



The Local Landmarker

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On the Cover: An early 19th century house rehabilitated into commercial space in the Village of Pittsford, Monroe County. This Erie Canal village, just east of Rochester, retains a great deal of its historic character due to an active and interested Village government and Historic Preservation Commission. Pittsford is one of several communities in the Rochester area that jointly made an application for a 2010 CLG grant to prepare and execute a training series for all preservation commissions in the region. Pittsford has been a CLG since 2005.

From the Coordinator

This issue

This issue is a new idea for the *Landmarker*. In it I'm highlighting the successful grant applications from the 2010 CLG Grant round and including information about previous projects that were facilitated by the CLG funding. We hope this information is informative for those of you have not yet submitted an application. There are many types of local preservation-oriented projects that are eligible for grants. While every year we announce a set of funding priorities, we are also always open to creative thinking in proposals. I always encourage anyone who has an idea for a grant application to contact me and/or Lorraine Weiss to discuss it. It might be something we had not thought of before, but is a serious need for your community. By sharing it, we can all learn about the possibilities for supporting local preservation.

Also, in this issue, we're starting a new feature, "Further Reading", providing information on books and other publications that may be helpful to you in your preservation responsibilities. If anyone has a publication that you have found useful, please share it, and it might be featured in an upcoming Landmarker.



Julian Adams, CLG Coordinator

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
P.O. Box 189; Waterford, NY 12188-0189
(518) 237-8643, ext, 3281

Julian.Adams@oprhp.state.ny.us Listserv: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NYSCLGS>

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2010 Certified Local Government Grant Awards

City of Albany: Historic Resources Commission and Historic Windows Brochures

The City of Albany has been awarded a grant to prepare two individual publications that will educate the owners of historic properties in Albany's historic districts. The first will be a general brochure about the purpose and functioning of the Historic Resources Commission, helping owners understand the hows and whys of the City's preservation program. This is the first update of this type of brochure since one was published in the mid 1990's, so the revision and republication is a high need for the Commission. Included will be the basics regarding historic designation, the process for making applications to the Commission, and an overview of the preservation guidelines that are used by the Commission for decision making. The second brochure will cover details about the appropriate repair, and if deemed necessary, the appropriate replacement of historic windows, always an issue in the work of any historic preservation/resources commission.

Town of Amherst: Reconnaissance Level Survey Update

This grant will enable the Town of Amherst to revisit their 1997 reconnaissance level survey, updating the existing conditions descriptions and designation eligibilities for previously surveyed properties. The project will also find and record any historic properties missed or excluded from the earlier survey. The total number of buildings covered is potentially greater than 1300, making this a massive undertaking. The final product will include a digital database so that the survey information can be incorporated into the Town's Comprehensive Plan. This new tool will be used by the Town Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Historic Preservation Commission in future land use planning and landmark designation decisions. The final survey report will also be made available on the Town's website so that the public can easily access it and learn about the Town's historic resources.

Village of Brockport: Oliver Middle School National Register Nomination

The A. D. Oliver Middle School in the Village of Brockport is a large Collegiate Gothic school building that has been a very prominent local landmark since its construction in 1934. Locally known as the "Queen of the Hill" for its scale and grand design, it is an excellent example of its style and building type highly enriched on the exterior with stained glass, sculpture, and embedded decorative plaques. Designed by Dreier and Dreier, a well known Rochester architectural firm, it continues to serve as a school building. This listing will formalize the building's status as a local landmark, and raise awareness of its historic character as an asset to the Village.

City of Binghamton: City, Citizens and Community Collaborating to Sustain Preservation

The City of Binghamton is in the midst of undertaking an ambitious effort to strengthen its historic preservation program through education, outreach, and published informational materials. The City's application states that "the goal of the education campaign is to encourage collaborative preservation efforts between the City, the community, and developers, and underscore the benefits of preservation in enhancing the economic and cultural quality of Binghamton." Products from this project will include five educational workshops targeted to specific audiences (two for homeowners, two for business owners and developers, and one for realtors), brochures on five different topics relating to local preservation, and printed copies of the City's newly revised design guidelines. This project can serve as a model for other communities seeking collaborative and creative efforts to improve the image and function of their local preservation program

City of Buffalo: Preservation Board Educational Brochure

Buffalo has a long local preservation program, with eight locally designated historic districts, yet many owners in those districts are still not aware that their property is designated. Even for those that are aware, there can be confusion on what designation means to them personally. The City of Buffalo will produce an informational brochure as part of a larger strategy to educate owners of historic properties and increase the visibility of the Buffalo Preservation Board. The goal is to ensure that knowledge about the responsibilities, opportunities, and benefits of local designation is distributed to property owners and the general public. The City plans to work with residents of the districts as well as local preservation groups to ensure that the materials are relevant and appropriate.

Town of Clarence: National Register Listing of the Town Clubhouse

The Town of Clarence Clubhouse serves as a public meeting and dining facility for the citizens of the Town of Clarence, just east of Buffalo. Unusual in that it is not a private membership club, but truly a town-wide and town-supported community center, it is regularly used by local clubs, service organizations and a wide variety of other groups. The building was originally constructed in 1911 as the “country” clubhouse for the Buffalo Automobile Club, and designed in the Arts and Crafts style by noted Buffalo architects Esenwein and Johnson. It is one of the earliest examples of an automobile-oriented club facility in the United States. The building has served as the Town clubhouse since it and the surrounding grounds were purchased by the Town in 1957. Placing the Clubhouse on the National Register will enable the Town to access grant and assistance programs, as well as raise the building’s visibility as a significant regional and state-wide historic resource.

Village of East Hampton: Historic Preservation Report

The Village Board of Trustees and the Design Review Board see the Historic Preservation Report as a valuable educational tool to increase appreciation for historic preservation in the village and to support an atmosphere that will allow the village to continue to expand its preservation efforts. Although the Village’s four local historic districts protect approximately 100 historic properties, there are approximately 250 properties listed on the State and National Registers that remain unprotected. Among these is a group of about twenty-five pre-1850 buildings scattered throughout the Village that are extremely valuable and eligible as historic landmarks. They include one of only four 17th-century houses in the Village; six 18th-century Saltbox houses; two 18th-century Cape Cod cottages; the 1791 Dominy woodworking shop and the 1801 Dominy clock shop. The Report will explain the contribution these resources make to the Village and how the loss of any one of them would diminish our heritage. Copies will be mailed to the approximately 2500 property owners in the Village and placed in public buildings, cultural sites and businesses.

Village of Hamburg: Historic Resources Educational Program

This project builds on two already completed projects for the local preservation program: the development and publication of an educational brochure about the work of the Historic Preservation Commission, and; the creation of a walking tour of the historic central business district. Continuing this progress, the Village will produce 5 sidewalk markers to be placed at historic structures in the business as well as a double sided, pole mounted marker that will be placed in historic Memorial Park. This project will raise the visibility of historic resources in Hamburg as well as the visibility of the Preservation Commission as a resource for the community.

Town of New Paltz: Historic Property Mapping Project

Building on an earlier CLG grant that identified 1775 historic properties within the Town and Village of New Paltz, the Town will receive a CLG grant to create a web-based, user-friendly interface that will make the survey information available to the public. Once the project is complete, web users will be able to locate local properties on an interactive map that will also provide narrative histories and descriptions on each specific site. This use of survey data as a powerful, easily accessible educational tool can have impacts for local preservation for years to come. An important part of the project will be the documentation of the process so that other CLGs can benefit from New Paltz's experience.

City of New Rochelle: Historic Preservation Website Design

This project will bring over 25 years of information on local historic resources and historic preservation to the citizens of New Rochelle in a manner both universally accessible as well as cost effective. The new website will include the City's preservation ordinance, design guidelines, minutes and decisions of the Historic Landmarks Review Board, previous newsletters, survey information, a history of the City, and self guided tours of historic districts. The goal is to create a web-based location for all information developed during New Rochelle's preservation efforts, making it simple for the public to access and use the accumulated knowledge of New Rochelle's historic preservation efforts.

Village of Pittsford, Village of Fairport, Village of Palmyra, City of Rochester, Village of Brockport, Town of Irondequoit: Training for Preservation Boards and Commissions

These six CLGs in the Rochester vicinity are bonding together and working with the Landmarks Society of Western New York on a preservation board and commission training program. Although focusing on the six CLGs, registration will be open to all interested persons across New York State, making this a state-wide training opportunity. Particular effort will be made to reach out to all of the 193 municipalities in the Landmark Society's service area. The ultimate goal is to educate commission members, as well as encourage other municipalities to become CLGs. The programs will consist of one all-day conference and two outreach programs, all designed to train attendees on the charge, role, and function of preservation commissions and boards. The six CLGS are working together to provide cash, in-kind services, and meeting spaces as part of the project. This project represents an excellent cooperative effort that can serve as a model for other regions of the state.

Town of Poughkeepsie: Historic Resource Survey, Phase II

The Town of Poughkeepsie is following up the success of Phase I of a Town-wide historic structures survey with a second phase that will complete the work. The first survey, assisted by a 2008 CLG grant, surveyed all historic resources in the Town constructed prior to 1850. Phase II will cover all historic resources completed after 1850, with a cut-off date of 1965. It is anticipated that approximately 500 individual properties will be surveyed, with digital photographic documentation and mapping. The information gathered will be entered into a database, with appropriate architectural and historical analysis. A report on the full survey effort will be compiled, printed and distributed for use by the Town's planning and preservation bodies. The impetus behind the survey is the rapid growth and development within Dutchess County which threatens Poughkeepsie's historic resources and their settings, and therefore the County's overall historic character.

City of Saratoga Springs: Historic Legislation Update and Public Education Outreach

The City of Saratoga Springs has greatly benefited from being an early adopter of a local historic preservation efforts (beginning in 1966), as a walk through well kept, intact historic neighborhoods and the vibrant downtown will attest. However, even the best preservation laws need updating from time to time to adapt to new ideas, new legal thinking, and new threats. Saratoga recognized that their existing law needed some revising after some close calls over the proposed demolition of several historic structures. The 2010 grant will carry forward the research and revision work begun through a 2009 CLG grant. In all the project will finalize the legislative updates, and the City, working with the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation, will undertake a series of programs to educate property owners about the revised ordinance provisions and recommended preservation practices.

Town of Saugerties, Village of Saugerties: Publications

The Town and Village of Saugerties, two independent and separate CLGs with separate preservation commissions, will collaborate to create a series of publications to complement celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the founding of Saugerties (2011). The CLG grant will assist in the creation and publication of several educational materials about the history of Saugerties as well as preservation guidance for owners of historic properties. This Town/Village coordinated work has been successful in other such “layered” municipalities in New York State.

Recently Completed CLG grant projects

Architect John Bero conducted two workshops for the **Village of Brockport** on the maintenance of older homes, attended by about 50 persons, and subsequently surveyed and assessed twenty homes for maintenance and preservation issues. He prepared detailed reports and recommendations to the Historic Preservation Board and the owners on his observations and analysis. His reports were an excellent means for the Board and the owners to obtain a better understanding of the problems and opportunities associated with preserving Brockport's inventory of older homes. Also, as a result of that program, some thirteen structures were newly designated as historic landmarks under the local ordinance. The Village Board had encouraged participation in this program by offering eligible homeowners a property tax abatement on the increased value that resulted from the work undertaken in implementing recommendations of the consulting architect.

Buffalo hosted a regional training opportunity, Commission Assistance Mentoring Program (CAMP) in October 2009. The training workshop was attended by over 30 preservation commission members from over 6 local municipalities along with other preservation professionals. The full day workshop featured three preservation educators from the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) in a full-day workshop.

The **Town of Clarence** received a grant to print a Historic Preservation brochure to promote the program and hopefully get many new residents interested in local preservation activities. The brochure will describe the local historic preservation program in Clarence and the process through which a property owner can work with the commission on designating their site as a historic structure. The brochure will be available at various locations such as the Clarence Museum, library, Chamber of Commerce, Clarence Town Hall and will also be distributed when commission members are presenting public programs.

The **Village of Great Neck Plaza** Preservation Commission held 3 training workshops for its commission members and other CLG commissions. The first workshop introducing preservation law basics was led by preservation attorney Richard Handler who reviewed the legal history and preservation case law. Topics discussed included the Penn Central v. NYC Landmarks Commission case and other cases that guide preservation law in the state today, the rights of commissions to make decisions, the role of criteria in evaluating applications, and what makes a sound decision. Simeon Bankoff, executive director of the Historic Districts Council in New York City, presented the second workshop on how to gain community support for preservation. Bankoff discussed examples where landmark designation was the result of a long-term advocacy process. He explained which organizations and elected officials offered crucial support to achieve success, how the relationship between appointed commissions and independent associations can provide crucial support for landmarking efforts, and how to create public awareness of landmark commissions and associations. One of the major topics discussed was how to create a new preservation organization where one does not exist, as is the case in GNP, and how to create a greater awareness of the commission. The final workshop, also by Richard Handler was on how to work with various agencies including the Village Board and the SHPO, how to assist property owners with various tax credit programs, how to review applications for changes and alterations, what criteria must be used in making decisions, and the rights and responsibilities of the commission.

The Village of Southampton, which is concerned with teardowns and their impact on its neighborhoods, sponsored two CLG-funded workshops in Spring, 2010. Understanding economic hardship in the context of preservation law, discouraging teardowns with innovative zoning tools, and gaining a national perspective on the teardown trend were the focus of these workshops, which drew an audience from both Suffolk and Nassau Counties. The workshops were open to members of architectural and historic review boards, planners, elected officials and others interested in preserving the integrity and setting of older homes on Long Island. Principal speakers at each workshop were Roberta Lane, Senior Program Officer and Regional Attorney for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Northeast Office; Paul Graziano, an urban planner and preservation advocate in private practice in Queens, New York; and attorney Anthony B. Tohill, who specializes in real estate, zoning, land use and municipal law. Workshop sessions and local contexts for the issue were presented by Zachary N. Studenroth, historic consultant to the Southampton Village ARB, and Erin Tobin, the Preservation League's Regional Director of Technical and Grant Programs for Eastern New York.



Featured Website

The nation-wide not-for-profit, membership funded historic preservation organization, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, helps thousands of people each month answer their preservation questions. One way they help is through their website, which has many useful links for members of the public as well as preservation commission members. The link below leads to the “Frequently Asked Questions” section of the Trust’s website, specifically the “How to Preserve Your Historic Home”. Be sure to check out the other links under the “Resources” section of the website, and be sure to pass it along to others who might be interested. www.preservationnation.org/resources/faq/historic-homes/

The Back Page...

Further Reading: This is a new feature for the Landmarker, recognizing that there exists a great deal of published material that can be useful for your local preservation work, but that it may not be available in your local bookstore. Luckily, with the internet, access to any book in print is possible with a few clicks!

This issue's recommendation is *Caring for Your Historic House*, published by the National Park Service and Heritage Preservation (Harry Abrams, New York, NY, 1998). This book compiles papers by some of the leading preservation professionals in the United States, covering all materials and aspects of a historic house, both interior and exterior. Maintenance, masonry, roofing, siding, paint, plaster, electrical systems, structure, and landscape are just a few of the subjects covered in this useful reference. Having it in your preservation library can make you the source of much needed information if a property owner or a fellow commission member has a question about historic building systems or materials. As always, knowledge is power!

The Environmental Protection Fund



The EPF program is a New York State grant program to improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate or restore properties listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places. Funds are available to municipalities or not-for-profits with an ownership interest in the resource. Over the program's existence, it has provided funding for critical work at many of New York's most significant historic buildings and sites.

One such project was the restoration of the deteriorated roof of the historic Porter Sheldon House located in Jamestown, New York (shown). The house has served as a community resource since 1970, when the Daughters of the American Revolution acquired the building. Built between ca. 1867 and substantially renovated and enlarged ca. 1880, the prevailing characteristics of the house reflect the influences of the Second Empire and Classical Revival styles, popular during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries, respectively. Architecturally significant, the house is also important for its association with Porter Sheldon, one of Jamestown's most prominent citizens, renowned for his involvement in law and politics and as the founder of the American Aristotype Company of Jamestown. The American Aristotype Company was the first major producer of improved photographic paper in the United States. George Eastman later purchased this company and the technology was used for the Eastman Kodak Company of Rochester, New York.

If you have a project that might benefit from an EPF grant, visit the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation grants web page at: <http://www.nysparks.com/grants/grant-programs.aspx> and find information about the grant program and the appropriate grants officer for your area. The EPF grants are competitive, so work closely with your grants officer to make sure your application is the best it can be.