

involve Site 7 include the establishment of an east–west underground corridor connecting the 34th Street–Herald Square and the 34th Street–Penn Station–Seventh Avenue Subway Stations and a potential north–south below-grade concourse east of Seventh Avenue (between approximately West 30th Street and West 34th Street) and one or two new crossings below Seventh Avenue to connect Penn Station to the potential new north–south concourse. It is anticipated that these transit improvements would only occur if the existing Hotel Pennsylvania building is removed and replaced with an office building on the site.

Public Realm Improvements

ESD, through the GPP, would require the implementation of above-grade public realm improvements in the Project Area in connection with the proposed developments on Sites 1 through 8. The above-grade public realm improvements include sidewalk widenings, new passive open space, enhancements to existing open space, the creation of shared streets, and the installation of protected bike lanes. At Site 7, the sidewalks adjacent to the new building along Seventh Avenue and West 33rd Street would be widened by 15 feet on Seventh Avenue, and 10 feet on West 33rd Street by setting the proposed building back from the lot line.

PENN STATION RECONSTRUCTION AND EXPANSION

In addition to the project components described above, the Proposed Project would support separate but related projects to improve and expand Penn Station. These projects would be undertaken separately by one or more of the involved railroads (MTA, Amtrak, and/or NJT) and would be subject to their own environmental reviews and approvals, as appropriate. Specifically, the Proposed Project would:

- Support reconstruction of the existing Penn Station. Revenue from the Proposed Project’s new development would fund substantial improvements to the existing Penn Station as identified through a Penn Station Master Plan under development by MTA, Amtrak, and NJT.
- Support the expansion of Penn Station. The Proposed Project would support the planned expansion of Penn Station by (i) providing a potential source of funding for the proposed expansion and improvement of Penn Station and (ii) facilitating, through ESD’s proposed GPP for the Empire Station Complex, transit-oriented development above the below-grade expansion of tracks and platforms south of the existing Penn Station. Such an expansion of Penn Station would increase the overall station capacity for train operations and passenger flow. The expanded facility would incorporate eight or nine tracks (depending on final configuration) to substantially increase Penn Station’s existing track and platform capacity. The expansion of Penn Station would occupy the below-grade levels of Block 780 and portions of Blocks 754 and 806. The Proposed Project would be designed and constructed to accommodate rail infrastructure for the proposed station expansion.

C. HOTEL PENNSYLVANIA BUILDING HISTORY, CONDITIONS, AND ALTERATIONS

The Hotel Pennsylvania building (S/NR-eligible) on Site 7 at 401 Seventh Avenue is a 22-story building with Classical Revival-style details that opened in 1919 to cater primarily to travelers using the original Pennsylvania Station across Seventh Avenue. The firm of McKim, Mead & White designed the hotel to aesthetically and urbanistically complement Pennsylvania Station (1910) and the General Post Office (1913) across Eighth Avenue from the station, both of which were also designed by McKim, Mead & White. The Pennsylvania Railroad company built the

Empire Station Complex

hotel partially out of concern that they would lose passengers to the New York Central Railroad, which was building the Commodore Hotel for a similar clientele near Grand Central Terminal, and the Pennsylvania Hotel's design met the newly emerging need for businessmen's hotels. Such hotels needed, for example, function rooms for large conventions of professional societies and business organizations. The hotel's lobby, once one of the most important decorative spaces in the hotel, was modeled after the peristyle court in a house of the late Roman Republic, and its ornamental glass ceiling was designed by the firm of G. Rae & Co. Other original interior spaces included ballrooms and banquet rooms; a main restaurant, private dining rooms, a tea room, a bar, and a men's cafe; and a library. Although the commercial zone around Penn Station developed much more slowly than the area around Grand Central Terminal, in large part because the Pennsylvania Railroad was not as active in development as was the New York Central Railroad, the Hotel Pennsylvania aimed to cater to the nearby printing district, the emerging retail district centered around West 34th Street, the proximate Times Square, and the Garment District. The Hotel Pennsylvania building is significant under Criterion A for its association with commercial development around Penn Station. In addition, the building also meets Criterion C for its architectural design.

The plan of the large, brick-and-stone hotel consists of four rectangular wings set parallel to Seventh Avenue and connected by a perpendicular core set back from West 33rd Street. This plan creates three deep light courts on the south (West 32nd Street) side of the hotel to provide direct light to the hotel rooms. Two smaller light courts are located on the north (West 33rd Street) side of the hotel. The façade has a tripartite design of a rusticated, four-story stone base with a loggia of Ionic pilasters, a largely unornamented brick shaft, and a four-story capital that repeats the motif of a loggia of Ionic pilasters. The top floors of both the base and capital are conceived as attic stories above the loggias below. A projecting terra cotta cornice originally crowned the building. Located on Seventh Avenue, the main entrance is a tall portico of six Ionic pilasters. (See **Figures 2-4** for historic photographs of the hotel. **Figures 5 and 6** show current photographs.)

Since the hotel's construction in 1919, the building's exterior and interior spaces have undergone several major alterations. Four of the building's six Ionic portico columns at the Seventh Avenue entrance have been cut off at mid-height to accommodate a new marquee and an expanded entryway. Windows on the building's first three floors have been altered and expanded into doorways or replaced to accommodate a variety of retail establishments, many of which have awnings and miscellaneous signage. Windows on the building's upper floors have been replaced with modern aluminum windows of several different types. Various types of signage have been installed on the building's façades. A penthouse structure has been added to the roof, which breaks the cornice line and adds approximately a half floor in height. The original cornice at the roof has been removed. Most, if not all, of the hotel's original public rooms no longer exist, as many have been converted to other uses like commercial retail space and a basketball court. The hotel lobby's original ornamental glass ceiling has been removed, although the lobby's terrazzo tile floors remain. The hotel's ballrooms have also been converted for use as television studios.

D. ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

As the Hotel Pennsylvania is S/NR eligible, ESD, with input from Vornado, has evaluated the potential for retaining and reusing the existing building in conjunction with the Proposed Project. The following analysis concludes that it is not prudent or feasible to retain and reuse the Hotel Pennsylvania as part of the Proposed Project.



Hotel Pennsylvania, 7th Av. 32-33 Sts. from 32 St, 1919
Note: Collection of the Museum of the City of New York, Photographer - Irving Underhill



Hotel Pennsylvania, Seventh Ave. & 32nd St., Building, South Elevation, 1919
Note: Collection of the Museum of the City of New York, Photographer - Byron Company (New York, N.Y.)

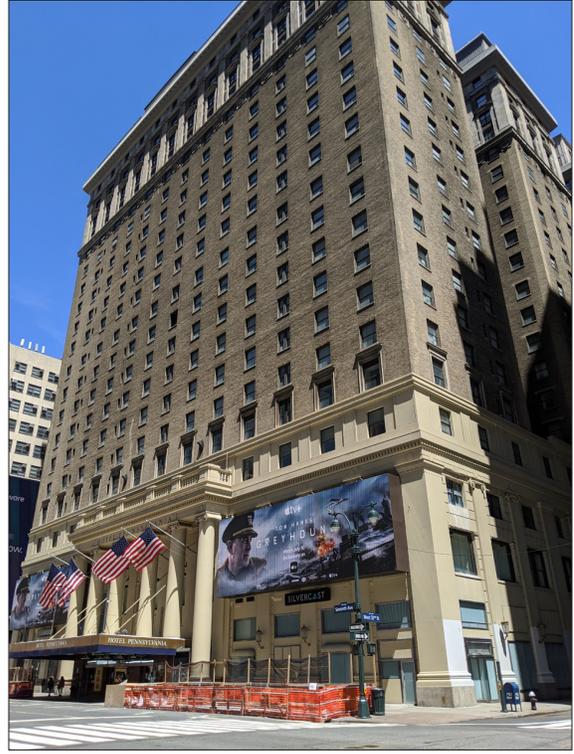


Hotel Pennsylvania, Seventh Ave. & 32nd St., Exterior, Main Entrance, 1919
Note: Collection of the Museum of the City of New York, Photographer - Byron Company (New York, N.Y.)

12.16.20



View northeast on Seventh Avenue from West 31st Street 1



View northeast on Seventh Avenue from West 32nd Street 2

EMPIRE STATION COMPLEX

Hotel Pennsylvania – Current Photographs
Figure 5

12.16.20



View west on West 32nd Street 3



View east on West 33rd Street 4

EMPIRE STATION COMPLEX

Hotel Pennsylvania – Current Photographs
Figure 6