PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

A SPECIAL meeting of the PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD will be held at 6:00 p.m. on THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2022. In accordance with NYS Executive Orders, this meeting will be conducted remotely via the online platform Zoom and streamed on the City of Ithaca YouTube Channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7RtJN1P_RFaFW2IVCnTrDg.

Instructions for commenting to the Planning Board

Scheduled Public Hearings: There are no public hearings scheduled for this meeting.

General Public Comments: There will be no public comments read at this meeting. Written comments can be sent to the contact(s) listed below. All comments received will be forwarded it to the Planning Board for their consideration. Written comments received in advance of the meeting give the Board/Committee time to consider them fully.

All comments and questions can be emailed to Anya Harris at aharris@cityofithaca.org or Lisa Nicholas at lnicholas@cityofithaca.org, or call 607-274-6550.

AGENDA ITEM

1. Site Plan Review
   - Project: Catherine Commons
   - Location: Intersection of Catherine Street, Cook Street, and College Avenue
   - Applicant: Kathryn Wolf, Sponsor
   - Actions: ☐ Design Review Part 2 ☐ Review of FEAF Part 3

   Project Description: The applicant proposes to demolish the existing (11) two-story wood frame houses and construct a primarily residential mixed-use development. The applicant proposes (3) multi-story buildings on the Catherine North Site and (3) multi-story buildings on the Catherine South Site (six buildings total) with a combined total gross floor area of 265,000 SF. The buildings will contain approximately 360 residential units, a 2,600-SF commercial space along College Avenue, a 1,600-SF private fitness center, and a small parking lot for ADA compliance and service vehicles. The project includes streetscape improvements, several ADA-compliant plaza spaces, pedestrian amenities, and public bus stop infrastructure. The project is in (4) zoning districts: the MU1, in which the maximum building height is five stories/70 feet; MU2, in which the maximum building height is six stories/80 feet; CR3, in which the maximum height is 35 feet; and CR4, in which the maximum height is 45 feet. The project will require several area variances including maximum building floors/height (two), minimum off-street parking, maximum street façade, doors and entries, recessed entry, chamfered corner, and rear yard setback (two). It is also subject to the Collegetown Design Guidelines. The project involves 12 tax parcels totaling 1.45 acres, seven of which are located north of the Catherine Street/College Avenue intersection and four of which are to the south. Parcel consolidation will be required. This has been determined to be a Type 1 Action under the City of Ithaca Environmental Quality Review Ordinance §176-4 B(1)(h)[4], (k) & (n), and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) §617.4 (b)(5)[iii] and is subject to environmental review.

Project materials are available for download from the City website and are updated regularly: https://www.cityofithaca.org/DocumentCenter/Index/1385
Design Review materials are available here:
https://www.cityofithaca.org/DocumentCenter/Index/1408

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If you have a disability & would like specific accommodation to participate, please contact the City Clerk at 274-6570 by 12:00 p.m., 2-3 business days (not including weekends/holidays) before the meeting.

Out of consideration for the health of other individuals, please try to refrain from using perfume/cologne and other scented personal care products at City of Ithaca meetings. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

"An Equal Opportunity Employer with a commitment to workforce diversification."
CATHERINE COMMONS
Site Design Review Package
January 13, 2022
COLLEGE AVENUE STREETSCAPE | OVERVIEW

COLLEGE AVENUE CORRIDOR
- HARDSCAPE
- STREETLIGHTS
- STREET TREES
- STRUCTURAL SOIL
- TREE GRATES
- BIKE RACKS
- BUS STOP

LIGHT POLE
SleekVision-Lumec

TREE GRATE
Urban Accessories - Jamison

BIKE RACKS
Stainless Steel ‘Ring Rack’ - Landscape Forms
COLLEGE AVENUE STREETSCAPE | PLANT PALETTE

CRIMSON SPIRE OAK
Quercus robur x alba ‘Crimschmidt’

MUSASHINO ZELKOVA
Zelkova serrata ‘Musashino’

PRINCETON SENTRY GINKGO
Ginkgo biloba ‘Princeton Sentry’

STREET KEEPER HONEYLOCUST
Gleditsia triacanthos ‘Draves’
CREATE A VIBRANT PUBLIC SPACE
• EXPAND PUBLIC REALM
• PERMEABILITY
• OPEN SITE LINES
• PROGRAM TO ACTIVATE SPACE
• DURABILITY
• VISUAL INTEREST
CATHERINE COMMONS | PROVIDE A VARIETY OF SEATING
CATHERINE SOUTH | BLDG 3B PLAZA ELEVATION AT COOK STREET
PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The applicant proposes to demolish the existing (11) two-story wood frame houses and construct a primarily residential mixed-use development. The applicant proposes three multi-story buildings on the Catherine North Site and three multi-story buildings on the Catherine South Site (six buildings total) with a combined total gross floor area of 265,000 SF. The buildings will contain approximately 360 residential units, a 2,600-SF commercial space along College Avenue, a 1,600-SF private fitness center, and a small parking lot for ADA compliance and service vehicles. The project includes streetscape improvements, several ADA-compliant plaza spaces, pedestrian amenities, and public bus stop infrastructure. The project is in four Zoning Districts: the MU1, in which the maximum building height is five stories/70 feet; MU2, in which the maximum building height is six stories/80 feet; CR3, in which the maximum height is 35 feet; and CR4, in which the maximum height is 45 feet. The project will require several area variances including maximum building floors/height (two), minimum off-street parking, maximum street façade, doors and entries, recessed entry, chamfered corner, and rear yard setback (two). It is also subject to Collegetown Design Guidelines. The project involves 12 tax parcels totaling 1.45 acres, seven of which are located north of the Catherine Street /College Avenue intersection and four of which are to the south. Parcel consolidation will be required.

This has been determined to be a Type 1 Action under the City of Ithaca Environmental Quality Review Ordinance §176-4 B(1)(h)[4], (k) & (n), and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) §617.4 (b)(5)[iii] and is subject to environmental review.

IMPACT ON LAND
The 1.45 acre, 12-tax parcel site is located in a densely urbanized area and is previously developed currently covered with 80% impervious surfaces. The grade at the project site is steeply sloping down toward the SW from College Avenue, resulting in slopes greater than 15% in the southwest and western areas of the project site. The applicant is proposing two main sites: Catherine North and Catherine South. Catherine North currently has seven existing vacant wood frame homes on approximately .81 acres and is composed of three properties along the west side of College Avenue north of Catherine Street and four adjacent properties along the north side of Catherine Street. Catherine South currently has four existing vacant wood frame homes on approximately .64 acres and is composed of four properties along the west side of College Avenue between Catherine and Cook streets and one property along the north side of Cook Street. In total, project implementation will require the demolition of (11) two-story wood frame houses.

Currently the 11 houses are empty as the project sponsors worked with Ithaca ReUse to salvage all useable appliances and furniture in the existing houses. According to the applicant before the buildings are demolished Ithaca ReUse will evaluate each building to determine what components of the building themselves are worth salvaging. All utility services have been terminated at each building and the windows and doors are boarded up per instructions from the Building Department. Please see Impact on Human Health below for further information on the demolition of the existing houses.
Construction is expected to last approximately 18 months. The construction will result in a net removal of approximately 12,000 cubic yards of asphalt and soil due to the existing steep slopes.

The applicant submitted a Preliminary Report of Subsurface Exploration and Evaluation prepared by John P. Stopen Engineering LLP dated December 28, 2020. According to the report the findings determined that both 10-story buildings (buildings 1a in Catherine North and South) should be constructed on deep foundations in shale bedrock with concrete slab-on-grade floors, while the other four buildings (buildings 1b and 1c in Catherine North and South) should be constructed on conventional shallow foundations bearing on dense glacial till or shale bedrock. Due to the steep slope, “there will be unbalanced earth pressures in the east-west and north-south directions of the buildings. Special provisions may be necessary to accommodate the unbalanced forces.”

The Lead Agency has determined that based on the information above, and with strict compliance to regulations regarding excavation, no significant impact to land is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON GEOLOGIC FEATURES**

The site is in a densely urbanized area with no geologic features present.

The Lead Agency has determined that based on this information, no significant impact on geologic features is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON SURFACE WATER**

There are no surface water features on or adjacent to the project site, but any stormwater runoff ultimately reaches Six Mile Creek.

During construction soils will be exposed and dewatering practices will be used so there is potential for erosion and sediment runoff during this time. The project team will submit a SWPPP in order to comply with NYSDEC regulations. The applicants have also stated in their Preliminary Site Plan Review Application Report submitted in August 2021 they will adhere to the following practices during construction:

- Install silt fencing adjacent to the downhill edge of any site disturbance or material stockpile area, parallel with the site contours.
- Provide protection around drainage inlets to prevent siltation.
- Temporary seeding and mulching of disturbed areas or topsoil stockpiles.
- Install sediment traps prior to initiating significant earthwork and maintain throughout construction period.
- Direct all sediment-laden water form trench and pit excavations to a sediment basin or equivalent sedimentation system.
- Install crushed stone tracking pads at principal construction site access points.
- Construction documents for the project will include an erosion and sediment control plan prepared in accordance with New York State Guidelines for Urban Erosion & Sediment Control.
Therefore, based on the information above, the Lead Agency has determined that no significant impact to surface water is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON GROUNDWATER**
The proposal is a housing project in an urbanized area and as such does not include operational activities that impact groundwater.

According to the Preliminary Report of Subsurface Exploration and Evaluation prepared by John P. Stopen Engineering LLP dated December 28, 2020, regional groundwater level is deep, and they do not expect significant volumes of groundwater to be encountered during excavation. They do suggest “provisions should be made to remove precipitation and surface water during construction” and that if water is encountered “dewatering by pumping from sumps should be adequate.”

The Lead Agency has determined that based on the information above, no significant impact to groundwater is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON FLOODING**
The project site is not located in a flood zone, and it is not near any waterbody that may contribute to flooding.

The Lead Agency has determined that based on the information above, no significant impact on flooding is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON AIR**
According to information provided by the applicant, construction is projected to last approximately 18 months. During construction, generators may be required to provide power to the site. Excavation and preparation of foundations additionally create the potential for increased airborne dust and dirt particles. Impacts to air quality will be limited to the period associated with construction activities. During construction, the applicant will employ the following applicable dust control measures, as appropriate:

- Misting or fog spraying the site to minimize dust;
- Maintaining crushed stone tracking pads at all entrances to the construction site;
- Re-seeding disturbed areas to minimize bare exposed soils;
- Keeping roads clear of dust and debris;
- Requiring construction trucks to be covered; and
- Prohibiting burning of debris on site.

The Lead Agency has determined that with the mitigation measures during construction identified above, no significant impact to air is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON PLANTS AND ANIMALS**
The project site is in an urbanized area and is previously developed. Most of the current site is impervious cover with a few trees, shrubs, and lawn. Wildlife likely to be encountered on or near the project site include invertebrates, small mammals, and birds.

Six trees (maples, ashes, and spruce) from the project site ranging from 6” – 18” DBH are slated for removal. The trees are in poor to fair condition and the maples are the invasive tree, Norway maple. The applicant proposes to plant many trees including deciduous shade trees, ornamental trees, evergreen trees, many shrubs, perennials, and groundcover. They will also add many street trees along College Avenue, Catherine Street and Cook Street.

The Lead Agency has determined that based on the information above, no significant impact on plants and animals is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

The project site is not in or adjacent to an agricultural area, therefore, the Lead Agency has determined no significant impact to agricultural resources is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

According to the Tompkins County Scenic Resource Views, there are no scenic resources located adjacent to or in vicinity of the Project Site. Additionally, there are no locally identified scenic resources located near the project site. Currently, the eleven existing houses do allow for light and views to the west hills on College Avenue.

The project team conducted a viewpoint study of existing, as-of-right, and proposed views of the project from 10 different viewpoint locations around the city from the specific vantages where the site is most visible. This study was submitted to the planning board in August 2021. The Planning Board further heard this study presented at the October 26 meeting and commented that the views in this study are very convincing that the extra height is nominal with the activation of the street this project affords.

The proposed buildings will only allow for views to the west hills from Catherine and Cook Streets as the new buildings stretch across the entirety of the project along College Street front blocking mid-block views that existed between the older houses. Mitigations proposed by the applicants include building transparency on the ground level, set back of the corners of the buildings to allow for light and views, transparency at the upper corner of the buildings, and activation at the street level. The applicants further addressed public comments to consider a mid-block pedestrian connection through the project site at the November meeting, concluding a mid-block pass through was not desirable at this location. The applicants showed an already existing north-south connection of Catherine Street to Dryden Rd that would make the west-east connection redundant and also discussed the majority of pedestrians’ preference to travel towards campus and the heart of Collegetown versus traveling south. The board agreed with the applicant’s mitigations for views and mid-block connection investigations.

The Planning Board had the following feedback regarding design review at the December 2021 Planning Board meeting, January 13, 2022, special meeting and previous meetings:
Buildings

- Board unanimously supports this project at this location in Collegetown.
- Believe height variance is significantly mitigated, will not adversely affect the neighborhood and worth the street activation including 2-story height public plazas and spaces, bus stop infrastructure, street trees and plantings.
- Appreciate the quality and diversity of building materials providing a dynamic experience for the users and passersby of the site.
- Think the stoops are an important element along College Street as they reflect traditional architecture and also add human scale so as the scale of the buildings is lessened. Wondering if material might be warmer versus the metal material used currently in design.
- Like the lightwells along College street as they add to the rowhouse feeling and provide smaller entrances for residents.
- Board members are questioning the uses of bridges between the buildings in Catherine North site- as it gives it more of a dormitory-type feeling and erodes the rowhouse aesthetic. Applicants feel the connectivity is important for both functionality in inclement weather and for services and for design aspirations.
- Would like the ground floor to be very transparent as to activate the street and see life in the buildings.
- Have questions regarding the color palette- seem to be a lot of different colors, some facades are completely different colors than the rest of the building, and project has many bold colors. Case studies or precedents of developments and projects with varying color palette as this would be helpful to see and ask applicant to demonstrate colors blend with vernacular.
- Raise a few concerns regarding two facades- the north façade of building 1 in Catherine North and the west façade of building 2A. The north façade appears very monolithic and both facades have very narrow windows, so wondering how the interior space feels.

Based on the information above, the Lead Agency has determined that no significant impacts to aesthetic resources is anticipated.

IMPACT ON HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The site is not located within a historic district, and the existing site is not designated at the local or state level as an historic resource. However, the project site is located east of and in close proximity, within 175-200’ in some locations, to the East Hill Historic District, which is locally and nationally designated. There are two buildings designated as Local Landmarks in close proximity to the project site: the John Snaith House at 140 College Avenue is located across Cook Street south of the project site; and the Grandview House at 209 College Avenue is located across College Avenue east of the project site. The applicant submitted a viewpoint study in their Preliminary Site Plan Review Application Report dated August 2021, which shows the existing views and the proposed views with the proposed project from 10 different vantage points within the city. Viewpoint 6 and Viewpoint 7 include the Grandview House and the John Snaith House respectively and proposed view depict the proposed project will not adversely affect the surrounding context of the local landmarks.
At the November PB meeting, the applicant presented mitigations for the historic buildings including transparency at the ground level through the building and two-story height openings, the terracing and landscaping along Cook street, the stoops along College Street reflecting traditional architecture, and quality design including quality materials and contextual colors that add to the architecture continuum. The board agreed these mitigations address the contextual context of the proposed buildings and proximity to the historic buildings, although there was a question as to whether the project could contribute to these historic buildings to mitigate for the demolition of the eleven older houses which created the urban fabric in Collegetown.

As a result of historic site use and based on the information provided above, the Lead Agency has determined no significant impact on historic and archaeological resources is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION**

The project site is in a densely developed multi-family residential neighborhood and not contiguous to any public park or open space. Dryden Road Park, a publicly owned passive recreational facility is approximately 600 feet NW from the project site. Cascadilla Gorge UNA is also located within 800-feet to the north of the site.

The project will widen the sidewalks and create expanded pedestrian zones with new plaza spaces, in both Catherine North and South areas, to create more open space along College Avenue. The project team proposes an open resident green space on the north side of Catherine North.

As a result of the information provided above, the Lead Agency has determined that no significant impact to open space and recreation is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS**

There are no critical environmental areas located within the City of Ithaca. However, Tompkins County identifies Unique Natural Areas (“UNAs”) throughout the county, which are part of the landscape that has outstanding geological and environmental qualities, such as special natural communities, or plants and animals that are rare or scarce elsewhere in the county or region. A UNA is not a regulatory designation and does not provide legal protection for an area but signals that special resources may exist that require project modification.

The project site is approximately 800 feet to the closest UNA, 136- Cascadilla Gorge, a steep forested riparian area with unique geological features. The project site is located down slope from the UNA, so will have little to no impact on it.

As a result of the information provided above and in discussions with the applicant, the Lead Agency has determined no significant impact to Critical Environmental Areas is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION**

The project site is in an urbanized area in central Collegetown. It is connected to the City sidewalk system, is proximate to goods, services and transit and is within walking distance to Cornell University.
Construction Related Impacts:

**Pedestrians & Cyclists**

Construction is expected to take approximately 18 months for both Catherine North and South sites and will take place at the same time. As part of the street permit required by the City Department of Public Works (DPW), a Traffic and Pedestrian Control Plan must be prepared. As well, street closures will be coordinated with the City Fire Department and DPW.

According to the Preliminary Site Plan Review Application Report submitted by the applicant August 17, 2021, the Traffic and Pedestrian Control Plan will include demarcated pedestrian crossings, directional signage approaching and at the site for pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and personnel directing traffic with flags when necessary. Other mitigations for pedestrian and cyclists include safe detours around project site, adequate barriers around active construction site, and locating staging areas so as not to impede with pedestrian and bike routes. It is presumed material staging will occur on site.

**Vehicular Traffic**

It is estimated daily construction deliveries of materials and supplies will fluctuate between 10-20 trucks. Large loads will be scheduled outside of the peak commuting times and a maximum of five truck deliveries scheduled during morning and afternoon commuter peaks. Construction vehicles will use Route 13 to approach the project site and exit via Route 366 to Mitchell Street and College Avenue. Mitigations around the project site include the ones aforementioned for pedestrians and cyclists.

**Parking**

Designated parking in specific locations will be provided for construction workers and for contractors. Most of the workforce will be scheduled to arrive outside of morning and afternoon peak commuter hours.

**Project impacts (non-construction related)**

The project site is in the CR-4 Collegetown Area Form District (CAFD). The applicant proposes minimal on-site parking with 5 proposed spaces designated accessible and for service vehicles/loading. Residents who choose to have a car can pay for a parking space at Collegetown Terrace, which will be accessed by a private shuttle.

District regulations state that if no parking is provided the applicant must either: (1) obtain a variance for relief of parking requirements; or (2) demonstrate full compliance with the NYS Building Code or Residential Code for new construction and implement a Transportation Demand Management Plan (TDMP) that is approved by the Planning Board.

The applicant submitted a Transportation Demand Assessment created by SRF Associates dated August 12, 2021, that has the following conclusions, recommendations and mitigations:

- The project site is located nearby available transportation services, such as TCAT, Ithaca Car Share, and will be serviced by an existing private shuttle.
City of Ithaca
FULL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM – Part III
Project Name: Catherine Commons
Date Created: 10/07/21 Updated 11/03/21, 1/07/22, 1/11/22

- Four TCAT routes service the area with headways varying from 10 to 30 minutes.
- Given the similar characteristics between the proposed housing project and the existing Collegetown Terrace Apartments complex, actual parking rates were developed at the Collegetown Terrace Apartments complex for use to determine project-related parking demands.
- Based upon the developed parking rates at Collegetown Terrace Apartments, there is a projected demand of 138 to 189 spaces.
- When considering both student housing sites, there is sufficient capacity within the existing Collegetown Terrace Apartments complex to accommodate the projected parking demands created by the proposed Catherine Commons project.
- It is expected that very few residents would choose to park on surrounding streets given the inconvenience of constantly moving vehicles or interacting with the parking pay station.
- A public garage and on-street parking are available for patrons of the commercial uses. Catherine Commons residents are expected to patronize the uses; thus, can reduce the projected commercial parking demands. Additionally, considering the mode share statistics and Walk Score results, the area is characterized as a dense multi-use urban environment.
- Strategies planned to reduce parking demands:
  - Charging for off-site parking at Collegetown Terrace Apartments
  - Shuttle service that will adjust its headways to meet resident demands
  - Pedestrian and bicycle amenities (e.g., bike storage, increased sidewalk area, seating, etc.)
  - New enhanced TCAT bus stop along the project’s frontage with comfort amenities
  - Other streetscaping enhancements
  - Additional strategies may be considered (if necessary)
- The project developer will coordinate with TCAT on the new transit stop and any impacts to the existing service routes.
- Scheduled service deliveries will be encouraged to take place during off-peak times when commuting traffic is least disrupted. As a result of the information provided above, the Lead Agency has determined that no significant impact on traffic is anticipated.

IMPACT ON ENERGY
On August 4, 2021, the Ithaca Energy Code Supplement (IECS) went into effect for all new buildings constructed in Ithaca. The IECS prioritizes electrification, renewable energy, and affordability with the following objectives:

“deliver measurable and immediate reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from new buildings, major renovations, and new additions; promote best practices in the design of affordable buildings to deliver reduced GHG emissions; and provide a rapid but orderly transition to buildings that do not use fossil fuels for major building energy needs such as space heating and hot water heating, by 2026. For construction subject to the Ithaca Energy Code Supplement, requirements for reductions in GHGs go into effect in three steps: 2021, 2023, and 2026.”

From August 4, 2021, until 2023 all new buildings must produce 40% fewer greenhouse gas emissions than the Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State requires. Beginning in 2023, the IECS will increase the requirements of new construction to produce 80% fewer greenhouse gas emissions
than the Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State requires, and by 2026 all newly constructed buildings in Ithaca will be required to be net-zero buildings that do not use fossil fuels. The IECS supports Ithaca’s Green New Deal which aims to “achieve an equitable transition to carbon-neutrality” community-wide by 2030.

The Building Division will oversee implementation and enforcement of the IECS.

According to the project team submittal on August 17, 2021, they “will conduct an energy analysis, review the findings and adjust the envelope system accordingly” to meet the Ithaca Energy Code supplement. The applicant submitted the following strategies they are imploring to reduce energy in their project:

- Reduce stormwater runoff
- Provide porous paving for water infiltration
- Exterior light fixtures on daylight sensors
- Enhance building envelope to reduce heat gain and loss; glazing with thermally broken windows and vestibules at major entry points
- Highly reflective roof to reduce heat gain and maximize sun reflectance
- Natural daylight to reduce energy consumption and enhance indoor quality
- Use of natural and recyclable materials
- Use of low flow water fixtures
- Use of Energy Star appliances to minimize energy consumption, including electric stoves and ventless heat pump clothes dryers
- All light fixtures used will be LED fixtures
- The proposed mechanical system is a VRF system that is an electric air-source heat pump packaged unit, similar to a PTAC. Each dwelling unit will have a dedicated HVAC system.

As a result, from the information provided above, the Lead Agency has determined that no significant impact to energy is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON NOISE, ODOR, AND LIGHT**

The residential project is not expected to produce operational noise, odor or light that is out of character with surrounding uses. The limited exterior lighting will be dark sky compliant. Interior lighting in stairs and corridors will be on sensors.

According to the site plan review application provided by the applicant, construction will last approximately 18 months. The project is in a dense mixed-use area. Noise and odors from construction activities could have significant but temporary impact the neighborhood. The foundation will be a combination of deep foundation systems for the two taller buildings and conventional shallow foundation systems for the other four buildings. Due to its proximity to neighboring structures, construction noise will particularly affect adjacent properties.

Noise producing construction activities will temporarily impact residents in the immediate area. Noise producing construction activities will be limited to the hours between 7:30 A.M. and 5:30 P.M., Monday
through Friday (or Saturday 9:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. with advance notification to and approval by the Director of Planning and Development).

The project team submitted shade study renderings dated August 17, 2021, depicting the shadows cast by as-of-right buildings and the additional depth that would be created by the proposed buildings on the project site at various times on winter and summer solstice, and spring and autumn equinox. The project team presented the shade studies at the October and November meetings, where the board members responded positively, agreeing that the as-of-right and the proposed building heights did not cause a significant difference in shading throughout the year.

As a result of this information, the Lead Agency has determined no significant impact on noise, odor, and light is anticipated.

**IMPACT ON HUMAN HEALTH**

The existing 11 buildings will be completely removed and replaced. Demolition will include removal of toxic substances such as asbestos or lead paint. According to the applicant, a hazardous material survey conducted by Lakeland Environmental in September-November 2019 identified asbestos containing material (ACM) in all 11 existing buildings. In February 2020 the applicant hired Sunstream Corporation to remove ACMs from the buildings. Five of the eleven existing houses have been completely abated and final air clearance reports have been submitted to the Building Department of the City of Ithaca. The remaining abatement work for the six houses that need it is all exterior largely confined to the roofs and will be completed closer to the demolition of the buildings themselves. According to the applicant, the demolition permits for the remaining six houses will be similarly closed out once the roofs on these buildings have been abated.

According to the applicant in their Application Report dated August 17, 2021:

An experienced, licensed and insured demolition contractor will perform demolition of the 11 remaining buildings. The demolition debris will be disposed of at a C&D landfill or recycling facilities licensed by NYSDEC per 6 NYCRR 360 Solid Waste Management facilities. It is expected that the demolition of these structures will generate approximately 1,480 tons of waste.

The demolition contractor will apply for Street Permits as needed and maintain a Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic Control Plan. The project sponsor will retain a licensed monitoring firm to observe the demolition process and provide constant air monitoring services during the course of the demolition work. The demolition of all the buildings will take approximately 4 weeks to complete. Upon completion, the site will be turned over to the General Contractor for construction of the proposed project.

The project site has no reported spills in the NYDEC Spills Incidents database or in the Environmental Remediation database, nor are there any such sites within 2000 feet of project site.

As a result of this information, the Lead Agency has determined no significant impact to human health is anticipated.
CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY PLANS
The project is consistent with the City of Ithaca’s Comprehensive Plan and its Collegetown land use category which calls for active streetscapes to enliven the pedestrian experience. The project is also in line with the economic vitality section of Plan Ithaca where it states, “Appropriate compact, mixed-use development will provide significant new development opportunities while preserving the character of our established residential neighborhoods. The project also meets the purpose and intent of MU-1 and MU-2 districts along College Avenue, as outlined in Ithaca’s Collegetown Area Form Districts, which is to concentrate the majority of additional development and higher density within these districts and create dynamic urban environments that promote a walkable neighborhood.

Consistency with Zoning:
The project as designed, requires many variances. By zone the following variances will be required for the project as proposed.

- **CR-3** - the multiple dwelling building located in Catherine South along Cook Street (referred to as Building 4 in site project documents)
  - **Minimum off-street Parking** - the zone requires the building to have 13 spaces, the proposed building will have 5 spaces
  - **Rear Setback** - zoning requires a 20’ rear setback building 4 has 5’
- **CR-4** - the multiple dwelling buildings located in Catherine North along Catherine Street (referred to as Buildings 2a and 2b in site project documents)
  - **Rear Setback** - zoning requires a 20’ rear setback the proposed building 2B has 5’
- **MU-1** - the multiple dwelling buildings located in Catherine South along College Avenue south of Catherine Street (referred to as Buildings 3a and 3b in site project documents)
  - **Maximum Height of Principal Building (stories/feet)** - zoning allows for buildings to be a maximum of 5 stories and 70’ tall, whereas proposed buildings 3a and 3b are each 7 stories and 78’ tall
- **MU-2** - the multiple dwelling building located in Catherine North along College Avenue north of Catherine Street (referred to as Building 1 in site project documents)
  - **Maximum Height of Principal Building (stories/feet)** - zoning allows for buildings to be a maximum of 6 stories and 80’ tall, whereas proposed building 1 is 8 stories and 90’ tall
  - **Required Chamfered Building Corners** - zoning calls for buildings at corner lots to be chamfered at least 10’ from the corner or setback a minimum of 5’ from both street frontages. Building 1 as proposed does not have chamfered corners and is not setback a minimum of 5’ from street frontages.

Reasoning for Variance Request from the applicant dated?

Variance Impacts: **Considerations for the PB:**

Based on the information described above, the Lead Agency has determined that no significant impact to community plans is anticipated.

CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY CHARACTER
The existing Catherine North and Catherine South sites contain 11 traditional wood-frame houses. The Collegetown Core, as this area where the project site is located is referred in the City of Ithaca’s Collegetown Design Guidelines adopted in 2018, is densely developed and highly urban in character with mixed-use buildings with ground floor commercial and residential above and built close to the sidewalk edge. Building heights range from one to six stories.

The proposed buildings are new structures that are much larger in scale than the existing houses. The buildings along College Avenue contain more stories and are taller than zoning allows in the core. The project team presented to the board at the October 26, 2021, meeting a façade study and other mitigations for the buildings to fit in to the character of the community and to seem moderate in mass and height. These mitigations include but are not limited to three-part articulation in the buildings to reduce scale; dynamic material choice, grid pattern of glass, metal panels and terracotta, and color palette to activate the facades; and overhangs on the lower floors of the buildings with widened sidewalks and trees to activate the streetscape. The board appreciated this study and had positive comments regarding the mitigations creating interesting experiences for people walking by the project. These mitigations help to reduce the appearance of scale and mass.

The proposed project fits the character of the Collegetown Core in that it is quite dense and along College Avenue the buildings are mixed-use with commercial space on the ground floor in Catherine North building 1 and a fitness center on the ground floor in Catherine South building 1 and residential above in both.

Based on the information provided above, the Lead Agency has determined no significant impact on community character is anticipated.

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