
Appendix 1

Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement

Project:

Adoption of the Congress Street and Ferry
Street Corridor Master Plan and Associated
Zoning Amendments

Action:

SEQR Type 1 Action

Location:

City of Troy, Rensselaer County, New York

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Troy City Council

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Generic Environmental Impact Statement

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- C. Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. (October 1989). “Uncle Sam” Wilson House, Phase II archeological investigation.
- D. Landmark Archeology, Inc. (November 2006). Phase 1A Archeological Study, Congress and Ferry Streets.
- E. Hartgen Archeological Associates, (April 2008). Phase 1B Addendum Archeological Field Reconnaissance, Congress and Ferry Street Reconstruction.

Introduction and Summary

The adoption of the Congress Street and Ferry Street Corridor Master Plan (the “Master Plan”) and associated zoning amendments by the Troy City Council will require compliance with Part 617 of the implementing regulations pertaining to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act – “SEQR”) of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law.

Pursuant to SEQR, the Troy City Council has been designated as the Lead Agency and has classified the adoption of the Master Plan and related zoning amendments (the “Action”) as a Type I Action and has authorized the preparation of the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). For the purposes of compliance with SEQR, the Master Plan shall also serve as a part of the GEIS as indicated in this document. Refer to Reweaving Troy’s Urban Landscape – Congress Street and Ferry Street Corridor Final Report dated July 2009 for a complete description of the proposed Action.

SEQR establishes a process requiring the consideration of environmental factors early in the planning stages of actions that are undertaken, approved or funded by state, regional or local agencies. This systematic approach allows adverse impacts to be avoided or mitigated.

Based upon the evaluation of the Action through the GEIS, the adoption of the Master Plan and associated zoning amendments will not result in one or more direct significant adverse environmental impact. A direct impact is an impact that would occur as a direct result of the action (e.g., the removal of vegetation may result in erosion and sedimentation of a water body, an impact directly related to the removal of vegetation). Due to the fact that the Action being evaluated by this GEIS is only the adoption of the Master Plan and associated zoning amendments, there will be no direct adverse impacts.

According to §617.10 of 6 NYCRR Part 617 State Environmental Quality Review:

“Generic EISs may be broader, and more general than site or project specific EISs and should discuss the logic and rationale for the choices advanced. They may also include an assessment of specific impacts if such details are available. They may be based on conceptual information in some cases. They may identify the important elements of the natural resource base as well as the existing and projected cultural features, patterns and character. They may discuss in general terms the constraints and consequences of any narrowing of future options. They may present and analyze in general terms a few hypothetical scenarios that could and are likely to occur.”

The Action will result in a direct positive impact, as the City of Troy will now have a clear plan and the regulatory tools in place to guide appropriate urban mixed-use development within the Congress Street and Ferry Street Corridor, something the City currently does not have.

While no direct adverse impacts will occur, there is the potential for indirect adverse environmental impacts that may occur as a result of future development projects proposed in accordance with the Master Plan and the new zoning regulations.

In combination with the mitigation measures offered in this FEIS, the Master Plan and proposed zoning amendments should be viewed as a mitigation measure against potential indirect impacts associated with future development on environmental resources.

The proposed Master Plan, including the concepts for redevelopment, and the related zoning amendments are being evaluated using this GEIS. This GEIS can serve as a foundation document and thereby shorten subsequent reviews and allow projects to proceed more quickly. However, the adoption of the Master Plan and related zoning amendments along with the acceptance of a Final GEIS and Statement of Findings will not create default approvals of any development activity, either private or public.

For each future project proposed, the scale of the proposed action and consistency with the concepts, vision and recommendations outlined in the Master Plan should be closely considered by the City of Troy and other involved approval agencies.

Due to the fact that the Action will not result in any direct adverse impacts the GEIS will only discuss the potential for indirect impacts, both positive and adverse.

1.1 Impact on Land Use and Zoning

Potential Indirect Positive Impact: The Action will facilitate a change of land use from underutilized to a more efficient mixed-use condition.

The Action will facilitate a land use change within the District from vacant and underutilized to a developed and efficient urban form. The intensity and density of uses allowed would also increase compared to the existing zoning regulations. These changes are considered a positive indirect impact when compared to the current land use patterns and the type of development that existing regulations would allow. As discussed above, the primary zoning district is B-5 Highway Commercial which allows large-scale retail/wholesale uses with large surface parking lots. This development pattern is more suburban and automobile-dependent. The Action will facilitate a change away from this inefficient use of urban land and improve pedestrian connections, which will be positive for Troy's central business district.

Mitigation

All projects proposed under the Master Plan and zoning amendments will continue to be subject to the City's applicable land use regulations along with SEQRA and other applicable local, state and federal regulations. Direct impacts associated with development under the Master Plan and zoning amendments will be addressed during their respective review phases.

Significance of Impact

No significant adverse environmental impacts on land use and zoning were identified.

1.2 Impact on Geology and Topography

Potential Indirect Adverse Impacts: Increased potential for runoff, erosion and water quality degradation.

During construction, with the steep slopes prevalent in the District, there is an increase in the potential for stormwater runoff, erosion and water quality degradation. These potential impacts are greatest during construction periods when soils are without any vegetative cover. However, these potential impacts exist under the current zoning and are not unique to the implementation of Master Plan and zoning amendments. Refer to Figure 1 – Soil Types for further reference on subsurface conditions.

Mitigation

The Action will facilitate more efficient use of land within the District and is likely to result in less large surface parking lots and more centrally located parking structures and/or garages. This will limit the amount of impervious surfaces and allow for a greater concentration of structures, which may utilize green roofs, and other alternative stormwater measures that limit and control runoff.

Development will be required to comply with applicable NYSDEC stormwater regulations for land disturbances over one acre. In addition, all projects proposed for the District will be subject to applicable city stormwater and land use regulations as well as SEQR and other applicable local, state and federal regulations, which will address potential impacts, related to runoff, erosion and water quality.

Significance of Impact

The Action would not introduce development at an intensity level significantly greater than what is currently permitted. The Action will facilitate more efficient land use patterns, and any potential impacts associated with the implementation of the development under the Action would be an indirect impact and would be addressed under the appropriate local, state and federal regulations including SEQR and stormwater regulations. Based upon this information, the Action is not expected to result in any indirect significant adverse impacts related to increased potential for runoff, erosion and water quality degradation.

Potential Indirect Adverse Impacts: Noise and vibration impacts related to blasting.

Due to the prevalence of bedrock throughout the District, blasting is likely to be required during construction, an indirect impact related to the Action. Adjacent and nearby properties could be impacted. Properties within 500 ft of the development site limits may be more susceptible to experience minor vibrations related to the removal of bedrock. It should be noted that the existing zoning permits development that may also require blasting due to the prevalent bedrock conditions.

Mitigation

If blasting is required during future development projects, it must be performed by licensed contractors and conducted in a manner to reduce the maximum peak particle velocity to less than two inches per second at property limits (or the required standard at the time of blasting). Depending on location and the sensitivity of nearby structures, the thresholds may be lowered if possible to mitigate potential for damage. Airblast overpressure from blasting will be limited to less than 0.014 psi (or the required standard at the time of blasting) as measured from the nearest occupied structure.

Furthermore, the following mitigation techniques should be utilized for all future development where blasting is required and should be incorporated into future approvals as conditions:

- > Residents within a one-half mile radius of any blasting site will be notified in advance of blasting events, if requested. The blasting contractor will formally contact nearby residents to ensure that all persons requesting notification are identified.
- > Blasting will only occur between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays only. Explosives will not be detonated on weekends and holidays.

- > All blasting will be conducted by a qualified licensed blaster pursuant to the applicable requirements of the State of New York and federal government.
- > Blasting will not occur during adverse weather conditions such as high winds unless a loaded charge must be detonated before the end of the day.
- > Shots will be designed to minimize ground vibration and air blast.
- > Blasting mats of suitable size and material will be employed to dampen noise and contain blasted materials.
- > Blasting will be in compliance with applicable NYS Codes under the Department of Labor. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the selected contractor will submit a specific blasting plan to the City Building Department for their review and approval. This will include a pre-blast survey to identify pre-existing conditions at nearby properties, if necessary.
- > Controlled blasting, if required, will be performed in a manner that limits the maximum peak particle velocity (PPV) to less than two inches per second (ips) at the Project limits. At this level, the likelihood that adverse impacts will result to nearby structures is very low, and the degree of vibration will decrease as distance from the blast site increases. Depending upon the sensitivity of adjacent properties, more strict vibration criteria may be warranted. In addition, the peak airblast overpressure limit should also be limited to less than 0.014 psi at the nearest adjacent occupied structure.
- > Records of all blasts, including seismograph data, will be prepared and maintained by the Applicant and/or blasting expert, and made available to the City upon request.

Significance of Impact

While the Action will facilitate development within the District, the current zoning allows development that may also require blasting to occur. Any potential adverse impacts related to blasting would be indirect and would be addressed at the time of the development review under applicable regulations. Due to these facts, along with the above-recommended mitigation measures and the need to fully comply with regulations at the time of project review, the Action will not result in a significant adverse environmental impact related to blasting.

1.3 Impact on Water Resources

Potential Indirect Adverse Impact: Development within the 100-year floodplain.

According to the published Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the City of Troy, Rensselaer County, a small section of the District's western area is within the 100-year floodplain. As depicted on Figure 2, the area of the District within the 100-year flood plain contains two existing buildings and a portion of grassed area between Congress and Ferry Streets. The 500-year floodplain occupies additional areas of the western portion of the District.

Floodplain boundaries for the Hudson River were previously determined using detailed hydraulic methods. A summary of the results were published in a Flood Insurance Study (FIS), Community No. 360677, dated 1979. The FIS indicated that the area of the District in the 100-year floodplain is within what is termed the floodway fringe. The floodway fringe is that portion of the flood plain that could be completely obstructed without increasing the water surface elevation of the 100-year floodplain by more than 1 foot.

In addition, development is currently allowed within the 100-year flood plain under the existing zoning subject to applicable regulations. The Action would continue to allow development in this area and would not be facilitating a major change in the development patterns within the floodplain.

As depicted on Figure 3 there are no streams or other surface water resources or wetlands subject to NYSDEC jurisdiction within or near the District. A field survey of the site confirmed the absence of water resources and the absence of wetlands under the jurisdiction of the ACOE.

The Hudson River, a Class C water body pursuant to the NYSDEC, is located approximately 1/3 of a mile to the west of the District and separated by a built urban environment, primarily impervious.

While the Action could indirectly result in increased impervious surfaces and potentially increase runoff, no adverse impacts on water resources are expected due to the absence of wetlands, streams or other surface water resources.

The District is not located within a Coastal Area as defined by the NYS Department of State Coastal Zone Management regulations, 19 NYCRR Part 600. Therefore, the Action or any development project undertaken in accordance with the FBC will not need to be evaluated with respect to potential impacts to this waterway area and for consistency with the Inland Water Act.

Mitigation

Any future development proposed within the floodplain will need to address potential impacts at the time of the environmental reviews to ensure significant impacts are avoided or mitigated to the maximum extent practicable under the relevant local, state and federal regulations at that period.

While there are no streams or other surface water resources or wetlands subject to NYSDEC or ACOE jurisdiction within or near the District, all future development projects will be required to comply with applicable NYSDEC stormwater regulations for land disturbance over one acre. In addition, all projects proposed under the FBC will also be subject to the city's applicable land use regulations along with SEQRA and other applicable local, state and federal regulations, which will address any potential direct impacts, related to runoff, erosion and potential water quality issues.

Significance of Impact

Due to the facts presented above, no significant direct adverse impacts to water resources will occur as a result of the Action and the Action is not expected to result in any indirect significant adverse impacts on water resources.

1.4 Impact on Plants and Animals

Potential Indirect Adverse Impact: Temporary Removal of Vegetation and Temporary Loss of Terrestrial Habitat

The Action would facilitate future development that would result in the removal of existing vegetation and the temporary disruption of some terrestrial species. Vegetation in the District is comprised mainly of small trees, maintained grassy areas, flower plantings along sidewalks and grassed maintenance strips, as well as overgrown vegetation commonly found in urban and suburban areas. Small mammals and bird species commonly found in urban and suburban areas also populate the District.

It can be expected that a majority of the existing vegetation within the District would be removed during future construction and replaced with a built environment along with new trees, lawns, landscaping and other plantings. This loss of vegetation is expected to occur in phases as the District builds out and would only be a temporary loss, as new vegetation would be planted with each development. The resulting conditions are expected to be an improvement over existing vegetation conditions, particularly from an aesthetic perspective.

The displacement of any terrestrial species is also expected to be temporary during construction periods. Habitats for small mammals and bird species similar to what currently exists will be re-established after each construction project.

While these potential indirect impacts associated with the loss of vegetation and habitat is considered minimal, mitigation measures will be required as outlined below under Mitigation.

According to a letter dated June 14, 2009 from NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program, there are no known occurrences of rare or state-listed animals or plants, significant natural communities, or other significant habitats, on or in the immediate vicinity of the project area involved in the Congress and Ferry Street Reconstruction project NYSDOT FHWA Final Design Report dated July 2008 (referred to as the Final Design Report). The Project Area involved is bounded by 5th Street to the west, Congress Street to the north, Ferry Street to the south and 11th street to the east. Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Final Design Report. The NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper confirmed that there are no known occurrences of rare or state-listed animals or plants, significant natural communities, or other significant habitats, on or in the immediate vicinity of the District.

The Design Report also states that the United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was contacted regarding the possible presence of threatened and endangered species and habitat areas. The USFWS indicated that except for the occasional transient individuals, no Federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species under their jurisdiction are known to exist in the Congress and Ferry Street Reconstruction area.

Mitigation

All disturbed areas will be re-vegetated as appropriate. All cleared areas, which will not be built on, will be re-vegetated and appropriately landscaped. All relevant requirements and conditions associated with the

review of future development under the City's zoning regulations will be adhered and future projects will require compliance with all other local, state and federal requirements including but not limited to SEQRA and compliance with stormwater regulations.

Future projects proposals will need to separately coordinate and confirm with NYSDEC and USFWS that no adverse impacts to any rare or state or federally listed animals or plants, significant natural communities, or other significant habitats will occur.

Significance of Impacts

Due to the fact the vegetation is expected to be removed in phases with each development, that vegetation will be planted with each new development, which will provide similar habitats for small mammals and birds; that there are no known occurrences of any rare or state or federally listed animals or plants, significant natural communities, or other significant habitats and the fact that the above mitigation measures will need to be complied with and all other local, state and federal regulations will need to be adhered to, any potential indirect impact on plants and animals are not expected to be significant.

1.5 Impact on Air

Existing Conditions

Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the NYSDOT and FHWA Final Design Report, which provides an overview of the existing air quality for the District and surrounding areas.

1.5.1 Air Quality Impacts associated With Construction

Potential Indirect Adverse Impact: Temporary air quality impacts during construction

During construction within the District, airborne particulates will increase as construction vehicles in motion raise dust. The increase is expected to be sporadic over several years as the District builds out. The increase is also expected to be short-term in nature and will be most noticeable in the areas immediately adjacent to the construction.

Mitigation

The impact should be minimized by the use of dust inhibitors, such as calcium chloride, water and other dust-control provisions. The amount of time that disturbed areas remain exposed should be kept to a minimum as outlined above under Section 1.2.3 – Impact on Plants and Animals. The City of Troy and other involved agencies during the review of future projects may require additional mitigation measures to avoid or reduce air quality impacts associated with construction.

Significance of Impact

Based upon the mitigation proposed above and the need to comply with the City of Troy and other local, state and federal regulations during the development review process, air quality impacts associated with the buildout of the District are not expected to be significant.

1.5.2 Air Quality Impacts Associated with Traffic

The Final Design Report analyzed future traffic conditions projected to increase by 1.0% per year. Based upon these projections, the potential for air quality impacts associated with traffic were evaluated. According to the Final Design Report, a detailed microscale air quality analysis was not necessary as part of the road reconstruction project since that project would not directly result in increased traffic volumes, reduce receptor distances or change other existing conditions to such a degree as to jeopardize attainment of the National and New York State ambient air quality standards. It was also determined that a mesoscale analysis would not be required and that the reconstruction project would not result in significant adverse impacts on ambient particulate matter air quality.

While it is anticipated that the Action would result in increased traffic volumes over existing levels and above the projected annual increases (1.0% per year) in the Final Design Report, the Final Design Report should be used as a guide on potential air quality impacts moving forward. All future development projects within the District will need to consider the potential for air quality impacts associated with traffic during the development review phases. In addition, all local, state and federal requirements must be adhered to with respect to air quality.

1.6 Impact on Agricultural Land Resources

There are no existing agricultural districts or agricultural operations within the Project Area.

1.7 Impact on Critical Environmental Areas

There are no Critical Environmental Areas on or near the Project Area according to the NYSDEC website on Critical Environmental Areas - <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6184.html>.

1.8 Impact on Transportation Resources

The current transportation resources in the Project Area were evaluated as part of the proposed reconstruction of Congress Street and Ferry Street project and detailed in the July 2008, Creighton Manning Engineering, LLP (CME) completed a Final Design Report – Refer to Appendix A of this GEIS for a copy. As part of that study, CME needed to measure existing traffic volumes, estimate them for the chosen alternative design, and project those volumes out for ten and twenty years. The proposed reconstruction is also discussed in the Master Plan. The Final Design Report evaluated the following intersections:

- Congress Street/5th Avenue
- Congress Street/6th Avenue
- Congress Street/7th Avenue

- Congress Street/8th Street/Ferry Street
- Ferry Street/5th Avenue

Due to the fact that the evaluation of the reconstruction project began before the Master Plan project, the Final Design Report did not take into account the projected build out of the Project Area. Despite this, the Final Design Report does demonstrate that with an increase in traffic volumes of greater than 20%, the above intersections would operate at a level of service (LOS) of C or higher. This provides a significant buffer to allow for volume increases before adverse impacts on the intersections may occur.

While the Action at full build out will result in an increase in traffic volumes over existing and the possibly the projected volumes analyzed in the Final Design Report, there is not enough information available to determine if there is a potential for adverse impacts on transportation resources.

Future development proposals will need to evaluate the potential impacts on both the intersections within and outside of the Project Area through a traffic impact studies. The analyses completed and detailed in the Final Design Report will provide a significant foundation upon which to base future studies and should be referred to.

Mitigation

While it is unclear if future development in the Project Area will result in significant adverse impacts on transportation resources, traffic impact studies will need to be completed as part of the environmental review process for each development proposal to identify potential impacts and consider reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures.

Significance of impact

There is not enough information to make a determination as to whether or not one or more significant indirect adverse impacts on transportation resources would result from the implementation of the Proposed Action.

1.9 Impact on Open Space and Recreation

No Adverse Impact of Open Space and Recreational Resources

Currently, the Project Area consists largely of vacant privately owned land, with a combination of mowed grass, young trees and overgrown areas. While there are sidewalks throughout the Project Area, there is no public open space or recreational areas. Therefore, the Action will not result in an adverse impact on open space and recreational resources. Positive impacts are anticipated as discussed below.

Positive Impact of Open Space and Recreational Resources

The proposed Master plan has designed a number of open spaces more appropriate to an urban setting. Primary among these is the new pocket park atop the foundation of “Uncle Sam” Wilson house. This interpretive pocket park promises to be a significant historic park in the city. In addition, every street will be lined with trees.

Just as importantly, the project opens new entrances on the downtown side of Prospect Park. This permits access to the active and passive amenities in the park, which is currently only accessible through an automobile gate at its extreme eastern end. Now people can walk from downtown directly into the park. Also, access and activity on this side of the park enhances opportunities for the Friends of Prospect Park to carry out expressed plans to increase the importance of this largely overgrown northern area.

Based upon the above information, the Action will have a positive indirect impact on open space and recreational resources.

Mitigation

No mitigation is proposed, as the Action is not expected to result in adverse impacts on open space and recreational resources.

Significance of impact

The Action is not expected to result in any adverse impacts on open space and recreational resources.

1.10 Impact on Community Services

The potential municipal and school fiscal impacts associated with the build out of the Project Area were evaluated and the results are documented in the Fiscal Impact Analysis City of Troy Corridor Study dated December 17, 2008. Refer to Appendix 3 of the Master Plan for a copy of the full fiscal impact analysis. The Study evaluated six alternative buildout scenarios for the Project Area as outlined below in Table 1 – Development Scenarios.

Potential Positive Indirect Fiscal Impacts for the City of Troy and Host School Districts

For each development scheme, the analysis evaluated municipal costs, conceptual level development costs estimates, estimated real property taxes, municipal revenues associated with the scenarios, net fiscal impact for the city, estimated host school district costs and revenues including property tax and overall net fiscal impact on the school district.

The analysis indicates that at full build out of the District under any of the evaluated development schemes would result in positive fiscal impacts for both the City of Troy and for the Troy and Lansingburgh Central School Districts.

Mitigation

No mitigation is proposed, as the Action is projected to result in positive fiscal impacts for both the City of Troy and for the Troy and Lansingburgh Central School Districts.

Significance of impact

The Action is not projected to result in any adverse fiscal impacts on the City of Troy and for the Troy and Lansingburgh Central School Districts.

point, there is not enough information to conclude that the Action may result in an adverse impact on the ability to provide services. Indeed, it is likely that the increased demand for community services will be offset by the overall fiscal benefit of redeveloping the corridor.

Mitigation

There is not enough information to determine if adverse impacts are anticipated on the ability to provide community services, such as demands on ambulance, police, fire protection and other essential services as the Project Area builds out.

Significance of Impacts

Due to the fact that there is not enough information to determine if adverse impacts on the ability to provide community services may result, a determination on significance cannot be made at this time.

1.11 Impact on Aesthetic Resources

While significant adverse aesthetic impacts are not anticipated to result from the build out of the Project Area under the proposed Master Plan, all future development proposals within the Project Area will need to be evaluated to ensure any potential impacts on aesthetic resources are avoided or mitigated to the maximum extent practicable in accordance with the SEQRA and the NYSDEC Program Policy on Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts (DEP-00-2), the Visual Policy.

Under the Visual Policy, an aesthetic impact occurs when there is a detrimental effect on the perceived beauty of a place or structure, specifically an inventoried aesthetic resource of local, state or federal significance (e.g., a property on or eligible for inclusion in the National or State Register of Historic Place, State and local parks. Refer to the Visual Policy for a complete list). The Visual Policy goes on to state that mere visibility, even startling visibility of a project proposal, should not be a threshold for decision-making. Instead a project, by virtue of its visibility, must clearly interfere with or reduce the public's enjoyment and/or appreciation of the appearance of an inventoried resource (e.g., cooling tower plume blocks a view from a State Park overlook).

The Project Area itself is a large vacant lot. As such it is already incongruous with the surrounding densely built environment. The Action will facilitate redevelopment that is more aesthetically complimentary to the existing urban fabric of Troy.

The Project Area is immediately adjacent to Prospect Park, a city-owned park and an area that would be considered an aesthetic resource of local significance under the Visual Policy. While the proposed zoning regulations permit buildings up to 95 feet in this area adjacent to the Park where the current maximum building height is 35 feet, there are no hiking trails or scenic vista points in the park that would be obstructed by new buildings. This will need to be confirmed for each future project proposal during the environmental review phases. Also, any future improvements to Prospect Park including but not limited to new trail and scenic view points should be considered in light of the development recommended under the Master Plan and enabled under the proposed zoning amendments.

The Action would actually indirectly increase access to the Park and by facilitating the redevelopment of the Project Area and increasing the resident and workforce population in the area, use of the Park is expected to increase.

Currently, there are no other parks within or near the Project Area that would be adversely impacted by future development under the Master Plan. This will need to be confirmed for each future project proposal during the environmental review phases.

All future buildings adjacent to Prospect Park will not exceed the elevation of the Park. The Park will continue to serve as a scenic backdrop for the Project Area when viewed from northern locations.

There are numerous locations in the City of Troy that are listed on the State and National Registers including the Central Troy Historic District, the Grand Street Historic District, the Second Street Historic District, the Washington Park Historic District, the River Street Historic District, the Old Troy Hospital, the Troy Public Library, the Ilium Building, the Kate Mullany House, the Troy Savings Bank, and the W & L.E. Gurley Building. While future development in the Project Area is not expected to result in significant adverse aesthetic impacts on these designated historic resources.

1.12 Impact on Historic and Archeological Resources

Potential indirect impact on historical and archeological resources

The Action will facilitate the construction of buildings, roads, sidewalks, parks and other elements of the built environment. Such construction has the potential to impact any existing historic structures or archeological resources on the site. Given investigations that have taken place on the site, the conclusions under *Section 1.9 Impact on Aesthetic Resources* above and the proposed mitigation for archeological and historical interpretation as discussed in the Master Plan, significant adverse impacts upon historical and archeological resources are not anticipated.

Historical and archeological resources are important because they provide a link to our history and, in an urban environment, offer a foundation for a redevelopment design that makes communities more vibrant, valuable and economically sustainable.

Resources

There are no historical structures on the site. Aside from an abandoned car wash building, there are no above ground structures in the Project Area.

Four different archeological studies examined of various portions of the site. The complete studies can be found in GEIS Appendix B with summaries and relevant results described below.

Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. (July 1989). Report for Archeological Potential SEQR Part 1A, Super Shop'N Save, Hannagord Bros.

This study examined the 9.35 acres on the southern side of the current project site in anticipation of the construction of a supermarket. Historic maps and photos show that the project site was well developed in the 1800s. "In 1840, the residents of Upper Ferry Street included three laborers, 14 craftsman and three

merchants, including Samuel “Uncle Sam” Wilson at 144 Ferry Street.” That foundation warranted further investigation.

Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. (October 1989). “Uncle Sam” Wilson House, Phase II archeological investigation.

This study specifically examined the foundation of the Uncle Sam House at 144 Ferry Street. The foundation of Samuel Wilson’s house occupies a small portion of the 9.35-acre site. On this parcel, significant portions of the Wilson House exist including the footprint of the building, its brick paving, the privy and the cistern. All of these features were sample archeologically and show to preserve intact 19th-century remains. The Wilson household is representative of a 19th century working class urban household. As an individual, Sam Wilson is important in the history of Troy and the United States as the source of the Uncle Sam symbol. The report goes on to recommend the site be designated as a park and marked with interpretive signs.

Landmark Archeology, Inc. (November 2006). Phase 1A Archeological Study, Congress and Ferry Streets.

This study considered the approximately 14 acres of the project site. It found, via examination of historic maps, many structures had existed along both the current and abandoned streets within the project area. It recommended a Phase II investigation as a further step as well as the avoidance and preservation of the Uncle Sam House site.

Hartgen Archeological Associates, (April 2008). Phase 1B Addendum Archeological Field Reconnaissance, Congress and Ferry Street Reconstruction.

The results of this study are based upon four trenches dug on the location of land acquired to realign the roads on the north side of Ferry Street just west of where Ferry and Congress come together. The study found extensive disturbance in the project area from previous demolition episodes. This massive demolition operation razing dozens of dwellings required the use of heavy equipment such as bulldozers to level foundations and other structural features in the 1983 realignment areas. The research found two historic archeological sites, but recommended that no further archeological investigation is recommended in this study area for the Congress and Ferry Street reconstruction project.

Mitigation

The significant archeological asset noted by these studies was the foundation of the Samuel “Uncle Sam” Wilson House. Two of the studies recommended that the area be preserved. The Master Plan recognizes the significances of the site and sets the foundation aside as a public park interpreting the industrial history of Troy. It also could serve as a new entrance to Prospect Park – one closest to the city.

Significance of impact

Given the mitigation above, no significant adverse impacts resulting from the Action are anticipated.

1.13 Impact on Public Health

Potential Indirect Positive Impact on Public Health

The Action will result in a more pedestrian friendly and oriented district, with less of an emphasis on automobiles. The mixed-use, high-density compact nature of recommended development patterns will encourage more pedestrian traffic within the Project Area and with surrounding locations such as

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, The Sage Colleges, the waterfront and the Central Business District. The Action is expected to result in the pedestrian traffic between the Project Area and Prospect Park through the creation of three pedestrian access points with the park. Together, these pedestrian enhancements and opportunities could serve to improve public health.

Mitigation

No mitigation is proposed.

Significance of Impacts

The Action is expected to result in indirect positive impacts on public health and no indirect adverse impacts are anticipated.

1.14 Alternatives

There are two feasible alternatives to consider: (1) The adoption of the Master Plan and the proposed zoning amendments; (2) Not to adopt the Master Plan and proposed zoning amendments – the no action alternative.

Alternative 1 – Adoption of the Master Plan and the proposed zoning amendments

The adoption of the Master Plan and proposed zoning amendments would reweave the underutilized Project Area into Troy’s existing urban fabric – the ultimate goal of the Master Plan. The Action would also provide mechanisms and controls to allow for a more appropriate build out of the area, increases in pedestrian connectivity and an overall improvement in the efficiency of land use in this part of the city. In addition, the Action is expected to result in positive fiscal impacts for the City and host school districts and increased investment in the Project Area. Therefore, this action is considered the Preferred Action.

Alternative 2 –Not to adopt the Master Plan or proposed zoning amendments – No Action Alternative.

The no action alternative would not further the City’s goal of reweaving the Project Area into Troy’s existing urban fabric, the Project Area may not build out at the high-density urban development patterns consistent with the urban density found in the adjacent Central Business District and surrounding areas, will not likely improve the economy or vibrancy of the area and the City of Troy as a whole, and will not result in the same fiscal benefits. The preferred action provides a direction that would allow the city to grow, while still protecting and enhancing community character. The absence of a plan and implementing regulations will place the city in a position of reacting to development instead of being proactive in its efforts. Therefore, the no action alternative is not recommended.

1.15 Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

The impact on community character will be positive. The City of Troy has been experiencing a rebirth of residential and commercial growth. Long time residents and new residents are drawn to the city because of its high quality of life, convenient services and walkable urban form. The intent of the master plan and zoning amendments is to facilitate appropriate urban development patterns for this section of the city where the current zoning allows suburban style development, incompatible with surrounding forms. The Action will also facilitate high density mixed use development with a focus on pedestrian amenities and

connections within and between the Project Area and surrounding districts. The Action is expected to result in new investment and positive economic benefits for the Project Area and the City of Troy.

1.16 Effects on the Use and Conservation of Energy Resources

The Action is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on energy. While additional commercial and residential development may increase energy usage, the build out of the Project Area under the proposed high density and pedestrian oriented patterns will serve to minimize overall energy usage. The focus on enhancing the pedestrian environment, encouraging bicycling and the development of three new pedestrian access points into Prospect Park supports alternative modes of transportation, which reduces the reliance on automobiles. Compared to the current zoning allowances, which indirectly promotes reliance on automobiles, the Action may actually result in a positive impact on energy.