

Site Background & Assessment

November 2025

As part of the City of Rome's engagement of MRB Group to develop a Reuse Feasibility Study for the property located at 112 Columbus Avenue, an MRB Group Engineer conducted a preliminary review of the existing zoning and utilities for the project parcel and surrounding area. The following memorandum details the geotechnical conditions, the zoning of the property and surrounding properties, and the condition and capacity of the existing utilities serving 112 Columbus Avenue. Information was gathered using online sources, Environmental Site Assessment Reports, correspondence with local water and sewer departments, and communication with National Grid regarding electric and gas services.

Geotechnical Considerations

- a. The geotechnical analysis of this project has been conducted by reviewing the existing Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report (ESA) for the Old Columbus School site, written by HRP Associates, INC, and dated December 5, 2022. All information in this section was gathered from within this report.
- b. It should be noted that the ESA was written prior to the demolition of the Old Columbus School building, which took place between May 2024 and March 2025. Some of the findings and recommendations made were to be completed prior to demolition of the school and confirmation that these recommendations were accomplished is unknown at this time. Included in these recommendations was an asbestos and lead-based paint survey. Awareness of the potential ground contamination of these materials from demolition should be present in the event of future development.

- c. The extent of the demolition, per HRP Associates, consisted of removing all materials underground including foundations, basement floors, concrete pads, etc. The only materials that were left behind on the project parcel were the existing stormwater lines. There is no known mapping of the locations and material type of the existing stormwater infrastructure that has been left behind. The corresponding extent and integrity of the fill material/compaction is also unknown.
- d. The assessment revealed no evidence of Recognized Environmental Conditions (REC's) or Historical Recognized Environmental Conditions (HREC's) in connection with the site.
- e. No releases of unusual odors, petroleum, or hazardous materials were identified during on-site inspections.
- f. There was once a 4'x6' concrete patched area in the rear of the building at the basement level which is noted to be located near the historic boiler system. The old boiler system was coal powered, and coal was likely fed to the boiler from the exterior of the building. The ESA recommended conducting soil sampling in the rear areas of the old building to determine the extent of coal contamination, if any, and identify possible past coal storage locations to be remediated. The ESA also emphasized the importance of making future developers aware of the possible coal contamination on the site.
- g. From October 1, 1969 to August 1, 1994, a 1,000-gallon #2 fuel oil above ground storage tank (AST) for on-site usage could be found on site. Use for this storage tank is unknown, and no tank closure documents were identified. No files have been identified for the site or adjacent properties in the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) files, but soil samples should be taken to identify if any oil spills or seepage can be found on site.
- h. According to the USDA Web Soil Survey, the site consists primarily of Alton-Urban land complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, which are typically gravelly loam to gravelly loam sand. According to the Surficial Geologic Map of New York, the surficial geology on-site is classified as lacustrine sand, typically a laminated silt and clay layer, deposited in proglacial lakes, generally calcareous, potential land stability, and a layer thickness that is variable up to 100 meters. The bedrock layer beneath the surficial layer on-site, is classified as Utica Shale. Of the wells located within 1-mile of the project site, only one well, within the 0.5-1.0-mile range, has a bedrock depth given at a depth of 20ft. The existing groundwater table is estimated to be located approximately 25ft below grade and flows south toward the Erie Canal.

- i. Based on the presumptive information on existing site soils, bedrock, and groundwater, further geotechnical evaluation is recommended. The evaluation should be coordinated with the project design team and a qualified geotechnical engineer and would need to consider the presumed extent of the demolished building and proposed development.

Existing Zoning of Property and Surrounding Land

- a. The existing project parcel at 112 Columbus Avenue is currently zoned as R-2 Single Family Residential. The parcel is currently vacant following the demolition of the old school building.
- b. Per Article VI. – Residential Districts of the City’s zoning code, the R-2 single-family residential district is intended to provide a neighborhood environment of single- and two-family detached and attached dwellings. Limited non-residential uses that are compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods may be permitted per City of Rome 2018 Ordinance No. 9301A, such as community gardens, home-based daycare, government offices, etc. per City of Rome 2018 Ordinance No. 9301A.
- c. All surrounding parcels with one exception are also zoned R-2 Single Family Residential and consist of single-family residences.
- d. The only surrounding parcel not zoned R-2 Single Family Residential is the McIntosh Box and Pallet Company located north of the project parcel across Mohawk Street. This property is zoned I-G General Industrial. The McIntosh Box and Pallet Company are actively operating, and there is no indication that the use of that parcel will change in the near future.
- e. Zoning for these parcels are per the 2018 Final Rome Zoning Maps (see Appendix A, Attachment 1) and the City of Rome online property information search tool.

Existing Water & Sanitary Sewer Service

- a. Per Maps received by City of Rome representatives, Engineer II and the Superintendent of Water and Sewer, there are existing water and sanitary mains running underneath the center of Columbus Avenue. Both utilities are depicted in Appendix A, Attachments 2 & 3.
- b. Both utilities are depicted in Appendix A, Attachments 2 & 3. Attachment 2 depicts the intersection of Columbus Avenue with Dominick Street and focuses on the water main. The attachment shows that there is a 6” watermain on both streets controlled by two valves located in a manhole within the intersection.

- c. Appendix A, Attachment 3 depicts the watermain's connection to the project parcel, showing that there are two waterlines that run towards the project parcel. One is a 4" main that is turned off and is instructed not to be turned on. The other is the continuation of the 6" main after connection to the nearest fire hydrant.
- d. As per Appendix A, Attachment 3 and the City of Rome Superintendent, both of these water mains and the services to the property have been capped by the City. The 6" main is capped at 11'6" and the 4" main at 13'4", both diagonally measured, from the adjacent fire hydrant as shown in Attachment 3. Through discussion with the City, the water service via the 6" main to the property is in good condition and can be re-connected and re-used for development.
- e. While the sanitary main can be seen on both Appendix A, Attachments 2 & 3, very little information is given about this utility on these attachments. The City representatives have stated that the sanitary main along Columbus Avenue is an 8" main running to a manhole just prior to the project parcel. City representatives state that the sanitary service for the project parcel has been capped at the existing sanitary manhole. As with the water service, the City has described this sanitary service as being in good condition and capable of re-connection and re-use for development. The size of the existing sanitary service lateral to the former school is unknown at this time. This is the only information regarding the sanitary utility on the attachments discussed.
- f. City officials have stated that the City of Rome has a Chobani development that is going to increase their wastewater influent to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) by about 1 MGD. Despite this additional load, the City stated that the potential additional load due to redevelopment of the project parcel will most likely be able to be accommodated by the existing WWTP.
- g. City officials have also stated that their water providing capabilities are in great shape and even with the proposed demand from the Chobani Plant mentioned above, the City and the existing water treatment plant can service the demand of future development on the project parcel. Further stating that any development that would fit on the project parcel and be approved can be supplied.

Existing Electric & Gas Service

- a. Communication with National Grid yielded some initial information regarding electric and gas service to the project parcel. As with water and sanitary, these services were disconnected from the project parcel during demolition of the school.

- b. The project parcel is served by a 150kVA transformer, but National Grid was not able to provide utilization voltage (likely due to the removal of the lines servicing the parcel).
- c. Gas service to the school was provided by a 6" steel 24# main that runs along Columbus Avenue, which is still present.
- d. Any new development would need to reestablish service and install new meters for both electric and gas.

Appendix A: Site Assessment Attachments

On the following pages are:

- Attachment 1: 2018 City of Rome Inside District Zoning Map
- Attachment 2: Utility Map – Intersection of Columbus Avenue and Dominick Street
- Attachment 3: Utility Map – Mains And Services Prior to Project Parcel

[INSERT ATTACHMENT 1]

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[INSERT ATTACHMENT 2]

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[INSERT ATTACHMENT 3]

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