
Site Plan Review Application Report



Seneca Way Apartments

City of Ithaca
Ithaca, New York

December 22, 2010

FILE COPY



1001 West Seneca Street, Suite 101
Ithaca, New York 14850

t: 607.277.1400
f: 607.277.6092
www.twla.com

December 22, 2010

Lisa Nicholas and
Members of the City of Ithaca Planning and Development Board
Department of Planning and Development
City of Ithaca
108 West Green Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

RE: Site Development Review Application for Seneca Way Apartments

Dear Lisa:

This letter transmits to you the Site Development Plan Review Application and LEAF for the Seneca Way Apartments project proposed at 140 Seneca Way.

The proposed project seeks to construct market rate housing, commercial space, parking, site amenities and landscaping in the City of Ithaca. The site is located in downtown Ithaca at the tuning fork along East State Street/Martin Luther King Jr. Street and Seneca Way.

The attached materials include a detailed project description for Seneca Way Apartments with an Environmental Assessment Form and supplemental information to the LEAF. In addition, preliminary design plans and renderings for the project are included.

On behalf of the Project Team, we look forward to reviewing the project with you and members of the Planning and Development Board at the January 2011 meeting.

Please do not hesitate to call should you have questions or require additional information.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Trowbridge'.

Peter Trowbridge
Principal

Attachments

DEC 22 2010

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Project Consultants

Developer:

Brian Warren
Fall Creek Development of Ithaca, LLC
301 East State Street
Ithaca, New York 14850
607.330.5238

Architect:

HOLT Architects
217 North Aurora Street
Ithaca, New York 14850
607.273.7600

Landscape Architect:

Trowbridge & Wolf, Landscape Architects, LLP
1001 West Seneca Street, Suite 101
Ithaca, New York 14850
607.277.1400

Civil Engineer:

T.G. Miller P.C., Engineers and Surveyors
203 North Aurora Street
PO Box 777, Ithaca, New York 14851
607.272.6477

Structural Engineering:

John P. Stopen Engineering Partnership
450 South Salina Street
Suite 400, P.O. Box 29
Syracuse, New York, 13201
315.472.5238

MEP Engineering:

Erdman Anthony
2165 Brighton Henrietta Town Line Road
Rochester, New York 14623
585.427.8888

Traffic Engineers:

SRF Associates
3495 Winston Place, Building E Suite 110
Rochester, NY 15623
585.272.4660

Archeology Review:

PAF-Binghamton University
Science 1 room 146
Binghamton, New York 13902
607.777.4786

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Location and Setting

Location

The project site consists of tax parcel 69-2-20 and is located at 402 East State Street / East Martin Luther King Jr Street. The site is the former location of Challenge Industries. The existing building and site features occur both along East State Street / East Martin Luther King Jr Street and Seneca Way. The parcel falls within the City of Ithaca B4 Zone and is adjacent to the East Hill Historic District which includes portions of Seneca Street. The site is considered a gateway to The City of Ithaca at the base of a steep slope and adjacent to the Downtown Business District for the City and a transition zone to the residential area to the north.

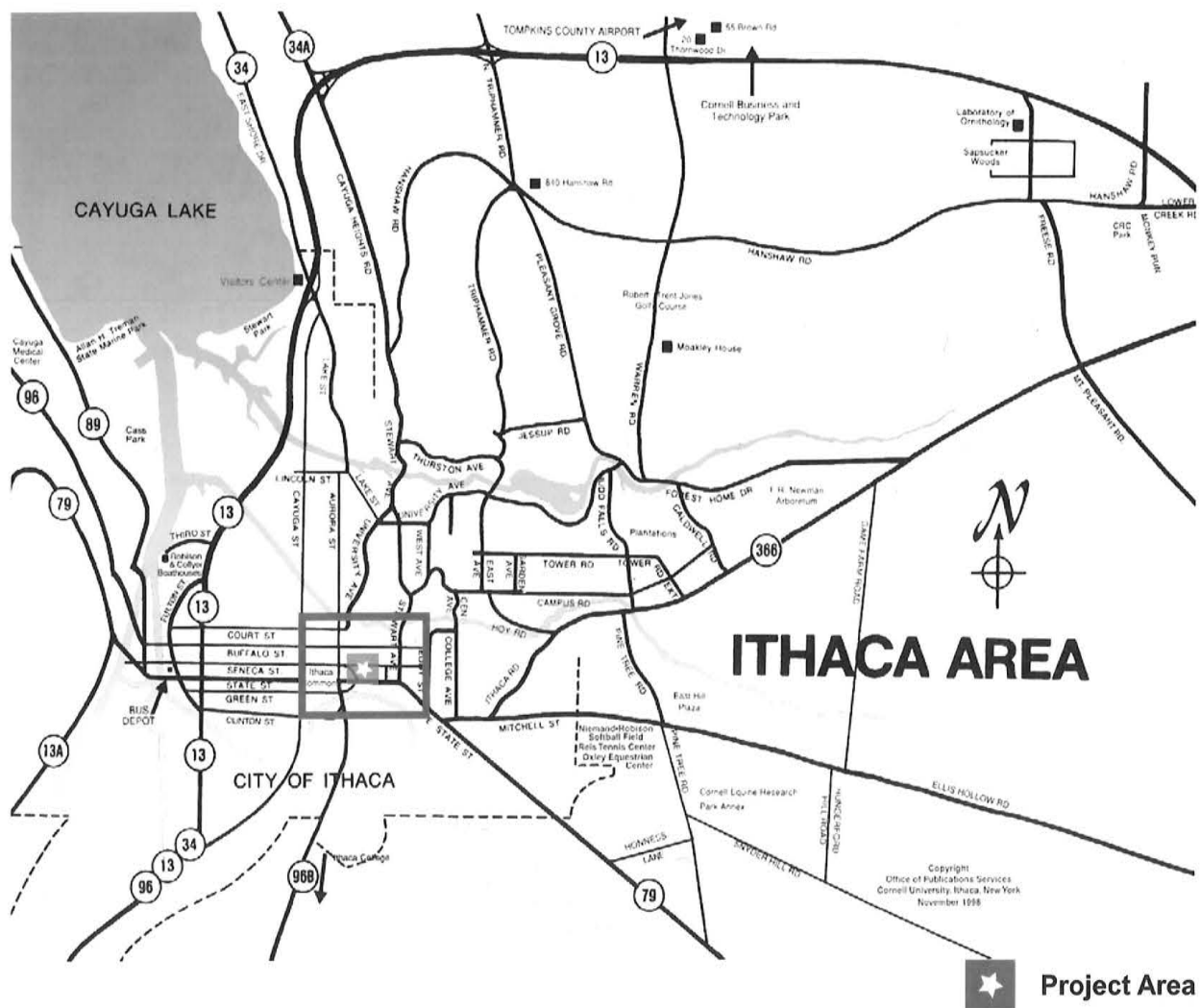


Figure 1: Location Map in context with the City of Ithaca.

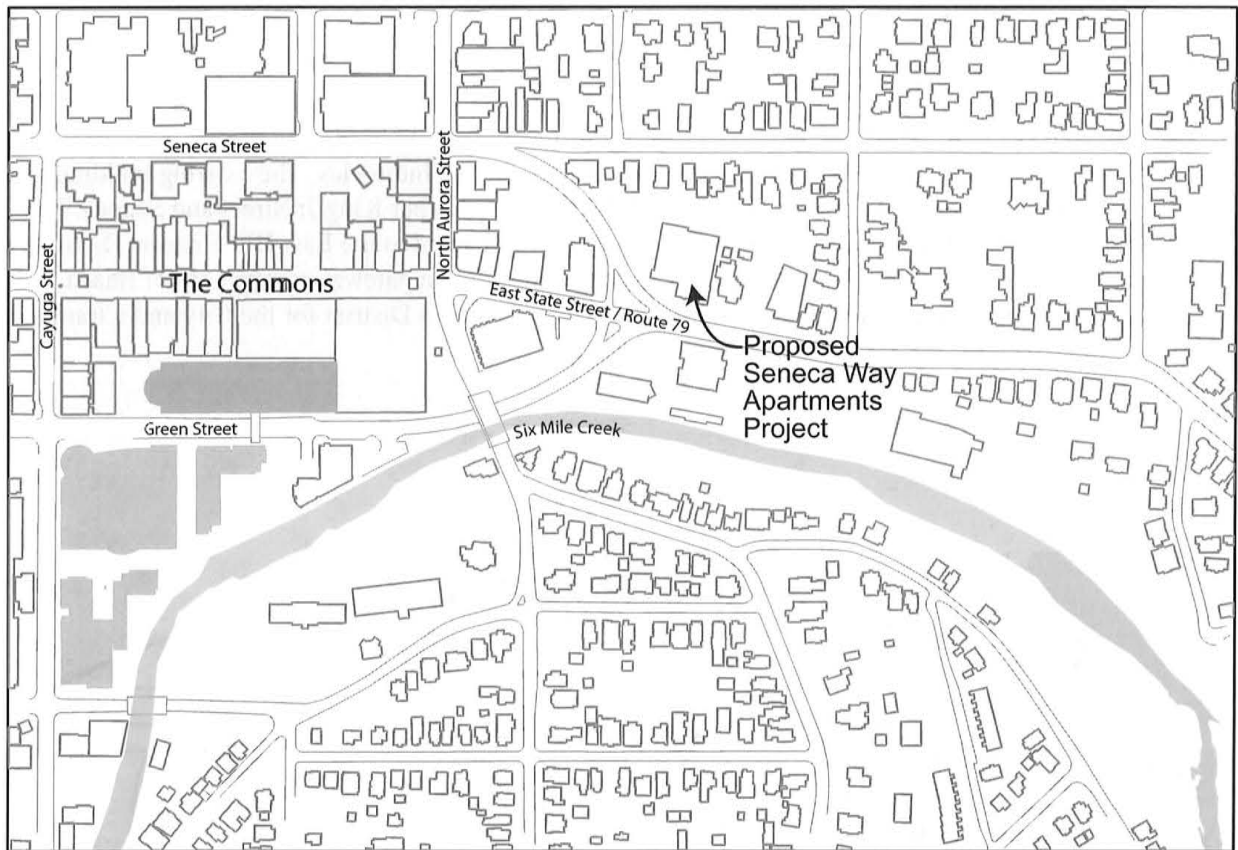


Figure 2: 140 Seneca Way Project Context

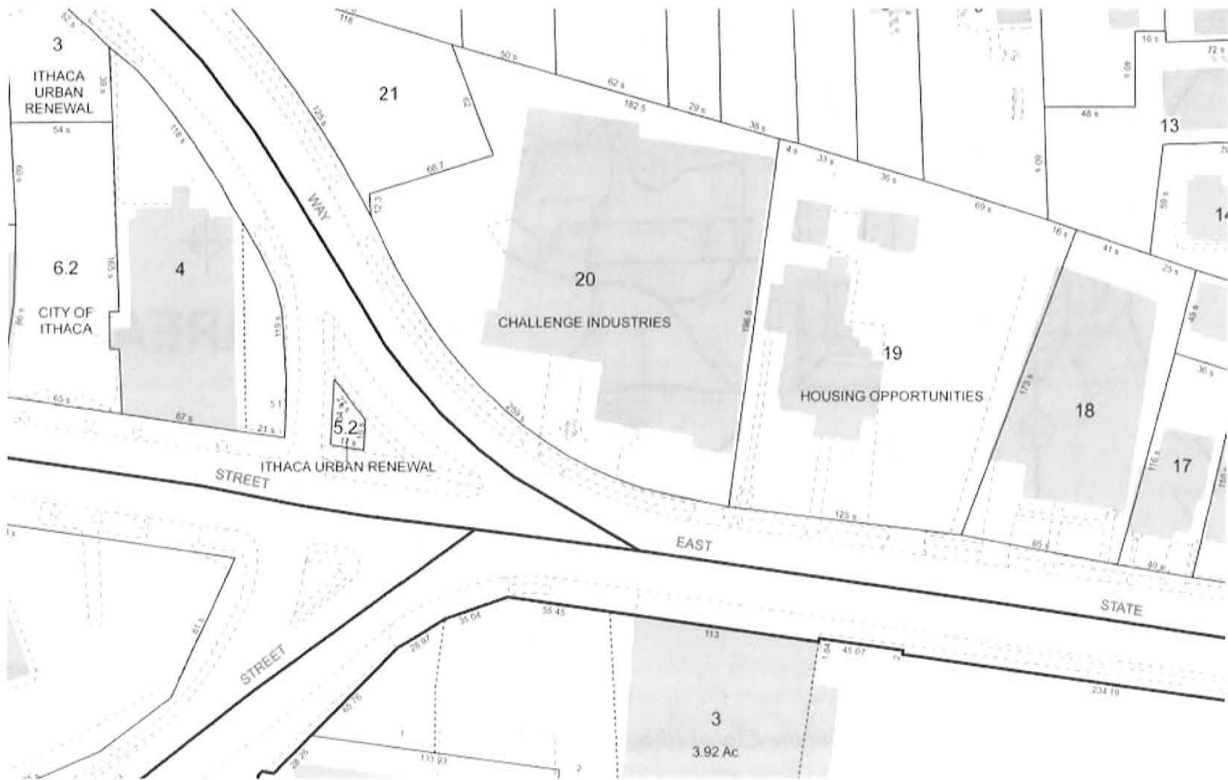


Figure 3: 140 Seneca Way Property



Figure 4: View looking from Green Street



Figure 5: View from Gateway Commons

East Hill Historic District

The following has been excerpted from the City of Ithaca website describing the East Hill Historic District:

“The first historic districts on East Hill were the Fountain Place Local Historic District, (1974), and the initial, smaller East Hill Local Historic District, (1976). The district was increased to its present size with listing of the East Hill National Register Historic District in 1986. In 1988, the local historic district was expanded to match boundaries of the National Register District. Encompassing the two earlier districts, the expanded district includes 264 contributing elements and surviving segments of the city’s early 20th century street paving.”

“Residences on East Hill dating from the 1830s and the 1840s are concentrated on the 400 block of East Seneca and East Buffalo Streets. The random nature of settlement on East Hill in the 1840s and 1850s was characterized by few residences near the village limit on Eddy Street. Except for isolated properties associated with the milling activities near Osmun Place and Williams Street, the neighborhood was primarily rural in character. The major force spurring dense development was the selection of Ithaca as the site for Cornell University, which opened in 1868. The large 2-1/2 and 3 story residences and boarding houses constructed in the last quarter of the 19th century were part of the building booms that shaped the visual character of East Hill. The 1870s and 1880s were also marked by extensive public improvements, such as street paving and public water, undertaken in the district and throughout the city. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, East Hill residents have played key roles in Ithaca’s social, educational, financial and political life and attest to the importance of East Hill to Ithaca’s growth and development.”



Figure 6: East Hill Historic District (pink) in relation to project site (black, dashed line)

Zoning

140 Seneca Way is located in a B-4 Use District in the City of Ithaca, a zoning district originally designed to accommodate certain motor-vehicle related uses (gasoline stations, motor vehicle sales and service, and freestanding parking garages) that were located in this area in the 1960s and 1970s. These uses have long since left the area partly due to the construction of the so called "Tuning Fork" (Seneca Way and the East Green Street connection to State Street) which changed traffic patterns in the area, and the migration of motor-vehicle-related uses to the Route 13 corridor. When a comprehensive rezoning of the City's residential use districts was undertaken in 1976-77, it was recognized that the City's business use districts also were in need of rezoning. This never happened; instead various areas were rezoned to stimulate specific projects, or specific kinds of projects in the area. Unfortunately, the outmoded B-4 zoning persists on this side of Martin Luther King Jr./East State Street, although the City has seen fit to rezone the area on the south side of the street to CBD-60, which is intended to stimulate more intense commercial development. Had the City rezoned this area to CBD-60, the height and parking variances would not be necessary.

The proposed uses are permitted in the B-4 Use District, so no use variances are required. The uses are also permitted in the adjacent CBD Use Districts. Unfortunately, the

siting and height of the proposed building trigger the need for area variances, and an application has been made to the Board of Zoning Appeals for variances from the following B-4 Use District Regulations (Section 325-8 of the City of Ithaca Zoning Ordinance):

1. Off-street Parking (Column 4): The proposed building includes 9,311 square feet of commercial space and 38 one-bedroom apartments. Column 4 requires a parking space for each apartment, and a parking space for each 250 square feet of office space, or 37 spaces. The total requirement is for 75 spaces. Proposed are 53 spaces: 8 in the west parking lot, 14 in the basement parking garage, and 31 in the east parking lot. A variance is requested for the 22 parking spaces that cannot be accommodated on the property.
2. Off-street Loading (Column 5): One off-street loading space is proposed for this project, where Column 5 requires three for the residential uses and one for the commercial uses. In addition, the area in front of the service entry is designed to accommodate large moving vans during apartment tenant moves. A variance is requested to permit the reduction of loading spaces to one plus the moving van location.
3. Height (Columns 8 and 9):
 - a. Column 8, Building Height in Stories: The proposed building is five stories in height above average finished grade. Column 8 limits the permitted number of stories to four stories above average finished grade. A variance is requested to permit the additional story.
 - b. Column 9, Building Height in Feet: The roof of the building is 57.5 feet above the average finished grade, with a 3.0 foot high parapet above the roof for part of the roof. Column 9 permits a maximum height of 40 feet; therefore the proposed building exceeds the permitted height by 17.5 feet (the parapet is permitted above that height). A variance is requested to permit the additional 17.5 feet above the permitted height.
 - c. Side Yard Setback (Column 13, as modified by Section 328-19B): The north end of the proposed building will be ten feet from the north property line. The parcel has two front yards (Seneca Way and East Martin Luther King Jr./State Street), and the east yard has been designated to be the rear yard

and the north yard the “other” side yard. The minimum required setback for the “other” side yard in this case is five feet, but the Building Department has advised that Section 328-19B of the Zoning Ordinance applies, requiring that “where a lot in a business or industrial district abuts a lot in a residential district, there shall be provided along such abutting lines a yard equal in width or depth to that required in the residential district.” The wording seems to require that the business district side yard be equal in width or depth to that of the required side yard of the abutting residential district (which would be five feet in this case). The diagram on the following page of the Zoning Ordinance similarly shows the side yard = side yard, rear yard = rear yard relationship, but does not show a condition where a side yard abuts a rear yard. The proposed side yard setback on the north side of 140 Seneca Way is ten feet; the minimum required rear yard setback in the adjacent Residential (R-2a) Use District is 25% of the lot depth to a maximum requirement of fifty feet. The average depth of the lots on Seneca Street that abut this property is 139 feet; 25% of that average is 35 feet; therefore the worst-case side yard requirement for 140 Seneca Way is 35 feet. A side yard variance is requested for the 25 foot deficiency, based on the Building Department’s application of Section 328-19B of the Zoning Ordinance.

These variances will permit a much better building and site with consequently greater contributions to the downtown experience, vitality both day and night, and a higher density. The height increase allows for 14 parking spaces in the basement, bringing the project closer to compliance with the parking requirements and creating better amenities for the tenants. The siting of the building reduces the required excavation and site work and results in an efficient linear organization within the building. It is planned to sit approximately in the former footprint of the western Challenge Industries’ building. The new walls will function as retaining walls for the east and west parking lots. The siting also provides viewsheds for residents of the R-2A district to the north. See figure 7 Site Plan

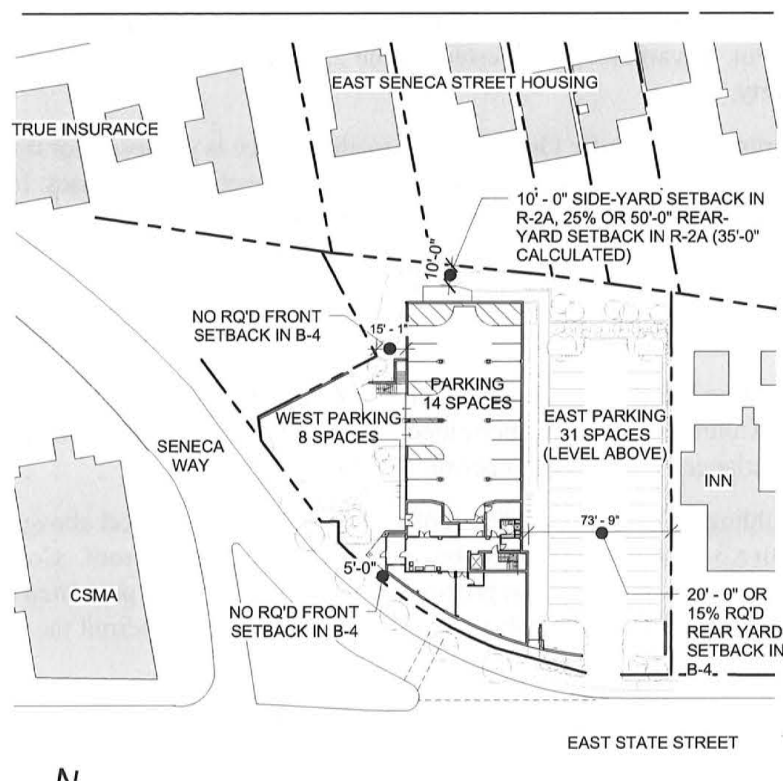


Figure 7 Site Plan

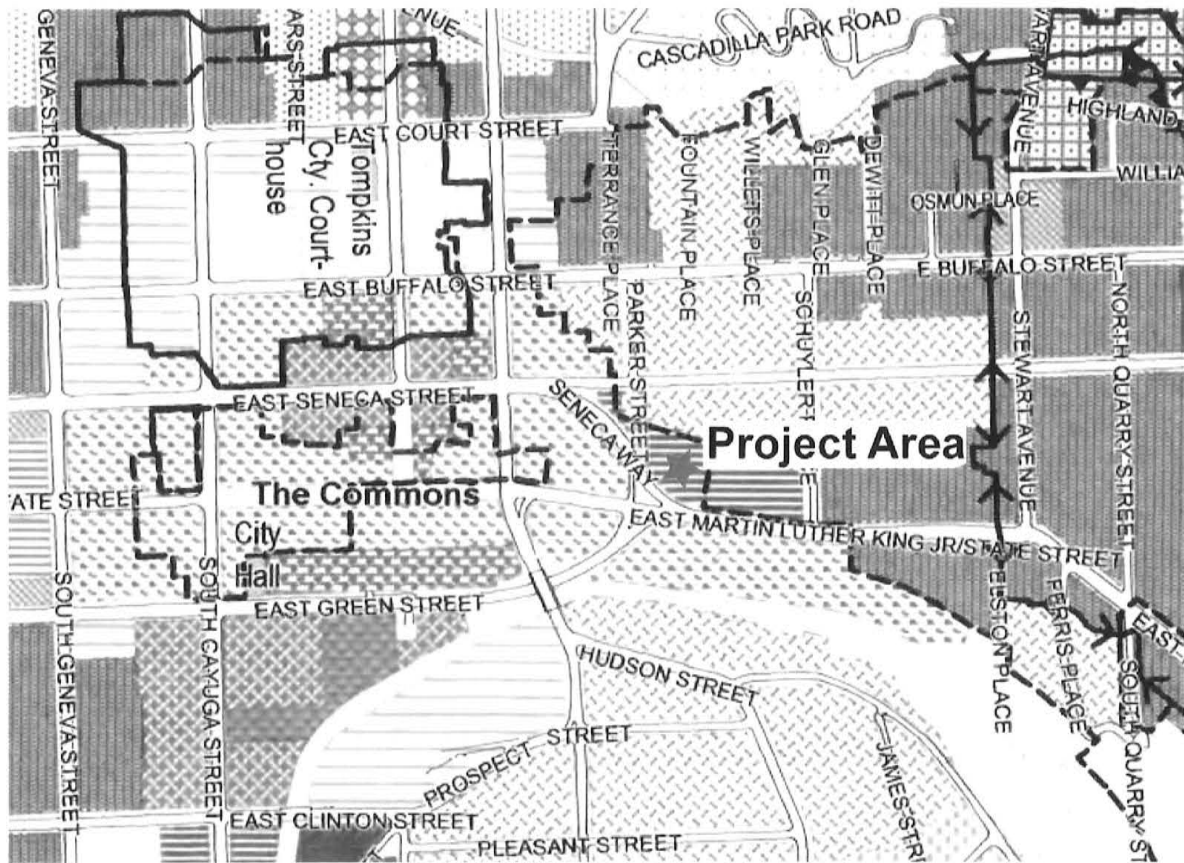


Figure 8: City of Ithaca Zoning Map

Legend for Zoning Districts

R-1a	B-1b	CBD-85	U-1	WF-1c
R-1b	B-2a	CBD-100	WEDZ-1a	WF-1d
R-2a	B-2b	CBD-120	WEDZ-1b	GP-A
R-2b	B-2c	MH-1	SW-1	GP-B
R-3a	B-2d	C-6U	SW-2	GP-C
R-3b	B-4	I-1	SW-3	Historic District
R-U	B-5	M-1	WF-1a	CPDZ
B-1a	CBD-60	P-1	WF-1b	Adult Uses

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Introduction

The proposed Seneca Way Apartments building will be a mixed-use building designed as a place to work and live in downtown Ithaca. A 14 space parking garage is proposed for the basement. These spaces and the 8 in the west lot and 31 in the east lot provide an appropriate number, based on the proximity of garages and projected needs of the users. There will also be abundant indoor bike storage in the basement. The main entry for both residents and commercial users is at this level and will feature a vestibule, a large lobby to access the elevator and stair and storage for tenant use. The ground floor will be approximately 9,300 sf of commercial space. Warren Real Estate is planning to occupy half of this space and there may be one or two other commercial tenants. A secondary entry from the east parking lot and an emergency exit to the west parking lot will be shared by the tenants. On the second through fifth floors there will be 38 residential units (32 1BR units and 6 2BR units). There are 44 beds anticipated. The projected rental market is young professionals working downtown or at the colleges. The fifth floor will include a fitness center and roof terrace to the south of the building. See figures 9 through 13.

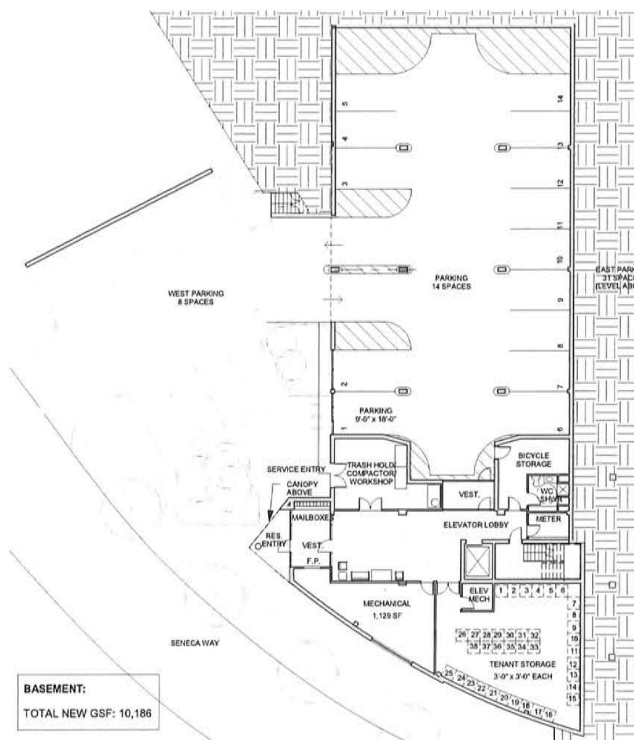


Figure 9: Basement Floor Plan

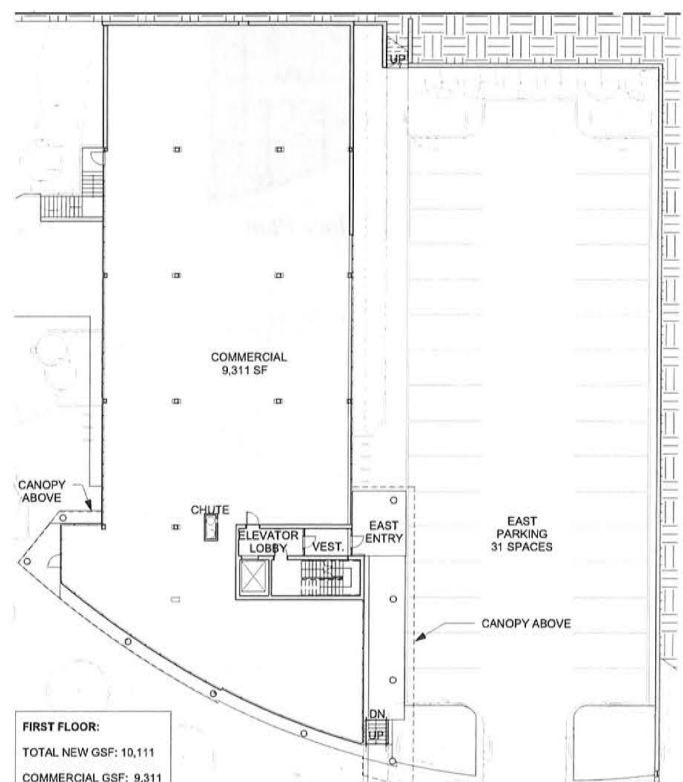
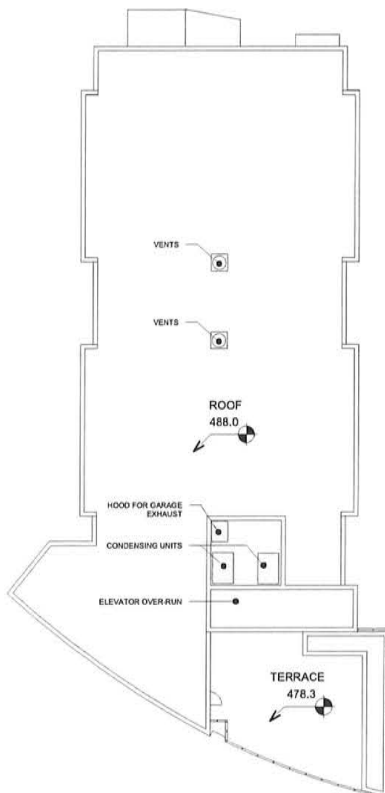
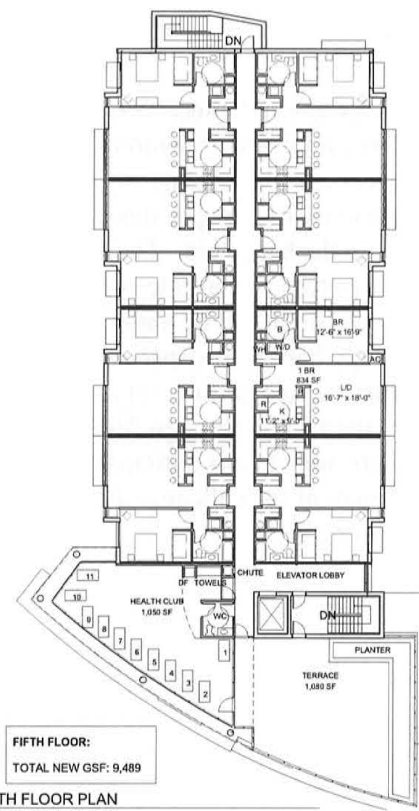
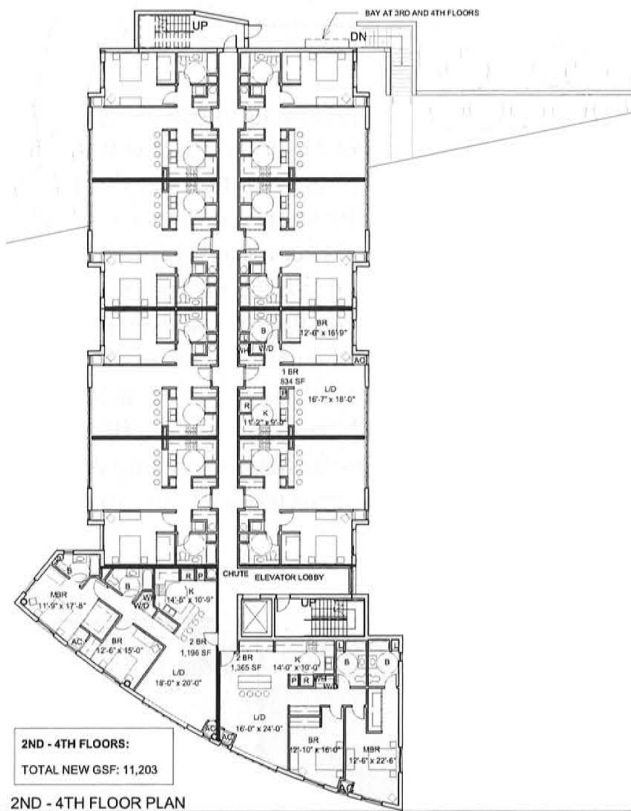


Figure 10: First Floor Plan - Commercial



The current status of the property is tax-exempt and unused since Challenge Industries moved last year. This project will not only be on the tax roll, the assessed value will be significantly higher than what the existing building would be if it were taxable under a new owner. Unlike many recent downtown projects, the developers are not requesting tax breaks or any public investment. It is entirely a private sector project. The plan for the project fits the Downtown Ithaca Development Strategy and would fulfill needs for housing and office space downtown. This project, which is on a brownfield site, will contribute to downtown growth and urban in-fill.

Project Purpose, Need, and Benefit

140 Seneca Way is a mixed residential/commercial project targeted at residents looking for a quality, urban and sustainable lifestyle within the lively business district of downtown Ithaca. The project will include 38 apartments (32 one-bedroom and 6 two-bedroom) and $\pm 9,300$ square feet of office space over a 14-space parking garage. An additional 41 space will be located in two parking lots on the east and west sides of the building. Apartments will be spacious with upscale finishes, premium appliances, quality casework, walk-in closets, washer/dryers and ample storage. Building amenities will include a private health club, roof terrace, indoor bike storage and additional secure storage. The emphasis on one-bedroom floor plans is driven by market research, which indicates the project will fill an important need downtown as it attracts empty nesters and young professionals into the urban core. Residents will live less than 1,000 feet from the center of the Commons and along bus routes to Cornell, Ithaca College and most other destinations in and around Ithaca. The commercial space will also address the significant need for Class A offices and will help attract and retain quality businesses within this important business district. The primary commercial tenant will be Warrant Real Estate.

The project is located at a prominent gateway location into the City on the former Challenge Industries property along a transitional zone from residential into commercial. HOLT Architects have creatively addressed the significant design challenges presented by the site topography and rock conditions by benching the garage/foundation into the slope, thus reducing the scale to an appropriate level for the residential properties to the north and establishing a distinctive posture for the building addressing the business district to the south and west. The building's mix of apartments and offices provides an ideal transitional use into downtown from the abutting district that is primarily residential, but also includes commercial, institutional and multi-family properties.

The 140 Seneca Way project will revitalize a now vacant site with a new urbanist development model that embraces smart growth strategies consistent with the Downtown Ithaca Alliance Plan. The new development will put a now tax-exempt property back on the tax rolls. The current owner (Challenge Industries) has attempted to sell the property for over 2 years with little interest or no interest until the currently proposed the plan.

The project schedule anticipates a construction start for June 2011 and completion by March 2012.

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Architectural Design

140 Seneca Way will be a prominent element of the gateway into downtown Ithaca. The building's design will make a strong contribution to the Martin Luther King Jr./East State Street and Seneca Way. By locating the building on the western portion of the site, there is a physical connection to downtown and the tall buildings across both streets (the Gateway Center, the Gateway Commons, the Community School of Music and Arts). See figure 14



Figure 14: Northwest View

The southern façade follows the curve of Seneca Way toward downtown. The building's wall, plantings and low site walls or elements would continue this urban edge along the curve. The dramatic experience of this curve would be balanced with a smaller scale of site elements, change of building materials and geometries at the pedestrian level. The parking spaces, necessary both for zoning and tenant requirements, would be screened from the street. See figure 15



Figure 15: Seneca Way View

From the neighbors' perspectives, the building is nestled into the hill, hiding the lower floors and lower parking level. The building use in areas adjacent to the R-2A district is residential, with an enclosed exit stair to grade (at the second floor of the building). This face would be modified to match the scale and language of the residential district through the use of sloped roofs. See figure 16

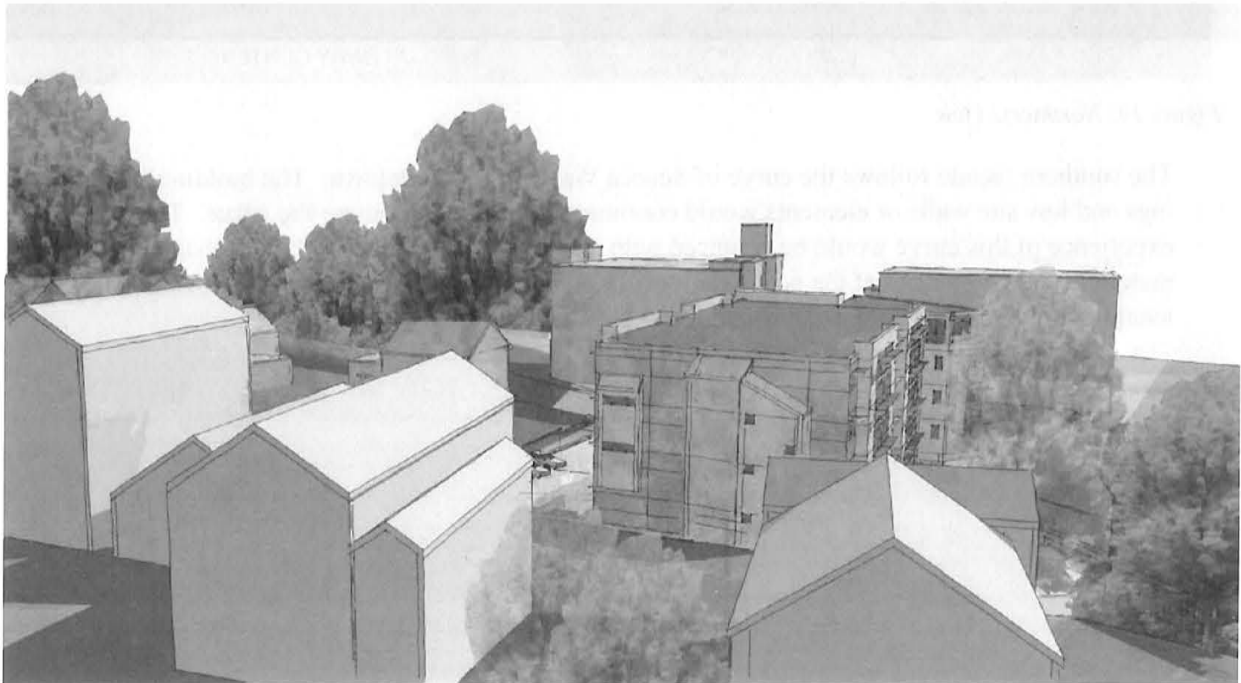


Figure 16: Residential District

The linear shape of the plan allows the apartments to be efficient and desirable to renters. The facade is articulated by the living room projections, which feature large windows and louvers and also by the smaller-scaled elements at the bedrooms. The apartments along the south curve of the building are 2-bedroom units which are stacked for efficiency and to make them and the resulting façade unique in character. The fitness center and roof terrace add amenities to the building as well as further define and personalize this edge. Figure 17 and 18 South and West Elevations and 19 and 20 East and North Elevations



Figure 17: South Elevation



Figure 18: West Elevation

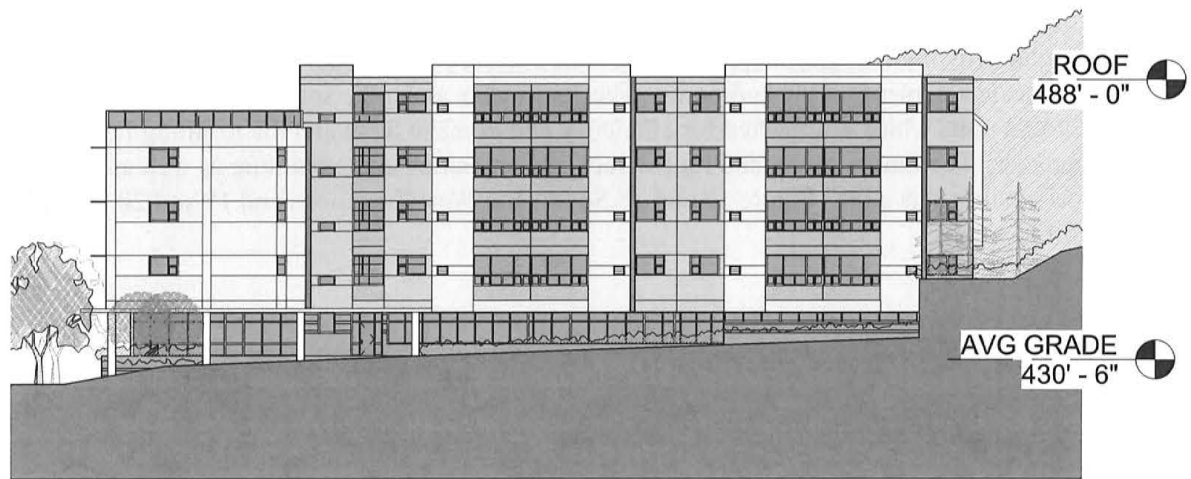


Figure 19: East Elevation

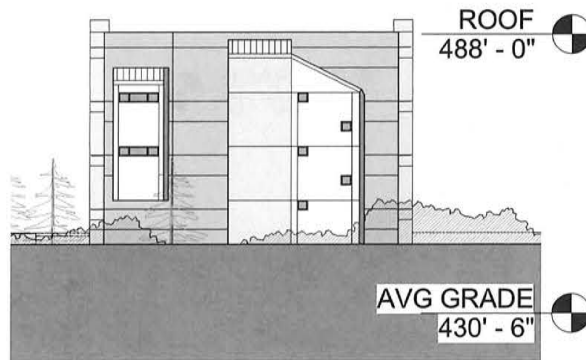
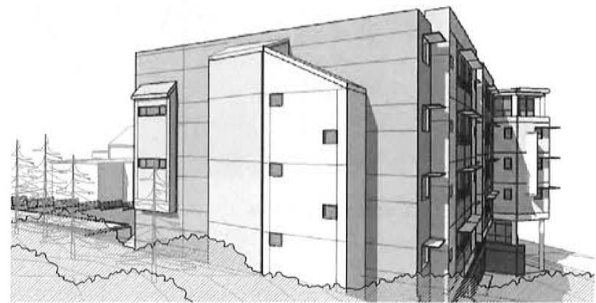


Figure 20: North Elevation



Back Yard Viewshed

The overall design is an efficient use of a difficult site that takes advantage of the changes in elevation, the curve of Seneca Way, the proximity and connection to downtown and is responsive and appropriate to its neighbors on each side.

Site Design

This former Challenge Industries Site is approximately 0.78 Acres. The topography across the site falls significantly from east to west which defines in part the nature of the site plan. Along the eastern edge of the site is a parking lot just west of 408 East State Street. This parking lot is a full story higher than the primary entry plaza, entry drive and ADA compliant parking to the west. The north part of the site will be a heavily vegetated slope of existing and proposed trees and shrubs creating a buffer between homes on Seneca Street and the new building. New curb cuts are limited to one on East State /Martin Luther King Jr. Street and one on Seneca Way (Unlike the current, almost continuous curb cut). This allows for the development of the design of a continuous sidewalk, tree lawn and street trees, extending the more urban character of Green Street in the Central Business District.

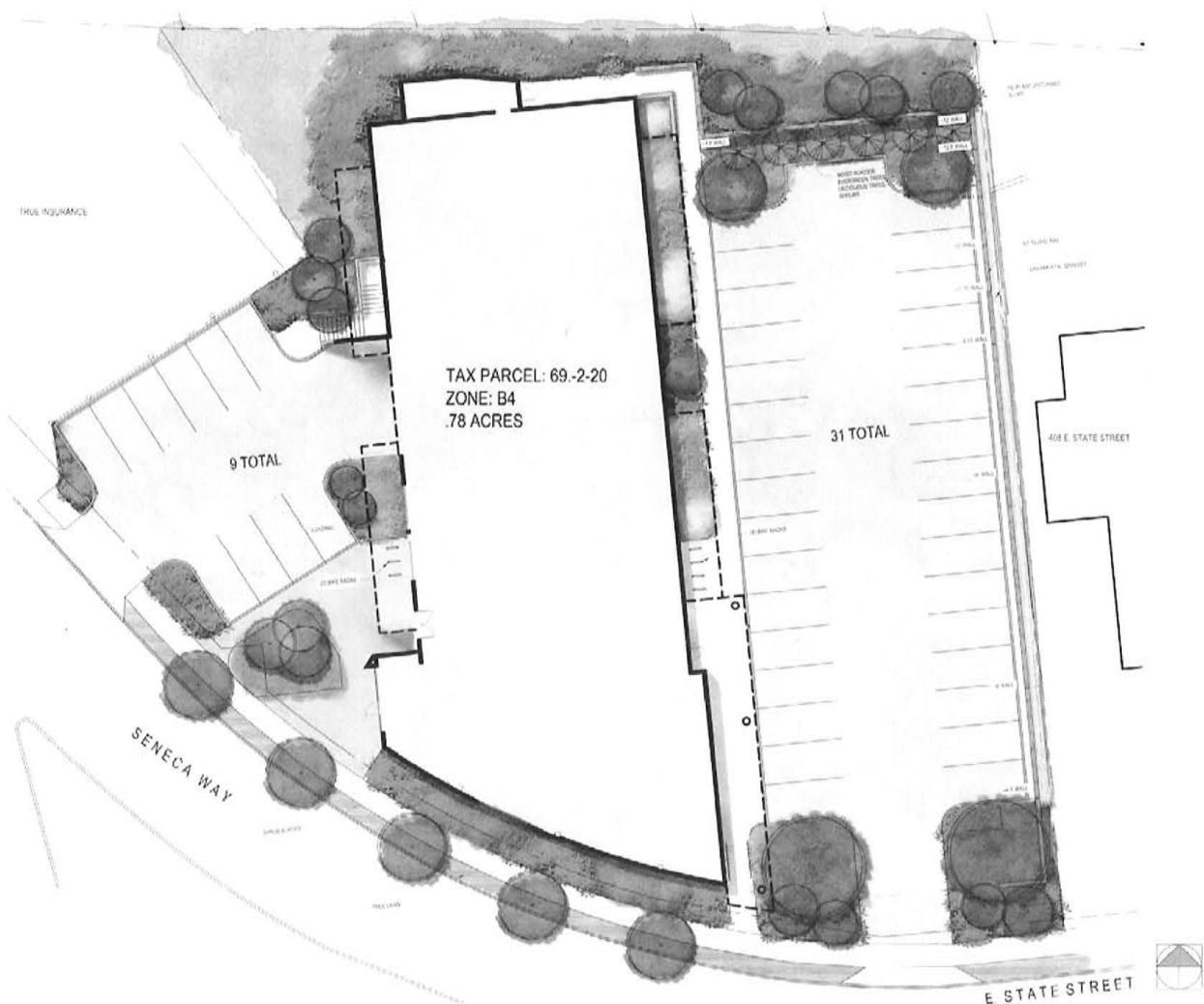


Figure 21: Site Plan

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City of Ithaca Site Plan Review (SPR) Application

Applicant:

Name Trowbridge & Wolf LLP

Address 1001 West Seneca Street, Ithaca, New York 14850

Telephone 607.277.1400

Principal Project Consultant:

Name HOLT Architects

Address 217 North Aurora Street, Ithaca, New York 14850

Telephone 607.273.7600

Project Owner:

Name Bryan Warren, Fall Creek Development of Ithaca, LLC.

Address 301 East State Street, Ithaca, New York 14850

Telephone 607.330.5238

Project Description

Title: Seneca Way Apartments

Address 140 Seneca Way

Type (check one)

Residential X

Industrial

Commercial X

Institutional

Scope of work (*check all that apply and indicate approximate operation/construction cost*)

<u>X</u> Vegetation removal	<u>\$3,500</u>
<u>X</u> Demolition	<u>\$150,000</u>
<u>X</u> Earthwork	<u>\$484,000</u>
<u>X</u> New structure	<u>\$6,374,000</u>
Expansion of structure	<u> </u>
Facade change	<u> </u>
Accessory structure	<u> </u>
<u>X</u> New paving	<u>\$55,000</u>
<u>X</u> New planting	<u>\$15,000</u>

Total construction cost \$7,081,500.00

Anticipated construction period May 2011 – May 2012

Other Information

1. If the development site is leased property, state property owner's name and address:

The project is not leased but is under contract for purchase from the current owner, Challenge Industries, 950 Danby road Suite 179, Ithaca, New York 14850

and length of lease: _____

(An owner's authorization of the applicant as the agent of SPR has to be filed with this department.)

2. Please state application date and approval status of any required federal, state or local permits or approvals for this project.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Approval Agency</u>	<u>Application Date</u>	<u>Approval Status</u>
<u>Site Plan Review</u>	<u>Planning Board</u>	<u>12-22-2010</u>	<u>TBD</u>
<u>Height Variance</u>	<u>Zoning Board</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

3. Describe any existing deed restrictions relevant to developments on this property.

No deed restrictions are known to exist.

4. Please provide any additional information that you feel is important in gaining a full understanding of your development proposal.

*PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PROPERTY DESCRIPTION.

Applicant's signature  Date 12-22-2010

CITY OF ITHACA BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
OWNER'S AUTHORIZATION FORM

APPEAL NO. _____

In any case in which an appeal to the Board of Zoning Appeals seeking an interpretation, special permit or variance on behalf of certain property is submitted and signed by someone other than the current record owner of that property, this form must be submitted along with the appeal.

DATE 11/8/10

TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS, Ithaca, New York:

I (We) Patrick J. McKee for Challenge of 402 E. State St
(Name) (Street Address)

Ithaca NY 14850
(Municipality) (State) (Zip Code)

own property at 402 E. State St, Ithaca 14850
(Street & Number)

☐ I am the sole owner of the above mentioned property.

☒ This property is also owned by Challenge Industries, Inc
and I have a Power of Attorney to authorize this appeal (attach P.O.A.).

I do hereby authorize Bryan Warren & Mark Newman of Full Creek Development of Ithaca to appeal or
(Name)

request a variance or special permit on my (our) behalf. I (we) understand that the appeal will be heard at the January 4, 2011 meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

[Signature]
Signature

STATE OF NEW YORK)
COUNTY OF TOMPKINS)

Sworn to this 8th day of

November, 2010

Emily M. Parker

Notary Public

EMILY M. PARKER
NOTARY PUBLIC-STATE OF NEW YORK
No. 01PA6173902
Qualified in Tompkins County
My Commission Expires September 04, 2011

Note to all those signing this form:

(1) Owners authorizing another to present an appeal on their behalf should be aware that the Board may, in granting relief, add reasonable conditions which then become binding on the property.

(2) Especially where a variance is being sought, the owner may well be the only person with the sort of detailed information about the property which is essential to the appeal. In such a case simply authorizing another person to appeal is to no avail unless the owner is either present at the hearing or sends another person fully prepared to answer questions about the property and the feasibility of using it consistent with the zoning ordinance.

Submit form to: City of Ithaca Building Dept., 108 E. Green St, Ithaca, NY 14850
Revised 3/04

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PART 1—PROJECT INFORMATION

Prepared by Project Sponsor

NOTICE: This document is designed to assist in determining whether the action proposed may have a significant effect on the environment. Please complete the entire form, Parts A through E. Answers to these questions will be considered as part of the application for approval and may be subject to further verification and public review. Provide any additional information you believe will be needed to complete Parts 2 and 3.

It is expected that completion of the full EAF will be dependent on information currently available and will not involve new studies, research or investigation. If information requiring such additional work is unavailable, so indicate and specify each instance.

Name of Action: Seneca Way Apartments

Location of Action: 140 Seneca Way, The City of Ithaca, Tompkins Co.

Name of Applicant/Sponsor: Trowbridge & Wolf, LLP

Address: 1001 West Seneca Street, Suite 101

City/Town/Village: Ithaca

State: New York

ZIP: 14850

Business Phone: 607-277-1400

Name of Owner(If Different): Fall Creek Development of Ithaca, LLC

Address: 301 East State Street

City/Town/Village: Ithaca

State: New York

ZIP: 14850

Business Phone: 607-330-5238

Description of Action:

The proposed building is 63,400 sf with 5 stories and a basement. This includes 9,311 sf of commercial space on the First floor and a parking garage on the Basement level. The upper 4 floors of the building will be 1-BR (32 total) and 2-BR (6 total) units. There will also be a fitness center and roof terrace on the Fifth Floor for the residents. The architectural features of the building include a curved southern façade, projections at living rooms in residential units to articulate the program and a sensitively-designed northern side that provides privacy for the residential neighborhood to the north.

The project proposal provides the greatest possible views / light to adjoining houses on Seneca Street since the narrow end of the building orients North. The new building aligns with the arc of Seneca Way, providing an urban street edge with street trees and a broad sidewalk. A buffer planting will occur on the northern edge of the site between the new building and the existing houses on Seneca Street. Parking for the building will occur primarily on the east side of the building, with an entry drive and required ADA parking and other parking to the west.

*See Attached Program Description

Please Complete Each Question--Indicate N.A. if not applicable

A. SITE DESCRIPTION

(Physical setting of overall project, both developed and undeveloped areas.)

1. Present Land Use:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
3. Total area of project area: 0.78 Acres		
Approximate Area (Units in question 3 apply to this section)	Presently	After Completion
a. Meadow or Brushland (non-agricultural)	0 Ac.	0 Ac
b. Forested	0.04 Ac.	0.04 Ac.
c. Agricultural	0 Ac	0 Ac
d. Wetland (as per Articles 24 of ECL)	0 Ac	0 Ac
e. Water Surface Area	0 Ac	0 Ac
f. Public	0 Ac	0 Ac
g. Water Surface Area	0 Ac	0 Ac
h. Unvegetated (rock, earth or fill)	0 Ac	0 Ac
i. Roads, buildings and other paved surfaces	0.68 Ac.	0.61 Ac.
j. Other (indicate type) Landscaping	0.06 Ac.	0.13 Ac.
4a. What is predominant soil type(s) on project site (e.g. HdB, silty loam, etc.): Unknown – Predominant soil types will be determined upon completion of subsurface exploration and Geotechnical Engineering Evaluation.		
4b. Soil Drainage:	<input type="checkbox"/> Well Drained _____ % of Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderately Well Drained <u>100%</u> of Site <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly Drained _____ % of Site	
5a. Are there bedrock outcroppings on project site? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
5b. What is depth of bedrock? <u>Unknown</u> (feet) Site bedrock profile will be determined upon completion of subsurface exploration and Geotechnical Engineering Evaluation.		
5c. What is depth to the water table? <u>Unknown</u> (feet) Water table depth to be determined upon completion of subsurface exploration and Geotechnical Engineering Evaluation.		
6. Approximate percentage of proposed project site with slopes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 0-10% <u>73</u> % <input type="checkbox"/> 10-15% _____ : % <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15% or greater <u>27</u> %	
7. Is project substantially contiguous to, or does it contain a building, site or district, listed on or eligible for the National or State Register of Historic Places?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Project is directly adjacent to the East Hill Historic District (NRL 90NR02264) which includes the residence at 408 E. State Street (adjacent to existing building) and the residences on E. Seneca Street to the	

	north of the existing building. Project area is outside the NRL district.
or designated a local landmark or in a local landmark district?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
8. Do hunting or fishing opportunities presently exist in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Identify each species
9. Does project site contain any species of plant or animal life that is identified as threatened or endangered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A According to: TWLA did a field assessment to identify threatened and/or endangered plant species. None were identified Identify each Species:
10. Are there any unique or unusual landforms on the project site? (i.e., cliffs, other geological formations)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Describe: Exposed Rock and steep topography.
11. Is the project site presently used by the community or neighborhood as an open space or recreation area?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A If yes, explain:
12. Does the present site offer or include scenic views known to be important to the community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Describe: Using Standard assessment methods for view evaluation for the community, none exist.
13. Is project within or contiguous to a site designated a unique natural area or critical environmental area by a local or state agency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A Describe:
14. Streams within or contiguous to project area: N/A	a. Names of stream or name of river to which it is tributary: N/A
15. Lakes, ponds, wetland areas within or contiguous to project area: N/A	a. Name: b. Size (in acres):
16. Has the site been used for land disposal of solid or hazardous wastes?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Describe:
17. Is the site served by existing public utilities? a. If Yes, does sufficient capacity exist to allow connection? b. If Yes, will improvements be necessary to allow connection?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Physical dimensions and scale of project (fill in dimensions as appropriate)

1. a. Total contiguous area owned by project sponsor in acres: 0.78 or square feet:

1. b. Project acreage developed: 0.78 Acres initially 0.74 Acres ultimately

1. c. Project acreage to remain undeveloped: 0.04 Acres

1. d. Length of project in miles: (if appropriate) or feet: N/A

1. e. If project is an expansion, indicate percent of change proposed: N/A

1. f. Number of off-street parking spaces existing: 35 proposed: 55

1. g. Maximum vehicular trips generated per day: and per hour: (upon completion of project).

*SEE ATTACHED TRAFFIC STUDY

1. h. If residential: Number and type of housing units (not structures):

	One Family	Two Family	Multiple Family	Condominium
Initial			38	
Ultimate			38	

If non-residential: Orientation(check one)

	Neighborhood	City	Regional	Estimated Employment
Commercial				
Industrial				

1i. Height of tallest proposed structure: 57.5 feet.

1j. Linear feet of frontage along a public street or thoroughfare that the project will occupy? 283

2. Specify what type of natural material (i.e. rock, earth, etc.) and how much will be removed from the site: or added to the site. To be determined once Geotechnical Engineering Evaluation is completed.

3. Specify what type or vegetation (trees, shrubs, ground cover) and how much will be removed from the site: acres, what type? Landscaping/Brush/Lawn 0.06 Acres

4. Will any mature trees or other locally important vegetation be removed by this project? No

5. Are there any plans for re-vegetation to replace that removed during construction? Yes

6. If single phase project: Anticipated period of construction 12 months, (including demolition)

7. If multi-phased project: N/A

7. a. Total number of phases anticipated N/A

7. b. Anticipated date of commencement phase one May month 2011 year, (including demolition)

7. c. Approximate completion date of final phase May month 2012 year.

7. d. Is phase one financially dependent on subsequent phases? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A

8. Will blasting occur during construction? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A; if yes, explain

9. Number of jobs generated: during construction <u>150</u> after project is completed <u>3</u> .
10. Number of jobs eliminated by this project: <u>- 0 -</u> Explain:
11. Will project require relocation of any projects or facilities? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, explain Re-routing of on-site utilities including water, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, gas, electric and telephone.
12. a. Is surface or sub-surface liquid waste disposal involved? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, explain
12. b. If yes, indicate type of waste (sewage, industrial, etc) N/A
12. c. If surface disposal, where specifically will effluent be discharged? N/A
13. Will surface area of existing lakes, ponds, streams, or other surface waterways be increased or decreased by proposal? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, explain:
14. a. Will project or any portion of project occur wholly or partially within or contiguous to the 100 year flood plain? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
14. b. Does project or any portion of project occur wholly or partially within or contiguous to: Cayuga Inlet Fall Creek, Cascadilla Creek, Cayuga Lake, Six Mile Creek, Silver Creek? (Circle all that apply) N/A
14. c. Does project or any portion of project occur wholly or partially within or contiguous to wetlands as described in Article 24 or the ECL? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A;
14. d. If yes for a, b, or c, explain:
15. a. Does project involve disposal or solid waste? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A;
15.b. If yes, will an existing solid waste disposal facility be used? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A;
15. c. If yes, give name: <u>Seneca Meadows</u> ; location: Seneca Falls NY
15. d. Will any wastes not go into a sewage disposal system or into a sanitary landfill? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, explain
15. e. Will any solid waste be disposed of on site? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, explain
16. Will project use herbicides or pesticides? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, specify
17. Will project affect a building or site listed on or eligible for the National or State Register of Historic Places? Or designated a local landmark or in a landmark district? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, explain
18. Will project produce odors? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, explain
19. Will project product operating noise exceed the local ambient noise level during construction? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; After construction? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A;
20. Will project result in an increase of energy use? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A; if yes, indicate type(s) The project will increase energy usage in electric and natural gas.
21. Total anticipated water usage per day gals/day. <u>3,500</u> Source of water <u>City Water</u>

C. ZONING AND PLANNING INFORMATION

1. Does the proposed action involve a planning or zoning decision? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A;
if yes, indicate the decision required:

☐ Zoning Amendment ☒ Zoning Variance ☐ New/revision of master plan ☐ Subdivision
☐ Site Plan ☐ Special Use Permit ☐ Resource Management Plan ☐ Other

2. What is the current zoning classification of site? B4

3. What is the maximum potential development if the site is developed as permitted by the **present** zoning?
Building footprint - 17,002.5 sf, building height - 40 feet, stories - 4, building gross area - 68,010 sf.
(85,012.5 sf. with a basement)

4. Is proposed use consistent with present zoning? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

5. If no, indicate desired zoning .

6. What is the maximum potential development of the site if developed as permitted by the **proposed** zoning? N/A

7. Is the proposed action consistent with the recommended uses in adopted local land use plans?
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A; If no, explain:

8. What is the dominant land use and zoning classification within a 1/4-mile radius of the project?
Downtown commercial (CBD-60, CBD-85, CBD-100, CBD-120), Residential neighborhoods (R-2a, R-2b, R-3a, R-3b), Business (B-1a, B-2a), Public and Institutional (P-1), University and Cornell special use (U-1) and Courthouse Special Use (CSU).

9. Is the proposed action compatible with adjacent land uses? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Explain: Per the zoning ordinance of the city of Ithaca

10. If the proposed action is the subdivision of land, how many lots are proposed? N/A
a. What is the minimum lot size proposed?

11. Will the proposed action create a demand for any community provided services? (recreation, education, police, fire protection, etc.) ? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A
Explain: The site is currently served by City Fire, Police, Schools, Sewer and Water.
If yes, is existing capacity sufficient to handle projected demand? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Explain:

12. Will the proposed action result in the generation of traffic significantly above present levels?

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A

If yes, is the existing road network adequate to handle the additional traffic? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Explain: *Please see attached Traffic Study

C. APPROVALS

23. Approvals:

23. a. Is any Federal permit required? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A; . Specify

23. b. Does project involve State or Federal funding or financing? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A; If Yes, Specify

23. c. Local and Regional approvals:

	(Yes-No)	Approval Required (type)	Submittal Date	Approval Date
Council	No			
BZA	Yes	Area Variances for Height, Stories, Setback at North side-yard, Off-street Parking and Loading	12/17/2010	TBD
P&D Board	No			
Landmarks	No			
BPW	No			
Fire Department	No			
Police Department	No			
IURA	No			
Building Commissioner	No			

*Project will need approval from the City Stormwater Management Officer and the NYSDEC for a Basic Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

D. INFORMATIONAL DETAILS

Attach any additional information as may be needed to clarify your project. If there are or may be any adverse impacts associated with your proposal, please discuss such impacts and the measures which you propose to mitigate or avoid them.

E. VERIFICATION

I certify that the information provided above is true to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant/Sponsor Name Jan V. Brath

Signature 

Title Project Manager – Trowbridge & Wolf LLP.

Impact on Land

A Subsurface Exploration and Geotechnical Engineering Evaluation will be completed to determine soil characteristics, depth to bedrock, water elevation, seismicity, and for the development of foundation design recommendations.

The presence of bedrock outcrops on the north end of the site suggests the presence of bedrock at shallow elevations; the subsurface exploration will determine the topography of the bedrock surface for foundation design.

Impact on Water

The existing site cover is predominantly impervious with over 87% of the site being building, sidewalk or pavement. Surface stormwater runoff is collected in the City's stormwater collection system and discharged south of the site into Six Mile Creek.

The site is only 0.78 acres in size and the total site disturbance for the project is estimated to be 0.74 acres. A site disturbance of less than 1 acre is required to prepare a "Basic" Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for review and approval by the City of Ithaca Stormwater Management Officer prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. A Basic SWPPP will be prepared consistent with NYSDEC GP-0-10-001 and the City of Ithaca Stormwater Regulations and include erosion and sediment controls. No permanent controls such as detention ponds or water quality basins are required.

However, the current site plan will reduce the amount of impervious cover by approximately 9%. This reduction will inherently lead to a reduction in the rate of runoff (quantity control) as well as a reduction in pollutant loads (quality control) from the site. Measures to further improve water quality will be considered for the project including deep sumps and hoods in storm structures.

Impact on Air

Because it is primarily a housing project, it is not anticipated that significant sources of air emissions will be generated. The proposed project will have no significant impact on air.

Impact on Plants, Animals and Agriculture

The only existing vegetation on the site is the northern most part of the property. The area is roughly 0.04 acres of the total site area and is composed of steep slopes and mature vegetation. This area will remain post-development. In addition, the site investigation provided no evidence of threatened or endangered plant or animal species and the current site is not a significant wildlife habitat.

There will be no significant impact on plants, animals or agriculture, since the impervious areas of the existing site condition (roofs, asphalt parking, concrete walks) exceed the percent impervious cover of the project proposal.

The property is not zoned or appropriate for agriculture and will have no effect on local agriculture.

Impact on Aesthetic Resources

This project proposes to demolish the two existing buildings on the site. Most recently owned by Challenge Industries, the light-industrial buildings no longer fit with the use of the district or aesthetic character of the surrounding neighborhood. While the structures are low, they cover most of the site. See figure 22 and figure 23.



Figure 22: Aerial View



Figure 23: View to Challenge Building

Within the fabric of any city there are changes in use and height. While there is not a typical condition, a flat elevation can produce a dramatic transition between zoning districts. Transitions in flat elevations are present in Ithaca and are necessary for city life and use. See figure 24 and figure 25

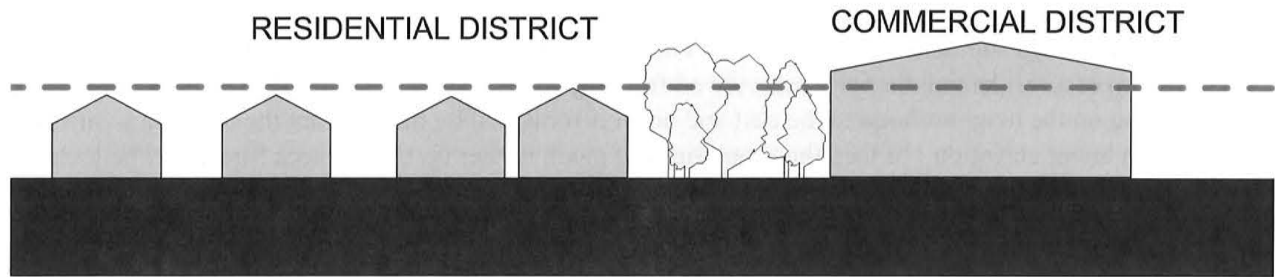


Figure 24: Flat Adjacency Condition



Figure 25: Examples of Flat Adjacency Conditions in Ithaca

If a change in district takes place at a change in elevation this adjacency condition can be greatly improved. A taller building downhill will still be closer to the height of shorter buildings uphill. See figure 26

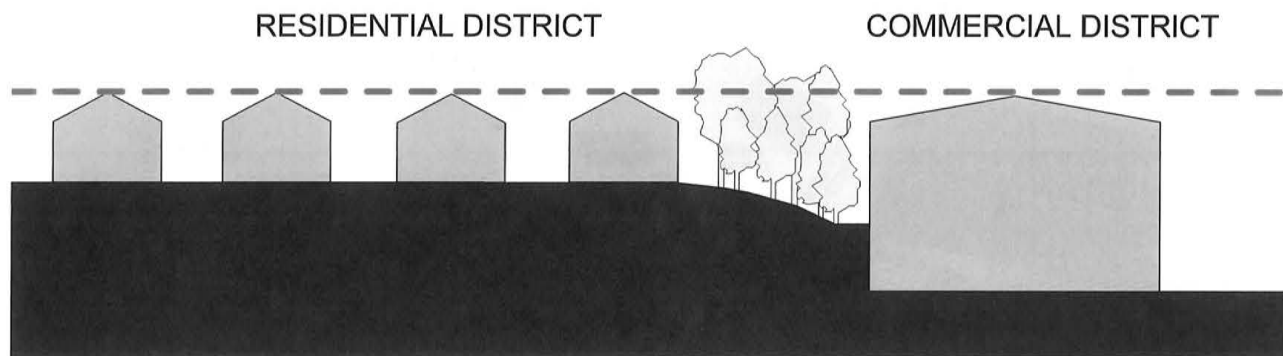


Figure 26: Elevation Change - Improved Adjacency Condition

The proposed building would fit within the context of the taller buildings across the street but also with the residential district to the north. This is possible because of the change in elevation between the northern and southern sides of the site. The upper floors are residential and match the height and program of a residential district when viewed from the R-2A district to the north. The effect of a taller building on the neighborhood to the east and north is mitigated by the fact that the building is sited at a much lower elevation. In fact, the properties not much farther up East Seneca Street will be looking over the proposed building. See figure 27 - figure 30



Figure 27: Northeast View

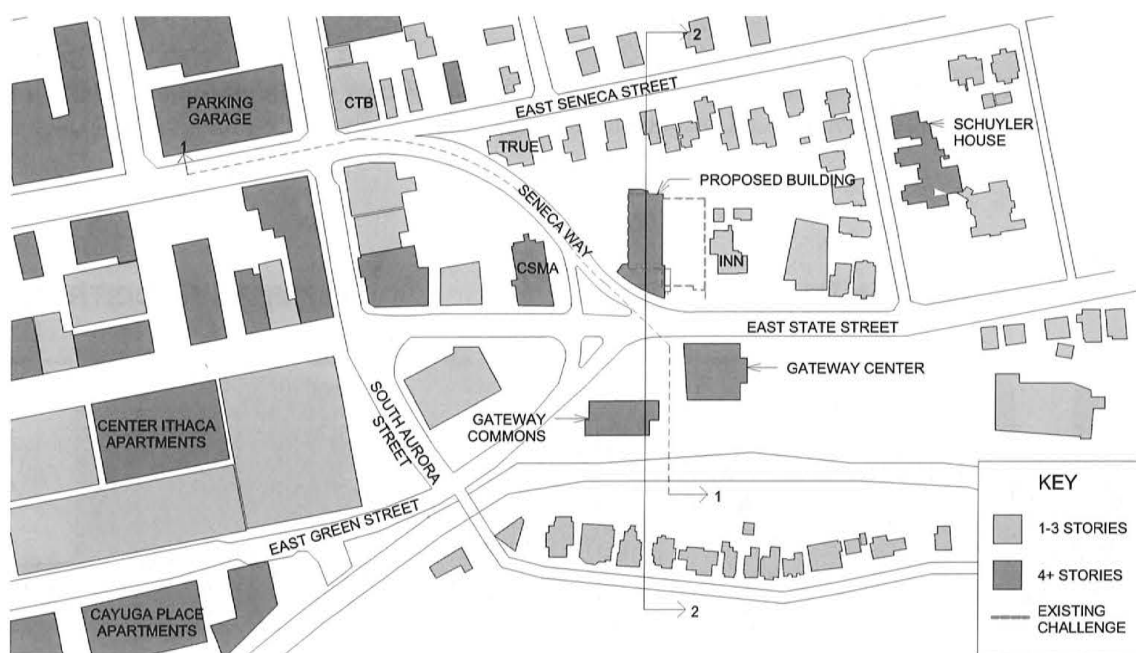


Figure 28: Height Comparison Map

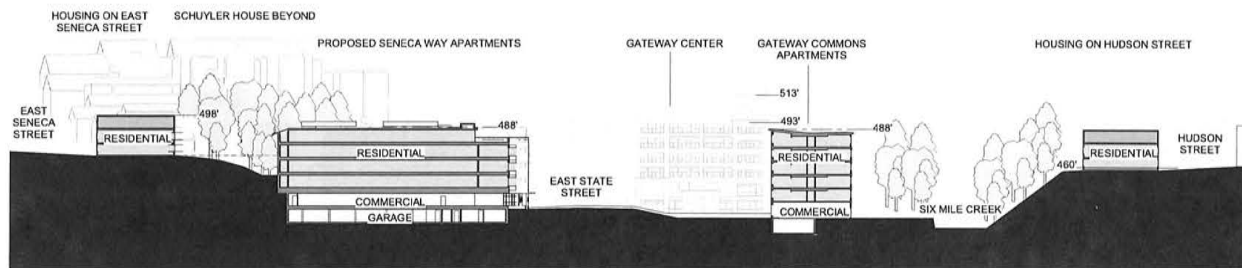


Figure 29: Proposed Seneca Way Section

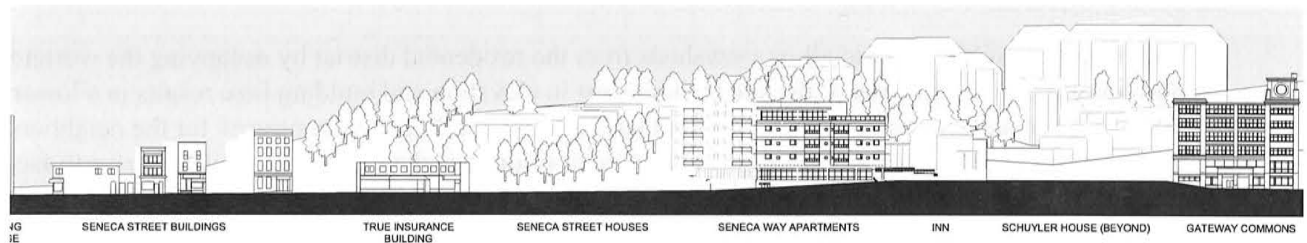


Figure 30: Proposed Seneca Way Elevation

While a building with a lower height and a bigger footprint could result in the same amount of floor area, this would produce an inefficient plan and would be undesirable for commercial and residential space (where maximum access to daylight is important). Through a visual assessment study, it was found that this layout could also block views from the residential district if the maximum allowable height was used. See figure 31 and Figure 32

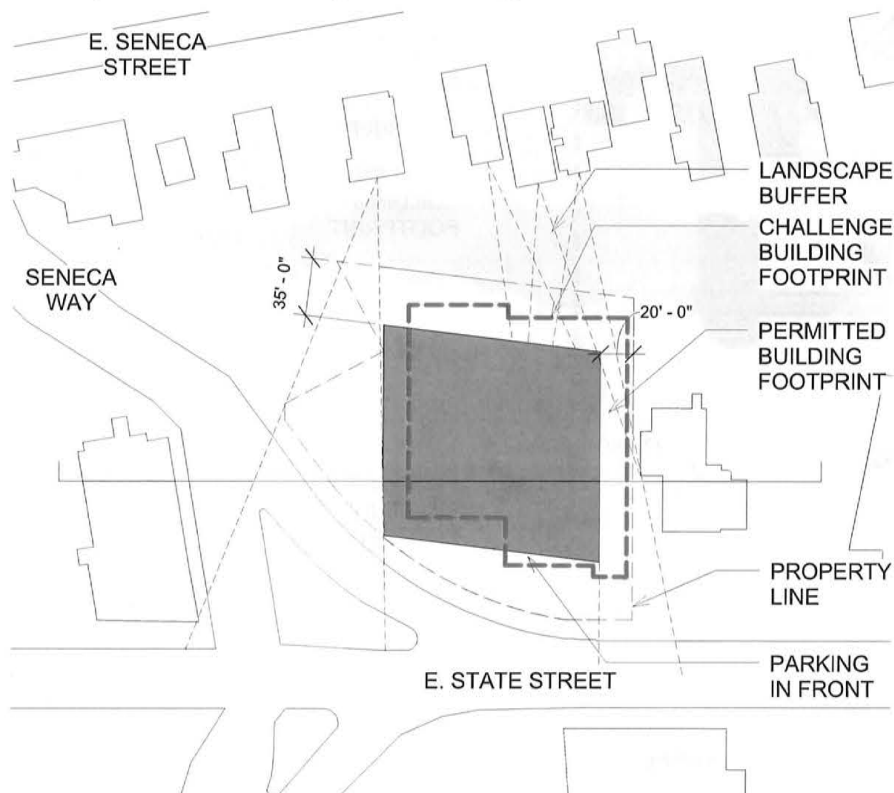


Figure 31: Backyard Viewsheds with Hypothetical Building Complying with Setback Requirements

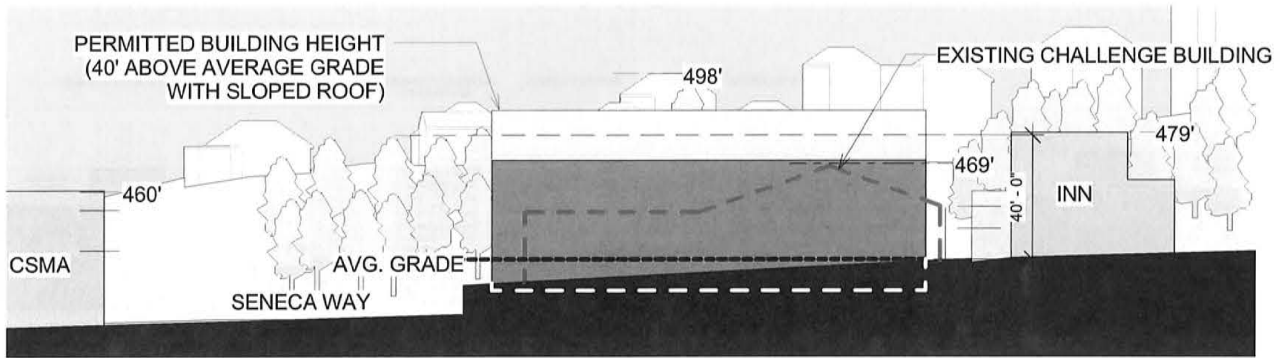


Figure 32: View from East State Street - Hypothetical Permitted Building

The proposed building would allow viewsheds from the residential district by occupying the western portion of the site. This part of the site is the lowest in elevation and building here results in a lower average grade and shorter building. The orientation of the building creates privacy for the neighbors to the north. With a square footprint, the apartments would face the neighbors uphill. The north face would have interest and residential-scale elements. It could feature high windows, bay-window protections and sloped roofs. See figure 33 through figure 35

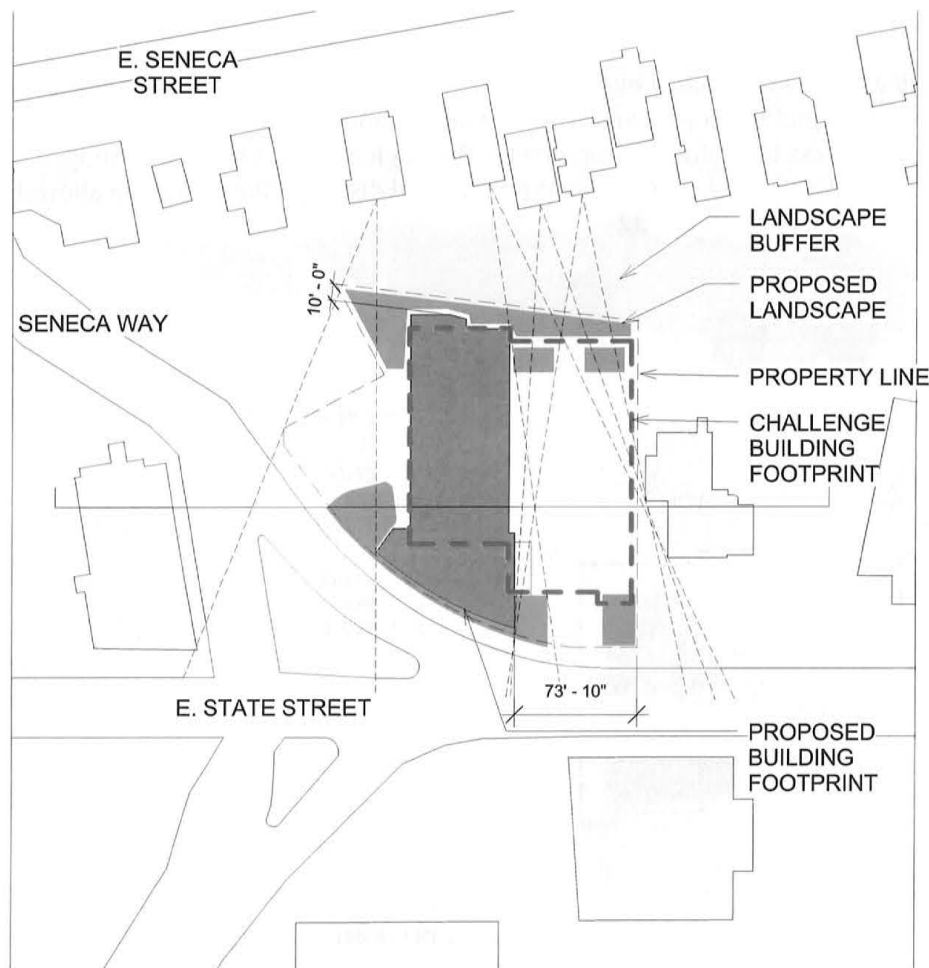


Figure 33: Backyard Viewshed with Proposed Building

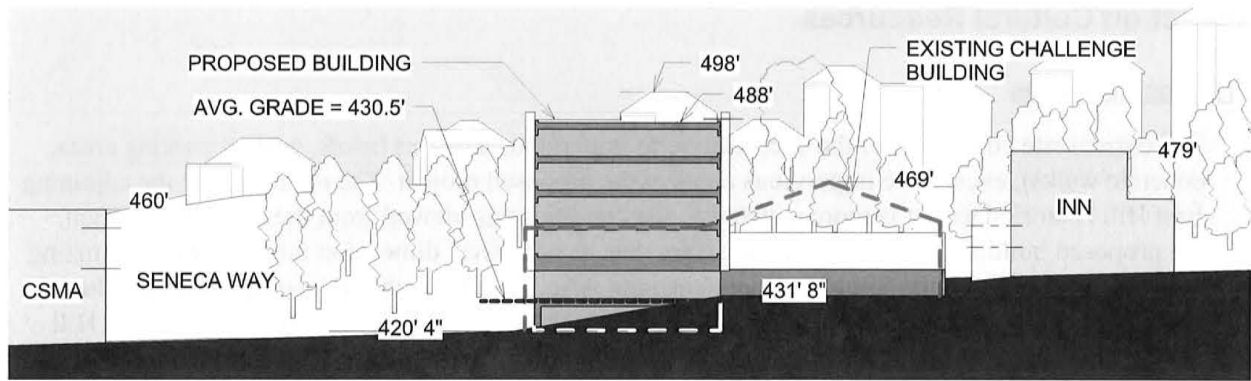


Figure 34: View from East State Street - Proposed

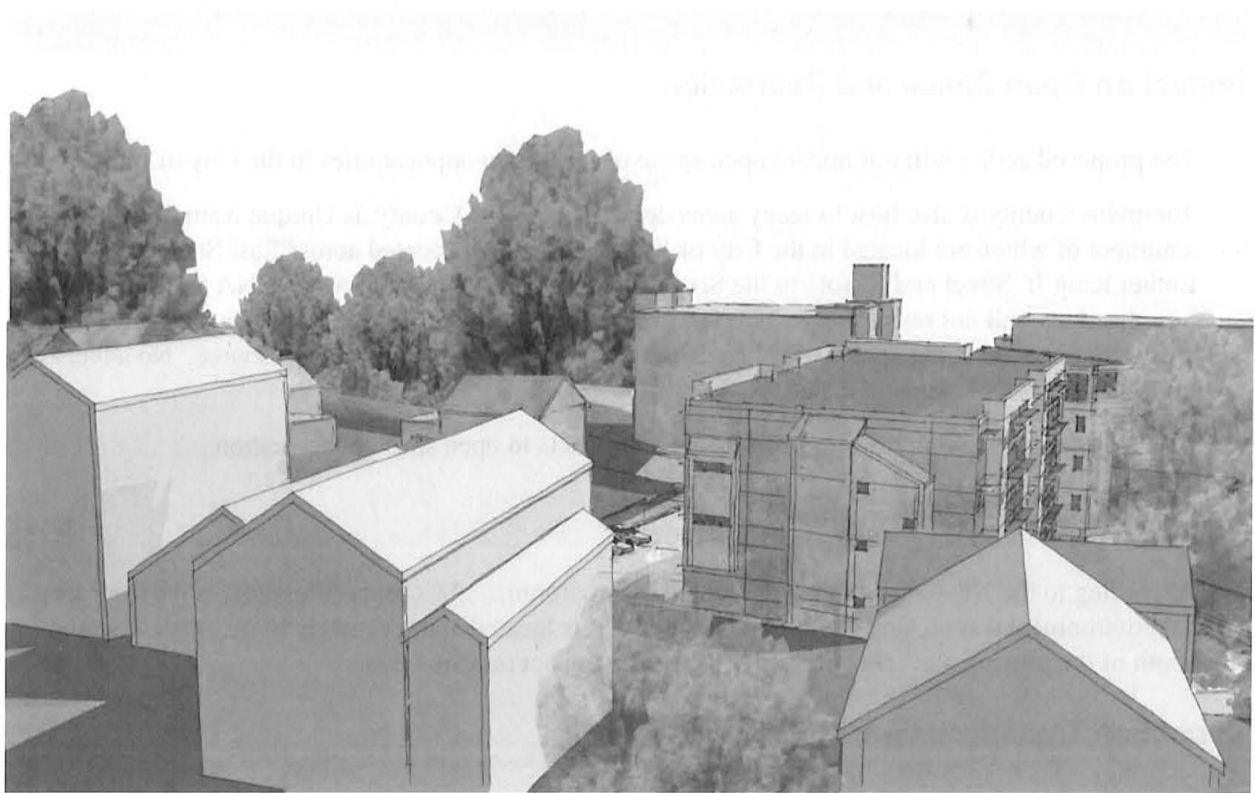


Figure 35: Residential District

Impact on Cultural Resources

Historic Resources

The current site conditions of the site, relative to impervious surfaces (roofs, asphalt parking areas, concrete walks), exceed the impervious areas of the proposed project. The net result for the adjoining East Hill Historic District is more vegetative site conditions as viewed from the north. In addition, the proposed building, as a mitigating measure, has its narrowest dimension facing north, optimizing views to the south and the Six Mile Creek corridor. Also, the architectural detailing of the northern elevation includes residential-scaled details, sympathetic to the neighboring homes of the East Hill Historic District.

Archaeological Resources

The project area is a highly disturbed site and archeological resources are not anticipated.

Impact on Open Space and Recreation

The proposed action will not impact open space or recreation opportunities in the City of Ithaca.

Tompkins County is also host to many areas designated by the County as Unique Natural Areas, a number of which are located in the City of Ithaca. The site is located across East State / Martin Luther King Jr. Street and remote to the Six Mile Creek Unique Natural Area (UNA #156). The proposed actions will not result in a reduction of the quantity or quality of the unique natural area associated with Six Mile Creek, nor will it impact the function or enjoyment of the resource. No adverse impacts to the UNA are anticipated.

The project will result in no significant negative impacts to open space or recreation.

Impact on Critical Environmental Areas

According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation there is only one critical environmental area, Coy Glen, in the vicinity. It is located approximately three miles west and south of the project site. This project will have no impact on Coy Glen.

Impact on Transportation

Parking

Currently the number of designated parking spaces on the site are 35. These are poorly designated and layed-out, allowing vehicles to cross the sidewalk along the south side of the site almost continuously due to the drop curb. The proposed surface parking includes access to the site which will be provided via two existing driveways on Seneca Way. The west driveway will provide access to a small high-turnover parking lot containing 10 spaces, some ADA compliant, as well as access to the underground garage containing 14 spaces. An east driveway will afford access to a parking lot containing 31 spaces. This east parking area is not connected to either the garage nor the small west parking lot.

Traffic

There is sufficient capacity on the adjoining streets (East State / Martin Luther King Jr. Street and Seneca Way) for the number of on-site cars / parking as proposed. More rational and safe curb cuts are limited to a right-in, right-out on Seneca Way and an in-lane and out-lane on East State / Martin Luther King Jr. Street. The new traffic patterns improve the vehicle and pedestrian conflicts that currently exist on this site.

Alternative modes of transportation

The project site is very close to two TCAT transportation hubs, one a block away at the Seneca Street Garage and a second at the Tompkins County Public Library. East State / Martin Luther King Jr. Street has a designated bike lane on the south side of the street. In addition, most TCAT buses have front mounted bike racks to assist interested cyclists up and down East Hill.

Impact on Energy

The new building will be primarily electric for appliances and natural gas for some heating functions which account for the majority of the energy usage in the building. These energy types are typical for the commercial and residential uses of the building. We anticipate the building energy use to increase since the building has a larger area than the existing building on the site. The design will incorporate energy saving measures for lighting and mechanical equipment where possible to minimize the impact to the existing utility systems serving the property.

Noise and Odor Impact

Noise Impacts

No permanent noise impacts are expected to result from the proposed projects. The only anticipated sources of exterior noise to the facilities will be fan noise and traffic/delivery noise. Both of these noise sources are anticipated to be similar to existing sources in the immediate area. Overall, the future facilities are not expected to generate noise above existing ambient conditions. Noise during construction will be limited to those times as designated by the City.

Impact on Public Health

The proposed actions will not create a risk of explosion, release hazardous substances, produce hazardous wastes or store quantities of natural gas or other flammable liquids.

Impact on Growth and Character of Community

The Draft Downtown Ithaca 2020 Strategic Plan by The Downtown Ithaca Alliance has identified the former Challenge site as a transition zone and a “key eastern gateway property” to the city. The proposed project embraces the ideals established in the Plan and contributes positively to the growth and character of downtown and its surrounding neighborhood by acting as a transitional development that repairs the urban fabric, where a now vacant and undesirable building sits.

The existing Challenge building design is now obsolete as its original orientation was toward State Street. When Seneca Way was constructed, it exposed the more industrial-looking west facade, a result that was never intended. This has made the building less attractive in visual appearance and less desirable to potential tenants and/or buyers. The proposed project will demolish the current outdated building and create a modern, sustainable and accessible project that will be a significant improvement aesthetically, functionally and economically for the City.

The Challenge building historically had various industrial and manufacturing uses that generated considerable traffic, parking, noise and other negative impacts. The new apartment/office use will be a much more appropriate and complimentary use.

The current owner, Challenge Industries, initially looked at refurbishing the buildings but found the \$3.6 million cost prohibitive. They have tried for over 2 years to sell the property, but have had no interest until the currently proposed project. The many problems and issues associated with the current building and site have proven to be significant barriers for continued or alternative uses of the property. The currently proposed approach creatively addresses the various issues to produce a viable and desirable project.

The new project will also take a now tax-exempt property and place it back on the tax rolls.

The mix of apartments and offices creates an ideal project in design and purpose at this transitional boundary in the City from residential to commercial. The building/site design carefully takes advantage of the natural topography to accomplish multiple tasks. The design approach provides the required density that allows the project to be economically feasible, while creating a building consistent in height to the residential buildings to the north and at the same time establishing an appropriate scale and mass to the neighboring CBD-60 zone.

There is also an established desire for a blending of commercial, residential and amenities within downtown as proposed by this project, which would be very attractive to residential and commercial tenants. There will be a roof terrace, fitness center, indoor bike storage, additional secure storage, convenient bus routes and easy pedestrian access to the Commons and the Ithaca central business district. These elements promote a healthy, sustainable and dynamic urban lifestyle that creates a community character that is diverse and appropriate to this transitional area. The proposed uses are quite literally a hybrid of the surrounding districts, a combination of residential and commercial.

The proposed 140 Seneca Way project will provide a viable redevelopment opportunity for a very problematic urban site; establish a very appropriate use in form and function in a sensitive transitional zone; place an attractive and distinctive building at a prominent gateway location into the City; create quality and desirable housing that will attract residents into the urban core; provide needed Class A office space to retain commercial tenants downtown; and provide a tax-paying project on a currently tax-exempt property.