5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential of the Proposed Action to impact the visual character and aesthetic resources of the project area and the surrounding area. The Proposed Action would demolish the Main Building and Ellis Hall of the St. Paul's School and replace these buildings with open space. The aesthetic resources study area has been defined based on the area from which the project site buildings are visible and to encompass prominent visual landmarks in the area, and is roughly bounded by Merillon Avenue to the north, Hampton Road to the west, South Street and 4th Street to the south, and Cherry Valley and Cathedral Avenues to the east (see Figure 5-1).

5.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

5.2.1 PROJECT SITE

5.2.1.1 VISUAL CHARACTER

The project site contains the St. Paul's School Main Building, which is oriented parallel to Stewart Avenue, and Ellis Hall, adjacent to it to the east. The Main Building is a monumental building dating to the late 19th century. It is three and four stories in height and extends 300 feet along Stewart Avenue (see photo 1 of Figure 5-2). It has an E shaped plan, with three wings—east, central, and west—extending north from the rear façade of the building to a depth of approximately 180 feet. The Main Building is set back from Stewart Avenue behind a driveway and landscaped lawn with large mature trees (see photo 2 of Figure 5-2). There is a central traffic circle, positioned in front of the building's Stewart Avenue entrance, that contains shrubs, a tall flagpole, and a number of World War I and World War II stone monuments. The monuments are low to the ground and not visible except in proximity. Between the Stewart Avenue sidewalk and the driveway, at the east end of the lawn, are hedges pruned into the shape of a cross. As described by John Ellis Kordes, Village Historian, this is the location of the school's original flagpole.

The Main Building is clad in red brick and designed in the Ruskinian Gothic style, with pointed arched windows, a Mansard roof with dormers and stone finials, and polychromatic stone ornament, including radiating voussoirs framing the windows. Along Stewart Avenue, the main entrance is centrally located in a one-story portico with a pointed arched opening, and capped by a cast iron balustrade and stone finials (see photo 5 of Figure 4-4 of Chapter 4, "Historic and Archaeological Resources." Within the central bay and gable are engraved stone plaques set flush with the brick façade that read "In Memoriam," "Alex Turney Stewart," and "St. Paul's." At the roofline is a central gabled dormer capped by a stone cross and flanked by stone finials.

The west façade of the building also contains a large pointed arched entrance set within a carved stone enframement, set centrally within the four-story section of the building. At the roofline is a

large gabled dormer with decorative stone finials. Inscribed on a stone plaque just below the gable are the words, "Ars Et Philosophia." Connecting from the west façade of the Main Building to Cluett Hall (in the project area to the west) is a one-story brick passageway (see photo 3 of Figure 5-3). This structure has a flat roof without windows and is at the level of the Main Building's raised basement.

The rear façade is composed of the north façade of the Main Building and the three projecting wings (see photo 4 of Figure 5-3). At the end of the east wing is the building's clock tower, which projects an additional two-to three-stories above the main roof (see photo 4 of Figure 5-3 and photo 5 of Figure 5-4). The clock tower has a peaked roof capped with copper, with clocks on all four facades. The clocks are set within pointed arched openings. The central wing contains the double-height chapel, located at the second and third floors. The east and west facades of the central wing each contain four large pointed arched openings that contain stained glass windows set within stone tracery. The north façade of the chapel contains a centrally located tripartite stained glass window flanked by smaller blind arched windows. Above this, there is a gabled dormer capped by a stone cross. The central and west wings have metal fire escapes attached to the facades. Behind the Main Building is a grassy area with smaller deciduous trees located primarily at the perimeter. There is also a row of mature pine trees lining Rockaway Avenue north of the Rockaway Avenue entrance, blocking most views of the project site in views south on Rockaway Avenue (see photo 6 of Figure 5-4).

In close proximity, it is evident that the roof is in need of repair, with patching and weathered elements. At the rear of the building, there is a tarp covering a portion of the east wing's roof (see photo 10 of Figure 4-7 of Chapter 4, "Historic and Archaeological Resources." Chain-link and lower wood slat fencing has been installed between the wings of the building, prohibiting access (see photo 4 of Figure 5-3). The areas closed off by the fencing are generally overgrown and unkempt. There is also some vegetation growing up the sides of the building.

At the east end of the building is a one-story porte-cochere. The porte-cochere is attached to the east façade of the Main Building, and has a peaked roof with decorative roofline finials (see photo 6 of Figure 4-4 of Chapter 4, "Historic and Archaeological Resources". The driveway passes through the porte-cochere beneath a barrel vaulted ceiling formed by the pointed arched openings on the four facades. Similar in style and ornament to the Main Building, the arches are ornamented with polychromed stone radiating voussoirs. The driveway connects to another entrance on Rockaway Avenue, located behind the Main Building. A portion of the driveway also extends west from Rockaway Avenue to Cluett Hall and also provides access to Feringa Field House and the eight cottages.

Directly east of the porte-cochere is Ellis Hall, a 16,000 sf building that was built in 1969 (see photo 7 of Figure 5-5). Ellis Hall is a three-story red brick building. The building is designed with full height pointed arched window openings that are infilled with metal double hung windows and metal spandrels. The building has a partial Mansard roof design.

5.2.1.2 AESTHETIC RESOURCES

The Main Building is a prominent aesthetic resource. Its Gothic design and monumental character makes it a visual landmark on Stewart Avenue. The Main Building is prominently visible in views east on Stewart Avenue and from the playing fields in the project area and from the school district athletic fields across Stewart Avenue.

The large mature trees on the front lawn of the Main Building are also an aesthetic resource in the area.

5.2.2 PROJECT AREA

The project area contains Cluett Hall, the Feringa Field House, open playing fields and a small cluster of attached, wood-frame cottages facing south to the Main Building.

Cluett Hall is a two-story, 14,600 square foot building built in 1898 as a gymnasium for St. Paul's School. It is a two-story brick clad structure with a hipped roof, with the main Stewart Avenue entrance and round arched windows at the first floor framed in brownstone, and wood brackets at the eaves (see photo 3 of Figure 5-3). It is located west of the Main Building and set back approximately 100 feet further than the Main Building from Stewart Avenue. As described above, a one-story brick tunnel structure connects from the east side of the building to the Main Building.

Feringa Field House is a one-story, 24,000 square foot building, completed in 1963. It is located just north of, and perpendicular to, Cluett Hall. It is a concrete, rectangular shaped building with a flat roof. Strips of windows are located on the facades just below the roofline.

The cottages and nursery school are located at the north end of the project site. The eight attached buildings are one-story, gabled roof buildings with shingled facades that have the appearance of single-family, ranch-style homes (see photo 8 of Figure 5-5). The area around the buildings is landscaped with shrubs and flowers, and a wooden rail fence extends along the narrow parking area located in front of (and south of) the one of the cottages used as a Senior Center.

An entrance on Rockaway Avenue north of the cottages provides access to a large paved parking lot located just west of Cluett Hall and the Feringa Field House. The remainder of the project area is occupied by large, grassy fields with a playground and baseball diamond (see photo 9 of Figure 5-6). Some trees are located along the property boundary at Hampton Road and also along Stewart Avenue. A metal estate-style fence borders the athletic fields on Stewart Avenue.

5.2.3 STUDY AREA

5.2.3.1 VISUAL CHARACTER

Stewart Avenue is a wide, two-way thoroughfare lined with sidewalks and deciduous trees (see photo 10 of Figure 5-6). To the north and west, surrounding development is dominated by single family residential development along St. Paul's Place, St. Paul's Crescent, and Hampton Road (see photo 11 of Figure 5-7). To the south, across Stewart Avenue, is additional single family residential development along Westminster, Eton, and Chelsea Roads. The residential developments to the south, west and north of the St. Paul's property are relatively old, well maintained, and well landscaped. This is typical of Garden City, in general. Most of the residential properties have lawns and gardens, with the older properties containing mature shade trees which limit views from ground level (see photo 11 of Figure 5-7, and Figure 4-13 of Chapter 4, "Historic and Archaeological Resources").

Directly across from the developed portions of the St. Paul's Property are athletic fields used by Garden City Middle School, which is located east of the athletic fields at the southwest corner of Stewart and Cherry Valley Avenues (see photo 10 of Figure 5-6). The Garden City Middle School fronts onto the intersection and is set back behind a landscaped area with a tall flagpole

(see photo 12 of Figure 5-7). The school is a monumental, red brick building with a full height pedimented portico supported on stone columns. The building has a cupola atop the roof, capped by a weather vane.

Forming the east boundary of the project area, Rockaway Avenue is a curving four lane road that extends from Stewart Avenue northward and connects to Merillon Avenue. It is lined by tall deciduous trees and single family homes. Across Rockaway Avenue from the project area is the Garden City Golf Club, a private golf club (see photo 13 of Figure 5-8). The Golf Club contains a number of buildings, fairways, greens, and pathways. A number of single family residences are located directly across Rockaway Avenue from the project site, adjacent to the Golf Club. Other single family residences are located east of Rockaway Avenue on Stewart Avenue. The LIRR right-of-way extends east-west at grade north of South Avenue, and is largely hidden from view by tall hedges and trees (see photo 14 of Figure 5-8).

East of Cherry Valley Avenue are the Wyndham Condominiums located south of 9th Street. This large residential, multi-family dwelling complex contains red brick buildings that are visible from a number of locations in the study area, including in views east from Rockaway Avenue across the Garden City Golf Club (see photo 13 of Figure 5-8). South of the Wyndham is the Garden City Hotel, which was rebuilt in the 1980s. Fronting along 7th Street between Cathedral and Hilton Avenues, the hotel is a large structure, rectangular in plan, with a central cupola, which is visible from Stewart Avenue. The Wyndham and the Garden City Hotel are relatively tall, multi-story structures.

South of the LIRR right-of way along the west side of Cathedral Avenue is the Cathedral of the Incarnation complex. The Cathedral, which is oriented towards Cathedral Avenue, is a prominent Gothic sandstone church with a 210 foot spire, which is visible from a number of locations in the study area, including the project site (see photo 15 of Figure 5-9 and photo 10 of Figure 5-6). The Cathedral is set within a landscaped campus among other associated structures. These include the See House and Carriage House to the south along 4th Street, which are red brick structures dating to the late 19th century, and a more contemporary stone structure at the north end of the campus near the LIRR right-of-way.

South of the LIRR right-of-way west of Rockaway Avenue are the Cherry Valley Country Club and Adelphi University. Within the study area, the Adelphi University campus is developed with a large parking lot and free standing campus buildings. On the campus are a number of the earlier, classically designed red brick buildings with stone ornament and hipped roofs, and more contemporary structures (see photo 22 of Figure 4-14 of Chapter 4, "Historic and Archaeological Resources."

5.2.3.2 AESTHETIC RESOURCES

Aesthetic resources in the study area include the residential, tree lined streets, which are developed with a number of attractive and older homes designed in the Georgian, Victorian, and Tudor styles. There are also a number of monumental buildings in the area that serve as visual landmarks. These include the Cathedral of the Incarnation, which as described above, has a spire visible from numerous locations in the study area, and the Garden City Middle School, which is prominently sited at the intersection of Stewart, Cherry Valley, and Cathedral Avenues, and is designed with such prominent architectural features as a full height portico and a cupola (see photo 12 of Figure 5-7 and photo 15 of Figure 5-9). Also considered aesthetic resources are the earlier historic Adelphi University buildings, which are clad in red brick with stone ornament and hipped roofs.

5.2.3.3 VIEWS OF THE PROJECT SITE

Surveys were conducted in March, 2010, when the leaves were off the trees, and again in June, 2010, to determine the visibility of St. Paul's School from various locations in project and study areas, with an emphasis on the views from public spaces.

From the south, St. Paul's Main Building is plainly visible from the Middle School and the adjacent athletic fields, as well as from Stewart Avenue, especially in views from the west (see photo 9 of Figure 5-6). Portions of the Main Building are also visible from locations on the Adelphi University campus and on South Street above and between the hedges planted along the LIRR right-of-way (see photo 14 of Figure 5-8).

Directly to the west, the athletic fields in the project area also have direct views to the Main Building. Views from farther west are obstructed. The Main Building is not visible from Hampton Road, immediately to the west, as it is blocked by the row of large houses and densely packed large trees that line the east side of the street.

In general, views are quite limited from east of Cherry Valley Avenue, due to the presence of the tall Garden City Hotel and Wyndham. The Main Building is not visible from Village Hall, for example. However, as described above, the top of the Main Building's clock tower is visible in discrete locations across the Garden City Golf Club from Cherry Valley Avenue, and from the intersection of Stewart, Cherry Valley, and Cathedral Avenues.

From the north, portions of the St. Paul's Main Building are visible between the homes on St. Paul's Place (see photo 11 of Figure 5-7). The Main Building is not visible from the Garden City High School farther north.

Moving south from the high school on Rockaway Avenue, the building first comes into view at the curve several hundred yards north of the property. The Main Building is also visible from portions of Rockaway Avenue in greater proximity to the south Rockaway Avenue entrance, as the row of pine trees that line Rockaway Avenue north of the entrance obstruct views (see Figure 5-4). The Main Building is visible from portions of the nearby Garden City Golf Club, but this is a private establishment.

5.3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION

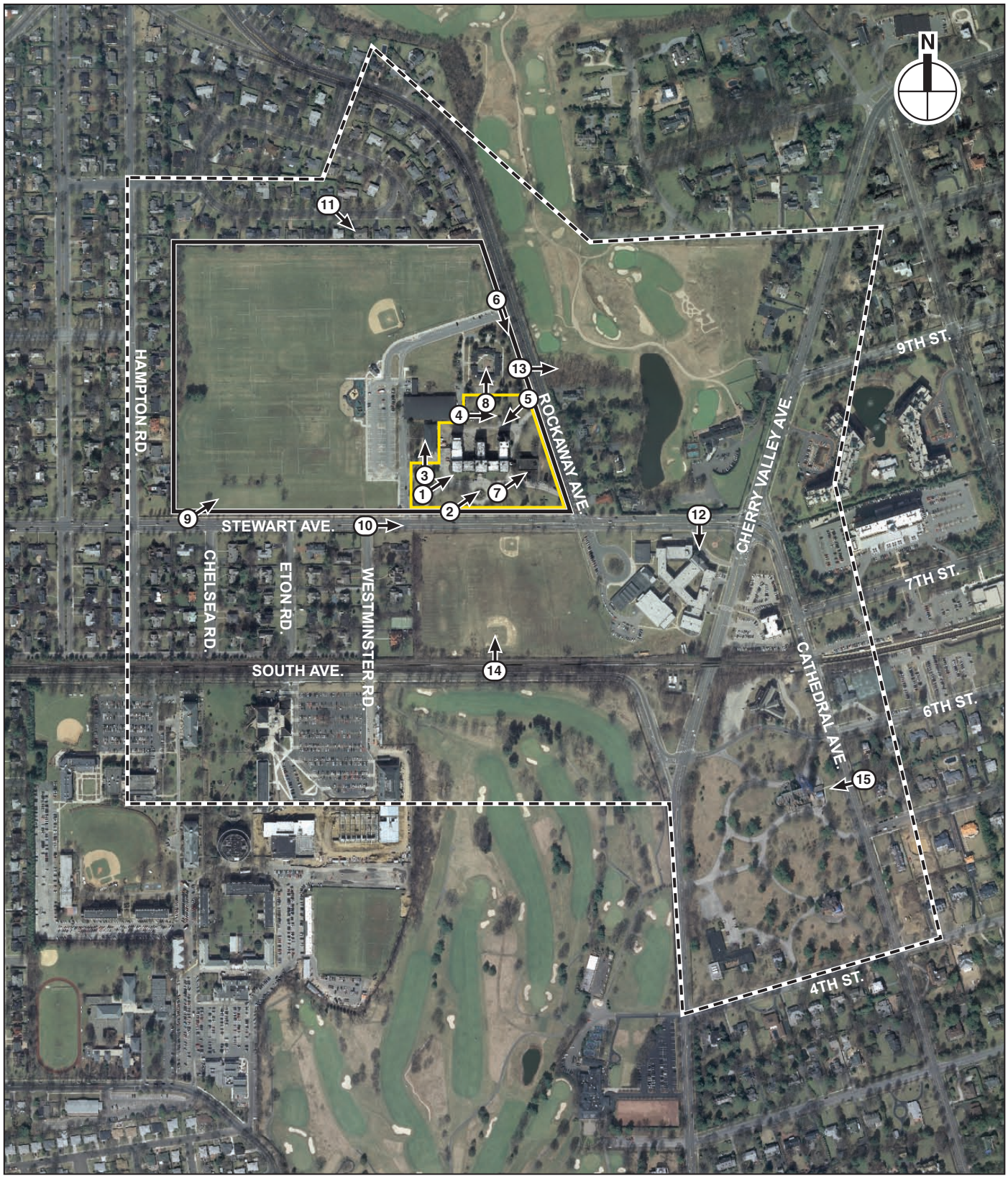
As described above, the St. Paul's School Main Building is an iconic aesthetic resource in the Village, due to its striking Gothic architecture and visibility on Stewart Avenue and adjacent open spaces. As such, the demolition of the Main Building would constitute a significant adverse impact on the visual character and aesthetic resources of Garden City.

Views from the athletic fields in the project area directly to the west of the Main Building, views east on Stewart Avenue, and views from the Middle School and its adjacent fields would be the most affected by the demolition, as there are direct views to the building from these locations. The removal of other, less direct views (i.e., west on Stewart Avenue; at the intersection of Stewart, Cherry Valley, and Cathedral Avenues; from discrete locations on Cherry Valley Avenue; from Saint Paul's Place; and from South Avenue) of portions of the Main Building, including the clock tower, from other portions of the study area would also result in the loss of a visual landmark in the area.

The large mature trees along Stewart Avenue would not be removed as part of the Proposed Action. Therefore, the Proposed Action would have no adverse impact on these aesthetic resources.

It should be noted that the proposed open space itself would fit into the visual character of the area, which is composed primarily of single family residences and open spaces including athletic fields and golf courses. The open space would not adversely impact other aesthetic resources in the area, as it would not obstruct views to these resources.

6.10.10



Project Area

Project Site

Visual Character and Aesthetic Resources Study Area Boundary

Photograph View Direction and Reference Number

0 1000 FEET

SCALE

Visual Character and Aesthetic Resources

St. Paul's School Demolition for Additional Open Space

Figure 5-1

Stewart Avenue façade, looking east **1**

View northeast on Stewart Avenue towards the Main Building **2**

Views of the Project Site

Figure 5-2

Cluett Hall and connecting passageway to the Main Building **3**

Rear (north) façade and clock tower, view east **4**

Views of the Project Site and Project Area

View southwest from Rockaway Avenue of the rear façade of the clock tower **5**

View south on Rockaway Avenue from the west side of the street **6**

Views of the Project Site and Project Area

Figure 5-4

Ellis Hall, view northeast of the Stewart Avenue façade **7**

View north of the Garden City Department of Recreation Senior Center and administrative offices **8**

Views of the Project Site and Project Area

View east across athletic fields in the Project Area from Stewart Avenue. The main building and clock tower are visible **9**

View east on Stewart Avenue. The project site is on the left. Garden City Middle School fields are on the right. The Cathedral of the Incarnation spire is visible in the distance **10**

Views of the Study Area

Figure 5-6

View south on St. Paul's Place. The Main Building is visible in between the houses **11**

View south on Stewart Avenue of the Garden City Middle School **12**

Views of the Study Area

Figure 5-7

View east to and across the Garden City Golf Club. The Premier Apartments and the cupola of the Garden City Hotel are visible in the distance **13**

View north on South Avenue of the LIRR Right-of-way. The Main Building's clock tower is visible in certain locations **14**

Views of the Study Area

Figure 5-8

Cathedral of the Incarnation, Cathedral Avenue façade **15**

Views of the Study Area

Figure 5-9