Chapter 2: Land Use and Zoning

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies land uses and zoning on the project site and in the surrounding study area in order to establish the context in which the Proposed Action would take place. In addition, the Proposed Action is assessed for its potential impacts with respect to land use and zoning.

2.2 EXISTING CONDTIONS

2.2.1 LAND USE

2.2.1.1 PROJECT SITE

As shown in **Figure 2-1,** the approximately 48-acre campus of the former St. Paul's School (i.e. the project area) is located at the northwest intersection of Stewart Avenue and Rockaway Avenue. The address is 295 Stewart Avenue in Garden City, New York. The Main Building and Ellis Hall and associated land area (i.e., the project site) occupy approximately seven acres in the southeast quadrant. The Main Building is a three- and four-story building with three wings comprising 115,000 square feet of interior space; Ellis Hall is a two-story, 16,000-square foot-building. The Main Building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the late nineteenth century A. T. Stewart Era Buildings district, and is in a deteriorating condition. Additional school buildings in the project area include Cluett Hall (a two-story, 14,600-square-foot building built in 1898 and eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places), and Feringa Field House (a one-story, 24,000-square-foot-building fully constructed in 1963). Also located in the southeast quadrant is the Garden City Department of Recreation and administrative offices, a senior center and nursery school. The remaining parcel consists of recreational fields and surface parking on approximately 38 acres.

Before closing in March 1991, St. Paul's School operated as an educational institution for over 100 years. The Village acquired the 48-acre parcel in 1993, according to the Village Board resolution approving acquisition of the property for Village purposes, including recreational purposes. The Village's petition in the eminent domain proceeding to acquire the property stated that the public benefit to be gained by the acquisition was the preservation of the 48-acre site, the provision of significant green space, and the prevention of an undesirable use of the property. In 2004, the Village Board dedicated the entire project area as parkland. Therefore, it is held in public trust and cannot be converted to non-park use without approval by the State legislature.

The Main Building and Ellis Hall are now unoccupied. The project area is owned by the Village, with the majority of the property used for a variety of Village purposes, including field and indoor recreation, special events, exhibits, and other general recreational and cultural community uses.

St. Paul's School Demolition for Additional Open Space

Figure 2-1
Land Use

2.2.1.2 STUDY AREA

The land use study area is defined by residential and recreational uses and is generally bounded by St. Paul's Place/10th Street to the north, the LIRR Tracks to the south, Cherry Valley Avenue to the east, and Oxford Boulevard to the west. The study area includes single-family residential development primarily to the north, south, and west. On the north and west, single family residences are located along St. Paul's Place, St. Paul's Crescent, and Hampton Road. To the south, across Stewart Avenue, is additional single family residential development along Westminster, Elon, and Chelsea Roads. The residential developments to the north, south, and west of the St. Paul's property are relatively old, well maintained, and well landscaped. This is typical of Garden City, in general. East of the property are several residential properties along Rockaway Avenue along with the Garden City Golf Club (a private golf course). In addition, the Garden City Middle School and athletic fields used by the Middle School are located to the south of the project site at the southwest corner of Stewart and Cherry Valley Avenues.

2.2.2 ZONING

2.2.2.1 PROJECT SITE

The project site is zoned R-20, as shown on **Figure 2-2**. The R-20 zoning district generally permits single-family residential uses, with a minimum of 20,000 square feet per lot. In addition to single-family residences, the R-20 zoning district permits public schools, railroad passenger stations, nurseries and greenhouses for personal use, golf courses, municipal uses (including public parks and playgrounds), certain parking and accessory uses, and other uses as permitted by the Board of Trustees or Board of Appeals.

2.2.2.2 STUDY AREA

The study area is zoned primarily for residential use. The R-12 district comprises the single-family residential development to the north, south, and west of the project site. The R-12 zoning district permits higher-density single-family residential use with a minimum lot size of 12,000 square feet.

The Garden City Middle School and adjacent athletic fields on the south side of Stewart Avenue are zoned R-20—the same zoning as for the project site—as are the residential uses in the eastern portion of the study area. The private golf course on the east side of Rockaway Avenue is zoned R-40. The R-40 zoning district generally permits single-family residential use on lots with a minimum of 40,000 square feet.

In addition to single-family residences, the R-12 and R-40 zoning districts permit the same uses as for the R-20 zoning district.

2.3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION

2.3.1 LAND USE

The proposed demolition of the Main Building and Ellis Hall at the vacant St. Paul's School, which is owned by the Village, would provide additional open space at the project site for the Garden City community. The area of the building footprints and the land immediately surrounding the buildings on the project site would be used by the Village as open space. Following the proposed demolition, the site would be appropriately graded, restored, and

St. Paul's School Demolition for Additional Open Space

Figure 2-2
Zoning

landscaped for its intended use as open space. The proposed reuse would be beneficial to Garden City residents. Demolishing the Main Building and Ellis Hall would allow this property to contribute to the recreational amenity comprised by the remainder of the former campus. Other recreational uses also exist adjacent to the site, including athletic fields on the south side of Stewart Avenue, and a private golf course on the east side of Rockaway Avenue. Therefore, the proposed reuse of the site as open space would be compatible with existing uses on the project site and in the surrounding area. The proposed open space would also serve the existing residents in the study area. The Proposed Action would be consistent with public policy as embodied in the 2004 Village Board park dedication. Therefore, the Proposed Action is not expected to result in significant adverse land use impacts.

2.3.2 ZONING

The proposed demolition of the Main Building and Ellis hall at the former St. Paul's School to provide additional public open space would be consistent with the existing zoning for the site, which permits municipal uses including public parks and playgrounds. The Proposed Action is not expected to have an adverse impact on existing zoning in the study area, which permits the same uses as zoning on the project site. ✷