



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 main 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 waste-water ejection system near the western most guest parking area. The sanitary waste will then be ejected up 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.

Are the homes net-zero?

Net-zero means that solar arrays purchased from a solar farm 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 zero in a net zero home. We anticipate that with the energy envelope upgrade and the proper number of arrays, the homes at Amabel can be net-zero. This can save as much as \$300/month in eliminated utility costs. Arrays will have to be purchased at solar farm as the roof areas are not large enough for the number of arrays that it takes to achieve net-zero. The incentives still apply whether it is on the roof or on a farm.

Is there a common house at Amabel ?

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

Are solar arrays included in the purchase price?

In order to receive the Federal and State renewable energy tax credits, only homeowners can contract to have their arrays installed

Are there mandatory community gatherings?

No, however there will be fun opportunities to get together.

Are there going to be HOA covenants?

Yes, there will be HOA covenants, regarding but not limited to: house additions, yard maintenance, noise, use of the common spaces, dog poo, outdoor cats, we may want to have a covenant on woodstoves. See woodstoves below. Once we have all the new owners, I figure we will have a conversation about this.



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 durable materials requiring little to no maintenance for many years.

How are the homes heated and cooled?

Air source heat pumps are standard in every home.

What is the standard finish package?

Interior: White stained satin finish nickel-gap walls, ceiling and trim, pine cabinets, doors and floors, laminate countertops, pine treads painted risers on the stairs, adjustable height solid wood shelving, Progress lighting fixtures, Moen plumbing fixtures. **Exterior:** LP smart side and trim, pressure treated porch decking, architectural shingles on the roof.

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.](#)

Can I have a woodstove?

The homes at Amabel are not like a conventional home. 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. Long story short; use of a woodstove will make the house very warm and will introduce products of combustion into a very tight space. In addition, woodstoves introduce air borne particulate that can be irritating to inhale. Moreover, whereas woodstoves are net carbon neutral they are greenhouse gas emitters. At the same time, the desire for the ambience and radiant warmth of a wood stove is desirable. For that purpose, we have found these electric units to be wonderfully satisfying in that regard. Their appearance is remarkably plausible, the warm heat they radiate is just as soothing and much cleaner than a woodstove. [electric fireplace](#)

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.



How will we get our mail and how is garbage collected?

Each house will have its own mailbox at the end of their drive. Each house will have its own pick up by Casella.

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).

Is Amabel in a flood plain?

No Amabel is not in a flood plain. In fact, the Amabel site is extremely well drained.

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 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, Cayuga Heights Elementary school. Taxes in the town of Ithaca are approximately \$32/\$1000 in assessed value.



Who is Sue Cosentini and New Earth Living

Susan Cosentini is a native Ithacan and has over thirty years' experience in the construction industry as a carpenter, foreman, estimator, designer and General Contractor. Her company Cosentini Construction has built or remodeled over 600 homes in the area including the Aurora Pocket Neighborhood and has been awarded the Big50 recognition by Remodeling magazine. Susan is Past

President of Tompkins Cortland Builders and Remodelers Association, and has worked as a volunteer in constructing Hospicare, the Sciencenter, Habitat for Humanity and post-Katrina reconstruction in New Orleans. Susan is a speaker at industry conferences and teaches a communication class at Ithaca College, as well as to organizations and business in the region. Susan is a graduate of Cornell University with a master's in Education, and the school of grinding perseverance and hard work achieving the honor of being inducted into the Cornell Athletic Hall of Fame as the only athlete in the history of Cornell to train, compete and excel in two sports in the same season. Susan has two brilliant grown daughters that she is very proud of.



New Earth Living

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

Climate change and the end of cheap oil are bringing about a new future. The emergent culture of partnership and connection is slowly displacing the dominant paradigm of exploitation and isolation. New Earth Living LLC is a leader in ushering in this new realm.

Our mission is to integrate proven sustainability practices, innovative models of housing and person to person connection to create a new model for living.