

8.5 HISTORIC RESOURCES

8.5.1 Introduction

This Section assesses the potential effects of the construction and operation of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site on historic resources, which include archaeological and architectural resources. As described in Section 3.5, “Historic Resources,” in Chapter 3, “Impact Methodologies,” the Area of Potential Effect for archaeological resources is the area that would be disturbed for the proposed project, in this case the location of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site, at the northeast corner of East 54th Street and Second Avenue. Since the area of potential project impacts for architectural resources could be larger to account for both physical and visual effects, the study area for known architectural resources has been defined as the area within 400 feet of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site (Figure 8.5-1). In addition, a Study Area of 100 feet was used for evaluation of properties that appear to meet criteria for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR) or for designation as a New York City Landmark (NYCL).

The general environmental setting (i.e., geology, surface geology, and flora and fauna) of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site is similar to that of the preferred Shaft Site. The E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site is located in close proximity to the preferred Shaft Site and shares the same general cultural and historical background. Specific archaeological and/or architectural resources found in or in the vicinity of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site are described and potential impacts assessed below.

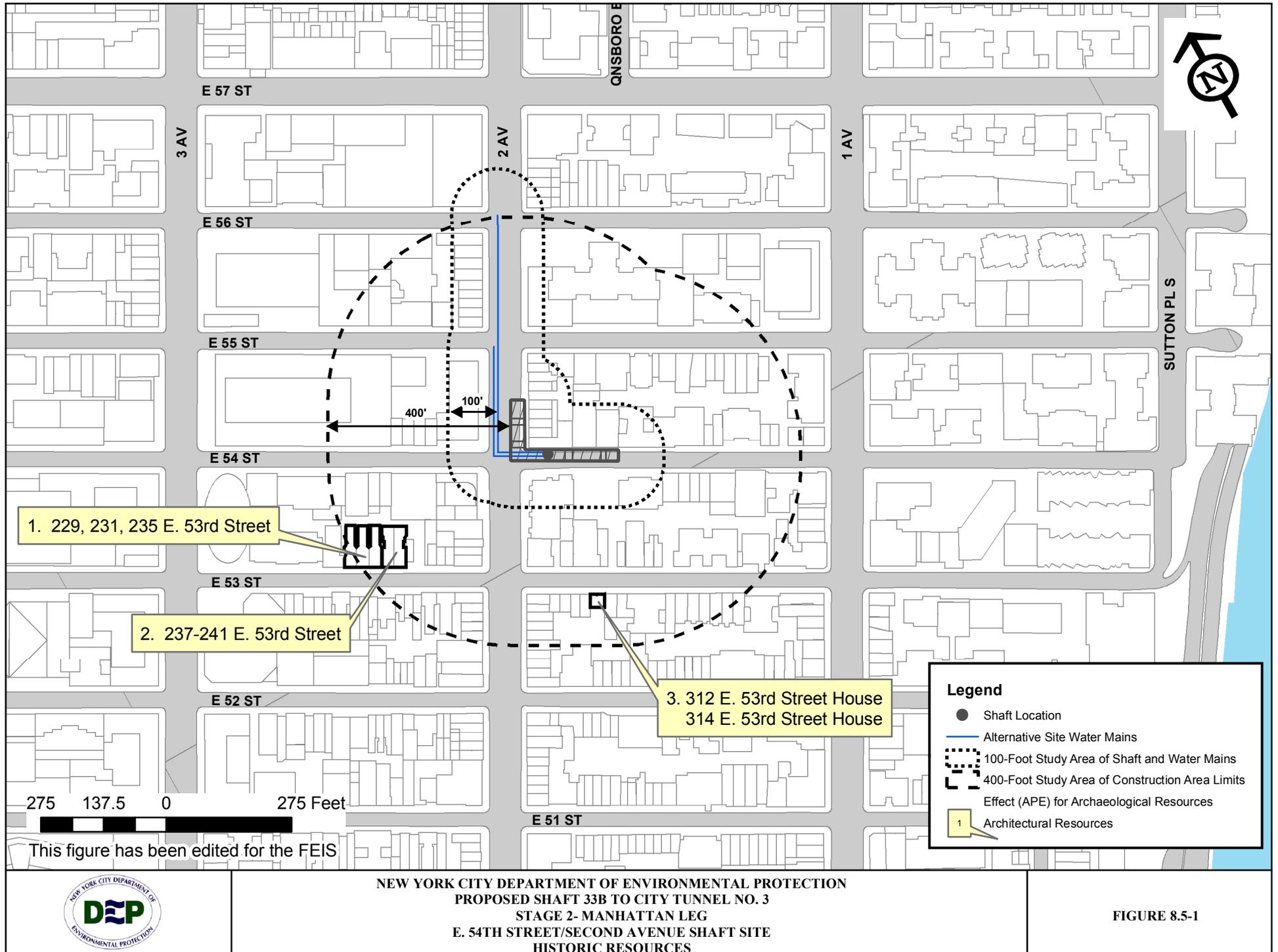
The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (NYCLPC) reviewed the Draft EIS, the Phase IA Historic Resources Assessment, and the Addendum to the Phase IA. In letters dated November 23, 2005, NYCLPC concurred with the Draft EIS text and with the conclusions of the Phase IA reports.

8.5.2 Existing Conditions

Archaeological Resources

This section evaluates the potential for buried archaeological resources to be present within the Area of Potential Effect at the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site (Figure 8.5-1).¹

¹ This section summarizes the archaeological resources assessment prepared for the project, contained in *Phase IA Historic Resources Assessment of the Proposed City Tunnel Number 3, Stage 2 Manhattan Leg, Shaft 33B Project Area, Borough of Manhattan, New York City, New York*, prepared by Eugene J. Boesch, October 14, 2005 (Appendix 5).



Potential Native American Resources

Although the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site is located within the general area identified as containing traces of Native American occupation in the archaeological site files of the New York State Museum (Site No. 4061), a freshwater source apparently was not located in its immediate proximity. Accordingly, the area did not formerly possess environmental characteristics that would suggest that it could have been attractive for Native American use. In addition, any Native American sites that were present would have been destroyed by construction of the Second Avenue and E. 54th Street road beds, including the latter street's 1855 improvement and installation of utilities there. For these reasons, the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site is not considered to be sensitive for Native American archaeological resources.

Potential Historic-Period Archaeological Resources

No historic-period structures were situated within the existing roadbed and sidewalks that constitute the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site. According to the research conducted for the Phase 1A Historic Resources Assessment (Phase 1A Assessment), Cato's House, a dwelling and tavern built in 1712, was located at least partially within E. 54th Street east of what is now the Area of Potential Effect for the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site during the 18th to mid-19th century. While the structure itself was located east of the Study Area, its former backyard may have extended into the E. 54th Street portion of the Study Area. Since municipal water was not installed along E. 54th Street until the 1860's, it is likely that sanitary and water retention features (i.e., privies, wells, and/or cisterns) were associated with the house's occupation. The most likely location for such features is within former backyard areas, which includes at least the E. 54th Street portion of the Area of Potential Effect for this alternative Shaft Site.

Research conducted for the Phase 1A assessment indicated that two later structures, one or both of which likely were residences, were fronting onto the north side of E. 54th Street immediately east of Second Avenue as of 1851. The buildings had not been constructed as of 1836. Municipal water was not installed below local streets as of 1851, which suggests that cisterns, wells, and privies were associated with the dwellings, and most likely were located in the two former backyard areas. The former backyards of these dwellings, like the buildings themselves, were situated north and east of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site's Area of Potential Effect. The former backyards of the dwellings are now covered by existing structures (Nos. 1024-1030 Second Avenue). By 1866 according to the United States Coast Survey map of that year, development had occurred within the entire block along the north side of E. 54th Street between First and Second Avenues.

Structural remains associated with the base of supporting pillars for the ca. 1880 elevated railroad (the "El") may be present within the Second Avenue portion of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site.

Construction of Second Avenue, including improvements made in 1855, and the installation of utilities within E. 54th Street have resulted in some disturbance to the E. 54th Street/Second

Avenue Shaft Site. Accordingly, this site is considered to have limited sensitivity for the presence of historic-period archaeological deposits. Specifically, there is limited sensitivity for the presence of truncated features associated with Cato’s House within the E. 54th Street portion of the Area of Potential Effect. In addition, the possible presence of structural remains associated with the supporting pillars for the El on Second Avenue may be present within the Area of Potential Effect along the Second Avenue portion of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site and may have historic value.

Architectural Resources

There are no architectural resources on the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site, which consists of the Second Avenue and E. 54th Street roadbeds and sidewalks. The Study Area contains three known architectural resources. These are listed in Table 8.5-1 and mapped on Figure 8.5-1. Each resource is described below.

Table 8.5-1
Architectural Resources
Within the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site Study Area

Number*	Historic Property	S/NR Listed	S/NR Eligible	NYCLPC Designated
1	229-235 E. 53 rd Street—3 dwellings	—	Yes	—
2	237 & 241 E. 53 rd Street—2 dwellings	—	Yes	—
3	312 & 314 E. 53 rd Street—2 dwellings	—	—	Yes
Note: * Corresponds to Figure 8.5-1				

In addition, a site visit was undertaken within 100 feet of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site by a professional architectural historian to determine if there are any architectural resources that could meet criteria for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and/or New York City Landmark designation. No potential architectural resources were identified in the Study Area.

229-235 and 237-241 E. 53rd Street

The five dwellings at 229–235 E. 53rd Street and 237–241 E. 53rd Street are located approximately 250 feet southwest of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site. The two buildings at 312 and 314 E. 53rd Street are also located approximately 250 feet from the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site.

The three buildings at 229–235 E. 53rd Street, located on the north side of E. 53rd Street between Third and Second Avenues, are three identical five-story brick apartment buildings that are intact examples of early 20th century residential buildings. These apartment buildings, which were constructed in 1900, were designed by the noted architect Charles Rentz in 1899 in a Renaissance Revival style. Rentz designed numerous buildings throughout Manhattan, some of

which are included in the Greenwich Village Historic District and the Lower East Side Historic District.

The buildings at 237–241 E. 53rd Street, adjacent to 229–235 E. 53rd Street, were designed by George F. Pelham. These two identical six-story brick apartment buildings have stone trim and were constructed in 1900 in a Renaissance Revival style. Pelham and his architectural firm were noted designers of apartment buildings during the late 19th and early 20th century. The buildings are intact examples of early 20th century residential buildings.

312 and 314 E. 53rd Street

No. 312 E. 53rd Street was designated a NYCL on June 12, 1968, while No. 314 was designated a NYCL on June 20, 2000². Robert and James Cunningham, local builders and carpenters, constructed both dwellings in a vernacular style with Second Empire and Italianate details in 1866. The buildings are two bays wide, two stories high above a brick basement, and are covered in clapboard. The structures are characterized by mansard roofs, dormers, bracketed wooden cornices and door hood, and molded window enframements on double hung sash windows. The buildings are among the last of the pre-1866 wooden buildings constructed north of E. 23rd Street. In that year, New York City fire codes prohibited the construction of such buildings in this neighborhood, and many existing wooden buildings were soon demolished and replaced by masonry structures. According to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (NYCLPC) Landmark designation report for the two structures, the buildings retain “a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.”

8.5.3 Future Conditions Without the Project

Archaeological Resources

In the Future Without the Project, no subsurface disturbance is expected to occur on the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site by the construction year for Shaft 33B. Therefore, any potential resources on this alternative site are anticipated to remain undisturbed. In the long-term, a new Second Avenue Subway is planned for construction along Second Avenue, with a new station extending across the Second Avenue portion of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site. This would not disturb the potential remains of Cato’s House, which may remain beneath E. 54th Street at the alternative Shaft Site.

Architectural Resources

No changes have been identified that would directly affect architectural resources in the Study Area.

² Source: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, designation report for No. 312 E. 53rd Street, 1968; designation report for No. 314 E. 53rd Street, 2000.

8.5.4 Future Conditions With the Project

Construction

Archaeological Resources

As described above under “Existing Conditions,” the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site is sensitive for potential truncated features that may be located in the former backyard of Cato’s House and extend into the E. 54th Street portion of the Area of Potential Effect. To avoid any potential significant adverse impacts on these potential archaeological resources should this site be selected for construction of Shaft 33B, monitoring by a professional archaeologist will be undertaken during construction so that any archaeological features, if encountered, are properly treated and recorded. A monitoring plan will be developed in consultation with NYCLPC and implemented prior to project construction. In addition, the Second Avenue portion of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site may contain the remains of the pillars that supported the Second Avenue El. Should these be encountered during construction, they will also be properly recorded.

As described in Section 5.5, where the potential water main route on E. 55th and E. 56th Streets crosses Second and Third Avenues, the streets may contain the remains of the pillars which supported the Second Avenue and Third Avenue EIs. If this route is selected, a protocol for archaeological monitoring will be prepared and implemented in coordination with NYCLPC prior to any subsurface excavation in the sensitive area. The objective of the monitoring is to properly identify and investigate any archaeological resources should they be encountered during project construction. Any resources encountered will be documented and properly recorded in consultation with NYCLPC.

The portion of the water main route from the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site extending to E. 55th and E. 56th Streets has not yet been evaluated for its archaeological potential. Similarly, other potential water main routes have not been evaluated for their archaeological potential. To avoid any potential significant adverse impacts on possible archaeological resources should any such route be selected, NYCLPC’s established procedures with respect to archaeological resources would be followed. As set forth in NYCLPC’s publication, *Landmarks Preservation Commission Guidelines for Archaeological Work in New York City*, dated April 12, 2002, these procedures involve initial review by NYCLPC to determine if archaeological work is necessary, archaeological documentary study if warranted, archaeological field testing if warranted by the results of the study, and, for any archaeological resources identified using this process, measures to avoid significant adverse impacts such as monitoring during construction, data recordation, and/or excavation. For any selected water main route or water main route segment that was not evaluated in a Phase 1A Archaeological Assessment, NYCLPC will be consulted to determine if an archaeological study would be warranted. If NYCLPC determines that a study is warranted, a Phase 1A Assessment will be prepared for NYCLPC review to determine if the selected route has the potential to contain Native American or historic-period archaeological resources. Should any potential resources be identified, a monitoring plan would be developed in consultation with the NYCLPC prior to any project construction. Any resources encountered would be properly

documented in consultation with NYCLPC. Thus, no potential significant adverse impacts to archaeological resources would occur as a result of this construction.

Architectural Resources

As described above, the architectural resources in the Study Area are located approximately 250 feet from the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site, and, therefore, they are too far away to be adversely affected by construction of Shaft 33B at the alternative Shaft Site. Therefore, the construction of Shaft 33B at the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site would have no potential significant adverse physical impacts on architectural resources. In addition, visual, or contextual, adverse impacts on these resources are not expected during the construction phase. The buildings at 229–241 E. 53rd Street are separated from the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site by intervening buildings, and there is no visual relationship between the alternative site and these resources. This is also the case with the buildings at 312 and 314 E. 53rd Street, which are separated from the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site by an intervening block. Therefore, construction of the shaft on this site would not result in any potential adverse visual impacts on these resources.

Conclusions

To avoid any potential significant adverse impacts on these potential archaeological resources should this site be selected for construction of Shaft 33B, monitoring by a professional archaeologist will be undertaken during construction so that any archaeological features, if encountered, are properly treated and recorded. A monitoring plan will be developed in consultation with NYCLPC and implemented prior to project construction. In addition, the Second Avenue portion of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site may contain the remains of the pillars that supported the Second Avenue El. Should these be encountered during construction, they will also be properly recorded.

Once a water main route is selected, NYCDEP will coordinate with the New York City Department of Design and Construction (NYCDDC) prior to construction of future water main connections to ensure that appropriate measures to protect archaeological resources are undertaken in accordance with NYCLPC's established procedures for archaeological resources. This will include consultation with NYCLPC, preparation of a Phase 1A Assessment if warranted, and implementation of a monitoring plan in consultation with the NYCLPC if appropriate prior to any project construction. Any resources encountered would be properly documented in consultation with NYCLPC. With implementation of these procedures, no potential significant adverse impacts to archaeological resources would occur as a result of this construction of Shaft 33B at this alternative Shaft Site or its potential water main connections.

The architectural resources in the Study Area are located approximately 250 feet from the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site, and, therefore, they are too far away to experience potential significant adverse physical or visual impacts because of construction of Shaft 33B at the alternative Shaft Site.

Operation

Archaeological Resources

Once Shaft 33B at the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site is in operation, no additional subsurface construction would be required. Therefore, there would be no potential for impacts to archaeological resources as a result of the operation of Shaft 33B at this site.

Architectural Resources

Since intervening buildings separate the architectural resources in the Study Area and the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site, precluding any visual relationship, operation of the E. 54th Street/Second Avenue Shaft Site is not expected to result in any potential permanent visual impacts on architectural resources. In any case, the shaft would be located entirely below ground, except for small above-ground shaft elements that would be visible, including an above-ground air release vent and two smaller hydrants.

