

Amabel Pocket Neighborhood



Happy future Amabel resident

Frequently Asked Questions:

Are there municipal services at Amabel?

Yes Amabel has water, sewer and electric at the road and all these services will be brought into the homes. Due to the height of the sewer at the road the sanitary system at Amabel is pumped. What this means is that the effluent is collected via a gravity system from each house to a sewage ejection system near the western most guest parking area. The sanitary waste will then be ejected in a 3" "forced main" pipe back to the road into the municipal sanitary system. This waste water system will be managed by an independent Transportation Corporation as the Town staffing is too low at this time to absorb a pumped system. The Transportation Corporation will impose a small fee as indicated in the HOA first year budget estimate in order to properly care for and maintain the system.



The water system is designed to Town specifications and will be dedicated back to the Town upon completion and each house will be separately metered and billed by the Town of Ithaca.

What does net-zero mean?

The roof top solar arrays are producing power in the summer and sending some of that back to the grid. In the winter the arrays are pulling power from the grid; the net of these two over one year is projected to be zero. This can save as much as \$300/month in eliminated utility costs.



One of the kitchens at The Aurora Pocket Neighborhood

Is there a common house at Amabel?

No, there will not be a common house at Amabel. Please visit this blog post for more information on the absence of a common house. [Relationships and the Uncommon House](#)

Are the solar arrays included in the purchase price?

In order to receive the Federal and State renewable energy tax credits, only homeowners, the end user can contract to have their arrays installed. We will make that process simple and easy by partnering with a reputable Solar system installer. Other than the installation of the arrays, the homes at Amabel have been conceived, designed, strategically placed on

the land, and very carefully built and insulated to allow solar energy production to make it possible for the houses to achieve net-zero performance.

Are there mandatory community gatherings?

No, however there will be fun opportunities to get together. There will mostly likely be start up meetings to select officers to the HOA and annual meetings of the HOA to go over budget and things like that.

Are there going to be HOA covenants?

Yes, there will be HOA covenants, regarding but most likely not limited to: house additions, yard maintenance, noise, use of the common spaces, dog poop, outdoor cats, we may want to have a covenant on woodstoves See woodstoves below.



How do the materials used for the homes result in a reduction in maintenance costs?

All the materials on the exterior of these homes from the ground to the roof will be highly durable materials requiring little to no maintenance. See future blog posts with full explanation of the various materials.

Are there going to be rules and regulations on cats and dogs?

Just as in any neighborhood it is expected that dogs will be on leashes and or fenced in and that everyone will always clean up after their dog. With regards to cats and song birds this may be one of the first community conversations that we have and I imagine we will adopt a policy that outside cats wear a collar with a bell to prevent bird predation, and that for the health of the cat (and birds) keeping cats indoors be considered. [dangers of being an outside cat](#)

Can I have a woodstove?

The homes at Amabel are not like typical homes. Whereas in a typical home there is what is called “accidental ventilation” there is none of that in an Amabel home. “Accidental ventilation” is air flow into and out of the home through random and myriad openings in the home. These locations in a typical home are everywhere, around the



windows and doors, at the wall to floor connection, the attic and basement, etc. There is very little of that in Amabel homes, this is one of the main ways that they are able to be fully solar powered. For instance, the homes at The Aurora Pocket Neighborhood had .4 air exchanges per hour when pressurized to 50 pascals. This measurement exceeds the highest standard in the industry for air tightness. Long story short; use of a woodstove will make the house very warm and will introduce some products of combustion into a very tight space. Most likely while the woodstove is operating windows will have to be opened to dissipate the heat. At the same time, the desire for the ambience on radiant warmth of a wood stove is overwhelmingly compelling. Perhaps we can do some research and find a type of woodstove

that is extraordinarily efficient and the heat it gives off-- highly controllable and mandate that only this type of stove be used. I venture to guess that this could also reduce and possibly eliminate the concern of exterior pollution and odor. Please do not forget that Amabel will have a beautiful outdoor fire circle to enjoy while sitting under the stars on an early spring or fall evening.

It is important also to note that although wood is releasing carbon that was formerly sequestered by the tree and is therefore not introducing a net increase in carbon emissions-- burning wood is still releasing carbon into the atmosphere. To a large extent the point of the care and consideration given to the design and construction of the Amabel homes is to reduce the space heating load so low that heating, especially combustion forms of heating are not necessary.

How will we get our mail?

Each house will have a mailbox at the end of their drive.

What is the Black Diamond Trail?

The Black Diamond Trail is a multi-use trail network connecting Taughannock State Park, Allan H. Treman State Marine Park (by Cass Park), Buttermilk Falls State Park and Robert Treman State Park. When built, it will provide over 15 miles of safe pathways for non-motorized users (i.e bicyclists and pedestrians). [TheBDTN](https://blackdiamondtrail.org/the-plan/) and <https://blackdiamondtrail.org/the-plan/>



Is Amabel in a flood plain?

Amabel is not in a flood plain. In fact the soil at Amabel is the former Coy Glen creek bed and for that reason is alluvial in character and extremely well drained. There has not been flooding on the Amabel site since 1935 when the flood control canal was created.

What is the carsharing idea?

Idea 1: we create a google calendar that allows us to post when we are going places in our car with a link that allows that others wishing to catch a ride-- to text us that they will be at the location we have indicated for our departure. I think this app already exists.

Idea 2: we collectively purchase a Prius or other electric car and it is like our personal car share car. I have researched the insurance issues on this and it is possible.

Will the houses at Amabel have radon abatement?

We will have the infrastructure in place to be able to add the radon fan and manometer. It is advisable to test the house immediately after it is built to determine if it needs radon abatement.

What are the taxes at Amabel and what is the school district?

Amabel is located in the Ithaca school district, Beverly J. Martin Elementary school. Taxes in the town of Ithaca are approximately \$32/\$1000 in assessed value.



Amabel in winter:
Awesome beauty, and the instigator of great design
for warmth and comfort--and the planet

The Mission of New Earth Living

New Earth Living creates vibrant neighborhoods that connect people to people and our shared earth, providing spaces for trust, purpose, play, and ease.

The Amabel Pocket Neighborhood is one of those places. Amabel addresses the need for low-carbon living, healthy and delicious food, energy and resource renewal, and meaningful social connections.



Next steps:



1. Pick a house plan from the website or printed material provided.
2. Review the site plan, visit the site with the site plan and pick a lot. (I will be marking lots, road, garden, barn etc with flags this week)
3. Fill out and sign the Letter of Intent. We can meet at the site to do this. This will be up on the site shortly
4. Register in the Resident forum on the website to receive updates
5. Ten interested and prequalified buyers will be assembled as quickly as possible using the Letters of Intent
6. Upon aggregation, purchase contracts will be signed and a 10% deposit will be collected and held in escrow and installation of infrastructure (road, water, sewer, and electric) will begin.
7. Upon completion of infrastructure, construction of the first three houses will begin. (I anticipate this winter or early spring) Houses will be completed in the order that they are purchased, unless otherwise requested by the buyer.
8. Closing and move in of the first house will be four to five months after start of home construction, with a closing and move-in approximately every two months thereafter, except a short lag in the winter of 2017 for weather contingency. We anticipate full build out in 24 months.