F" (the proposed project) and "Option RS3C," (Full Demolition Alternative) and that the SCA move forward with "Option RS2F," which includes the preservation of the station house main facades on both 4th Avenue and 43rd Street. OPRHP stated that considering that this building is an important architectural landmark in the neighborhood, retaining these two facades provides important continuity at this corner and preserves much of the architectural art of the façade. OPRHP further stated that the project would result in an Adverse Impact upon historic resources and suggested that the SCA develop a Letter of Resolution (LOR) to document the alternatives considered and to include the mitigation provided in the preferred redevelopment scenario, “Option RS2F.” The SCA has developed a draft LOR outlining the agreement between the SCA and OPRHP to which OPRHP has responded with recommendations and indicated that minor edits may be forthcoming but that the intent of the existing stipulations outlined in the LOR would not be altered or added to. In the draft LOR between the SCA and OPRHP, it is stated that the proposed project may proceed subject to the following stipulations: (1) The historic building shall be photographically documented in accordance with the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Level II Documentation Standards (HABS); (2) The SCA shall continue to consult with OPRHP regarding the design of the new public primary school facility, in accordance with Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law; and (3) Any party to the LOR may propose that the LOR be amended, whereupon the signatories shall consult with each other to consider such an amendment.

Transportation
With the proposed project, significant adverse traffic impacts would be expected at two intersections and a pedestrian impact would be expected at two corners and one crosswalk near the proposed school.

Improvement measures are recommended to mitigate the significant traffic impacts at the intersections of 43rd Street and 3rd and 4th avenues. Parking along the north curb of the westbound 43rd Street approach to 3rd Avenue should be “daylighted” (i.e., temporary
removal of parking adjacent to the curbs) for approximately 100 feet (a loss of about four parking spaces) during the AM peak hour. Additionally, due to an increase of nearly 60 vehicles in the AM peak hour approaching 4th Avenue on 43rd Street, it is proposed that the parking lane along the south side of 43rd Street be “daylighted” for approximately 100 feet (a loss of about four parking spaces) to create a left-turn lane during the AM peak period. Signal timing adjustments are recommended at both intersections to shift green time during the PM peak periods to mitigate impacts. The pedestrian elements were re-analyzed with the proposed signal timing adjustments. Improvement measures are recommended to mitigate the significant pedestrian impacts at the intersection of 4th Avenue and 43rd Street. Six-foot curb extensions are recommended at the northwest and southwest corners of 4th Avenue and 43rd Street, extending the corner quadrants into 4th Avenue, subsequently shortening the crosswalk distances and increasing the available corner reservoir space for pedestrians waiting to cross the street.

Noise
Based on noise monitoring measurements, the maximum L10 noise exposure level in the project area was found to be 72.5 dBA along 4th Avenue; this noise level includes the effect of traffic noise from local streets. As a result, based on the CEQR noise exposure standards, the school’s exterior noise exposure would be within the “Marginally Acceptable” category. To reduce the exterior noise exposure level to the required interior noise level of 45 dBA or below, attenuation measures (e.g., double-glazed windows), which are a standard feature of new facilities, would be incorporated into the school building’s design and construction. Standard double-glazed windows are available which would result in the required attenuation value of 31 dBA. The walls and doors of the proposed school would also have to attain a minimum attenuation value of 31 dBA. As a result, the proposed school would meet New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) interior noise level requirements, and would not experience any noise exposure impacts.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT
Three alternatives to the proposed project were considered including the No Build Alternative, the Adaptive Reuse Alternative, and the Full Demolition Alternative.

No Build Alternative
Under the No Build Alternative, the SCA would not construct a new public school facility on the project site to provide additional public school capacity in CSD No. 15. Accordingly, under this alternative, the existing unpaved vacant lot, currently used for private parking, and the (former) 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable, which are currently vacant, would remain on the project site.

Unlike the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would not provide additional public school capacity on the project site to accommodate current and future student enrollment in CSD No. 15. Therefore, this alternative would not meet the project’s purpose and need.

This alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts related to historic resources, transportation, and noise, which would occur with the proposed project (though impacts related to transportation and noise would be mitigated under the proposed project).
Adaptive Reuse Alternative

Under this alternative, the existing historic structures on the site would be reused and adapted for use as a public school facility (see “Option RS1A” in the Test-Fit SHPO Report). This alternative would preserve the approximately 25,000 sf (former) 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable currently on the site, which include a three-story (plus cellar) station house, two-story stable building, and one-story jail building, all connected at the cellar level. To preserve the perceived envelope of the existing historic structures, the cellar would be enlarged (because it is not “visible” from the street) in order to accommodate both additional school program area and modern utility services. With this design approach, demolition, though minimal, likely would be inevitable in order to facilitate the proposed new public school facility use. The school’s main entrance would be located on 43rd Street via the historic rear court. This alternative would provide an approximately 4,375 sf at-grade playground by utilizing the rear court and the adjacent Lot 34.

Unlike the proposed project, which would retain only the 43rd Street and the 4th Avenue facades of the former station house, the design for the Adaptive Reuse Alternative would preserve the existing volumes of the on-site historic structures, as visible from the street, and would preserve the rear court as a negative volume important to the historical understanding of the site.

Unlike the proposed project, this alternative could not accommodate the POR needed for a student capacity of approximately 332 and would only accommodate approximately 114 students. In addition, key elements of the POR, such as a gymnasium and a “cafetorium,” could not be provided within the school facility due to insufficient space within the existing historic structures; it is DOE and the SCA’s strong policy preference to not build new school facilities without the required gymnasium and sufficient public assembly space such as a “cafetorium". This alternative would also present several design issues, in terms of building configuration, for a primary school facility that would lead to inefficient operations and would not provide the amount of school seats needed in CSD No. 15 where there is a deficit of approximately 2,610 school seats in the sub-district of Sunset Park.

Like the proposed project, this alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; community facilities and services, open space; shadows; historic and cultural resources; urban design and visual resources; natural resources; hazardous materials; water and sewer infrastructure; solid waste and sanitation services; energy; transportation; air quality; public health; or neighborhood character; or construction-related impacts.

Unlike the proposed project, this alternative would result in significant adverse impacts related to playground noise at a residential property located directly adjacent to the proposed project and, as such, mitigation measures (storm or sound-attenuating windows and alternative ventilation) would be required to significantly reduce the impact of playground noise upon the affected residential property.

Compared to the proposed project, this alternative would have a reduced adverse impact to historic resources since the exterior of the existing historic structures on the project site would remain intact. Under this alternative, the SCA would also consult with OPRHP
Full Demolition Alternative

Under this alternative, the existing historic structures on site would be demolished and a new public school facility would be constructed on the project site (see "Option RS3C" in the Test-Fit SHPO Report). Upon full demolition of the existing structures, a new public school facility would be constructed with particular design consideration and sensitivity to developing a design scheme that is as-of-right and that complies with SCA design standards to the greatest extent possible. Based on preliminary schematic designs, the proposed new school facility would be a four-story building (approximately 60 feet tall\(^1\)), plus cellar, and would contain approximately 27,806 sf. In this redevelopment scenario, the gymnasium and rooftop play yard would be located adjacent to the western property lot line, with the balance of the remaining design scheme arranged in a "U" shape around the central core. The school’s main entrance would be located on 4th Avenue. This alternative would provide an approximately 2,745 sf rooftop playground on the third floor above the gymnasium in the new school facility.

This alternative, "Option RS3C" was presented by OPRHP as a feasible design approach, since this option would accommodate a student capacity of 332 students and would accommodate the functional and operational standards required for a primary school. This redevelopment scenario would also represent as-of-right development on the site.

As with the proposed project, this alternative would accommodate the primary school POR required for a student capacity of 332 and would serve students in CSD No. 15. This alternative would also be designed to provide the same facilities to meet the SCA’s school program requirements as the proposed project; both this alternative and the proposed project would provide a gymnasium on the first floor and a "cafetorium" in the cellar. However, unlike the proposed project, which would retain the 43rd Street and the 4th Avenue facades of the station house, or the Adaptive Reuse Alternative, which would preserve the existing volumes of the on-site historic structures, as described previously, the Full Demolition Alternative would result in demolition of all existing on-site structures. As this alternative would not preserve the existing station house street-facing facades like the proposed project would, this alternative would stand four stories above grade, rather than five stories, as would be the case with the proposed project, and this alternative would have approximately 2,254 sf less floor area than the proposed project as it would have a more efficient layout.

Like the proposed project, this alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; community facilities and services, open space; shadows; historic and cultural resources; urban design and visual resources; natural resources; hazardous materials; water and sewer infrastructure; solid waste and sanitation services; energy; air quality; noise public health; or neighborhood character; or construction-related impacts.

The Adaptive Reuse Alternative would also result in the same significant adverse impacts related to transportation as would occur with the proposed project and, as such, the same

\(^1\) Estimated using a floor-to-floor height of 15 feet.
Mitigation measures would be required. Compared to the proposed project, this alternative would have a greater adverse impact to historic resources since the existing historic structures on the project site would be fully demolished. Under this alternative, the SCA would consult with OPRHP regarding the demolition of the existing historic structures.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

There are many resources, both natural and human-made, that would be expended in the construction and operation of the proposed project. These resources include the use of land, funding, building materials, energy, and human effort required to develop, construct, and operate various elements of the proposed project. They are irreversibly and irretrievably committed because their reuse for some other purpose other than the project either is not possible or is highly unlikely.

The land (including its development potential) that comprises the project site is the most basic resource that would be committed irretrievably. In addition, the project's funding is an irretrievable resource since it would no longer be available for investment in other projects. The actual building materials used in the construction of the school (e.g., steel, concrete, glass, etc.) and the energy (in the form of gas and electricity) consumed during construction and by the school's various mechanical systems would also be irretrievably committed to this project.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The proposed project entails the construction of a new school facility that would replace an unpaved vacant lot, currently used for private parking, and the (former) 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable, which are currently vacant. The new school facility would provide approximately 332 seats for grade levels pre-kindergarten through five within CSD No. 15.

During construction, there would be some short-term adverse effects on the environment. These would include temporary disruptive effects due to increased traffic and noise levels associated with construction activities, and diminution of air quality due to fugitive dust and vehicular emissions.

Longer-term negative impacts would include changes to transportation and noise conditions, and the negative effect resulting from the demolition of a majority of the historic (former) 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable. However, measures are available to fully mitigate the project's transportation and noise impacts, and mitigate or minimize the project's impact on historic resources. These negative effects of the project would not be expected to adversely affect long-term productivity.

Positive consequences of the proposed project would include the provision of new public school capacity on the site to meet the needs of the area’s current and projected future primary school students.
GROWTH-INDUCING ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed project entails the construction of a new school facility that would replace an unpaved vacant lot currently used for private parking and the (former) 68th Police Precinct Station House and Stable, which are currently vacant. The new school facility would provide approximately 332 seats for grade levels pre-kindergarten through five within CSD No. 15. The proposed project would serve students from the surrounding community where currently there is a need for additional school seats and would not be expected to induce growth in the area.

CERTIFICATION OF FINDINGS

Having considered the FEIS, and having considered the preceding written facts and conclusions relied upon to meet the requirements of 6 NYCRR 617.11, this Statement of Findings certifies that:

1. The requirements of Article 8 of the New York State Conservation Law and the implementing regulations of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 6 NYCRR Part 617, have been met; and
2. Consistent with the social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is the one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and that adverse impacts will be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating as conditions to the decision those mitigation measures that were identified in the FEIS and in this Findings Statement.

Name of Agency: New York City School Construction Authority

Signature of Responsible Official: ____________________________

Name/Title of Responsible Official: Lorraine Grillo  
President and CEO  
Ross J. Holden  
Executive Vice President  
& General Counsel

Date: July 17, 2017