

Guide to the **Sarah Elbert Danby Collection**

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See the Hart Family Photograph Collection FBO-0167.1-.7 for more information.

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COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

This collection contains the records of Sarah Elbert, resident of the Town of Danby and member of the Town of Danby Board of Zoning Appeals. It documents her involvement in the dispute between Danby residents and Unity House over a proposed residence on Nelson Road in March of 2015. Unity House runs programs in six central New York counties providing “transitional and permanent housing, respite care, and rehabilitative and employment services for individuals with mental health illnesses, developmental disabilities, and/or chemical dependencies from which they are recovering” (unityhouse.com). The dispute arose when it was discovered that Unity House intended to house two Level 3 sex offenders in the residence, which was located within a mile of a school and pre-school. Neighbors immediately rallied in protest, with a yard sign campaign and two emotionally charged town meetings. In response, Unity House determined not to house the two sex offenders in the Nelson Road residence, and State Senator James Seward (R-Oneonta) drafted legislation to require the disclosure of potential group home residents’ sex offender status.

The collection also contains materials pertaining to Ms. Elbert’s service on the Town of Danby Board of Zoning Appeals from 2013 to 2015, including meeting minutes, appeal documents, and conference materials.

This collection includes news articles, notes, and correspondence pertaining to the dispute between the Nelson Road Neighbors and Unity House; an article on the standoff between the Ithaca Police Department and David Cady in Danby; the minutes and records from the Town of Danby Zoning Board of Appeals 2013-2015; the 2011 Town of Danby Comprehensive Plan; and materials from a regional zoning board conference.

CONTAINER LIST

News articles from the Ithaca Journal, Ithaca Times, Ithaca Voice, & Legislative Gazette pertaining to the Unity House dispute; photograph of lawn sign	Folder 1
Correspondence & notes pertaining to the Unity House dispute	Folder 2
Petition to NY Assembly & material pertaining to NY Senate bills 2885 & 5153	Folder 3
“After the Danby Standoff,” <i>Ithaca Times</i>	Folder 4
Town of Danby Comprehensive Plan 2011	Loose in Box
Town of Danby Zoning Board of Appeals 2013 minutes	Folder 5
Town of Danby Zoning Board of Appeals 2014 minutes	Folder 6
Town of Danby Zoning Board of Appeals 2015 minutes	Folder 7
Regional Conference for zoning & planning board members 10/2014	Loose in Box
“Ethical Considerations for Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeals”	Folder 8