

Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board
Meeting #57
Monday, October 26, 2015
Marcham Hall – 7:00 pm
Draft Minutes

Present: Planning Board Members Chair F. Cowett, D. Hay, S. Cunningham and R. Segelken
Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross, Deputy Clerk A. Podufalski, Attorney R. Marcus
Members of the Public

Item 1 – Meeting called to order

- Chair F. Cowett opened the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Item 2- September 28, 2015 Minutes

Motion: R. Segelken

Second: D. Hay

RESOLUTION No. 165
APPROVING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2015

RESOLVE, that the written, reviewed and revised minutes of the September 28, 2015 meeting are hereby approved.

Aye votes – Chair F. Cowett, S. Cunningham, D. Hay, and R. Segelken
Opposed- None

Item 3- Public Comment

- J. Sauer questioned the minutes from the September 28, 2015 meeting regarding the Board's environmental impact findings for the proposed project at 520 Wyckoff Rd. He stated that the Board's determination contradicted some of their findings. Attorney R. Marcus responded and explained the SEQR review process.
- Carol Battisti of 106 Overlook Rd. expressed her opposition to the proposed project. Two written statements were submitted for the record.

Mr Fred Cowett, Chair/Planning Board
Mr Roger Segelken, Graham Gillespie, Sean Cunningham, Ms. Deirdre Hay, Board
Members
Ms. Kate Supron, Mayor
Mr Brent A. Cross. Engineer
cc. Angela M. Podufalski, Deputy Village Clerk

Village Planning Board
936 Hanshaw Road
Electronically Delivered

October 20, 2015

RE: Wyckoff Rd Sorority Project

Dear Chair Cowett, Village Board Members, Mayor Supron, and Mr. Cross,

I would like to share some thoughts and concerns regarding the proposed Change of Occupancy at 520 Wyckoff Road.

First, allow me to express my appreciation for the labors put forth on behalf of our Community. As a resident of the Village since 1992, I am very grateful for the public services available to me.

I recognize that the proposed use of 520 Wyckoff Rd by a Sorority is a permissible use according to Multiple Housing District zoning regulations and thereby requires no variance. However, I see several safety concerns which might position the Village unfavorably with respect to expense and/or liability.

Furthermore, I am concerned that the Village could be forced to make drastic changes to Wyckoff Rd at an exorbitant financial expense to the Village which would negatively impact property values of neighboring lots. I understand that the Village has Right of Way that extends 25 feet from the center line of the roadway.

1. Changes to the roadway and the characteristics of this section of our Village:
Between Ridgewood and Kline, Wyckoff Road becomes a winding downhill lane with as many as four blind curves - two above and two below 520 Wyckoff Rd. It would be reasonable to expect an increase in pedestrian traffic on Wyckoff as is the case with the AXO Sorority. However, the traffic from 520 Wyckoff will be effectively compounded by the lack of sufficient on-site parking. Individuals, groups and visitors will need to transition from remote parking to the residence unlike at AXO. Furthermore, the automobile site lines are far more hazardous than those between AXO and Highland demanding significant revisions to the infrastructure.

- a) Widening the roadway could only be accomplished at the loss of privacy hedges and already very limited front lawn square footage which would dramatically change the character of this section of the Village, namely, the houses at 514, 516, and 518 Wyckoff Rd. The multi-family house at 519 Wyckoff and the adjacent garage are only 17 feet from the edge of the existing road surface. The mature, ~100 year old tree-line on the north side of Wyckoff, if removed, would deface the landscaping and character of the area, as well as remove the living evergreen fence and significantly reduce the privacy and property values at 104, 106, and 108 Overlook Rd.

- b) It is reasonable to expect that Sorority members would regularly walk to the Cornell campus, the bus stop at Wyckoff and Highland, and to nearby Sororities and Fraternities from Cayuga Heights to Highland to Ridgewood Roads requiring the extension of sidewalks down Wyckoff which currently end near Overlook Rd ... again, this has the potential to compromise the landscape and/or diminish lawn yardage of almost all of the other lots on that section of Wyckoff Rd.

2. Parking at and around 520 Wyckoff:

- a) Assuming the current lawn at 520 Wyckoff would not be converted to parking, the vehicles parking on-site would either back into the driveway or back out onto Wyckoff Rd since there is currently no turn-around.

- b) Parking will also be in a tandem, linear fashion. Therefore, moving a single vehicle might require several vehicles to back-out or pull onto Wyckoff and await their opportunity to re-enter the parking area ... creating roadside congestion.

- c) With the limited parking (max of 4 or so vehicles tandem parking), there is virtually no opportunity for the remaining 100+ visiting Sorority Sisters to park near the house. Therefore, it is more than reasonable to expect that there will often be short term drop-off and/or pick-up parking issues ... creating additional congestion.

- d) It is reasonable to expect that the overflow of parking for the 100+ Sorority Sisters will land on Overlook Rd. This is a quiet street that already has

- daytime parking from the Cornell Community who regularly back onto Overlook driveway surfaces to turn around and park. Considering the likelihood of evening and late night visits, the disruptive vehicle lights and noise of parking and pedestrian traffic on Overlook Rd would be very disruptive to the serenity of the residential area.
- e) It is reasonable to expect regular and even weekly deliveries to the Sorority of a more commercial nature ... large delivery trucks such as food service like Cisco, laundry service like Cornell Laundry and so on. This would add to the congestion concerns and would be inappropriate and disruptive to the largely residential neighborhood.
 - f) Converting the front lawn at 520 Wyckoff to a parking area or turn-around would be a very disappointing change to the beauty and character of that property and the neighborhood.

3. Cost of changes to the roadway:

a) Should it become necessary for the Village to make changes to the roadway, it could come at a significant financial cost to the existing taxpayers. Has a cost analysis been done for such changes? Is it fiscally responsible to expect the whole of the Tax Payers in Cayuga Heights to absorb an excessive financial burden to accommodate a permissible but arguably inappropriate usage of one parcel located at 520 Wyckoff Rd?

b) The cost in quality of life and character of the Village cannot be as easily measured. Some of the necessary changes could cause irredeemable damage to the ambiance and character of the neighborhood. It is reasonable to assume that the predominately single-family neighbors living not far from this house would immediately see an irreversible change in their own quality of life.

c) A Sorority is not the same as an apartment building or rooming house with numerous tenants: it is an organization with officers, committees, projects, social and philanthropic ventures, and so on. It generates much more in-house activity than a like-sized group of tenants, and in larger gatherings (Phi Mu currently has 118 Members).

I acknowledge that the Multiple Housing District allows for Sororities. Yet this does not automatically qualify every property as appropriate for such use. In this case, I suggest that squeezing the high-traffic function of an 118 Member Sorority into a narrow lot with sorely limited on-site parking is an incongruent usage of the land.

Necessary infrastructure changes would dramatically deface the beauty and character of the neighborhood, would likely alter the neighbors landscaping and negatively impact their property values, levying enormous financial expenditures to the Village Tax Payers.

In weighing the added value against the negative impact of the necessary changes (if approved) ... it becomes particularly painful to endure the results given that the return on investment for the One (520 Wyckoff) comes at an unacceptable defacing of the land and

an unreasonable financial cost to the Many (Village Tax Payers, adjacent parcels, the Cornell Heights Historic Design and the Community at large).

In conclusion, the proposed change of CO qualifies as an **inappropriate fit for the lot and location.**

Having read through the **Village of Cayuga Heights Comprehensive Plan** adopted 1/13/2014, I see that the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees has set in place short-term, medium-term and long-term goals allowing for future growth and appropriate changes with the intent to "*preserve the natural, architectural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that make the Village a distinctive community.*"

I recognize that the Comprehensive Village Plan is just a plan, but it is consistent with the 100 years of Village planning history and a desire to create and maintain a Village of distinctive character ...

I quote from p.12 of the Village Comprehensive Plan:

The original Cornell Heights subdivision, including the small portion that protrudes into Cayuga Heights, is a relatively intact example of a turn of the century planned residential suburban development. Cornell Heights was planned by William Webster, a landscape architect from Rochester. The curvilinear street plan, use of topography, and naturalistic setting reflect the influence of noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.

In close, I am requesting that the Board "Disapprove" the proposed change of CO due to inappropriate usage for the lot and location.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any questions my communication may have raised.

Respectfully yours,
Carol Battisti
106 Overlook Rd

Mr. Fred Cowett, Chair/Planning Board
Mr. Roger Segelken, Graham Gillespie, Sean Cunningham, Ms. Deirdre Hay,
Board Members

October 26, 2015

Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board
Marcham Hall
836 Hanshaw Road

Dear Members of the Board,

Today, you sit at an historic cross-roads which will define (or re-define) the character and historicity of the Village section of the Cornell Heights Historic District.

Ostensibly the Brown's have requested a change of usage for one lot located @ 520 Wyckoff Rd to be used as the Chapter House of a 118 Member Sorority housing 12-15 of the Sisters. However, in reality, this Board's ruling on this matter will set precedence and effectively decide the fate of the nearby lots and the entire neighborhood for generations to come.

This historic decision which lies before you is not simply about one property ... it represents the very dividing line between a predominantly owner occupied, single- and two-family, quiet residential neighborhood which is in keeping with the founding principles of the Village as compared to a non-owner occupied, multi-tenant, high-density and very likely transient population.

In a word picture: the train is in the station. Depending on which track the Board allows it to exit will set precedent and determine the future of this sector of the Historic Cornell Heights District and **there will be no turning back**. If a Sorority is permitted at 520 Wyckoff ... then shall begin a domino effect of converting surrounding properties into non-owner occupied institutional and/or corporate real-estate investments which will be unstoppable.

Juxtapose the legacy of "preserving the natural, architectural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that make the Village a distinctive community" against future institutional or corporate real estate investments which will generate a greater tax base by destroying over 100 years of precious history in this Village.

The small group of nearby Residents (of whom I am one) opposing this change have declared by collective voice that they desire to protect and preserve the beauty and history of this area for generations to follow while forfeiting their own personal gain.

In lieu of repeating concerns expressed in various communications by letters, emails, petitions and personal interactions - in lieu of rehearsing the dissimilarity of this proposed change from the intent of the Village Comprehensive Plan - in lieu of reciting the violation of many metrics listed in Section 24 Part III of the Village of Cayuga Heights Articles ... I wish to point to just one obvious and unchangeable fact - the tightness of the lot @ 520 Wyckoff affords no protection against the negative impact of sound transmission and the social activities of a high functioning 118 Member Sorority.

As such, I appeal to the Board to "**Disapprove**" this change of Certificate of Occupancy and prevent the inevitable transformation of a culturally distinctive community within this Village into a corporate take-over with a college-town flavor and correlating social issues.

I am confident in the wisdom and foresight of this Board to make the best right decision for the entirety of the Village. I thank you for exercising due diligence and I bless you in your efforts to rightly settle this matter so close to home.

Respectfully,

 26 Oct 15

Carol Battisti
106 Overlook Rd
Village of Cayuga Heights

- Jill Kimball of 106 Overlook Rd. expressed her opposition to the proposed project. Two written statements were submitted for the record.

October 26, 2015

To the Planning Board Members and All who are concerned: Good Evening to you!

A long time ago, there was a popular song called, "Turn, Turn, Turn," and one line of the lyrics said something like this: "To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven . . ."

In the Chronicles of the Village that I knew in the 70's, the laser sharp focus of the Planners was all about preservation. Now nearly 50 years later, things are indeed turning, and the Planners are charged with the responsibility of allowing for appropriate growth, while at the same time honoring our common goal of preserving the beauty & character of our historic neighborhood. The housing needs of the adjacent Cornell Community will not disappear, nor will they be denied. Yet the challenge set before the Board is to find point & counterpoint so that two very distinct cultures may harmoniously coexist side by side. Good fences make good neighbors & a spacious lot size with sufficient off-street parking is one step that provides a good "fence."

There is a rhythm to a community that is functioning properly. There is a melody, a type of hum, as all the residents live, move and have their being side by side, and each one goes to his place in peace. Communities that have transitioned too quickly have suffered congestion & confusion in their growing pains because the infrastructure couldn't keep pace with the changes . . . Communities that were initially highly desirable places to live [like ours] can quickly become undesirable & dysfunctional for both the original residents, and the newcomers as well. Our Village is no different. Multi-dwelling structures may be part of our neighborhood's long range future, but the Planners' strategic planting of each structure on a proper tract of land in a proper location will define the critical difference between peaceful co-existence and turmoil.

The Village of Cayuga Heights is too noble a community to be disfigured in the interest of maximum density.

Life in our corner of the Village is now, for the most part, decent and in order. I contend that a 118 member sorority would upset the delicate balance, and that "said use" cannot be properly sustained on the lot, and at the location, proposed. It is an anachronism - out of place, out of time and out of synch with the gracious, unforced rhythms of our Village. This is a stretch that would cause a snap! - - - as in a breaking - - - that would not build up, but would instead, tear down our community. The remote parking lot plan alone would generate worse difficulties with pedestrian & auto traffic than we could ever dare to think or even imagine. Daily collision of the two cultures would be unavoidable with this proposed use.

On the other hand, the larger tract of land and sufficient on-site parking surrounding the AXO Sorority helps to reduce the negative impact to its neighbors. Village growth is inevitable, but chaos is elective. While the Phi Mu Sorority is allowable at 520 Wyckoff, it needs to be closely reviewed for appropriateness, just as we are doing tonight. You, as the members of the Planning Board, can allow this use, but you don't have to. I appeal to your collective wisdom and discernment to render justice, and administer equity in deciding the outcome of this matter for those of us who live here now, and those who come after.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but desire fulfilled is as a Tree of Life. It is our earnest hope that the Board, in all your decisions, will serve the vision of the founding Village Planners to preserve & to promote a harmonious balance between two distinctly different cultures that must live side by side .

Thank you,
Jill Kimball 106 Overlook Road



Planning Board Village of Cayuga Heights 836 Hanshaw Rd Ithaca, NY 14850

Re: Site Plan Review for 520 Wyckoff Rd.

October 26, 2015

Dear Planning Board Members and All who are concerned,

Everything has a place, a purpose and a goal.
Since our neighborhood is adjacent to Cornell,
the place in which we live was originally designed with a dual purpose in mind.
That purpose is for single family homes & student housing to co-exist side by side.
The goal of the Planning Board is to promote balance between the two groups.

I propose that lot size is the most significant criteria necessary to meet this goal.
An aerial view of the fraternal organizations in our community shows a substantial
land mass surrounding each building. This margin of space provides not only a
buffer zone from noise, and social activities, but also offers the asset of sufficient
on-site, off-street parking for residents & their guests.

I suggest that a Sorority with 118 members is an incongruent match of function
with the lot size and location of 520 Wyckoff. The added inconvenience of
remote parking only compounds the problem.

We appeal to you, the members of the Planning Board, to hear our common
concern. While the Zoning Law generically allows multi-dwelling use at 520
Wyckoff, in this specific case, the needs of the Sorority members would be best
suited in another location . . . as would the needs of the resident families.

Thank you for listening to our perspective.



Jill Kimball
106 Overlook Road

- Bea Szekely read an excerpt from Enterprising Families by Carol Sessler regarding the history of the home located at 520 Wyckoff Rd and expressed her opposition to the proposed project.
- Everett Morse stated his parents built the home located at 520 Wyckoff Rd and stated his opposition to the proposed project. He previously submitted a letter for the Board's consideration.

October 6th 2015.

To whom it may concern:

News has just reached me of the possible sale of the house at 520, Wyckoff Rd to be used as a Sorority House for Cornell students.

My parents had this house designed and built by Lincoln Waldmidge a well known architect about 1920 and in 1932 an addition was built designed by the same architect.

It served us well until 1991 and is a fine family home.

It would be a great shame to have more students in that pleasant neighborhood.

Yours truly,

June Pat Moore
for Everett F Moore

- D. Shaffer of 518 Wyckoff Rd provided a petition opposing the project to be submitted into the record. She also read excerpts from a letter written by B. Gillian Turgeon of 522 Wyckoff Rd. A copy was submitted for the record.

October 26, 2015

Planning Board
Village of Cayuga Heights
836 Hanshaw Rd
Ithaca, NY 14850

Re: Site Plan Review for 520 Wyckoff Rd.

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

The signatories of this letter live within a 200' radius of 520 Wyckoff Rd. and are most directly affected by the above-referenced application. We are, collectively, deeply concerned about a proposed change of usage that is ostensibly for 12-16 residents, but in fact is for a Chapter House for a current 118 member Sorority.

We strongly urge the Planning Board to disapprove this change due to its negative impact on the immediate neighborhood and the Village.

At its September 28 meeting, the Planning Board reviewed the Short Environmental Assessment Form and found three items (Nos. 5, 11, and 3) that might have a moderate to large impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

1) SEQR Item 5: *Adverse Change in Existing Level of Traffic*

We are concerned with:

- a) the foot and vehicle comings and goings of 118 current sorority members, including the 12-16 who will be residents, creating noise and general disturbance to the quiet neighborhood
- b) insufficient parking for the 118 member Sorority and all its visitors
- c) the increased likelihood of accident due to blind curves, increased number of drivers and walkers on the street without sidewalks, and illegally parked cars resulting from the large increase in residents and visitors to the sorority house
- d) the inevitable congestion of move-in and move-out in such a tight physical space, minimally twice a year

We understand that the sorority has a tentative agreement with Westbourne Apartments for parking approximately 700' uphill from the house, although we understand that the terms are not finalized. We believe even these possible arrangements are insufficient to cover the needs of both the resident and the more than 100 non-resident sorority sisters who would come to the house, family members who would visit, and college friends, both local and not.

Based on observations of nearby sorority buildings, we feel that there is a high probability of illegal and dangerous street parking on Wyckoff. For example, on a recent Sunday afternoon at the Sigma Delta Tau sorority on Ridgewood, there were 4-5 cars parked illegally in front of that sorority's house, despite a parking lot on their premises. We can anticipate worse at 520 Wyckoff due to minimal on-site parking.

2) SEQR Item 11: *Hazard to Human Health (Noise Disruptions)*

The 12-16 potential residents at 520 Wyckoff would substantially increase noise in the area. Increased traffic, car doors slamming, possible delivery trucks, and non-resident sorority sisters and house guests will negatively impact this generally quiet, residential neighborhood. Our houses are physically close to 520 Wyckoff and some neighbors can already overhear even normal conversations. The attached map shows how closely packed together the houses are in this neighborhood. At present, some neighbors can hear the two current residents of 520 Wyckoff and/or their guests conversing outside. Imagine how loud that will be when multiplied by the youthful enthusiasm of the sorority sisters!

Further, it is typical even after 1:00 in the morning to hear both male and female students going back and forth on Ridgewood and farther up Wyckoff, closing car and house doors, "hanging out," and/or moving to and from social gatherings. Our houses are much closer to 520 Wyckoff. The annual January Rush would generate excessive noise and truly overwhelming additional foot-traffic at and around 520 Wyckoff.

3) SEQR Item 3: *Adverse Impact on Character or Quality of Existing Community*

The existing neighborhood is a beautiful, quiet, and serene area consisting of historic houses and mature landscaping and trees. The attached map shows a central core of very close-set, smaller buildings and plots, most of which are owner-occupied and most with 2-4 occupants. Families are unlikely to want to live next to a sorority house with many residents and daily visitors, with its associated traffic and noise. The proposed change of usage seems highly likely to produce a domino effect that will change the community's character from a predominantly owner-occupied, quiet residential area to a non-owner-occupied, multi-tenant transient population. We believe this shift of demographics would destroy the balance of the existing community.

Village of Cayuga Heights Articles, Section 24

The Village Articles establish and charge the Planning Board with Site Plan Review and instruct the board to consider 16 factors (lettered a through p) in their review for approval, conditional approval, or disapproval of a proposed usage. We believe the following factors support a disapproval.

- a) **Location and site of use** -- This particular plot is relatively small with much of its land unusable due to steep slope. Other houses are very close on both sides and across the street. It does not seem appropriate for a large number of residents and visitors.
- b) **Nature and intensity of operation involved** -- A sorority, by its nature, will have more intense use than a single-family house or an apartment building with 2-3 units. Informal social gatherings, small and medium size meetings, trips back and forth to campus, and frequent visits would likely occur on a routine basis.
- e) **Provisions for parking** -- The arrangement with Westbourne is neither permanent nor close to the house. Car drop-offs and pick-ups would likely become routine. A sorority at 520 Wyckoff would be physically much closer to other neighborhood residences than other Greek houses in the area.

- f) **The relation of the size of the building and lot to the parking area** -- Parking on-site is very limited and tandem and would create many accessibility problems and the likelihood of illegal street parking, creating congestion and safety risks.
- h) **Landscaping** -- If streets need to be widened or have sidewalks put in to accommodate foot and vehicle traffic, the mature landscaping of nearby neighbors would be compromised, causing a loss of character and quality of life of the area.
- i) **Architectural features** -- This house was built for single-family use and has been used as such for 100 years. Its brick construction and slate roof date from the earliest years of the Village and contribute to the area's history.
- j) **Location and dimension of buildings** -- 520 Wyckoff is set very close to houses on both sides, only 15-20' to the west and 20-25' to the east. Although we understand that old houses and setbacks are grandfathered, we believe these distances pale to any modern standards and make this site impractical for the proposed use.
- k) **Impact of the proposed use on adjacent land uses** -- Noise, traffic, and loss of character and quality of life as above.
- l) **Effect on the environment** -- Negative impact on the human environment, if perhaps not the land itself.

We collectively thank you for your efforts and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Jill Kimball
 Henry Richardson
 Marie Richardson
 Carol Battisti
 Gillian Tulpen
 Andrew Stoff
 Laura Nascala
 Conit Much
 Kathryn Mapes
 Eileen Zolner
 Neal Zolner
 cc: Kate Supron, Mayor
 Brent Cross, Village Engineer
 Angela Podufalsk, Deputy Village Clerk

Jill Kimball 106 Overlook Rd.
 HENRY RICHARDSON 104 OVERLOOK RD, ITHACA
 MARIE RICHARDSON 104 OVERLOOK RD
 Carol Battisti, 106 Overlook Rd.
 Gillian Tulpen 522 Wyckoff Rd.
 Andrew Stoff 518 Wyckoff Rd
 518 Wyckoff Rd
 Laura Nascala 524 Wyckoff Rd.
 Conit Much 524 Wyckoff Road.
 Kathryn Mapes 516 Wyckoff Rd.
 Eileen Zolner 109 Cayuga Heights Rd.
 Neal Zolner 109 Cayuga Heights Rd.

Kestinated

B. Gillian Turgeon
522 Wyckoff Rd
Ithaca, NY 14850

October 21, 2015

Planning Board
Village of Cayuga Heights
836 Hanshaw Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

Re: Site Plan Review for 520 Wyckoff Road

Dear Planning Board:

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed change at 520 Wyckoff Road from single family occupancy to sorority. I have conferred with many of my neighbors about this and am in complete agreement with the compilation of significant issues summarized in our petition (<http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/wyckoff-road-sorority-project>) and in all letters submitted by my neighbors describing concerns about the proposed change. Regarding the latter, as my house at 522 Wyckoff is directly adjacent to 520, the issues summarized in the letter of Dorothy Tien Shaffer and Stephen Tien, who reside at 518, on the other side of 520 are most relevant to my situation.

My concerns are the following:

1. I am familiar with the interior and exterior of the Brown's house and anticipate that, to be suitable for 13 women, significant alteration both inside and out will be needed in the near term.
2. I anticipate increased noise, many parked cars, and traffic on what is now a very quiet, primarily residential, street.
3. I also anticipate that, to accommodate the sorority, there will be irreparable changes to our current well-established landscaping, and a drop in property value. There are likely few who would want to purchase a house right next to a sorority, except maybe another sorority, or the same sorority for expansion purposes.
4. The increased density of actual residents in the house, their turnover rate, and the additional 100 + sorority sisters who are members of Phi Mu will have a significant impact on my comfort level at home resulting in a big change in my quality of life. I value knowing who my next door neighbors are, for my day-to-day sense of well-being, when at home or when I pull into the driveway after work, when emergencies arise, and when I'm away.

Regrettably, I am out of town next week and cannot attend the second hearing.

Barbara Gillian Turgeon, Resident
522 Wyckoff Rd, Ithaca, NY, 14850



- Henry Richardson of 104 Overlook Rd expressed his opposition to the proposed project. A written statement was submitted for the record. He also provided a petition by Jim Gilmore in opposition of the project.

October 25, 2015

Members of the Planning Board,
Village of Cayuga Heights,
Ithaca NY 14850

Dear Esteemed Members of the VCH Planning Board,

As immediate neighbors of the subject property, we wish to register our strong opposition to the application by the Brown family to change the occupancy of their home at 520 Wyckoff Road from an owner occupied single family residence to that of a sorority for 15 students. Superficially, change in occupancy of 520 Wyckoff Road is to a house 15 members of a new sorority. In actual fact the dwelling will be converted to a chapter house for a 118 member sorority. This change in occupancy is very significant on a number of levels.

1. At a strategic level, the planning board's decision may tilt the delicate balance in the density of an important buffer or edge zone between Cornell, Cornell Heights, and the Village of Cayuga Heights. The Multiple Residence District Zone is an edge or transitional zone in the Village. Currently, there is a delicate balance between owner occupied, rental, and group residences. While the rental units are intermixed with the owner occupied residences, the group residences including fraternities and sororities are sufficiently distanced from the owner occupied dwellings to make co-existence with them not only possible but bearable. Importantly, this balance exists not only in the immediate neighborhood in which this change is proposed but for the Village as a whole. Current Village statistics show that of the 1561 houses in the village, 710 (49%) are owner occupied while 729 (51%) are occupied by renters(1). The proposed change in occupancy will likely tilt the balance in favor of rental and group housing and thus create a domino effect that will destroy the existing delicate ecological balance between owner and group occupancies not to mention the decimation of the distinctive residential character of the neighborhood proudly touted in our Comprehensive Plan.
2. For those who are skeptical about this domino effect we only have to look at the fates and predicaments of comparable communities in Ithaca and Tompkins County, namely, Belle Sherman/Bryant Park District, and Cornell Heights. Like our multiple residence zone in the Belle Sherman/Bryant Park similarly occupies an edge condition between Cornell and Collegetown. As a result of the population pressure and invasion from Cornell and Collegetown, the Belle Sherman and Bryant park neighborhood has the second highest density in Tompkins County: 8,420 persons per square mile, second only to Collegetown with 46,950 persons per square mile. The comparable densities for the City of Ithaca and Cayuga Heights are 5,560 and 2115 per square mile respectively (2).
3. The birth of the Village of Cayuga Heights was the result of a similar domino effect. In his very enlightening article titled "Fraternity Row, The Student Ghetto and the Faculty Enclave", Blake Gumprecht chronicles a similar chain reaction that occurred with the sale of a residence in Cornell Heights to a fraternity in 1906.

"An unwelcome development in 1906, typical of the forces that trigger Neighborhood change in college towns, squelched Cornell Heights' emergence as Ithaca's premier faculty enclave. That year, Sherman Peer donated his Cornell Heights house to the Alpha Zeta fraternity. The move enraged Wyckoff, who threatened legal action against Peer for violating the terms of his deed. Cornell Heights' proximity to campus made it increasingly difficult to keep out students and gradually faculty began to relocate. In

1912, Cornell built the first of several women's dormitories in the area. Two years later, Wyckoff himself gave up, selling his Cornell Heights estate to the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. Many faculty who sought to escape the invasion of students looked north" (3).

4. There are several precedents in the Village to support the rejection of this application based on appropriateness of use rather than the legalities of zoning. In the 1970s when Cornell tried to build a student residence in the woods north of the current A parking lot the Village vigorously and successfully resisted it. A decade or so later a developer, Randy Hatcher, tried to build town houses on Kline Road between Overlook and Wyckoff. That was also rejected. We are sure residents can think of more.
5. These creeping density pressures will surely overtake us in the Village unless we, as a community, make smart growth decisions. The greatest asset of Cayuga Heights from its inception in the early 1900s to today is its quiet atmosphere, picturesque neighborhood character inspired by the designs of Frederick Law Olmstead, and safe environment in which kids can walk safely on streets without sidewalks to and from elementary, middle, and high school. As noted in our recently adopted Comprehensive Plan the Village needs to develop strategies to enhance and protect one of its major assets, its neighborhoods, while ensuring growth and change. It can do this by preserving the character and livability its threatened neighborhoods, ensuring compatible occupancies and densities, and providing statutory as well as physical and natural buffers between incompatible uses and occupancies.

Accordingly, we strongly urge the board to deny the application for a change in occupancy at 520 Wyckoff Road.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,


Henry Richardson and Marie Richardson
104 Overlook Road,
Ithaca NY 14850

1. www.city-data.com/city/Cayuga-Heights-New-York.html
2. : www.city-data.com/neighborhood/North-Belle-Sherman-Ithaca-NY.html#ixzz3pdeaHCjI
3. Blake Gumprecht "Fraternity Row, the Student Ghetto, and the Faculty Enclave Characteristic Residential Districts in the American College Town" in Journal of Urban History 2006, p260

Cayuga Heights Village Planning Board
936 Hanshaw Rd
Ithaca NY 14850 October 20, 2015

Dear Esteemed Board Members,

We, the undersigned, write to respectfully request that the Board "**Disapprove**" of the requested change of Certificate of Occupancy for 520 Wyckoff Rd (which would allow for a Sorority Residence) based on the following consensus that this is an **inappropriate usage** for the lot and the location.

We underscore this conclusion with the following points:

1. Significant quality of life, social, environmental and congestion impacts when Sisters of the 118 member Sorority use the site for informal social gatherings or meetings
2. Overcrowding for the land and the neighborhood
3. Irreversible change to the quality of life for nearby residents
4. Congestion and increased traffic flow with insufficient on-site parking
5. Potential for significant decrease in adjacent and nearby property values
6. Possible irretrievable disfiguring of Village historicity and character
7. Incongruent high traffic function of 12-15 Sorority residents in a predominantly residential area
8. Unavoidable burden of increased noise of daily activity exacerbated by the smaller lot size and proximity to neighbors
9. Increased evening and late night activity with projected increased traffic in a predominantly residential neighborhood
10. Possible costly infrastructure changes levied against the Village Tax Payers

We respect the stellar reputation of Sororities at large and appreciate their social and philanthropic ventures which add value back into the Community. However, we seek for the Board to vote against approval of this change, not based on the reputation of Sororities but based on the **inappropriateness of usage** of the lot and location of 520 Wyckoff Rd by a Sorority. Properly situated, we welcome a Sorority and embrace the opportunity to engage the next generation of Leaders in our midst.

As quoted from the Village Comprehensive Plan, which echoes the founding principles of the Village: "The overarching goal for the Planning Board in drafting this Comprehensive Plan has been to strike a proper balance between sustaining those factors that make today's Village a desirable place to live and addressing proactively the short and long term changes that will inevitably arise ... [while we look to] preserve the natural, architectural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that make the Village a distinctive community."

With that objective in mind, we look forward to working in a positive manner with Mayor Kate Supron, the Planning Board, Mr Brent Cross, Village Engineer and Zoning Officer, all Village Officials, and fellow Residents in an effort to continue to protect the serenity, safety and historic nature of Cayuga Heights.

Respectfully yours,

Name and signature	Address
Jim Gilmore - <i>Jim Gilmore</i>	424 Hanshaw Road, Ithaca, N.Y.
Phonda Gilmore - <i>Phonda Gilmore</i>	424 Hanshaw Road, Ithaca, NY 14850
Iivadas Szeczetes - <i>Iivadas Szeczetes</i>	500 Hanshaw Rd, Ithaca, NY 14850
Tim Rike - <i>Tim Rike</i>	501 Hanshaw Rd, Ithaca NY, 14850
Liz Karns - <i>Liz Karns</i>	510 Hanshaw Rd Ithaca NY
Steve G. Gordon - <i>Steve G. Gordon</i>	102 Highgate Rd ITHACA, NY
<i>J. Gordon</i>	103 HIGHGATE RD ITHACA, NY
<i>J. Gordon</i>	103 HIGHGATE RD, ITHACA, NY
Wendy Greentree - <i>Wendy Greentree</i>	105 HIGHGATE RD, ITHACA
Philip Hundert - <i>Philip Hundert</i>	107 Highgate Rd Ithaca
Julia Gorman - <i>Julia Gorman</i>	108 Highgate Rd Ithaca
Kristin McCarty - <i>Kristin McCarty</i>	201 Highgate Rd Ithaca NY
David Kohl - <i>David Kohl</i>	203 Highgate, Ithaca, NY 14850
Cucphuong Strong - <i>Cucphuong Strong</i>	203 Highgate, Ithaca, NY 14850
Lee Donnan - <i>Lee Donnan</i>	107 E Remington Rd
David Donnan - <i>David Donnan</i>	107 E. Remington Rd
Stacy Lehman - <i>Stacy Lehman</i>	117 E Remington Rd.
Adam Schombert - <i>Adam Schombert</i>	117 E Remington Rd
Ken Passnick - <i>Ken Passnick</i>	121 E REMINGTON RD
David Lemax - <i>David Lemax</i>	1001 Highland Rd.
Lugh Phoenix - <i>Lugh Phoenix</i>	914 Highland Rd
Tommy Bae - <i>Tommy Bae</i>	878 Highland rd, 14850
JOAN NOVAK - <i>Joan Novak</i>	876 Highland Rd
Patricia Novak - <i>Patricia Novak</i>	876 Highland Rd
24 Signatures	

JOC
Remond
LINDA
ROMAN

Carried by Jim Gilmore: *Jim Gilmore* 10/25/2015

- Steve Gordon of 110 Overlook Rd. expressed his opposition to the proposed project. He was upset that he did not receive notice of the public hearing as he believes his property falls within the 200 ft. area to be notified. A written statement from him and his wife, Jaime Wolffe, was submitted for the record.

Steve Gordon and Jaime Wolffe
110 Overlook Rd.
Cayuga Heights, New York

10/15/2015

To the Esteemed Members of the Cayuga Heights Planning Board:

We live less than a block from the proposed sorority house at 520 Wycoff Road. Along with all of our neighbors, we are deeply concerned about the potential of allowing a Greek fraternal organization to be housed so close to our single-family homes. We are all keenly aware of the realities of noise and traffic that accompany the dense and transient populations in the fraternities and sororities that are housed on the more distant periphery of our neighborhood.

The proximity of the proposed sorority facility will sorely impact the quality of life in our immediate neighborhood. We are particularly troubled by the fact that the sorority has 118 total members who may converge into this small space at any given time. It is also clear that the lack of contiguous parking and vehicular traffic for deliveries, pick-ups and drop-offs will have a detrimental impact on both safety, noise and traffic patterns on this historically quiet road.

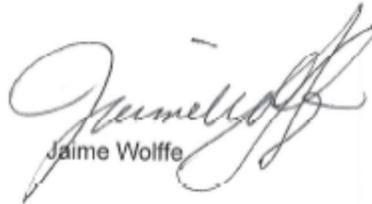
We need your help and we know that other neighbors have outlined the many reasons to withhold approval for this use.

We have no inherent bias against Greek life per se, but the potential negative repercussions to us as neighboring homeowners are significant, and we feel it is our right as such to ask the Village to protect our interests. This proposal use is ill-advised on many levels and we need you to take a stand, deny the change of occupancy use, and support us in maintaining the quality of life that we moved here for.

Sincerely,



Steve Gordon



Jaime Wolffe

- J. Wolffe of 110 Overlook Rd. read comments written by Christopher Umbach in opposition of the project on a petition. A copy was submitted for the record.

10/26/15

Dear Chairman Cowett and members of the Planning Board:

When we first learned about this 520 Wyckoff occupancy change, we were surprised that we weren't notified as were our neighbors who were convinced that we were within 200' of the subject property. We weren't sure about the actual distance, but being in such close proximity, we would have appreciated voicing our concerns at the September 28th review hearing. We didn't learn about this situation until the day after, on the 29th.

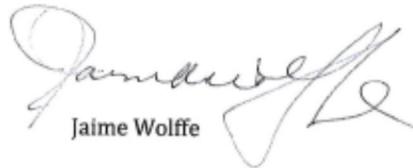
I was out of town most of last week but the issue continued to concern me so this morning I decided to measure. I extended a 200-foot tape measure from my property line to the corner of the driveway at 520 Wyckoff. I measured that distance at 199', although the driveway at 520 Wyckoff is 18-20' farther away from my property than a fence at 520 Wyckoff that I would assume to be closer to or at the actual property line. That suggests that my property is between 180-190' from 520 Wyckoff and that I should have been notified of any application for this address.

We are concerned that we were not able to attend the September 28 meeting and request that the Board disapprove this application.

Sincerely,



Steve Gordon



Jaime Wolfe

Petition

Wyckoff Road Sorority Project

About this petition

Cayuga Heights Village Planning Board

936 Hanshaw Rd

Ithaca NY 14850 October 20, 2015

Dear Esteemed Board Members,

We, the undersigned, write to respectfully request that the Board "**Disapprove**" of the requested change of Certificate of Occupancy for 520 Wyckoff Rd (which would allow for a Sorority Residence) based on the following consensus that this is an **inappropriate usage** for the lot and the location.

We underscore this conclusion with the following points:

1. Significant quality of life, social, environmental and congestion impacts when Sisters of the 118 member Sorority use the site for informal social gatherings or meetings
2. Overcrowding for the land and the neighborhood
3. Irreversible change to the quality of life for nearby residents
4. Congestion and increased traffic flow with insufficient on-site parking
5. Potential for significant decrease in adjacent and nearby property values
6. Possible irretrievable disfiguring of Village historicity and character
7. Incongruent high traffic function of 12-15 Sorority residents in a predominantly residential area
8. Unavoidable burden of increased noise of daily activity exacerbated by the smaller lot size and proximity to neighbors
9. Increased evening and late night activity with projected increased traffic in a predominantly residential neighborhood
10. Possible costly infrastructure changes levied against the Village Tax Payers

We respect the stellar reputation of Sororities at large and appreciate their social and philanthropic ventures which add value back into the Community. However, we seek for the Board to vote against approval of this change, not based on the reputation of Sororities but based on the **inappropriateness of usage** of the lot and location of 520 Wyckoff Rd by a Sorority. Properly situated, we welcome a Sorority and embrace the opportunity to engage the next generation of Leaders in our midst.

As quoted from the Village Comprehensive Plan, which echoes the founding principles of the Village: "The overarching goal for the Planning Board in drafting this Comprehensive Plan has been to strike a proper balance between sustaining those factors that make today's Village a desirable place to live and addressing proactively the short and long term changes that will inevitably arise ... [while we look to] preserve the natural, architectural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that make the Village a distinctive community."

With that objective in mind, we look forward to working in a positive manner with Mayor Kate Supron, the Planning Board, Mr Brent Cross, Village Engineer and Zoning Officer, all Village Officials, and fellow Residents in an effort to continue to protect the serenity, safety and historic nature of Cayuga Heights.

Respectfully yours,

(See the Undersigned)

Signatures

1. Name: Steve Gordon on 2015-10-22 23:03:37
Comments:

2. Name: Jill Kimball on 2015-10-23 02:31:25
Comments:

3. Name: Carol Battisti on 2015-10-23 02:40:37
Comments:

4. Name: B. Gillian Turgeon on 2015-10-23 12:14:44
Comments:

5. Name: Marie Richardson on 2015-10-23 15:28:25
Comments: My name is Marie Richardson, I live across 520 Wyckoff rd and I support this petition.

6. Name: Rehana Huq on 2015-10-23 18:24:54
Comments:

7. Name: Laura Cleveland on 2015-10-23 19:50:54
Comments:

8. Name: Sharon B. on 2015-10-23 20:21:15
Comments:

9. Name: Evanne Gordon on 2015-10-23 20:45:58
Comments: Dear Lord, please no.

10. Name: Kimberly O'Brien on 2015-10-23 21:13:33
Comments:

11. Name: Susan Eginton on 2015-10-23 21:33:35
Comments:

12. Name: Mark eginton on 2015-10-23 22:51:49
Comments: I purposely purchased my home outside the fraternity/sorority belt with enough buffer for a neighborhood atmosphere to raise children. While we still get the sounds of party music on weekends, and things like occasional halloween pumpkins stolen, its still a lovely place to live. Expanding the belt will impact home prices. This is a much larger issue than just one sorority house. There will be others and we should have a stance or at least understand what we're getting into if the character of our corner of village is envision to change.

-
13. Name: Kathy Zager on 2015-10-24 01:21:19
Comments:
-
14. Name: Crystal Miller on 2015-10-24 02:13:15
Comments:
-
15. Name: Lynne Bedenharn on 2015-10-24 03:04:34
Comments: Please keep this a family neighborhood!
-
16. Name: Yvonne Lomax on 2015-10-24 03:23:17
Comments:
-
17. Name: Camil Muscalu on 2015-10-24 03:33:09
Comments:
-
18. Name: Laura Muscalu on 2015-10-24 03:36:27
Comments:
-
19. Name: Patricia Gillette on 2015-10-24 09:45:21
Comments: A sorority does not belong in a quiet residential area. Should be much closer to colleges. Do not make this house a sorority
-
20. Name: kelly cullen on 2015-10-24 12:19:02
Comments: Kelly Cullen, Ithaca, NY
As a former Real Estate Agent, I simply feel it's bad for property values in the neighborhood.
-
21. Name: Martha Wallen on 2015-10-24 12:25:31
Comments: If you rezone this area to allow a sorority, there would be nothing stopping a fraternity house from moving in next. As someone who walked through a block of fraternity houses daily for 40 years, I'd be worried not just about noise but things like streets full of broken bottles.
-
22. Name: Rose Sammons on 2015-10-24 13:33:03
Comments: Leave this peaceful neighborhood alone please
-
23. Name: John Sammons on 2015-10-24 13:33:48
Comments:
-
24. Name: Adelaide Battisti on 2015-10-24 13:34:26
Comments:
-

25. Name: Dorothy Shaffer on 2015-10-24 15:11:16
Comments:
-
26. Name: Ebo Richardson on 2015-10-24 15:12:00
Comments: Hope the petition is successful.
-
27. Name: Michael Apisiga on 2015-10-24 15:38:45
Comments: It's a very small, quiet and historic village and the addition of a sorority will undoubtedly change the nature of the village. There is the potential that the sorority will generate noise which will affect the use and enjoyment of the village by the inhabitants. And the negative results of the establishment of the sorority will definitely affect the value of the properties in the village.
-
28. Name: Kathleen Brady on 2015-10-24 15:40:53
Comments:
-
29. Name: Nogbout alain on 2015-10-24 15:47:53
Comments: Keep the neighborhood
-
30. Name: Jack Powers on 2015-10-24 15:52:25
Comments:
-
31. Name: George Ansah on 2015-10-24 15:53:08
Comments: Keep the single household nature of the location to preserve the current family oriented and quiet atmosphere of this part of the community
-
32. Name: Melissa Burress on 2015-10-24 16:03:24
Comments:
-
33. Name: Warren Bunn on 2015-10-24 16:19:22
Comments:
-
34. Name: Tom Nicholson on 2015-10-24 16:21:49
Comments:
-
35. Name: Christine Wilkerson on 2015-10-24 16:27:55
Comments:
-
36. Name: Patricia Bergman on 2015-10-24 16:28:17
Comments:
-
37. Name: Laurel Garber on 2015-10-24 16:32:23
Comments: I grew up at 522 Wyckoff and still consider it my home. I disapprove of the

requested change of 520 Wyckoff Road very strongly.

-
38. Name: Franck sery on 2015-10-24 16:32:29
Comments:
-
39. Name: Denise Haughian on 2015-10-24 16:35:11
Comments: Beautiful quiet neighborhood-- keep it that way.
-
40. Name: Ramsey Brous on 2015-10-24 16:44:05
Comments: Save the neighborhood.
-
41. Name: Ira Brous on 2015-10-24 16:48:21
Comments:
-
42. Name: Stephen Richardson on 2015-10-24 16:49:33
Comments:
-
43. Name: Dotsevi Sogah on 2015-10-24 17:05:26
Comments: I am a professor at Cornell and drive through the area frequently. I support this petition.
-
44. Name: Scott hanson on 2015-10-24 17:10:27
Comments:
-
45. Name: Valerie Caward on 2015-10-24 17:17:55
Comments: This should not be allowed to happen. Just like the bus should not be going down Northway Road.
-
46. Name: Nina Miller on 2015-10-24 17:25:18
Comments:
-
47. Name: Ellen Zaslaw on 2015-10-24 17:32:35
Comments:
-
48. Name: James Tien on 2015-10-24 17:40:02
Comments: My childhood home is next door to this planned sorority, I would like to visit their again.
-
49. Name: Sharon Powers on 2015-10-24 17:59:32
Comments:
-
50. Name: e gers on 2015-10-24 18:09:29

Comments:

-
51. Name: Lucas Canales on 2015-10-24 18:11:05
Comments:
-
52. Name: Ann R Goodwin on 2015-10-24 18:14:12
Comments:
-
53. Name: Margaret Senturia on 2015-10-24 18:17:31
Comments:
-
54. Name: Stephen Slade Tien on 2015-10-24 18:20:57
Comments: None of us would knowingly invite a sorority or fraternity of 118 members to take up residence next door in what has always been a single family house.
-
55. Name: Barbara Caward on 2015-10-24 18:23:54
Comments:
-
56. Name: Sarosh Kuruvilla on 2015-10-24 18:27:04
Comments:
-
57. Name: Rachel J Siegel on 2015-10-24 18:29:07
Comments:
-
58. Name: Norman Krause on 2015-10-24 18:56:12
Comments:
-
59. Name: Carole schiffman on 2015-10-24 19:04:08
Comments:
-
60. Name: Irit Huq-Kuruvilla on 2015-10-24 19:21:06
Comments: Having a sorority in a purely residential neighborhood would be horribly disruptive, there are plenty of better places in which to have it that are more appropriate.
-
61. Name: Gibson Gilmore on 2015-10-24 19:21:39
Comments:
-
62. Name: Claudia Heroth on 2015-10-24 19:24:15
Comments:
-
63. Name: Garrick Meyers on 2015-10-24 19:32:31
Comments:

-
64. Name: June Knopf on 2015-10-24 19:38:34
Comments:
-
65. Name: Jo Ann Basgall on 2015-10-24 19:42:50
Comments:
-
66. Name: Mariann Carlin on 2015-10-24 19:46:09
Comments:
-
67. Name: Jeffrey Sauer on 2015-10-24 19:52:08
Comments: This property and this street and not an appropriate site for a sorority chapter house.
-
68. Name: Winthrop Wetherbee on 2015-10-24 20:02:48
Comments:
-
69. Name: Robert Isaacs on 2015-10-24 20:12:28
Comments:
-
70. Name: Brandon Prior on 2015-10-24 20:17:43
Comments:
-
71. Name: Robert L. Moore on 2015-10-24 20:26:10
Comments:
-
72. Name: Adam Law on 2015-10-24 20:32:05
Comments:
-
73. Name: Mande Semon on 2015-10-24 20:36:21
Comments:
-
74. Name: Samba on 2015-10-24 20:39:57
Comments:
-
75. Name: Zodia wagner on 2015-10-24 20:40:03
Comments:
-
76. Name: Andrew Jin on 2015-10-24 20:42:41
Comments:
-
77. Name: Brian Okumu on 2015-10-24 20:57:04

Comments:

-
78. Name: Rehana Huq on 2015-10-24 21:01:11
Comments: Our friends live at 518 Wyckoff and another family dear to us across from 520 -- we have known the neighborhood for 2 decades as a quiet single-family residential area. Surely the presence of a sorority changes all that? I am sure the sorority would be best served in a neighborhood which serves the sorority need's better and they are welcomed .
-
79. Name: Malama on 2015-10-24 21:02:41
Comments:
-
80. Name: Modupe Omoniyi on 2015-10-24 21:11:59
Comments:
-
81. Name: Oseoba Airewele on 2015-10-24 21:22:10
Comments:
-
82. Name: Leslie Daniels on 2015-10-24 21:41:12
Comments:
-
83. Name: olgabartley on 2015-10-24 21:53:22
Comments:
-
84. Name: Ben Piekut on 2015-10-24 21:54:11
Comments:
-
85. Name: Susan Zaslav on 2015-10-24 21:57:31
Comments:
-
86. Name: Luc Sinon on 2015-10-24 22:09:45
Comments:
-
87. Name: Janet Merritt on 2015-10-24 22:27:13
Comments:
-
88. Name: Dr. Lauris A. McKee on 2015-10-24 22:44:50
Comments: I support this petition!
-
89. Name: April Johanns on 2015-10-24 22:49:00
Comments:
-

90. Name: April Johanns on 2015-10-24 22:49:55
Comments:
-
91. Name: Sam Wise on 2015-10-24 22:50:54
Comments:
-
92. Name: Adelaide Gomer on 2015-10-24 23:16:02
Comments:
-
93. Name: David O'Brien on 2015-10-25 00:20:43
Comments:
-
94. Name: Theresa Battisti on 2015-10-25 00:44:49
Comments:
-
95. Name: Sung-Sung Smith on 2015-10-25 01:53:32
Comments:
-
96. Name: Rosalind Feinstein on 2015-10-25 01:57:58
Comments:
-
97. Name: Terry & Julie Craig on 2015-10-25 02:11:39
Comments:
-
98. Name: Arthur Groos on 2015-10-25 02:22:14
Comments:
-
99. Name: Amy Townsend on 2015-10-25 04:36:46
Comments:
-
100. Name: Janielle McLeod on 2015-10-25 05:37:36
Comments:
-
101. Name: Christopher Umbach on 2015-10-25 11:17:11
Comments: Before I took on my current temporary appointment as a Cornell Faculty-in-Residence living among freshmen on North Campus, I lived only a few minutes walk from 520 Wyckoff in the house in which we raised our children. My daily walk to the bus stop past this property was brightened by its beautiful appearance and well-maintained grounds. I could not say the same for the rental housing that I also passed on the same walk. There has always been student housing in Cayuga Heights and especially in the areas close to Cornell, but the balance between apartments in owner-occupied buildings and apartments in buildings owned by absentee landlords is, locally at least, shifting in the wrong direction. Renters understandably have little interest in maintaining the appearance of where they live, and Cornell undergraduates will pay remarkably high

rents in shoddy apartments for convenience alone—as the father of a Cornell sorority member, I am painfully familiar with the economics of student housing. Along Wyckoff the rental apartments are noticeably less well maintained than the single-family residences or owner-occupied rentals—for instance at one property on Wyckoff that was converted to all apartments with an absentee landlord, attractive plantings were razed for parking spots. Sororities and fraternities typically do not have the resources to maintain their properties well and rarely have much motivation to be good neighbors. When students park on Cayuga Heights road for their parties at nearby fraternities, I have observed first-hand that the parkway and its trees are trampled and mailboxes toppled. At my North Campus residence, I am only a hundred feet from multiple Greek houses. The outdoor sorority gatherings in September with Christmas lights and music are tolerable only because as a Faculty-In-Residence I have chosen to embrace the undergraduate lifestyle—but if I this were happening down the street from my family home I would not be so understanding. Given the relatively long distance from Cornell, the narrowness and steepness of the road itself, lack of a sidewalk, lack of street lighting, little space for parking, and close proximity to residential housing, this location for a sorority is a stunningly poor choice both for Phi Mu and for the neighborhood. There is a place for sororities and fraternities, but 520 Wyckoff is not it. Phi Mu is the newest sorority at Cornell, having had its first rush in January 2015. It was allowed to form a chapter because there is a strong demand for more sororities to prevent the disappointments that arise when a student does not get an offer during rush-- there are far fewer sororities than fraternities at Cornell. As eager as Phi Mu is to establish itself, I cannot imagine that the location would be viewed as desirable to rushes. Phi Mu members will have cars, and since they will use the location for chapter meetings and their own parties (which they are allowed to do at their chapter houses), Wyckoff will become a busy thoroughfare. Phi Mu, like many sororities, has a valuable mission, but starting off by aggravating its neighbors does not seem consistent with the community spirit of Phi Mu.

-
102. Name: Dr. Colleen Colbert on 2015-10-25 12:47:29
Comments:
-
103. Name: Nadine Louge on 2015-10-25 12:56:50
Comments:
-
104. Name: Kathleen Besemer on 2015-10-25 12:58:48
Comments:
-
105. Name: Kathleen Besemer on 2015-10-25 13:02:07
Comments: I did not intend to donate any monies to this issue. A window popped up with \$25 already highlighted then went to next window page as if I made a donation which I did not
So don't ask me for it.
-
106. Name: Marcia Zax on 2015-10-25 14:54:22
Comments:
-

107. Name: Jonathan Shu on 2015-10-25 15:23:46
Comments: I do not think this is appropriate use for a village residence, and will eventually lead to conflicts in the neighborhood.
-
108. Name: Abraham Richardson on 2015-10-25 15:28:28
Comments:
-
109. Name: Lirken Cordes on 2015-10-25 15:29:04
Comments: I agree that it's inappropriate for a sorority to reside in a single family home in a mostly residential neighborhood.
-
110. Name: Julie Prisloe on 2015-10-25 15:32:47
Comments:
-
111. Name: Tari Salotti Black on 2015-10-25 15:33:21
Comments:
-
112. Name: David Rosen on 2015-10-25 15:33:50
Comments:
-
113. Name: David Zax on 2015-10-25 15:35:21
Comments:
-
114. Name: Jonathan Feinstein on 2015-10-25 15:36:41
Comments:
-
115. Name: Andrew Hicks on 2015-10-25 15:39:49
Comments:
-
116. Name: Virginia Sierra on 2015-10-25 15:40:18
Comments:
-
117. Name: Shai Burstyn on 2015-10-25 15:41:34
Comments:
-
118. Name: Naomi Shapiro on 2015-10-25 15:54:12
Comments:
-
119. Name: Beatrice Szekely, Cayuga Heights Village Historian on 2015-10-25 16:03:30
Comments:
-
120. Name: neil hertz on 2015-10-25 16:12:00

Comments:

-
121. Name: Jaime Wolfe on 2015-10-25 16:25:48
Comments:
-
122. Name: Michael Lakin on 2015-10-25 16:43:22
Comments:
-
123. Name: Valerie Shepardson on 2015-10-25 16:58:10
Comments:
-
124. Name: Roger Moseley on 2015-10-25 16:59:15
Comments:
-
125. Name: Carol Lynne Krumhansl on 2015-10-25 17:11:57
Comments:
-
126. Name: David Sagan on 2015-10-25 17:43:43
Comments:
-
127. Name: J. Tyson Merrill on 2015-10-25 17:52:54
Comments: my worst fear
-
128. Name: Bonna Boettcher on 2015-10-25 18:15:51
Comments:
-
129. Name: joan battisti on 2015-10-25 18:42:25
Comments: please keep this neighborhood quiet and peaceful for the older residents.
thank you very much.
-
130. Name: lucy montanye on 2015-10-25 18:43:26
Comments: please this neighborhood quiet and peaceful for the older residents.thank you
very much
-
131. Name: Rebecca Harris-Warrick on 2015-10-25 18:54:59
Comments: Cayuga Heights, Ithaca, NY
-
132. Name: Diana Zaslav on 2015-10-25 18:55:17
Comments:
-
133. Name: Adjoa Ahedor on 2015-10-25 19:05:38
Comments: Please keep the Village serene. Thank you.

134.	Name: Joanna Strauss on 2015-10-25 19:06:31 Comments:
135.	Name: Cazleigh Silva on 2015-10-25 19:21:02 Comments:
136.	Name: Wilda M. Vanek on 2015-10-25 19:54:21 Comments: I strongly agree with the position of the petitioners.
137.	Name: Haralyn Kuckes on 2015-10-25 19:58:24 Comments: Please disapprove the requested change, and show support for and understanding of the neighborhood concerns. Thank you.
138.	Name: Jean C. Berg on 2015-10-25 20:02:54 Comments:
139.	Name: Margaret Ross on 2015-10-25 20:15:57 Comments:
140.	Name: Eric Feinstein on 2015-10-25 20:20:34 Comments:
141.	Name: Anne Sauer on 2015-10-25 20:39:39 Comments: I agree, this property and this street are not an appropriate place for a sorority house.
142.	Name: Ann B. Quigley on 2015-10-25 21:07:00 Comments:
143.	Name: Joe Quigley on 2015-10-25 21:08:05 Comments:
144.	Name: maria cotterill on 2015-10-25 21:34:16 Comments: I "Disapprove" of the requested change of Certificate of Occupancy for 520 Wyckoff Rd (which would allow for a Sorority Residence) based on the following consensus that this is an inappropriate usage for the lot and the location. Thank you for respecting the current residents and their desire to keep their community from turning into a college atmosphere.

145.	Name: Sarah Zaslaw	on 2015-10-25 21:51:18	Comments:
146.	Name: Anthony Pane	on 2015-10-25 21:58:46	Comments:
147.	Name: Linda Byard	on 2015-10-25 22:00:55	Comments: I totally agree with the petitioners. There is ample evidence of neighborhood deterioration in the Ithaca area when houses are allowed to be used inappropriately.
148.	Name: Trish Battisti	on 2015-10-25 22:22:27	Comments:
149.	Name: Robert Battisti	on 2015-10-25 22:25:18	Comments:
150.	Name: Andy Watts	on 2015-10-25 22:37:15	Comments:
151.	Name: John Carson	on 2015-10-25 22:40:33	Comments: I agree with the petition that it is an inappropriate use of the lot and location at 520 Wyckoff Rd to be uses as a Sorority.
152.	Name: Carole Long	on 2015-10-25 22:46:19	Comments: The thought of having so many vehicles parked along that stretch of Wyckoff Road is frightening and could create a considerable hazard to drivers.
153.	Name: Matthew Sammons	on 2015-10-25 22:59:08	Comments:
154.	Name: Joanne Speicher	on 2015-10-25 23:44:39	Comments: Absolutely contraindicated for a neighborhood with children.
155.	Name: Isaac kramnick	on 2015-10-26 00:19:00	Comments:
156.	Name: Miriam Brody	on 2015-10-26 00:40:22	Comments:
157.	Name: Sara Gardner	on 2015-10-26 01:17:25	Comments:

158. Name: Samuel Greenblatt, Providence on 2015-10-26 01:26:14
Comments:
-
159. Name: Callie on 2015-10-26 01:29:09
Comments:
-
160. Name: Dennis Charsky on 2015-10-26 01:29:18
Comments:
-
161. Name: Zach Williams on 2015-10-26 01:33:11
Comments:
-
162. Name: Nava Tadmor on 2015-10-26 01:40:20
Comments: Why make the life of all - residents and Sister of the Sorority - miserable? Not a good idea
-
163. Name: Andrew Sammons on 2015-10-26 02:13:16
Comments:
-
164. Name: Fred Mitchell II on 2015-10-26 02:13:40
Comments:
-
165. Name: Nathan Sammons on 2015-10-26 02:14:30
Comments:
-
166. Name: Leslie Ehrlich on 2015-10-26 02:15:21
Comments:
-
167. Name: Adrienne DiVito on 2015-10-26 02:23:46
Comments: not a good idea
-
168. Name: Fran Baruch on 2015-10-26 02:42:38
Comments:
-
169. Name: Judith S. Greenblatt on 2015-10-26 02:49:36
Comments:
-
170. Name: Joan Spielholz on 2015-10-26 02:51:51
Comments: This use of the property does not fit in this residential neighborhood.
-
171. Name: Jane Dieckmann on 2015-10-26 02:59:37
Comments: As a former resident of Cayuga Heights and local historian, I support this

petition wholeheartedly. The proposed sorority presents a situation not consistent with this or any residential neighborhood.

-
172. Name: Heather Turgeon on 2015-10-26 03:08:37
Comments: This is a family neighborhood with little kids (including mine). Housing of this kind would make me feel uncomfortable as a mom - and it's not an appropriate use of a single family home on a mostly residential street.
-
173. Name: Alex.E on 2015-10-26 04:01:51
Comments:
-
174. Name: Lisa watkins on 2015-10-26 04:16:52
Comments:
-
175. Name: Susan Grobstein on 2015-10-26 04:23:06
Comments:
-
176. Name: Jean on 2015-10-26 05:18:12
Comments:
-
177. Name: Carlye Gordon on 2015-10-26 05:40:15
Comments:
-
178. Name: Jane Perez on 2015-10-26 06:18:22
Comments:
-
179. Name: David Gersh on 2015-10-26 06:51:13
Comments: The consideration of turning 520 Wyckoff Rd into a sorority residence is precisely why the Planning Board was created: to carefully and thoughtfully review the objections presented in the accompanying petition. We ask that you perform the purposes for which you were made part of Village law and preserve the quality of life for Village residents by denying this application to change the C/O.
-
180. Name: Elana Maragni on 2015-10-26 11:16:50
Comments:
-
181. Name: Yoram Szekely on 2015-10-26 11:36:13
Comments: I agree wholeheartedly with all the points made in the petition letter. Another argument for disapproving the change is that it may constitute a precedent. While precedents are not legally binding or even predictive for future Planning Board decisions, approving this change may still encourage future requests and may make it that much harder to disapprove them.
-
182. Name: Elizabeth Bilson on 2015-10-26 12:11:27

Comments:

-
183. Name: Elizabeth Graham on 2015-10-26 12:22:42
Comments: Please make a decision which will be consistent with and maintain the historic character of the Cayuga Heights neighborhood.
-
184. Name: David Powers on 2015-10-26 12:31:07
Comments:
-
185. Name: Christopher Long on 2015-10-26 13:13:22
Comments:
-
186. Name: Kathleen C Moran-Langham on 2015-10-26 13:18:34
Comments: Change is not always good. Don't make this one. There is a time and place for everything, and this change could be more devastating than you realize. Take time to consider a better time and place for this.
-
187. Name: Karen Wagner on 2015-10-26 13:20:52
Comments:
-
188. Name: Keren Bassey on 2015-10-26 13:22:11
Comments: Please for the sake of the neighborhood and children who are growing up we are asking that they buy a different house. We would like to be able to keep the neighborhood quiet and as peaceful as possible. This is nothing against the wonderful girls of this sorority, but we do know that it will cause an increase in activity and noise in the neighborhood.
-
189. Name: Frances Kozen on 2015-10-26 13:22:59
Comments: Preserve the residential flavor of this block. That house is an unsuitable location for a sorority, too small, too close to neighbors, and with no parking.
-
190. Name: Winifred Richardson on 2015-10-26 13:25:15
Comments:
-
191. Name: Joy Oguntimein on 2015-10-26 13:26:59
Comments:
-
192. Name: Jane Levine Powers on 2015-10-26 13:34:02
Comments:
-
193. Name: Melonie Owusu on 2015-10-26 13:39:42
Comments:
-

194. Name: Marian Van Loan on 2015-10-26 13:44:31
Comments: A sorority house is unsuitable for this neighborhood, There will be inevitable parking problems and no reasonable way to control excess noise for the rest of the residents in the area.
-
195. Name: Kay Rhie on 2015-10-26 13:49:08
Comments:
-
196. Name: John Princewill on 2015-10-26 13:57:53
Comments:
-
197. Name: Steven Stucky on 2015-10-26 14:05:07
Comments:
-
198. Name: James Webster on 2015-10-26 14:06:20
Comments:
-
199. Name: Christopher Riley on 2015-10-26 14:06:26
Comments:
-
200. Name: Shanae Walker on 2015-10-26 14:32:31
Comments:
-
201. Name: Chris Kim on 2015-10-26 14:41:53
Comments: I am against this sorority
-
202. Name: Kay Rhie on 2015-10-26 14:42:25
Comments:
-
203. Name: Joseph on 2015-10-26 14:51:41
Comments:
-
204. Name: Ellen Diffenderfer on 2015-10-26 15:30:12
Comments:
-
205. Name: Art Lustgarten on 2015-10-26 15:38:01
Comments:
-
206. Name: Joshua Wallace on 2015-10-26 16:32:12
Comments: Hope all goes well!
-
207. Name: Barry Strauss on 2015-10-26 16:32:32

Comments:

-
208. Name: Lesli Sagan on 2015-10-26 16:51:29
Comments:
-
209. Name: Adene Lacy on 2015-10-26 17:08:10
Comments:
-
210. Name: Larry and Nadine Walker on 2015-10-26 18:01:23
Comments: We strongly support this petition.
-
211. Name: David Spellman on 2015-10-26 19:08:42
Comments:
-
212. Name: Yvonne Lomax on 2015-10-26 19:17:06
Comments:
-
213. Name: Kyrian Anike on 2015-10-26 19:23:52
Comments:
-
214. Name: Amy Cronin on 2015-10-26 19:57:20
Comments:
-
215. Name: David Battisti on 2015-10-26 20:56:15
Comments:
-
216. Name: Gary Gordon on 2015-10-26 21:04:53
Comments: This isn't right.
-

- David Zax of 411 Kline Rd. read a statement regarding research he has completed regarding his own lot. A written statement was submitted for the record.

David and Marcia Zax

411 Kline Road

Ithaca, NY 14850

October 26, 2015

Planning Board Members:

I'd just like to take the opportunity to apprise the board of a precedent you might wish to consider in the assessment of the suitability of 520 Wyckoff as a sorority house.

My wife and I have owned the house at 411 Kline Road since March 1991; that is, the southeast corner of Kline and Wyckoff. When we moved in nearly 25 years ago we were told that there has been some discussion of the kind of housing suitable for our lot; as we purchased a single-family house, with a studio apartment, we thought little more of it at the time.

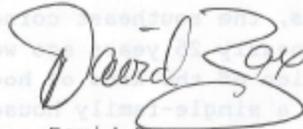
As our neighbors have discussed the proposal before the board, I went to the village archives to find out what had transpired long ago. Originally, the building lot combined what is now our lot and the property at what is now known as 615 Wyckoff, and in November 1988 Mr. Randall Hatcher, then the owner, brought to the board a proposal to build townhouses (known as Hatcher Proposals A-C) on the combined lot. The minutes of the day indicate that "numerous residents of that area voiced concerns relating to increase in density, traffic, noise, and emphasized the change in character of the neighborhood...". At that time the Village Board asked the Village Engineer to study the lot and appropriateness of the building proposals.

By February 1989's meeting, Mr. Hatcher was back in front of the Board with Proposal D—apparently, Proposals A-C were rejected—and the Board approved the new proposal to subdivide the lot into the two existing lots with the understanding that all uses of the property subsequently be "regulated under the Residence District of the Zoning Ordinance with the following restrictions: There will be a special review of the site plan by the Trustees, and it shall include a provision that there is no parking allowed on the road right-of-way at any time."

At that time, clearly, the Board saw it had a duty to not only insure that the useage planned was consistent with the zoning- but also that there was a need to guarantee that the usages allowed by zoning were consistent with the site, and with the neighborhood surrounding the site.

We hope you will consider this proposal with the same broad perspective-on the benefits both to the current owners and the sorority, but also to the neighbors and the Village itself-in your decision on the proposal for the change of use at 520 Wyckoff.

Many thanks for your careful attention to these matters.

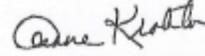


David Zax
411 Kline Road

MINUTES of Regular Meeting - 10/17/88

Trustees Fleming, Kira, Pimentel, Searle and Wheeler voted yes.

Adjournment to regular meeting 11:15 p.m.
Adjournment 11:16 p.m.


Anne Krohto
Clerk

MINUTES of a Regular Meeting 11/21/88

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Cayuga Heights held November 21, 1988 at 7:30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

PRESENT: Mayor Anderson, Trustees Camp, Fleming, Kira, Pimentel, Searle, Wheeler; Attorney Oesterle; Engineer/ZO Rogers; Police Chief Wall; Fire Chief Miller.

OTHERS: Raymond Van Houtte, James Burns, A. Egner, Mary Grainger, Randall Hatcher, Steve Shiffrin, John Dennis, Leslie Trotter, 40-50 Villagers.

Raymond Van Houtte, President of T.C.T.C., appealed to the Board to reconsider his request for approval to expand the branch at the Community Corners. The Board reiterated the position it took at the July 11 and August 15 meetings - that the issue had to be settled between the landowner and the Bank.

Mary Grainger presented a report on the Youth Commission activities and also an update on the City/Town/County funding and planning process. She stated that Village residents would like to see more local youth/family programming and asked that a portion of the \$3000 (State funding which historically is turned over to the Town) plus matching Village dollars be retained for that purpose. She said that applications are due by November 28 and urged immediate Board action. Mrs. Grainger announced her resignation from the Youth Board having served two three-year terms, stating that she and Trustee Searle will put forth an effort to find a replacement.

Mr. Randall Hatcher presented several alternate proposals to build apartment houses on the vacant lot at the corner of Kline and Wyckoff Roads (Multiple Housing District). Numerous residents of that area voiced concerns relating to increases in density, traffic, noise, and emphasized the change in character of the neighborhood which will occur if Mr. Hatcher is allowed to move ahead with his plan. The Engineer was asked to examine Mr. Hatcher's plans to determine if the proposed dimensions will fit on the lot, and further, to encourage him to consider building a duplex structure.

Mr. Steve Shiffrin of 102 Highgate Rd. spoke before the Board relative to the proposed Savage Farm development (no formal proposal has been submitted to the Board, as yet) suggesting that if Cornell changed their plan to single family dwellings, there would be no need for a zoning change of the parcel. He said he had explored the feasibility of available state funds for municipal purchase of open land for park/recreational purposes. He spoke of a need for an Environmental Impact Statement and submitted related documents for Board perusal. He advised the Board to seek legal advice regarding its options in this matter. John Dennis of 217 Highgate Road speaking on the same issue, addressed his comments to natural vegetation and wetland areas which would be affected in parts of the Farm which would be developed. Mr. Leslie Trotter of 161 Highgate Road presented a petition signed by 135 Village residents and directed his comments mainly to traffic impact and urged the Board to seek the best possible advice and to involve Villagers in the decision-making process. Mayor Anderson assured those present that Villagers will be given opportunity to become involved once Cornell submits a proposal.

MINUTES of a Regular Meeting - 2/6/89

Discussion ensued concerning Randall Hatcher's proposal "D" to develop his lot on the corner of Wyckoff and Kline Roads. Zoning Officer Rogers offered comments relative to yard requirements and recommended a strict interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance regarding this Section. He suggested that the Board base their determination on consideration of density and safety issues. Attorney Oesterle stated that, as she interprets this Section, Mr. Hatcher has met all yard requirements. Question of pedestrian and traffic safety were raised by the audience and Mr. Barlow Ware of 524 Wyckoff Road commented that this is "one of the most dangerous areas in Cayuga Heights." The question of parking was discussed as well as the Board's involvement in reviewing the site plan.

Moved by Trustee Pimentel, seconded by Trustee Kira:

RESOLUTION 3993 - APPROVE HATCHER PROPOSAL "D"

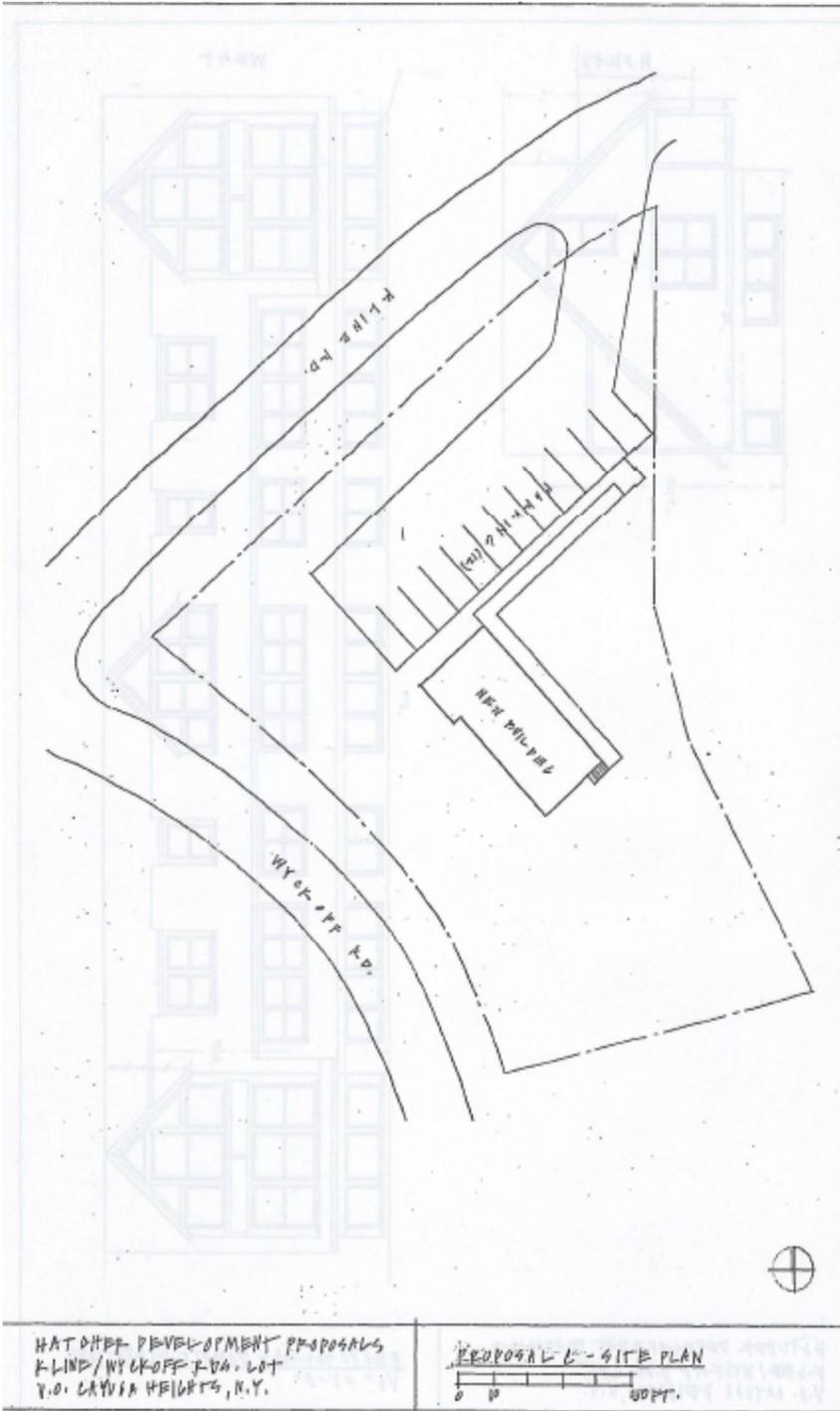
VOTED to approve proposal "D" as submitted by Randall Hatcher to subdivide into two lots his property at the corner of Wyckoff and Kline Roads only for use as a two-family residence, with the understanding that the primary unit have three bedrooms and the apartment be no more than a studio apartment, with 2-car garage and 2-car turn around on each lot. Any and all future uses are to be regulated under the Residence District of the Zoning Ordinance with the following restrictions: There will be a special review of the site plan by the Trustees, and it shall include a provision that there is no parking allowed on the road right-of-way at any time. Trustees Camp, Fleming, Kira, Pimentel voted YES. Trustee Searle OPPOSED.

John Majeroni, of Cornell University Real Estate Department, presented an update of a traffic report that encompassed the current number of proposed units, with the addition of the Highgate exit. He referred to a second document which dealt with the distribution of traffic and the effect the closing of E. Upland Road at the Corners might have. The traffic problem, he said, cannot be solved by Cornell alone and expressed the latter's willingness to work with the Board on this issue, as well as issues pertaining to school Board facts and figures, fiscal impact that the development will create on Village revenues and the feasibility of the Farm remaining as open space. He said if the Board would not accept the plan and if there would be no zoning change, he would like to know that now. There were questions from the audience relating to the impact on the Village in terms of police and fire needs, sewage capacity, downstream water flow and increase in runoff. Trustee Pimentel expressed a willingness to meet with Cornell officials, stating that he was unavailable to attend the January 31st meeting and stated he was still in favor of holding a public hearing. Attorney Oesterle suggested that the Board could devise a comprehensive plan if it rejected Cornell's proposal, and hold a public hearing on that issue. She stated that she would meet with Scott Chatfield, consultant in environmental law, on Thursday, February 9.

Motion by Trustee Camp, seconded by Trustee Searle:

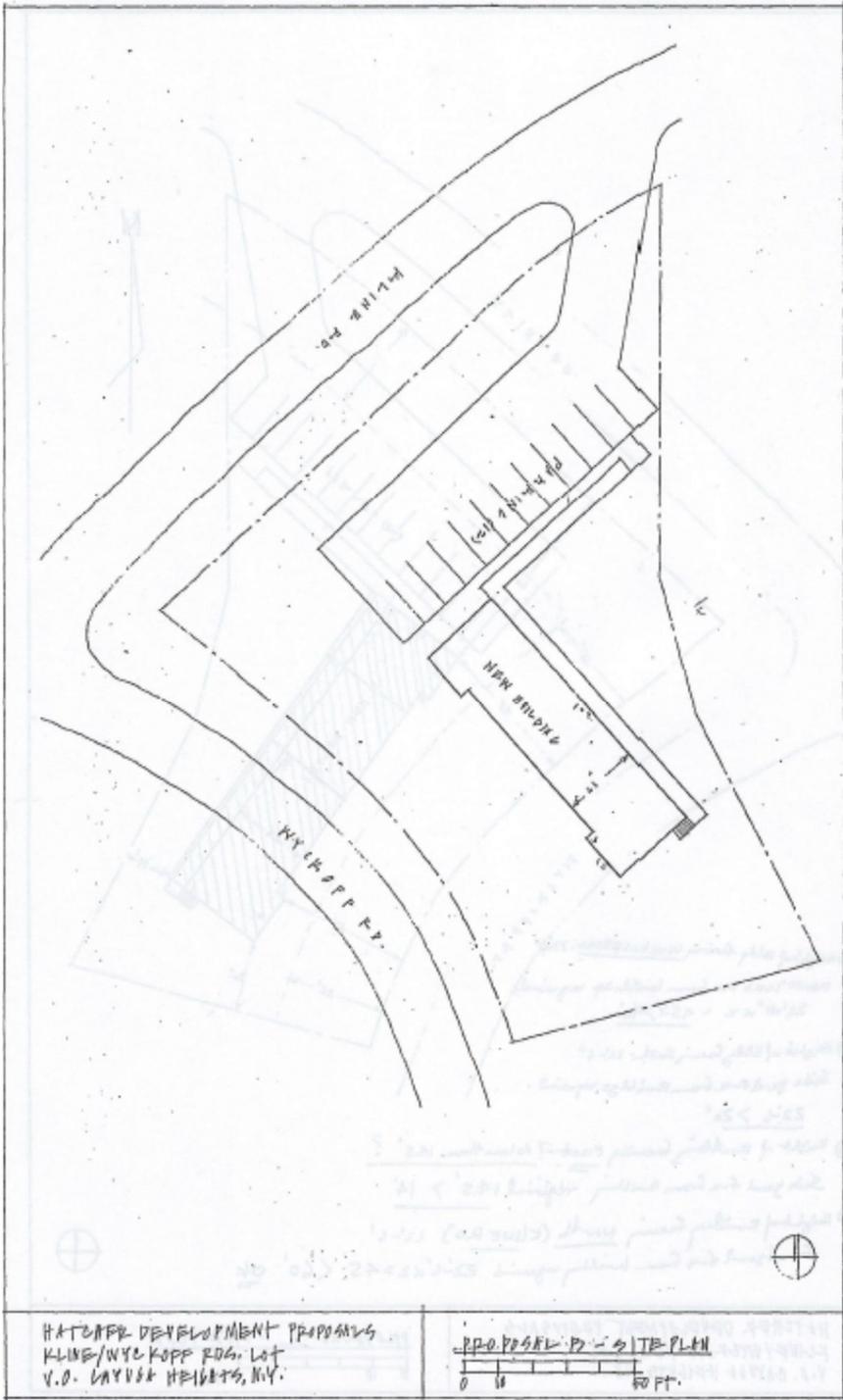
RESOLUTION 3994 - REJECT PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SAVAGE FARM

VOTED to reject Cornell's proposal for a change in zoning. Trustees Camp, Fleming, Kira, Searle voted YES. Trustee Pimentel was OPPOSED on the grounds that he prefers discussion first between the Board and Cornell with subsequent public hearing.



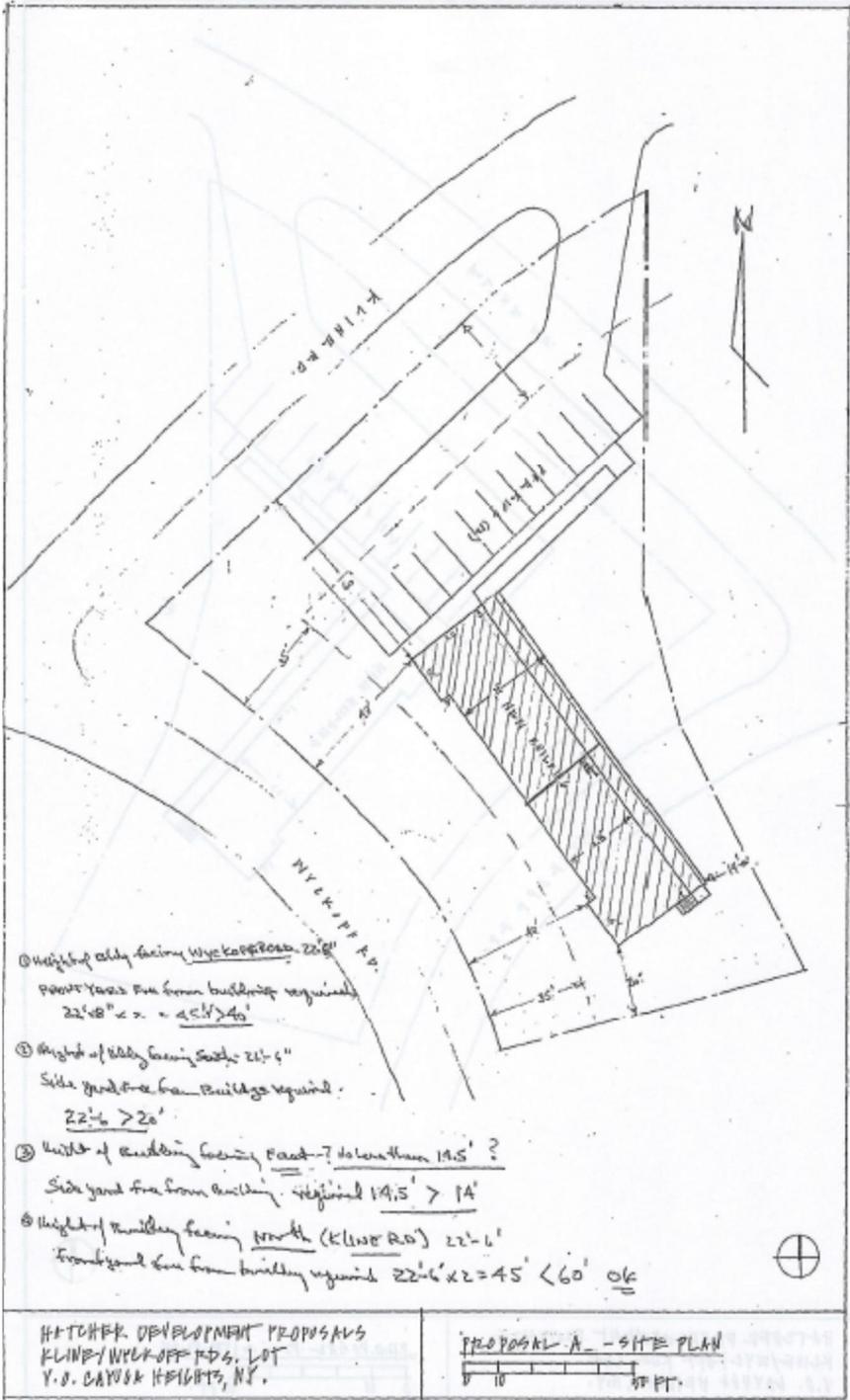
HATCHER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS
 KLINE/WYCKOFF R.D. LOT
 V.O. CAYNA HEIGHTS, N.Y.

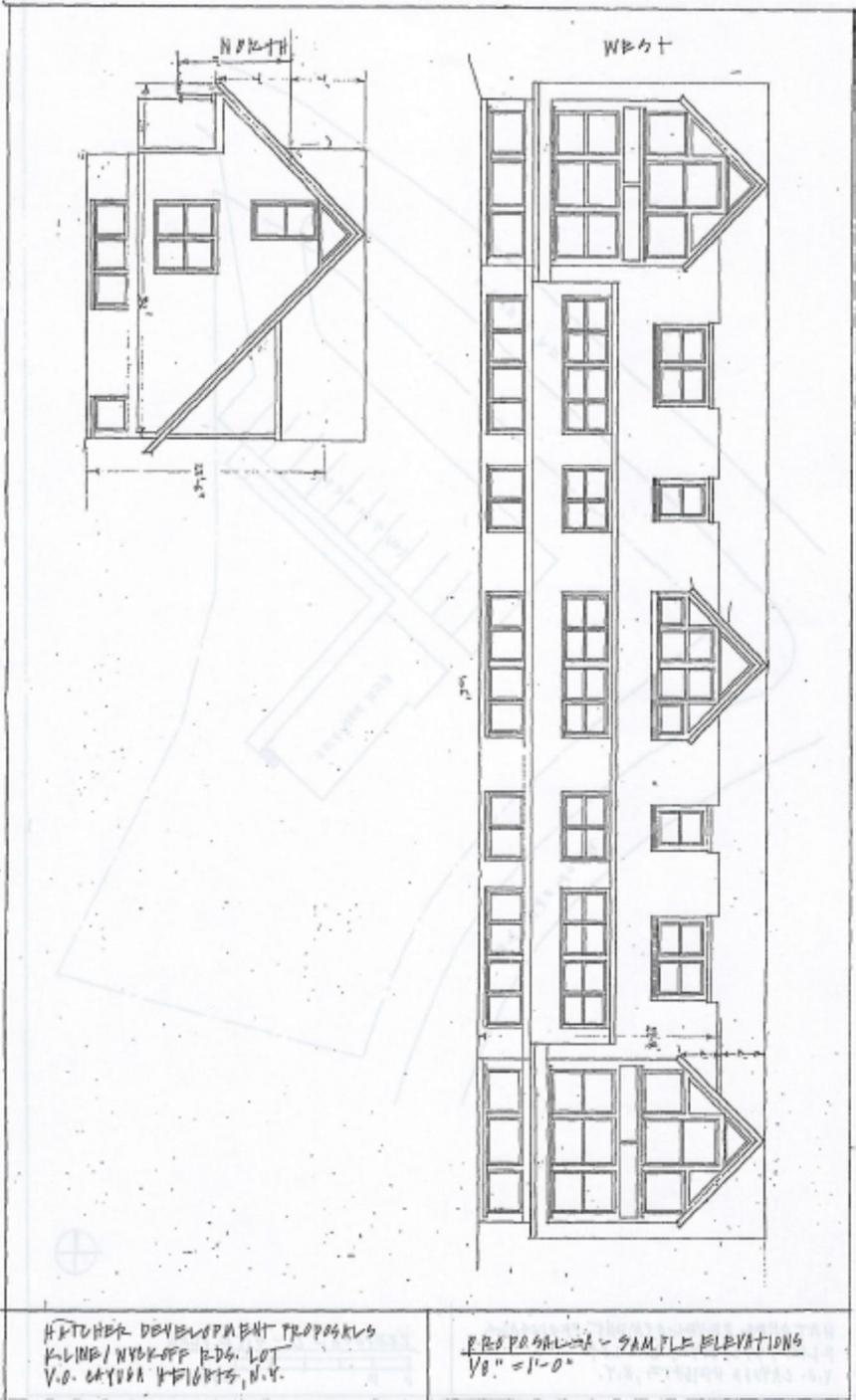
PROPOSAL C - SITE PLAN
 0 50 FT.



HATCHER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL
 KLINE/WYCKOFF RD. LOT
 V.O. LAYUSA HEIGHTS, N.Y.

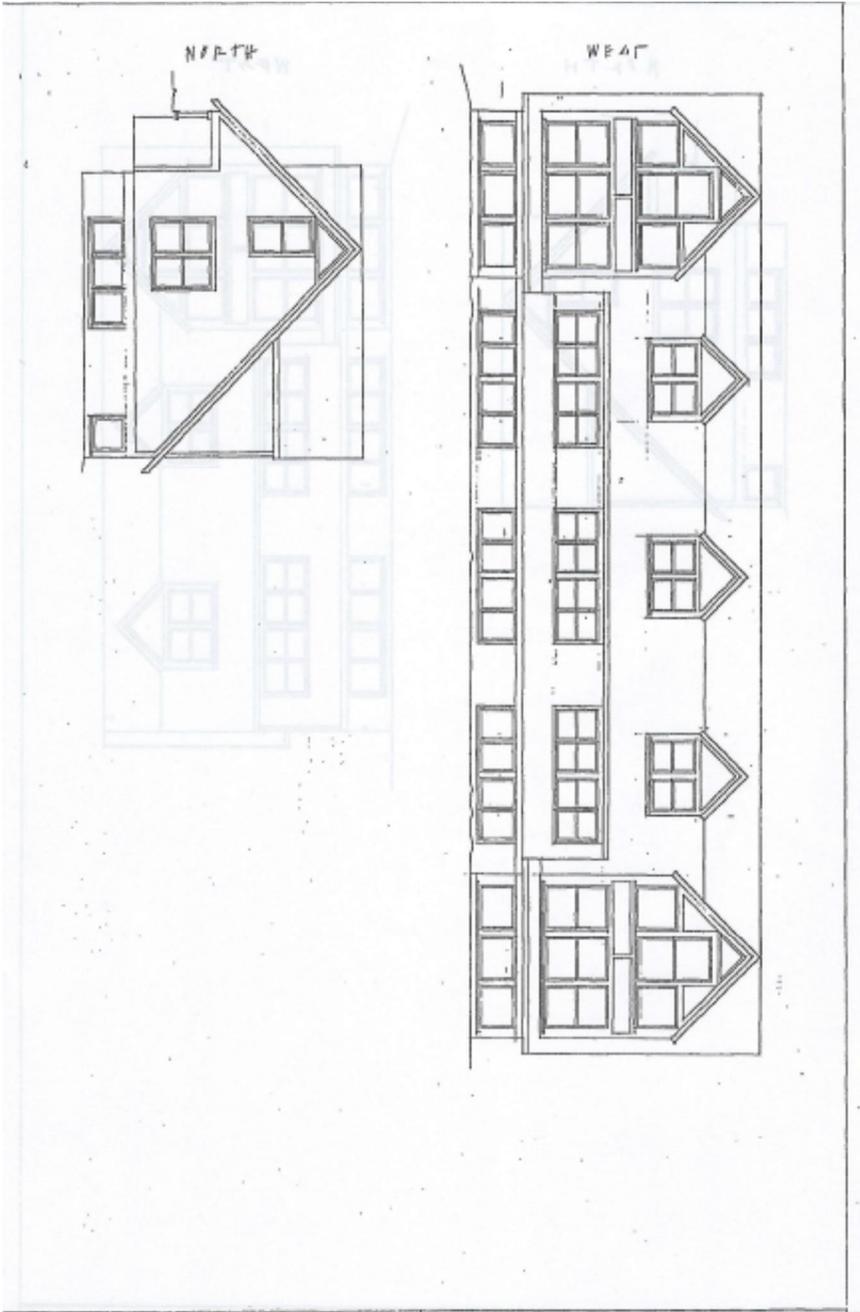
PROPOSED SITE PLAN
 0 10 20 30 40 50 FT.





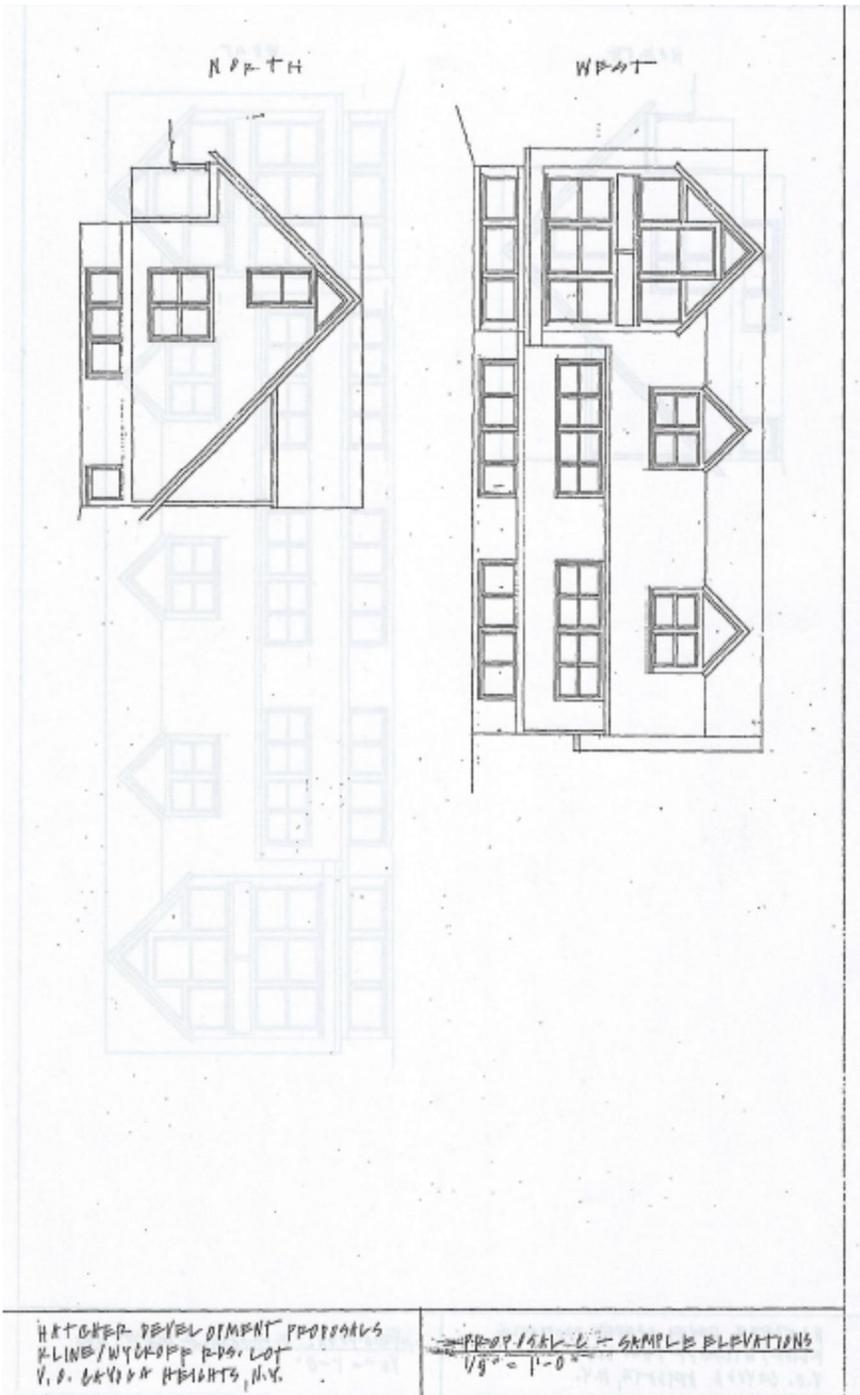
FURTHER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS
 KLINE/ NYCKOFF R.D. LOT
 V.O. CATHER HEIGHTS, N.Y.

PROPOSAL - SAMPLE ELEVATIONS
 V.B. = 1'-0"



HATCHER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS
KLINE/WYCKOFF BLDG. LOT
V.O. CAYVA ARCHT, N.Y.

PROPOSAL B - SAMPLE ELEVATIONS
1/8" = 1'-0"



- Anne Sauer expressed her opposition to the proposed project. A written statement was submitted for the record.

October 26, 2015

Planning Board
Village of Cayuga Heights
836 Hanshaw Rd
Ithaca, NY 14850

Re: Site Plan Review for 520 Wyckoff Rd.

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

We purchased our home at 107 Overlook Rd. a little more than a year ago in part due to its quiet street and setting, even with its proximity to North Campus, Ridgewood Rd., and several Greek houses in the area.

We have three specific concerns about a sorority chapter house at 520 Wyckoff Rd.:

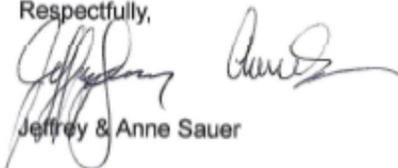
First, parking. Overlook Rd. is the closest street to 520 Wyckoff that allows on-street parking, although currently very few take advantage of this other than neighbors shuffling cars. A sorority chapter house with more than 100 sisters would turn this quiet street into a virtual parking lot and our driveway into the default turn-around for sorority residents and guests. We are aware that the sorority is in discussions with the Westbourne Apartments for the use of a finite number of parking spaces. However, as best as we understand, those discussions are not currently working toward a long-term solution, nor has been finalized. Regardless, Overlook Rd. is much closer and would inevitably be viewed as far more convenient.

Second, I have quickly learned from experience that the Overlook-Wyckoff intersection has poor visibility in both directions. I have myself come close to being involved in an accident. The dramatic increase in traffic that would result from a chapter house at 520 Wyckoff would make the intersection even more tenuous.

Third, our property already close to a sorority. We live with that because, for the majority of the year, the noise level is not imposing. However, our house is probably a couple hundred feet from the chapter house and behind a modest, treed hill. Still, we can regularly hear the women talking, returning home, and listening to music. A chapter house at 520 Wyckoff would be far closer to the abutters and the noise level would have no distance to dissipate.

We request that you disapprove this application.

Respectfully,



Jeffrey & Anne Sauer

- Kathryn Mapes previously emailed an editorial, with her adjustments and corrections, which was originally printed in the *Ithaca Times* to the Board. She requested that the document be entered into the record.

This is the editorial that was printed in the *Ithaca Times*. I have made a few adjustments and corrections.

Two weeks ago, I found out from my next door neighbor, Dolly Shaffer, that there was a good chance a sorority, Phi Mu, would be moving into our neighborhood on Wyckoff Road in Cayuga Heights. I live on 516 Wyckoff Road and the house the sorority has chosen is located at 520 Wyckoff Road, approximately 150 feet from my house. After living for thirty years in Minneapolis, I moved back in 2008 and in 2011 bought a duplex in the locality where I now live. I reasoned that Cayuga Heights was a beautiful and well-kept community. I had lived there as a small child in a rented basement apartment on North Sunset Drive and had formed an attachment to it.

You'll think I was naïve when I tell you that there are Greek houses right above us, but I thought that they were in Cornell Heights and subject to different zoning. I obviously knew that duplexes were allowed. While I live next to a single-family house on one side, I have a rental house with several apartments on the other. However, the students in our immediate neighborhood are quiet and respectful. When we have trouble with noise, it is often from the Greek houses, although they are a fair distance from us. But there are some nights when the noise is intolerable. I certainly don't want there to be more noise. It's the density of students that would come with a sorority that we are worried about.

On Monday night, September 28, my neighbors and I attended a meeting of the Planning Board in Marcham Hall in the Village of Cayuga Heights. Most of those who could not come wrote letters. We presented our situation and the board presented theirs,

including an explanation that we resided in a Multiple Housing District. Everyone was polite, but the meeting ran long. A decision has not been reached as to whether Phi Mu can move in. The Zoning Board will meet again on October 26.

We have had very little notice and are trying to figure out what this will mean for all of us. Between twelve and sixteen young women would live in the six-bedroom house, but there are 118 students in the sorority. What will happen when they gather together after school? Wyckoff is a steep road and we already have trouble with drivers speeding up it. The sorority has an agreement with Westbourne Apartments to use part of a parking lot, but I think that means they will be walking on the road during the winter when they would be safer in a car. You are not allowed to park on the shoulders in Cayuga Heights, but on occasion we all do this to allow plumbers and other workers to get in our driveways and I'm sure they would end up doing it often. A solution that could end up hurting me would be the addition of a sidewalk. I say this because although I love the view behind my house, I really only have a front yard and most of my planting has been done close to the street.

One of my other concerns is the proximity of the house to the gorge and the likelihood that get-togethers would take place on the multi-level deck in the back. I am concerned about students falling off it, especially in light of the situation recently with the young man who fell off the roof of a fraternity house on Ridgewood Road. The gorge is beautiful and was a major attraction for me when I made the decision to buy my house, but the gorges can also be a serious problem for young people who are exploring life.

The house in question is the Morse house, where Ev (see Ev's letter) and Fleet

Morse grew up. They are the grandchildren of the founder of Morse Chain. It is without a doubt the most beautiful house in the neighborhood, although it is somewhat small. I would argue that it has historical importance because it is the Morse house and because Lincoln Baldrige was the architect. At the Zoning Board meeting we were told that the district is historic, but that the house has not been deemed an historical site. Even so, I hope that it will be well-maintained. The adult sorority representative from Atlanta who was present at the meeting admitted that there would be a house director, but no alumni supervision. It is not the kind of house I think should serve as a sorority. Although being part of the Cornell Heights Historical District does not mean that all the houses therein are protected, it does indicate that we are part of a unique area with many houses built in the twenties and thirties and deserving of special care.

I guess that the message for me that I need to get more involved in my community. Until two weeks ago, I had no idea what was going on in my own neighborhood.

- Chair F. Cowett closed public comment.

Item 4- 105 Berkshire Rd Preliminary Site Plan Review

- Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross explained the reasons for the preliminary site plan review. The owner has applied to subdivide her property into 2 lots. The Zoning Board of Appeals has approved the owner's variance request for a reduction in road side frontage for the subdivision and the proposed lots would be compliant. He also explained that this case is considered a minor subdivision as the property would only be subdivided into 2 lots. The Board needs to decide if a public hearing is necessary. He also stated he has not required the owner to complete a SEQR form.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that, while a public hearing is not required for a minor subdivision in the Residence Zoning District, he had been made aware that some public concern exists regarding the subdivision. He therefore recommended to the Board that a public hearing be scheduled, that the Board should declare itself lead agency for SEQR, and that the Board conduct a SEQR review at its next meeting.
- S. Cunningham inquired about the requirements for site plan review of minor subdivisions. Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross explained the requirements.
- Chair F. Cowett read the variance conditions imposed by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Conditions of Variance:

- 1) Parcel B's width at the road must be no less than 38 feet.
 - 2) Subdivision approval must be obtained from the Planning Board for essentially the same subdivision submitted to this Board.
 - 3) Both lots share the existing curb cut and share the existing driveway as much as possible.
 - 4) Parcel A can only be used by at most 2 unrelated occupants or a single family with no unrelated occupants.
 - 5) This Board requests that the Planning Board consider the following as a condition of subdivision approval:
 - a) Any buildings, structures, or impervious surfaces built on Parcel A must obtain site plan approval from the Planning Board.
- The property owner asked the Board why a SEQR review was necessary. Attorney R. Marcus explained the requirements of SEQR.

Motion: S. Cunningham

Second: D. Hay

RESOLUTION No. 166

TO ACCEPT PROPOSED MINOR SUBDIVISION AT 105 BERKSHIRE RD AS AN UNLISTED SEQR ACTION

RESOLVE, that the Planning Board declares itself lead agency for SEQR review of the proposed minor subdivision at 105 Berkshire Rd. which the Board categorizes as an Unlisted SEQR action and the property owner is to complete Part 1 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form.

Aye votes – Chair F. Cowett, S. Cunningham, D. Hay, and R. Segelken
 Opposed- None

Motion: R. Segelken

Second: S. Cunningham

RESOLUTION No. 167

TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED MINOR SUBDIVISION AT 105 BERKSHIRE RD

RESOLVE, that a public hearing will be held on November 23, 2015 at 7:10 p.m. regarding the site plan review for the proposed minor subdivision at 105 Berkshire Rd.

Item 5- Continuation of Site Plan Review- 520 Wyckoff Road

- S. Cunningham stated that, while he was not in attendance at the last meeting, he has been caught up to speed on the site plan review.
- Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross addressed comments and concerns brought to his attention.
 - a) A statement was made that the existing sororities/fraternities in the Village are in neighborhoods of similar occupancy. The fact is that there are 4 such sorority/fraternity properties in the Village and 3 of them are adjacent to single family homes.
 - b) Parking enforcement is handled by the Village's Police Department. The Police will be diligent in enforcing parking regulations.
 - c) While he does not discount concerns regarding an increase in traffic, in terms of the Village's road infrastructure, the Village's street system can adequately handle an increased level of traffic associated with this project.
 - d) Previous comments were made regarding fire safety. If the project is approved, the building would be subject to building code regulations and annual fire inspections.
 - e) The method he uses to determine properties falling within the 200 ft. area requiring notification for public hearings is based on digital mapping provided by Tompkins County. A software program is then used to calculate distances and identify properties to be notified and he maintains that all properties that should have been notified about this project were notified. He uses the same methodology for every case.
- The Board reviewed Article IX Section 24, III, 1, factors to be considered by the Board for Site Plan Review cases, and found the following:

Article IX Section 24, III, 1

The following factors shall be considered by the Board:

a. The location and site of the use.

The site is located at 520 Wyckoff Rd in the Village's Multihousing Zoning District approximately one-half mile from the main Cornell University campus on the south side of Fall Creek. The site is also located within the Cornell Heights historic district. The Village of Cayuga Heights has no regulations pertaining to this historic district. Per Tompkins County, current property class is residential and current land use is one-family residential.

b. The nature and intensity of the operation involved.

The proposed operation is a chapter house for the Phi Mu sorority. The sorority currently has between 110 and 120 members. Based on building code and room measurements, the house can accommodate 16 residents. National Phi Mu sorority executives envision 12 – 15 students living in the house along with one full time resident house director. Any sorority member is entitled to visit the chapter house regardless of whether she lives there. Phi Mu Sorority executives envision that sorority-wide chapter functions will periodically take place at the house. Therefore, the proposed operation will entail more intensive use of the site than would ordinarily be expected for one-family residential use.

c. The size and topography of the site in relation to it.

Site acreage is approximately 0.43 acres (18,910 square feet). This acreage places it within the 25th quartile of all one-, two-, and three-family parcels by size in the Village, meaning it is of comparatively small size in relation to other Cayuga Heights family residential parcels. The lot is approximately 114 feet wide at its widest point and 219 feet long at its longest point. Per Tompkins County, the floor area of the house is slightly more than 2,000 square feet. The slope in the site's northern half where the house is located is approximately 8 percent. There is a steep slope in the site's southern half in excess of 30 percent which limits the use of that portion of the parcel.

d. The location of the site in respect to the roads giving access to it.

The site is located on a slightly curving section of Wyckoff Rd with 95 feet of road frontage. At its nearest point, the house is approximately 30 feet from Wyckoff Rd whose right-of-way is 50 feet. The slope on Wyckoff Rd adjacent to the site is approximately 8 percent. The slope on Wyckoff Rd increases as the street proceeds westward around a curve made "blind" by street curvature and narrowness, and dense vegetation along the sides of the road. The nearest cross streets are Kline Rd to the northwest and Overlook Rd to the east.

e. The provisions for parking.

There is a driveway on the western side of the site leading to a one car garage. The driveway is approximately 60 feet long and varies in width. At its narrowest point, close to Wyckoff Rd, the driveway is approximately 14 feet wide abutting a masonry wall. There is no legal street parking on either side of Wyckoff Rd adjacent to the site nor elsewhere on Wyckoff Rd between Kline and Overlook Rds. The sorority has secured a commitment from 126 Westbourne Lane Apartments for 14 parking spaces in its lower parking lot. Terms of the commitment are \$550.00 annually per parking space for the period 7/1/2016 to 6/30/2017. This is not a permanent arrangement and could be terminated in the future by Westbourne Lane Apartments. It is an approximate 1/8th mile walk from the 520 Wyckoff Rd house to the Westbourne Lane Apartments lower lot. While the apartments are mostly located in the City of Ithaca, the lower lot is located in the Village of Cayuga Heights. Possible overflow parking from the site onto Overlook Rd would likely impact the ability of current Overlook and Wyckoff Rd residents and their visitors to park their cars there.

f. The relation of the size of the building and lot to the parking area.

Article 14 of the Village's zoning code states that "Every building used for living purposes shall provide sufficient off-street garage space or parking space for the occupants and employees thereof." Current use of the site is a one-family residence. There is a one bay garage at the end of a driveway. Cars can be parked in the driveway as well as the garage. The above arrangement may be sufficient for a one-family residence, but is very unlikely to be sufficient for the greater number of occupants and employees associated with the proposed sorority. The parking arrangement with Westbourne Lane Apartments seeks to address this deficiency, but the degree to which it can successfully do so is unclear. Additionally, the overall width of the driveway would appear to preclude cars turning around there and any car heading front end in to park would be required to back up onto the street to exit the driveway. Given that there is a "blind" curve west of the site on Wyckoff Rd, a possible increase in the number of cars backing out of the driveway onto Wyckoff Rd, coupled with an increased possibility of illegally parked cars on Wyckoff Rd associated with more intensive site use, poses a safety concern for site occupants and employees as well as other Village residents.

g. Traffic and noise generated by the proposed use.

The proposed sorority will increase the number of residents on site and also likely increase the number of visitors to the site since the sorority currently has between 110 and 120 members and any sorority member is able to visit the chapter house regardless of whether she lives there. Additionally, Phi Mu sorority executives envision that chapter functions will periodically take place at the house. Although sorority house rules stipulate "quiet hours" between 10 pm

and 10 am and forbid the use of alcohol and a full time house director will reside on site, Phi Mu sorority executives have acknowledged to the Planning Board that change in use to a sorority would increase neighborhood noise and traffic (car, bicycle, pedestrian). They further acknowledged to the Planning Board that, while a House Director will reside on site and sorority rules are strict, no guarantee can be made concerning student behavior. Potential traffic and parking issues associated with the proposed use have been discussed above. With respect to noise, the Village passed a noise ordinance in 2012 the stated purpose of which is "to preserve the public health peace, comfort, repose, welfare, safety and good order." It is possible and even likely that the proposed use will create at least some additional noise disturbance for neighbors and result in an increase in the number of violations of the Village's noise ordinance.

h. Landscaping.

Trees, shrubs, and lawn comprise landscaping in front of the house. Trees and shrubs comprise landscaping in the side yards abutting the neighboring parcels. There is multilevel decking in the rear of the house which overlooks a wooded ravine. Sorority executives do not envision any significant changes being made to the existing landscaping. It is possible that if the sidewalk which terminates at 516 Wyckoff Rd was extended to 520 Wyckoff Rd to accommodate greater pedestrian traffic, mailboxes, electrical utility poles, shrubs, and at least one mature Norway spruce would need to be moved or removed at 516 and 518 Wyckoff Rd.

i. Architectural features.

The house is Tudor in style with a slate roof. Sorority executives do not envision any change to its architectural features.

j. Location and dimension of buildings.

The house is located in the northern portion of the lot where the slope is less steep than in its southern portion. The house is irregularly shaped, approximately 56 feet at its widest point and 70 feet at its longest point. Tompkins County lists the perimeter of the house as 225 feet. At its nearest points, it is approximately 37 feet to the neighboring house to the east (518 Wyckoff Rd) and 35 feet to the neighboring house to the west (522 Wyckoff Rd). Due to building location and lot configuration, many of the residences located on this block of Wyckoff Rd do not conform to current side yard setbacks in the Multihousing Zoning District (i.e. the maximum height of the building on the side facing the respective side yard). The non-conforming proximity of buildings on this block would not seem amenable to a significantly more intensive use of the site, particularly from the standpoint of noise and privacy. Windows at 518 Wyckoff look directly into possible bedrooms of the 520 Wyckoff Rd house.

k. Impact of the proposed use on adjacent land uses.

Per Tompkins County, current property class is residential and current land use is one-family residential. On Wyckoff Rd between Overlook Rd and Kline Rd, most property is one-family residential. There is a sorority east of Overlook at 509 Wyckoff Rd. It is possible, although not certain, that the proposed use may raise real estate values and alter neighborhood character to a sufficient extent that long-term pressure will be put on (1) the desire of current residents to live there and (2) the continuation of one-family residential land use on this block of Wyckoff Rd.

l. Effect on the environment.

The Planning Board categorized the proposed use as an Unlisted Action under SEQR and conducted a SEQR review. In its determination of significance, the Board found moderate to large impacts potentially related to (1) character and quality of the existing community (2) the existing level of traffic or existing infrastructure for mass transit, biking, or walkway, and (3) environmental resources or human health. The Board acknowledged possible mitigation of the above through the parking commitment from Westbourne Lane Apartments, sorority house rules stipulating quiet hours and forbidding alcohol use, and full time residence of a house director. The Board also acknowledged uncertainty as to the long-term effect on neighborhood property values and character and neighboring one-family residences. Accordingly, the Board resolved that the proposed use could not be judged with certainty to result in significant adverse environmental effects and did not require submission of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). However, the Board continues to recognize meaningful areas of concern with respect to the proposed use's effect on the environment described above and below primarily related to the character of the existing community, traffic safety, and the impact of noise on human health.

m. Effect on infrastructure and existing Village services, including sewer, water, drainage and solid waste.

The proposed change in use to a sorority would increase the number of residents in the house which would in turn increase the use of Village services such as sewer, water, and solid waste removal. However, such an increase in the context of all such services provided by the Village would be relatively negligible. It is possible that an increase in noise might lead to complaints by neighbors to Village police and result in a small overall increase in the number of calls for police service. There is currently a Village sidewalk on the south side of Wyckoff Rd that terminates near its intersection with Overlook Rd at 516 Wyckoff Rd. The driveway at 520 Wyckoff Rd is approximately 300 feet from the sidewalk's end. Extending the sidewalk westward 300 feet is probably feasible, but would result in meaningful construction costs to the Village.

n. *Any other reasonable factors that will promote the safety of the proposed use and the orderly development of the Multiple Housing or Commercial District.*

The Board has considered the widening of Wyckoff Rd to promote greater safety. However, the curvilinear nature of the road coupled with its slope effectively limits the ability to perform any such widening.

o. *Effect on population density, if any.*

The proposed change in use would increase population density for the site and for the block on Wyckoff Rd between Kline and Overlook Rds. The effect on population density for the entire Village would be negligible. It is possible, however, that the proposed use's effect on adjacent land uses could result over time in still greater population density for the block on Wyckoff Rd and increase population density on Overlook Rd as well.

p. *Any other factors reasonably related to the health, safety and general welfare of the community.*

The overarching goal stated by the Planning Board in drafting the Village's Comprehensive Plan adopted January 13, 2014 by the Board of Trustees was "to strike a proper balance between sustaining those factors that make today's Village a desirable place to live and addressing proactively the short and long term changes that will inevitably arise." Goal QL1 of the plan, stated in part, "Ensure retention of the Village's residential character" and included recommendations to "review and update as needed Village zoning regulations to balance future development with the existing scale, density, and character of historic residential neighborhoods," and to "continue the [Village's] historic role as [a] residential neighborhood." The plan also recommended at least in the Community Corners area that "any future multi-family and commercial development ... [should] have minimal adverse impact on the quality of life in residential neighborhoods" and that the existing zoning ordinance should be replaced "with a comprehensive new ordinance that better protects family residential neighborhoods." A zoning task force was subsequently created to rewrite the Village's zoning ordinance, but has not yet finished doing so and current zoning remains in effect. Nevertheless, Village Trustee Stephen Hamilton advised in his forward to the plan that decisions of the Trustees and Planning Board should conform to the long-range vision stated in the Plan and that the Trustees should try to maintain those qualities that lead people to choose to live in the Village while recognizing that the Village has changed and will continue to change irrespective of residents' wishes. Based on all of the above, although the proposed use is permitted in the Multihousing Zoning District under the Village's current zoning ordinance, such a change of use is not consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations contained in the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

- S. Cunningham asked if any Phi Mu representatives were present. None were in attendance.

Motion: D. Hay
Second: R. Segelken

RESOLUTION No. 168

TO ACCEPT THE ARTICLE IX SECTION 24, III, 1 FINDINGS

RESOLVE, that the Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board accepts the Article IX Section 24, III, 1 findings regarding the proposed project at 520 Wyckoff Rd.

- S. Cunningham asked if there have been any other precedent setting cases. Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross stated there have been no other precedent setting cases such as this.
- The Board discussed the available options for a final resolution which are to approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the site plan. A straw poll was taken among the Board. All members voted to disapprove.

Motion: D. Hay

Second: R. Segelken

RESOLUTION No. 169
TO DISAPPROVE THE SITE PLAN FOR 520 WYCKOFF RD

WHEREAS:

- A. This matter involves site plan review pursuant to a proposed change of use from a one-family residence to a fraternity/sorority at 520 Wyckoff Rd in the Village's Multihousing Zoning District; and
- B. On September 28, 2015 the Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board held a public hearing regarding such action; and
- C. On September 28, 2015 and October 26, 2015 the Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board thereafter thoroughly reviewed and analyzed (i) the materials and information presented by and on behalf of the applicant(s) in support of this proposed change, (ii) all other information and materials rightfully before the Board, and (iii) all issues raised during the public hearing and/or otherwise raised in the course of the Board's deliberations; and
- D. On September 28, 2015 in accordance with Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law - the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), and 6 NYCRR Section 617.5 (c), the Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board categorized the proposed change of use as an Unlisted SEQR action and found that said action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts; and
- E. On October 26, 2015 in accordance with Section 7-725-a of the Village Law of the State of New York and pursuant to Village of Cayuga Heights Article IX Section 24,

III, 1, the Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board makes the following findings with respect to the proposed change in use:

1. The proposed change of use has not sufficiently satisfied Article XIV of the Village's zoning code that "Every building used for living purposes shall provide sufficient off-street garage space or parking space for the occupants and employees thereof;" and
2. The proposed change of use is likely to create an unacceptable increase in neighborhood noise and impact privacy contrary to the purpose and intent of the Village's Noise Ordinance, Local Law 5 of 2012; and
3. The proposed change of use is likely to create an unacceptable increase in neighborhood traffic and parking violations contrary to Article IV Section 7.2b; and
4. The proposed change of use is not consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations contained in the Village's Comprehensive Plan "to balance future development with the existing scale, density, and character of historic residential neighborhoods" and to protect "family residential neighborhoods."

RESOLVE, that site plan approval for the change in use at 520 Wyckoff Rd is hereby disapproved.

Item 6- Other Business

- No other business was discussed.

Item 7 – Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.