

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential of the Proposed Action to affect historic resources on or in the vicinity of the project site. The project site includes the Main Building of St. Paul's School, which is listed on the State/National Register of Historic Places (S/NR) as a contributing property within the A.T. Stewart Era Buildings Historic District. This historic district encompasses buildings built as part of the Garden City planned community between 1871 and 1893. The district was nominated for the S/NR as a thematic group, because the buildings do not form a contiguous grouping of buildings, but rather are separated by intervening, subsequent construction. The Proposed Action would demolish St. Paul's School Main Building and the adjoining non-historic Ellis Hall building to create additional open space. This chapter assesses the potential of the Proposed Action to impact historic resources.

Historic resources include both archaeological and architectural resources. For archaeological resources, the study area is the project site itself, the area to be disturbed by project construction, where subsurface archaeological resources, if present, may be disturbed.

In general, potential impacts on architectural resources can include both direct physical impacts and indirect impacts. Direct impacts include demolition of a resource and alterations to a resource that cause it to become a different visual entity. A resource could also be damaged from vibration and additional damage from adjacent construction that could occur from falling objects, subsidence, collapse, or damage from construction machinery.

Indirect impacts are contextual or visual impacts that could result from project construction or operation. These could result from blocking significant public views of a resource; isolating a resource from its setting or relationship to the streetscape; altering the setting of a resource; introducing incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements to a resource's setting; or introducing shadows over a historic landscape or an architectural resource with sun-sensitive features that contribute to that resource's significance (e.g., a chapel with stained-glass windows).

This chapter considers the potential impacts of the Proposed Action on the historic character of the Village of Garden City, focusing on the area from which the St. Paul's School Main Building is visible and in consideration of this historic resource's relationship with other A.T. Stewart Era Historic District buildings. Architectural resources analyzed include properties listed on or determined eligible for listing on the S/NR.

4.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.2.1 PROJECT SITE

4.2.1.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The National Register nomination form for the A.T. Stewart Era Historic District states the following:

“Presumably, archaeological evidence associated with construction and historic use of all the above properties may exist on each plot. However, no systematic identification of archaeological resources has been undertaken.”

Therefore, it is possible that the project site is sensitive for historic-period archaeological resources.

There is a low potential to recover intact precontact (Native American) resources on the project site, as these resources are typically shallowly buried. Excavation, construction, and grading operations that have occurred on the project site have most likely impacted any such resources, if such resources were present.

4.2.1.2 ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

The seven acres of the project site contain the Main Building and Ellis Hall of the former St. Paul's School. The project site is located at the intersection of Stewart Avenue and Rockaway Avenue, at 295 Stewart Avenue in Garden City, New York (see Figure 4-1). Before closing in March 1991, St. Paul's School operated as an educational institution for over 100 years. The buildings are now unoccupied.

A.T. Stewart Era Historic District

St. Paul's School Main Building is listed on the S/NR as part of the A.T. Stewart Era Buildings district, which was added to the NR in 1978 (91NR00239, OPRHP number 05921.000089) (Appendix B). While listed in the NRHP as a district, this group was nominated as a “thematic group” because the constituent structures are not contiguous to one another, and later development on intervening lots has interrupted the continuity of the historic fabric. At the time of its nomination, the group consisted of 50 residential, commercial, religious and civic structures built as original elements of the planned community of Garden City between 1871 and 1893. These included 44 residences, the Cathedral of the Incarnation and associated structures, the St. Paul's School Main Building, the Cathedral School of St. Mary, the Garden City Water Works, and a commercial building at 53-55 Hilton Avenue. A number of the buildings in the district were commissioned by A.T. Stewart's wife in memory of her husband. These include the Main Building of St. Paul's School, the Cathedral of the Incarnation, See House, and St. Mary's Cathedral School.

The NRHP nomination form states:

The buildings of the “A.T. Stewart Era” thematic group consists [sic] of fifty structures built between 1871 and 1893 as components of Garden City, Long

Island's first planned suburban community ... The buildings associated with Stewart family development of Garden City [sic] include significant, well-preserved examples of residential, civic and commercial architecture of the late nineteenth century. The Cathedral of the Incarnation complex and its dependent Cathedral schools are monumental structures built in memory of A.T. Stewart which also contribute to the sense of the overall village plan.

*Main Building
Historical Background*

The Main Building was built in 1883 and commissioned by Stewart's wife, Cornelia Stewart, in memory of her husband. The Garden City entry in the *AIA Architectural Guide to Nassau and Suffolk Counties* (MacKay 1992:13) describes the Main Building as follows:

St. Paul's School was from the outset an extraordinary structure. Designed by Edward H. Harris in the Ruskinian Gothic Style, a mode rarely encountered outside of an urban context, the huge mansard-roofed brick building, with its ornate 300-foot facade, 500 rooms and fenestration comprised of 642 windows, was, on its completion, Long Island's largest structure other than a resort hotel. Polychromatic voussoir-arched windows, elaborate cast-iron balustrades and Dorchester stone trim were some of the elements that combined to make St. Paul's such a successful exercise in Victorian exuberance.

Note that the architect credited in *AIA Guide* (Edward H. Harris) differs from most other sources (including the National Register nomination and building inventory form for St. Paul's School), where Henry G. Harrison is cited. Harrison, born and trained in England, started an architectural practice in New York City in 1853, specializing in the Gothic Revival style. He won several commissions for landmark religious structures, and was a favorite architect of the Episcopal Church, for whom his finest work is the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City (Van Ingen 1997:207). A newspaper article from 1885 describing a lawsuit brought by Harrison against Cornelia Stewart to reclaim expenses indicates that Harrison served as the architect in charge of Garden City projects between 1876 and 1885 (*The New York Times* 1885), during which time St. Paul's School was built.

Another article in *The New York Times* described the Main Building's original features (W.J.H. 1897), most of which are extant and readily identifiable:

The school building is unique, because it combines so much under one roof. All of St. Paul's School is in this one building... in the shape of a letter E, and is 300 feet long, with wings 179 feet deep... with basement, three stories, and mansard roof, a clock and bell tower and a broach spire in copper for the ventilation of the chemical laboratory. The interior comprises wide and airy corridors and parlors, reading room, and library of

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really great dimensions. They are 140 feet long by 21 feet wide. On the first floor are the main schoolroom and eight classrooms and the dining room.

At the head of the grand staircase on the second floor is the chapel, a wonderfully beautiful little worship room... The school building also contains, in additions to the rooms of the masters and the pupils, a concert or lecture hall, a hall for the meetings of the school debating society, an infirmary, a gymnasium, and the chemical and physical laboratories.

In 2003, the Main Building was chosen by the Preservation League of New York State as one of its "Seven to Save" significant but endangered properties (Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities [SPLIA] 2003).

Nominated to the NR in 1978, the Main Building meets criteria for listing on the S/NR. As outlined in the *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 36, Part 60*, four basic criteria are used to assess National (and in New York, State) Register eligibility. In order to be considered eligible, structures or sites must typically be 50 years of age and must satisfy one or more of the following criteria (National Park Service 1991):

- A Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Structures or sites that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D Structures or sites that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The Main Building contributes to our understanding of broad patterns in history (Criterion A), specifically, late nineteenth century community planning (Stewart's development of a model country seat on the former Hempstead Plains, Long Island's first planned suburban community). Stewart's original vision was to provide "pleasant and reasonable" rental housing for employees of his Manhattan business (MacKay 1992:10), but Garden City never lived up to his expectations. According to the National Register nomination form:

All buildings and civic improvements remained part of the family's estate, much in the manorial tradition of Europe. Houses were not sold outright, but rather rented to carefully screened, "better" upper middle-class families at high, fixed rents. This system, together with the economic results of the Panic of 1873, effectively excluded the urban working class from Stewart's model community from the very beginning.

The failure of Garden City to fulfill its original purpose as a model country residential community was already evident by the 1870s. Following A.T. Stewart's death in 1876, the estate, led by widow Cornelia Stewart and executor Judge Henry Hilton, renewed the development of Garden City with the goal of creating a religious and educational center.

The property is also significant under Criterion B, for its association with Stewart, at one time among New York's wealthiest self-made millionaires. Stewart's death in 1876 was noteworthy enough to warrant five columns on the first page of *The New York Times*.

Perhaps most importantly, St. Paul's School possesses architectural significance (Criterion C) as an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival style. As noted in the *AIA Architectural Guide* (MacKay 1992:13), the high style is rarely encountered on civic buildings outside of urban landscapes. The massing, ornate roof line, decorative details (both exterior and interior), and high quality building materials and workmanship all contribute to the importance of St. Paul's School.

In addition to satisfying one of the four significance criteria, a structure must also possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to be eligible for listing on the NR. St. Paul's School's Main Building stands at its original location, in a collegiate setting, and until recently was used for its intended function, a boys' school. Because the building has witnessed only minor renovations and modernization, the integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling is quite high. The loss of the use of the interior of the northwest tower in 1970 due to fire, while regrettable, does not compromise the integrity of St. Paul's School and the building's listing on the NR postdates the loss of the northwest tower. Ellis Hall does not contribute to, nor does it impact (because it is visually distinct), the architectural and historical significance of the Main Building. In summary, the Main Building possesses very good integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Description and Condition

The Main Building comprises 115,000 square feet of interior space, including a full basement and partial cellar. It was used as a school for boys and housed offices, classrooms, student dormitories, faculty apartments, assembly areas, a kitchen, dining areas, and a chapel. The Main Building is a masonry bearing wall structure supporting wood framed floors and roofs. It consists of three wings (West, Center, and East) linked together at their south end. The buildings are three and four stories in height with a higher clock tower atop the north end of the east wing (see **Figures 4-2** and **4-3**). An entrance portico is located in front of the building's main entrance at the center of the south side of the building and another "drive through" portico, or portecochere, is located on the building's east façade (see **Figure 4-4**).

The building's structural system uses some metal members for trusses, beams, girders, columns, and miscellaneous anchoring devices for support. The foundation system is assumed to be on spread footings, and the roofing system is built-up roof on the flat surfaces and standard tile roof on the sloping mansards. The original slate tile roofing over the mansards was replaced with a mineral shingle application. The clock tower roofing is composed of copper flashing with slate tile.

The building was heated by a boiler plant consisting of two (2) low pressure, steam generating, oil-fired boilers, dated 1947, located in the basement. Floor-mounted steam radiators and/or steam piping grids located on/in the walls and/or ceilings distributed heat throughout the Main Building. The piping is most likely original (circa 1920s) and in poor condition. The boilers used

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No. 4 oil, which was stored in a 10,000-gallon underground fuel oil storage tank located outside of the south wall of the boiler room.

There is no evidence of foundation damage from settlement or deterioration. A number of the original ornamental finials, projecting from the dormer windows and at the corners of the roofs, which are visible in historic photographs, have been removed (see **Figure 4-5**). Decorative stonework pieces are weathered and in need of repointing and securing at some locations. Additionally, approximately 60% of the mortar joints in the masonry are weathered and/or decayed, allowing water to infiltrate the building.

The center wing contains the chapel, which contains nine arched openings with stained glass windows (see **Figure 4-6**). As indicated by John Ellis Kordes, Garden City Village Historian, the windows were designed by Clayton, Bill and Company, from London, England (the same manufacturer of the windows at the Cathedral of the Incarnation) with the exception of the second window in from the north on the west façade of the central wing, which Mr. Kordes believes is a Tiffany window. Several panels of the stained glass windows in the chapel have broken loose of their ties and have fallen in on themselves. Exterior glazing in the stained glass windows is cracked, broken, or missing at several locations; this has enabled water to infiltrate the building. Water has also infiltrated the building because the operable sashes of the stained glass panels do not fully close at some locations. Most of the original double-hung sash windows have been replaced with aluminum windows, with the exception of some of the dormer windows and windows on the north (rear) façade of the building.

The roof is in poor condition. The main surfaces of the flat roofs have bubbles, blisters, cracks, and peeling and raised seams. Some of the flat roofs have been re-roofed with insulation and flame-applied bituminous membrane. The insulation between the re-roofed portions and the original roofing material is saturated with and significantly damaged by water. The flashing is missing or damaged in many locations (see **Figure 4-7**). The roof skylight flashing is deteriorated, allowing water to enter the building. Many of the chimney tieback rods have been pulled out of the roof and are no longer securing the chimney to the building. Many windows and window frames are deteriorated and damaged (see **Figure 4-7**). The valley rafters, sheathing and framing are significantly damaged from water infiltration, and a significant portion of the rafters and sheathing are rotted (see **Figure 4-8**). Specifically, areas of the trusses that support the chapel wing roof, ceiling, and floor are rotted.

The clock tower, southeast and southwest towers have serious cracking and movement because of water leakage. The four (4) wooden faces of the clock are warped and deteriorated, and are in need of replacement. The clock tower masonry has vertical cracks at the buttresses (see **Figure 4-7**). This condition is most likely related to water infiltration and rotting of the wooden floors. Several slate roofing tiles have come loose and are in jeopardy of falling down. Additionally, the north and east faces are cracked, and the masonry is loose. Because of the water infiltration, there is dry rot in some of the wood joists and wood roof framing. The building's subflooring and framing is damaged in places below the radiators.

The emergency exit stairs are in very poor condition. They are rusted and missing stair treads. Additionally, the building is not in compliance with fire code requirements or the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") requirements.

The basement floor slab on grade is in poor condition with cracks and an uneven surface in many areas. The kitchen floor framing above the subcellar is in poor structural condition. It is framed with brick arches spanning between metal beams and girders, some of which have rusted

and delaminated, causing the brick arches to heave and the tie rods to buckle. The rusting is most likely from condensate from the walk-in freezers and/or a leaking waste line.

The first floor is generally in good condition. However, some of the ornamental ceramic tiles and hardwood finished floors located below the radiators are deteriorated. The second floor also has water damage to some of the finished floors. The damage is from water penetrating from the higher floors and from leaking radiators. The third floor and fourth floors are the most damaged due to water infiltration (see **Figures 4-8** and **4-9**). On these floors, water penetration from leaking roofs, mansards, and flashings has damaged the finished floors and plaster finish on the partitions. Additionally, the plaster/gypsum block walls are cracked in the areas surrounding the water damage (see **Figure 4-10**).

The fourth floor is in poor condition. The floor area above the chapel is warped and buckled, and the plaster/gypsum block walls are severely cracked. Additionally, the paint and plaster are peeling. The ceiling is water stained and the windows do not close properly. Water has penetrated and saturated the roof framing and trusses in the attic spaces above the chapel. The diagonal member joining points of the chapel timber trusses that support the fourth floor and roof have loosened, slipped, and pulled away. The stained glass skylight above the main staircase is sagging and its framing is in disrepair.

Visibility

The Main Building is prominently visible in views east on Stewart Avenue. The Main Building is also visible from the playing fields in the project area and from the school district athletic fields across Stewart Avenue. Portions of the building are also visible from discrete locations in the surrounding area. These include views in between homes located on the south side of St. Paul's Place north of the project site, on Rockaway Avenue east of the project site, and on South Avenue and some locations on the Adelphi University campus above and between the hedges planted along the LIRR right-of-way. The clock tower is also visible above the trees at the intersection of Stewart, Cherry Valley, and Cathedral Avenues, and between trees on Cherry Valley Avenue and 9th Street, looking across from the Garden City Golf Club.

Ellis Hall

Ellis Hall is a two story, 16,000 square foot building with a full basement. It was constructed in 1969 and served as a library and science building with chemistry and biology laboratories and a physics department. Due to its age, this building does not meet criteria for listing on the NR.

4.2.2 PROJECT AREA

The project area contains Cluett Hall and the Feringa Field House, described below. The remaining parcel consists of open fields and a cluster of eight attached, wood-frame cottages used as the administrative offices of the Garden City Recreation Department, a Senior Center, and a nursery school.

4.2.2.1 CLUETT HALL

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 **Figure 4-11**). A one-story tunnel structure connects from the east side of the building to the Main Building. When Feringa Field House was built in 1963, Cluett Hall was converted to a theater. It is presently operated by the Garden City Recreation Department

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for community activities. Due to this building's age and historic association with St. Paul's School, this property meets the criteria for listing on the S/NR.

4.2.2.2 FERINGA FIELD HOUSE

Feringa Field House is a one-story, 24,000-square-foot building, fully constructed in 1963, and used by the Recreation Department for recreational purposes, special events, and exhibits. Due to its age, this building does not meet criteria for listing on the S/NR. It is presently operated by the Garden City Recreation Department for recreation purposes, special events, and exhibits.

4.2.3 PROXIMATE RESOURCES

4.2.3.1 A.T. STEWART ERA HISTORIC DISTRICT

There are a number of contributing buildings in the A.T. Stewart Era Historic District. The closest of these resources are the Cathedral of the Incarnation, on Cathedral Avenue at Sixth Street, and the residences on 9th Street east of Cherry Valley Avenue. These resources are located approximately 1,500 feet southeast and northeast of the project site, respectively. The Cathedral of the Incarnation is a Gothic style church clad in sandstone, and articulated with flying buttresses, arched windows with tracery, and has a tower and spire that is 210 feet tall (see **Figure 4-12**). The spire of the Cathedral is visible from a number of locations in the area, including from the project site in views southeast across the playing fields on Stewart Avenue. Both the Cathedral of the Incarnation and the Main Building share a Gothic style vocabulary.

The residences on 9th Street and in other locations in Garden City, including on 6th and 5th Streets east of Cathedral Avenue and on 4th Streets between Rockaway and Cathedral Avenues, are brick and frame structures with gabled and mansard roofs. Other buildings in the thematically listed historic district include the Cathedral of the Incarnation's See House and Carriage House on 4th Street and the Garden City Water Works at the northeast corner of Cherry Valley Avenue and 11th Street. A number of these resources, including the See House, Garden City Water Works, and the individual residences, have architectural features in common with one another and the Main Building of St. Paul's School (see **Figures 4-12** and **4-13**). These features include brick facades, arched windows, mansard roofs, dormer windows, and ironwork details. However, while these resources have a shared architectural language, they are located at a substantial distance from the project site and there is no visual relationship between these resources and the project site.

Since nomination of the historic district, the Cathedral School of St. Mary, originally located at the southeast corner of Cathedral Avenue and 5th Street, has been demolished, and single-family homes occupy the site.

4.2.3.2 ADELPHI UNIVERSITY

Adelphi University is located along South Avenue, south of the LIRR right-of-way. Granted a charter as Adelphi College in 1895, Adelphi University became the first private, coeducational institution of higher learning on Long Island in 1926. The Garden City campus contains a number of buildings designed by McKim Mead & White which have been determined eligible for listing on the S/NR, including Woodruff and Levermore Halls, which are located along South Avenue, and Blodgett Hall, which is located towards the interior of the campus. These classically designed buildings are clad in brick with hipped roofs (see **Figure 4-14**). They are

designed with stone ornament, including stone framed entrances, stone balustrades at the roofline, and quoins at the corners of the buildings.

4.2.3.3 OTHER PROPERTIES

The Garden City Middle School, located at 98 Cherry Valley Avenue, is a classically designed building with a pedimented portico and centrally located cupola. The Garden City School District Administrative Building, located at 56 Cathedral Avenue, is a red brick building erected in 1941, with a central arched window and a stone cornice. Both of these buildings are listed in the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation's online database (SPHINX) as not eligible for listing on the S/NR.

It should also be noted that in addition to the residences included in the A.T. Stewart Era NR nomination, there are a number of single family residences older than 50 years that are located in the area surrounding the project site. It is possible that groupings of these buildings could constitute S/NR eligible historic districts.

4.3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION

4.3.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.3.1.1 PROJECT SITE

Potential proposed grading in and around the locations of the footprints of the Main Building and Ellis Hall could disturb archaeological resources, if any such resources are present. As described above, while there is a low potential for precontact archaeological resources to be present on the site, the A.T. Stewart Era Historic District National Register nomination form indicates the possibility of historic-period resources associated with the construction and use of the school to be present. Therefore, prior to demolition, archaeological field testing would be taken by a professional archaeologist to assess the presence or absence of archaeological resources. While the focus will be on potential historic-period resources, should any precontact resources be found, they would also be appropriately analyzed and documented as described below.

The tasks required to complete the archaeological field testing are described below.

In advance of field testing, existing information on existing utilities within the St. Paul's School property and any other large-scale recent ground disturbance would be reviewed by the archaeologist. Archaeological field testing would be conducted in portions of the property where project-related impacts could occur, and where no recent documented ground disturbance is known. Phase 1B testing would consist of the manual excavation of circular shovel test pits (STPs), 30 to 50 centimeters (12 to 20 inches) in diameter. Where possible, STPs would be placed at intervals of 15 meters (50 feet) or less within the test area, in accordance with the guidelines of the New York Archaeological Council (NYAC). STPs would be judgmentally placed where topography, terrain, or obvious ground disturbance prevents excavation at a regular interval. If appropriate, limited additional testing would be conducted in arrays of up to four STPs around archaeological find spots. All STPs would be excavated in natural stratigraphic levels and screened through ¼-inch mesh. Wherever site conditions permit, STPs would be excavated to levels in which no archaeological materials could occur. All field excavation would be conducted by or under the supervision of a Registered Professional

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Archaeologist (RPA). Professional standards for recording of features and stratigraphy, labeling, mapping, photography, and collection and storage of artifacts would be applied. The results of the field testing would be presented in an archaeological field testing memo, which would include tables, drawings, and photographs as necessary to support the conclusions, to be kept on file with the Village.

Any artifacts that are encountered would be processed and catalogued. The resources would be placed in a safe and secure location for potential future display on-site or at an off-site location. Thus, there would not be any significant adverse impacts on archeological resources.

4.3.2 ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

4.3.2.1 PROJECT SITE

Demolition of the Main Building would have a significant adverse impact on historic resources. It would remove a contributing resource of the A.T. Stewart Era Historic District as well as a historic and visual landmark centrally located in the Village. It would also alter the context of Cluett Hall.

A number of alternatives to demolition of the Main Building, and hence, the avoidance of the significant adverse impact, have been proposed and studied extensively. These alternatives are described in detail in Chapter 11, "Alternatives," and include stabilizing the building for potential future reuse, and adaptive reuse proposals including private and municipal use.

4.3.2.2 PROJECT AREA

Demolition of the Main Building would adversely impact the context of Cluett Hall, which was built 15 years after the Main Building, as a gymnasium for St. Paul's School. To avoid direct, physical adverse impacts on this resource, an architect who is familiar with the treatment of historic buildings could be retained to design or review the design of the rebuilding, if necessary, of Cluett Hall's east façade in the location of the basement connector to the Main Building to be removed as part of the Proposed Action. In addition, a protection plan, listing measures that would be put in place during demolition activities, would be prepared and implemented to ensure that Cluett Hall is not inadvertently damaged during demolition of the Main Building.

4.3.2.3 PROXIMATE RESOURCES

As described above, with the exception of the Cathedral of the Incarnation there is no visibility between the Main Building and the other contributing properties of the A.T. Stewart Era Historic District. However, demolition of the Main Building would have a significant adverse impact on the thematically listed A.T. Stewart Era Historic District, as it would result in the removal of one of the monumental contributing resources of the historic district. The removal of this centrally located historic resource would adversely impact the historic character of this part of the Village.

The Proposed Action would have no adverse impacts on the historic buildings on the Adelphi University campus. Although portions of the Main Building are visible from South Avenue in between and above the hedges that line the LIRR right-of-way, these views are at a distance and are sporadic. As such, the demolition of the Main Building would not adversely impact the context of the historic Adelphi University buildings.