



October 7, 2015

Lisa Nicholas
Senior Planner
Department of Planning and Economic Development
City of Ithaca
108 East Green Street
Ithaca, NY 14850

RE: 416-418 East State Street Updated Submission

Dear Lisa:

On behalf of the applicant, East State LLC, we are delighted to present the Printing Press for the further review of the Planning Board. Attached please find the following documents, which constitute an updated submittal packet for this Project:

1. A Vision Statement describing the Printing Press and the applicant's vision for the space
2. First floor Plan (revised)
3. Landscape Site Plan (revised)
4. Parking Diagram (revised)

The former printing-press cinderblock architectural section of the building, which operated through the 1960s, has not had any upkeep and is currently in a dilapidated state with crumbling concrete and peeling paint. Allowing this building to remain in this condition does little to support the substantial investments that neighbors have made in their properties in the East Hill Historic District. The open floor plan and space provided by this part of the structure lends itself to a gathering space and public venue, which the owner, East State LLC, envisions as a small, modest, intimate bar and lounge (not a nightclub or concert venue, as it has in some instances been misinterpreted), similar in quality to the Argos Inn. Zoned as B-4, the property is contiguous to both the uphill residential zone and the downhill downtown zone. Accordingly, the building is proposed as a mix of uses to transition between the two areas.

Project Vision

As described in the attached Vision Statement for the Printing Press, this space is intended to compliment the adjacent Argos Inn, rekindling a relationship between the two properties that had existed for much of the past 50 years. The proposed lounge will build upon the history of the Site as a former printing house, with a working name of the Printing Press. The character of the space will emphasize details from the existing warehouse, and recall industrial printing equipment and other industrial machinery, providing an industrial aesthetic from the 1940s and 50s. The lounge is targeted to a more mature audience. Typical customers

expected to be patrons at the Printing Press are young professionals, Cornell graduate students, professors, and locals. The ambience will be one of locality, with relaxation and comfort, providing local ciders and craft beers along with small plates such as local cheese and charcuterie. Like other “Speak Easies” provided as examples in the Vision Statement, signage will be kept to a minimum with a “secret entrance” to emphasize the speakeasy warehouse aesthetic. The renovation of the Printing Press Lounge will largely be interior. The exterior will have minimal changes that consist of restoring the façade, painting, and adding additional landscape while maintaining existing trees.

Parking

As per Section 325-20(D)3, Off-Street Parking Ordinance, this Project will provide the required maximum number of off-street parking spaces. The shared parking proposal to accommodate the adaptive reuse of the building at 416-418 E. State has shifted to the use of the neighboring Argos parking lot. The owners of Argos Inn and of 416-418 E. State Street have drafted and agreed to the following preliminary terms:

- 8AM-4PM: Shared parking in Argos assigned to 416 E. State Offices
- 4PM-9PM: Parking in the Argos Inn / Bar Argos lot will be to patrons of the Bar Argos
- 9PM-1:30AM: Parking will be provided for 416 E. State Lounge

The attached diagram of uses and shared parking between the two properties describes this allocation of shared parking between the Argos and 416-418 E. State Street.

Two parking spaces, one for ADA and another dedicated to the existing apartment, will remain on-site. The existing parking area will be formalized to provide safer access to and from the Property. An ADA compliant path is also provided, taking advantage of the existing grade on Site. The landing at the front of the property and connecting to the ADA path will be expanded to accommodate the 5’ turning circle required for ADA access.

Landscape

The proposed landscape design aims to add aesthetic value and greater functionality to the existing front and side yards. As the property exists, a narrow section of land along the east side of the building makes it deficient in setback requirements from the property line. A 3-car parking area, lawn area, and concrete path to the south and east entrances are located in the front of the property connecting to East State Street / MLK Jr. Avenue. The front entrance to the building is currently not ADA accessible.

The goals of the design are to: 1) reinforce the existing pedestrian and vehicular routes, creating safer access to the Site and building; 2) provide visual screening between the property and adjacent residential properties; 3) provide aesthetic value to a degrading Site; and 4) provide sound attenuation between the Site and surrounding neighborhood.

One concern of the existing Site is pedestrian and vehicular safety. Shared parking is provided via the Argos parking lot, and the existing parking area is formalized with striping and provides a designated handicapped parking space. With the renovation of the parking area, cars leaving the property are able to turn around and exit facing forward.

The proposed ADA compliant path from the parking area is at a slope of 7.8%, taking advantage of the existing topography rather than installing a railed ramp. The two existing concrete walkways perpendicular to the E. State Street sidewalk maintain pedestrian access to the two entrances on the south and east side of the building. Shrubs and perennials will be planted in beds along the pedestrian walkways and adjacent to the building. The area on the southeast side of the property will be planted to provide visual screening and sound attenuation for the adjacent properties. All but two existing street trees will remain, which are invasive Norway Maples. At the rear of the property, the existing established vegetation on the northeast area will remain in order to not disturb the steep slope. The design and plant selection is intended to absorb, deflect, and refract sound, providing sound barriers in order to ensure any activity on the Site complies with the City of Ithaca's Noise Ordinance.

Noise

As described in a previous memo dated September 22, 2015, the Project will adhere to the stricter outdoor standards of the City of Ithaca's Noise Ordinance. Outside permitted limits in a residential zone are 60 decibels (7:30 AM-10 PM) and 50 decibels (10 PM to 7:30 AM). Additionally, the Project will adhere to the stated indoor permitted limits in a commercial zone, which are 55 decibels (7:30 AM-10 PM) and 40 decibels (10 PM to 7:30 AM).

The location of the lounge has also shifted towards the front of the building, and is now located at the building's center to provide a greater interior buffer for potential traveling sound. In order to ensure that the intended uses of the Site adhere to the City of Ithaca Noise Ordinance an Acoustical Consultant will be hired by East State LLC for an initial consultation with the Project Team. The information obtained from this consultation will be used to direct the design and programming by developing sound mitigation strategies that will address potential sounds which may exceed the limit as specified by the Noise Ordinance. This is planned to occur in the coming days.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and presenting the project at your upcoming meeting. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Scott Whitham