



## CITY OF ITHACA

108 E. Green St. — 3rd Floor Ithaca, NY 14850-5690

### DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, BUILDING, ZONING, & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

JOANN CORNISH, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

PHYLLISA A. DeSARNO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Telephone: Planning & Econ. Development – 607-274-6550 | Community Development/IURA – 607-274-6559

E-Mail: [dgrunder@cityofithaca.org](mailto:dgrunder@cityofithaca.org)

E-Mail: [iura@cityofithaca.org](mailto:iura@cityofithaca.org)

Fax: 607-274-6558

Fax: 607-274-6558

#### To:

City of Ithaca Common Council  
City of Ithaca Conservation Advisory Council (CAC)  
City of Ithaca Planning & Development Board  
City of Ithaca Board of Public Works (BPW)  
City of Ithaca Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Council (BPAC)  
David West, Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Council (BPAC)  
City of Ithaca Shade Tree Advisory Committee (STAC)  
Larry Roberts, Disability Advisory Council (DAC)  
Andrew Rappaport, Disability Advisory Council (DAC)  
Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency (IURA)  
John Barber, Chief, Ithaca Police Dept.  
Tom Parsons, Chief, Ithaca Fire Dept.  
Michael Thorne, Superintendent, Dept. of Public Works  
Erik Whitney, Assist. Superint., Dept. of Public Works

Ray Benjamin, Assist. Superint., Dept. of Public Works  
Phyllis Radke, Director of Zoning Administration  
Mike Niechwiadowicz, Director of Code Enforcement  
Scott Gibson, Environmental Engineer  
Jeanne Grace, City Forester  
Skip Schell, Code Inspector  
Tom West, Director of Engineering  
Eric Hathaway, Sidewalk Program Manager  
Tim Logue, Transportation Engineer  
Frank Nagy, Director of Parking  
Doug Swarts, TCAT

**From:** Lisa Nicholas, Senior Planner

**Re:** Projects for Review & Comment

**Date:** November 5, 2015

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Listed below are one new project and two carried over from prior months, which the Planning and Development Board will consider at its November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting. Please submit comments on these projects no later than noon, **November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015**, so the Planning Board may have the opportunity to fully consider them.

**Project:** Herson Wagner Funeral Home Relocation

**Location:** 327 Elmira Rd.

**Applicant:** Gregory L. Myer of Myer Funeral Services Corp.

**Anticipated Board Action(s) in November:** Determination of Environmental Significance & Recommendation to BZA

**Project Description:** The applicant is proposing to relocate a funeral home business to this location. The L-shaped project site is 1.24 acres and contains two existing buildings. The proposed project is to renovate the existing buildings, add a 46-space parking area, a portion of which will be porous paving, entrance drive and drop-off area, install internal pedestrian walkways, as well as a connection to the public sidewalk, and add landscaping, lighting, and signage. The project site is in two Zoning Districts: the portion of the site contiguous to Elmira Road and containing the larger building is in the SW-2 District, while the larger portion of the site containing the smaller building and proposed parking lot is in the R-2a District. The rear portion of the site is currently used for outdoor storage of goods and construction equipment. The project requires a Use Variance for uses proposed in the R-2a District. This is an Unlisted Action under the City of Ithaca Environmental Quality Review Ordinance ("CEQRO") and the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"), and is subject to environmental review.

**Project:** Site Improvements  
**Location:** 416-418 E. State St.  
**Applicant:** Scott Whitham, Whitham Planning & Design, LLC

**Anticipated Board Action(s) in November:** Determination of Environmental Significance & Recommendation to BZA

**Project Description:** The applicant proposes to convert a portion of the existing commercial space into a bar, expand and renovate the existing office space, create one apartment, and provide storage. Exterior renovations include construction of two new building entrances, one of which will have a stair connecting the back entrance to the adjacent parking area, realignment of the curbing to provide better maneuverability in the 2-car parking area, walkways, landscaping, lighting, and signage. The new bar, office spaces, and apartment require 40 off-street parking spaces. The applicant is proposing shared parking with the adjacent Argos Inn. The project is in the B-4 Zoning District and the East Hill Historic District. The project requires variances for existing area deficiencies and a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission (ILPC). This is an Unlisted Action under the City of Ithaca Environmental Quality Review Ordinance (“CEQRO”) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”), and is subject to environmental review.

**Project:** Four Multi-Family Dwellings — “Pocket Neighborhood”  
**Location:** 215-221 Spencer St.  
**Applicant:** Noah Demarest, STREAM Collaborative, for PPM Homes

**Anticipated Board Action(s) in November:** Preliminary & Final Site Plan Approval

**Project Description:** The applicant proposes to build a new multi-family “pocket neighborhood” on a hillside site between W. Spencer St. and W. Cayuga St. The project will include four buildings, each of which will be 3 stories tall and contain 3 units (12 units total). A 12-car parking area is proposed with access off W. Cayuga Street. Site circulation will be organized with a series of landscaped stairs and terraces connecting through the site. The project also includes lighting, retaining walls, and landscaping. The project is in the R-3b Zoning District and received a variance for parking on November 3, 2015. This is an Unlisted Action under the City of Ithaca Environmental Quality Review Ordinance and the State Environmental Quality Review Act, for which the Planning Board, acting as Lead Agency, issued a Negative Determination of Environmental Significance on October 27, 2015.

cc: Mayor Svante Myrick & Common Council  
Dr. Luvelle Brown, Superintendent, ICSD  
Jay Franklin, Tompkins County Assessment

**ACCESSING ONLINE DOCUMENTS**

Site Plan Review & Subdivision Application Documents (and Related Materials)

Site Plan Review application documents are accessible electronically via the “Document Center” on the City web site (<http://www.cityofithaca.org/DocumentCenter>), under “Planning & Development” > “Site Plan Review Project Applications,” and in the relevant year/month folder. Subdivision application materials can be similarly located, but in the “Subdivision Applications” folder.

**City of Ithaca**  
**FULL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM (FEAF) — Part III**  
**Project Name: 327 Elmira Rd. — Herson Wagner Funeral Home**  
**Date Created: 10/14/15**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is proposing to relocate a funeral home business to this location. The L-shaped project site is 1.24 acres and contains two existing buildings. The proposed project is to renovate the existing buildings, add a 46-space parking area, a portion of which will be porous paving, entrance drive and drop-off area, install internal pedestrian walkways, as well as a connection to the public sidewalk, and add landscaping, lighting, and signage. The project site is in two Zoning Districts: the portion of the site contiguous to Elmira Road and containing the larger building is in the SW-2 District, while the larger portion of the site containing the smaller building and proposed parking lot is in the R-2a District. The rear portion of the site is currently used for outdoor storage of goods and construction equipment.

The project requires a Use Variance for uses proposed in the R-2a District. This is an Unlisted Action under the City of Ithaca Environmental Quality Review Ordinance (“CEQRO”) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”), and is subject to environmental review.

**IMPACT ON LAND**

No impact anticipated.

**IMPACT ON WATER**

No impact anticipated.

**IMPACT ON DRAINAGE**

No impact anticipated.

**IMPACT ON AIR**

No impact anticipated.

**IMPACT ON PLANTS & ANIMALS**

No impact anticipated.

**IMPACT ON AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

No impact anticipated.

### **IMPACT ON HISTORIC RESOURCES**

No impact anticipated.

### **IMPACT ON OPEN SPACE AREA**

No impact anticipated.

### **IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION**

No impact anticipated.

### **IMPACT ON ENERGY**

No impact anticipated.

### **IMPACT ON NOISE & ODORS**

No impact anticipated.

### **IMPACT ON PUBLIC HEALTH**

The applicant has submitted a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), dated September 2015 and prepared by GeoLogic NY, Inc. The assessment revealed the following recognized environmental conditions in connection with the property:

*Two USTs were removed from the Property in 1995. Petroleum contaminated soil was encountered in the gasoline tank excavation. Soil was stockpiled on the Property. No information was available on the presence and/or impacts to groundwater from these USTs. It appears that the excavated soil from the tank removals is still located at the Property.*

*A 275-gallon AST diesel was noted on the Property. The tank appears to be empty. No secondary containment was noted for this AST. The AST is sitting directly on the ground. Spillage, if it occurred, when pumping product from this tank, or placing product into this tank, could have an adverse impact to the soil, soil vapor and/or groundwater quality of the Property.*

*Eight drums were noted on pallets. Most of the drums appeared to have contained new motor oil (based on labels) and appear to be empty. One drum appeared to be full, contents unknown (no label). Some leakage (petroleum?) was noted and was impacting the ground surface adjacent to one drum. Release of material(s) from these drums could have an adverse impact to the soil, soil vapor and/or groundwater quality of the Property.*

*A self-contained solvent-based parts washer is used at the Property. The parts washer is located inside, on a concrete floor. Cracks were noted in the floor in the vicinity of the parts washer. Spillage of solvents associated with this parts washer could have an adverse impact to the soil, soil vapor and/or groundwater quality of the Property.*

## Applicant Response Needed

No impact anticipated.

### **IMPACT ON GROWTH & CHARACTER OF COMMUNITY OR NEIGHBORHOOD**

The project requires a Use Variance for creation of a parking area in the portion of the site that is in the R-2a Zoning District.

The property has been in commercial use for nearly 50 years and is currently used for sales and rentals of construction equipment, tools, and associated supplies, including outdoor storage of goods and equipment. One building on site is also used as a retail and rental store with office, storage, and warehouse area. The second building has an office area and is used for retail sales of construction supplies. The remainder of the property is used for parking and outside storage of large construction equipment and supplies. Currently, there is little vegetation on site with the exception of approximately 0.43 acres of patches of lawn and scrubby vegetation around the south periphery of the property. There is no visual barrier between the service yard and the residential properties to the immediate south and west.

The project proposal would remove the existing gravel drive, storage yard, and parking, replacing it with an asphalt drive with a turn-around between the two buildings, and a parking lot in the south area of the lot. The southeastern bay of the parking lot is proposed as porous asphalt. One large-caliper shade tree in the southeast corner of the property would be preserved, and new buffer plantings would be provided along the south and east property lines, while the northern edge of the parking lot would have landscaped beds. The applicant has also agreed to install a wooden privacy fence at the perimeter of the property.

The Lead Agency finds that the proposed project greatly improves the existing interface between the residential and commercial uses. The proposed use is more compatible with residential than the existing use; and the project provides a substantial and attractive visual buffer for the adjacent residents.

No impact anticipated.

**Prepared by:** Lisa Nicholas, AICP