CEPA PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
WHITNEY HOUSE DEMOLITION
JULY 25, 2023
WEBINAR “TECH CHECK”

CEPA PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
WHITNEY HOUSE DEMOLITION
JULY 25, 2023

Submit comments via the chat window by writing your name, address, and comment.
PRESENTATION AGENDA

- Public Scoping Process
- Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA)
- Project Overview & Schedule
- Public Comments
PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS

- Provide basic information on the project (Proposed Action)
- Occurs at the early stage of project
- Provide a forum for agency and public input
  - Range of alternatives
  - Environmental impacts that should be considered for study
- Solicit written comments to be addressed (via public meeting, email, mail, or fax) in the CEPA process
WHAT IS CEPA?

- Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA)
- Identify and evaluate the impacts of proposed state actions that may significantly affect the environment
- Allow for public input
### CEPA RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

**Natural**
- Water quality (incl. surface water and groundwater)
- Flooding, in-stream flows, erosion or sedimentation
- Natural communities, critical plant and animal species
- Resident or migratory fish or wildlife species
- Air quality
- Ambient noise levels
- Existing land resources and landscapes (incl. coastal and inland wetlands)
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Changing climate (incl. resilience)

**Socioeconomic**
- Historic, archeological, cultural, or recreational building or site
- Aesthetic or visual effects
- State, regional, and municipal plans
- Existing housing, communities
- Population
- Human health and safety
- Other natural, cultural, recreational, or scenic resources

**Physical**
- Public water supply system
- Pesticides, toxic or hazardous materials
- Congestion (traffic, recreational, other)
- Energy use
- Agricultural resources
- Existing/proposed utilities/infrastructure

**Bold** indicates resources most relevant to this Proposed Action
CEPA PROCESS MAP & TIMELINE

Project Need Identified

Publish Scoping Notice in *Environmental Monitor*

(Optional) Hold Public Scoping Meeting

Publish Post-Scoping Notice

Prepare Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE)

Publish Availability of EIE in *Environmental Monitor*

(Optional) Hold Public Hearing

Respond to Comments

Prepare and Publish Record of Decision (ROD)

Office of Policy & Mgmt. Issues Determination of Adequacy [END]

45-Day Public & Agency Review & Comment Period

30-Day Public & Agency Review & Comment Period

Prepare Memorandum of Findings

Determination that No EIE Required [END]
WHITNEY HOUSE DEMOLITION
PROJECT LOCATION ON CAMPUS

- Whitney House
  - Built 1802 - 1807
  - One of the oldest structures on campus
  - **Contributing resource** to the University of Connecticut Historic District
PROJECT OVERVIEW

- The Proposed Action
  - **Removal** of the building
    - Decommission existing utilities
    - Remediate hazardous and regulated materials
    - Demolish building
  - **Restore** project site
PURPOSE AND NEED

- **Purpose:** Eliminate present hazards and liabilities associated with the existing structure and site.

- **Need:** Vacated without a useful purpose since 2004 and **damaged by fire, smoke, and water** in January 2023, Whitney House is **unsafe for occupancy**.
**ALTERNATIVES OVERVIEW**

- **No Action**
  - House is currently an unsafe liability risk
  - Will increasingly deteriorate with no action
  - Mold, mildew growth/moisture damage will accelerate

- **Repair/Restore Building**
  - Loose hazardous materials are problematic construction conditions
  - Structural damage makes areas challenging to restore
  - Smoke damage is extensive throughout the house and beyond areas of obvious structural damage
  - Coordination required on mitigation measures due to the building being a historic resource
  - Funding limitations make timely repairs challenging

- **Salvage/Relocate Building**
  - HAZMAT and chain of custody may make this a liability for all parties
  - Complete architectural salvage of entire structure would be time consuming and remediation intensive
  - Damage to structure and location limits feasibility of relocating
  - Requires resolution of potential legal issues

- **Remove Building & Restore Site**
  - Most timely means to mitigate the safety and other risks associated with the damaged structure
  - Coordination required on mitigation measures due to the building being a historic resource
  - Potential salvage of key building elements (where feasible)
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE – REMOVE BUILDING & RESTORE SITE

- **Removal** of the building
  - Decommission existing utilities
  - Remediate hazardous and regulated materials
  - Demolish building

- **Restore** project site
  - Grade/infill basement
  - Reestablish lawn and plantings
  - Restore services and/or remediate soil as needed

- **Mitigation** of Adverse Effect on Historic District
  - Pending coordination with SHPO
  - Potential salvage of key building elements (where feasible)
  - Potential commemoration of site

FUSS & O’NEILL
RESOURCES NOT PRESENT AT THE PROJECT AREA

- No FEMA flood zones
- No aquifer protection areas
- No tidal wetlands/coastal areas
- No farmland soils
POTENTIAL EFFECTS

- Potential **beneficial effects**:  
  - No long-term, energy-related *greenhouse gas emissions*  
  - **Removal of hazards** to human health and safety (e.g., asbestos, structurally unsound building)  
  - Conversion of impermeable surface to **permeable landscape** resulting in reduced stormwater

- Potential **adverse effects**:  
  - Demolition of a *contributing resource* to the UConn Historic District  
  - Possible disturbance of *archaeological resources*
NEXT STEPS
CEPA PROCESS MAP & TIMELINE

Project Need Identified
- Publish Scoping Notice in *Environmental Monitor*
- (Optional) Hold Public Scoping Meeting
- Publish Post-Scoping Notice
- Prepare Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE)
- Publish Availability of EIE in *Environmental Monitor*
- (Optional) Hold Public Hearing
- Respond to Comments
- Prepare and Publish Record of Decision (ROD)
- Office of Policy & Mgmt. Issues Determination of Adequacy [END]

30-Day Public & Agency Review & Comment Period

45-Day Public & Agency Review & Comment Period

Prepare Memorandum of Findings
Determination that No EIE Required [END]
## SCHEDULE MILESTONES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Tentative Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Published Scoping Notice in <em>Environmental Monitor</em></td>
<td>July 3, 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Scoping Meeting</td>
<td>July 25, 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of Public Comment Period</td>
<td>August 4, 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Scoping Notice</td>
<td>Late Summer 2023</td>
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<td>Planned Start of Work</td>
<td>Early 2024</td>
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COMMENTS

- **Written comments** accepted **tonight** via the Chat
  - State **name, address, and your comment(s)**
- May also **submit written comments (email preferred)** to:
  - Name: **James Libby**, AIA, LEED AP, NCARB
  - Address: 3 Discovery Drive, U-6038, Storrs, CT 06269
  - Fax: (860) 486-3117
  - E-mail: **james.libby@uconn.edu**
- End of **Comment Period**: August 4, 2023
- **Additional information** regarding the meeting, as well as a link to a recording of the meeting, will be posted at: [https://updc.uconn.edu/whitney-house/](https://updc.uconn.edu/whitney-house/)
- **Recording** will be posted by COB Thursday, July 27, 2023