



March 29, 2016
Planning & Development Board
City of Ithaca
108 E. Green Street, 3rd Floor
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850

Re: Maplewood Redevelopment Project –Site Plan Review Submission

Dear City of Ithaca Planning Board:

Thank you for your time in considering this proposal for the redevelopment of Cornell University's Maplewood Graduate and Professional Student Housing Project. This project will redevelop the existing Maplewood housing complex, which currently has 372 beds in 170 units in one-story flat apartments, and will create a new, revitalized, and pedestrian friendly neighborhood of 850-975 beds in 500-600 units of a mix of townhome, stacked flat, and multi-family apartment buildings within a +/-17-acre property between Maple Avenue and Mitchell Street, with Veteran's Place as a thru-street to these roads. Nearby amenities include East Hill Plaza, Belle Sherman Elementary School, and East Hill Recreation Way and Cascadilla Creek Natural Area.

A small portion of the site, the northwest corner consisting of 0.75 acres, is located in the City of Ithaca and is zoned as R3b. This portion of the project is proposed as an as-of-right multi-family residential apartment building consisting of 3 to 4 stories, with a community-serving commercial space on the ground floor.

A majority of the property is located in the Town, and is currently zoned as High Density Residential, limiting the site's development to fulfill the objectives set forth in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The 2014 Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use and Character map envisions Maplewood as a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) High Density area in connection with East Hill Plaza (or East Hill Village in the future per Cornell's Master Plan). In order to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's guidelines and goals to create more sustainable and dynamic, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use developments with compact and dense footprints that conserve environmentally sensitive areas, we are requesting to rezone the site as a new Planned Development Zone (PDZ) for the Town of Ithaca.

Since the Sketch Plan presentation of the previous concept plan, the Project Team has held community meetings and received feedback from the Town and City Planning Boards. The attached concept plan is a revision of the previous one, reflecting general comments the Team received on



open space, density, and building types. Townhomes and stacked flats comparable in scale to the surrounding neighborhood to the west are located along the western edge of the property to form a stronger relationship to the project's surroundings. The open space that traverses the site along east-west axis takes their cues from neighboring streets, visually continuing the urban grid through the site. To accommodate the townhouses along the western portion of the project, one of the multi-family apartment buildings was moved to the eastern portion of the site, tucked against the topography.

For next steps in the process, we are currently in discussions with the Town Planning Committee developing a hybrid PDZ / Form-Based Zoning document. While this develops, we hope to begin the SEQR review process with the Town and City, and are anticipating the production of an EIS. We are planning to develop a Scoping Document early April after the Town Planning Board's April 5th meeting, in which we anticipate the Board declares its intent as Lead Agency. The project team will draft a Scoping Document for the Town's and City's review and feedback for mid-April.

The Project Team has been chosen by Cornell University after a Request for Proposals process, an example of Cornell's goal to provide housing for more of its graduate and professional students. The developer is EdR Trust of Memphis, TN, one of the country's largest owners, developers, and managers of collegiate housing. The design team consists of Torti Gallas and Partners of Silver Spring, MD, a nationally recognized Urban Design and Architecture firm grounded in principles of New Urbanism, Whitham Planning & Design and T.G. Miller, P.C. Engineers & Surveyors, both of Ithaca, NY.

On behalf of the developer and design team, I am attaching a brief narrative and preliminary annotated concept plan for your review, which describes the proposal and how the redevelopment of Maplewood as a denser and more pedestrian-friendly neighborhood will help achieve the City's and Town's goals to create walkable neighborhoods. We look forward to continue working with you, the Town, and the surrounding community to reimagine Maplewood as a dynamic, connective residential development for current and future residents associated with Cornell University.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be the initials 'M' or 'S'.

Scott Whitham