

MINUTES

197th MEETING

NEW YORK STATE BOARD FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

December 5, 2024

**Meeting held at
New York State Museum
Albany, New York**

Virtual option for the public via WebEx webinar
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVfCldN8Teo>

The meeting was held in person at the Huxley Theater of the New York State Museum, Albany, Albany County, New York.

The following people attended the meeting (*denotes remote participation via WebEx):

SRB Members

Douglas Perrelli, Chair*
Wint Aldrich
Carol Clark
Jay DiLorenzo
Kristin Herron
Erika Krieger
Jennifer Lemak
Peter Reuben*
Gretchen Sorin*

OPRHP Staff

Melissa Baer*
Ashley Barrett
Daniel Boggs
Chris Brazee
Olivia Brazee
Beth Cumming
Erin Czernecki
Weston Davey*
Sara Evenson
Johnathan Farris
Campbell Higle
Olivia Holland
Kathy Howe
Jeff Iovannone
Bill Krattinger*
Leslie Krupa
Aine Leader-Nagy
Kathleen LaFrank
Daniel Mackay
Julie Maresco
Dan McEneny
Sara McIvor*
Theresa Moriarty
Michelle Wiegert
Lisa Petruzzelli
Kristian Price
Katherine Raymond*

Robyn Sedgwick*
Matthew Shepherd*
Mariana Montes Staines
Frances Stern*
Chelsea Towers
Christina Vagvolgyi*

Guests

Matthew Andrews, City of Rome*
Virginia Bartos*
Jeremy Boyer*
Gina DiBella*
Nina Farahanchi, NYC Housing Authority*
Christian Giardino*
Samuel Gruber*
Jesse Kling, Higgins Quasebarth & Partners*
Jennifer Lantzas, NYC Parks*
Ken Lustbader, NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project*
Max Mazzoni
Zelick Mintz*
Amanda Mills, City of Rome*
Glen Noto*
Tabitha O'Connell*
Jesse Ravage*
Anthony Robins*
Andrew Roblee, PACNY*
Linda Santoro, Heritage Consulting*
Jay Shockley, NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project*
Tom Stetz*
Kathryn Swanton*
Kristin Swanton*
Jennifer Walkowski

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Doug Perrelli at 10:35 a.m. on Thursday, December 5, 2024 taking place at the New York State Museum's Huxley Auditorium in Albany. He noted that the meeting is also being held virtually via WebEx to members of the public as well as a few board members who cannot make it in person due to the snow emergency declared by the Governor.

Board secretary Kathy Howe called the roll. The following board members were present and gave a brief summary of their role on the board:

- Douglas Perrelli: Board Chair, teaching professor at the University of Buffalo and Director of Archaeological Survey; serves as one of two archaeology positions on the board; he is also a past president of the New York Archaeological Council and Director of the Marian White Museum
- Wint Aldrich: Former Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation at State Parks; fills the position of historian on the board
- Carol Clark: Academic in historic preservation and a professor at Columbia University, Pratt Institute, and NYU
- Jay DiLorenzo: President, Preservation League of New York State
- Erika Krieger: Assistant Director for Variances at the New York State Department of State, Division of Building Standards and Codes; represents the Secretary of State
- Jennifer Lemak: Chief Curator of History at the New York State Museum; represents the Commissioner of Education
- Kristin Herron: Program Director for Design Arts and Museums; represents the New York State Council on the Arts
- Gretchen Sorin: Historian and Professor of the Cooperstown Graduate Program in Museum Studies, which is part of SUNY Oneonta
- Peter Reuben: Director of the Department of Environmental Conservation's Office of Indian Nation Affairs and DEC's Agency Preservation Officer.

Absent members: Molly Garfinkel, Wayne Goodman, and Tom Maggs.

There being nine members present, a quorum was confirmed.

Approval of Past Minutes

Doug asked board members if they had any comments or questions regarding the minutes from the September 2024 State Review Board meeting. There were none.

Motion to approve: Erika Krieger

Second: Jay DiLorenzo

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Public Officers Law and Emergency Declarations

Daniel Mackay acknowledged that Doug, Peter, and Gretchen faced some extreme weather conditions so they could not make the trip to Albany to attend the meeting in person. State disaster emergencies were declared for multiple counties in Western New

York. Daniel noted for the record that the in-person participation requirements of the Public Officers Law §103-a(2)(c) shall not apply during a state disaster emergency declared by the governor pursuant to Executive Law §28. Therefore, due to this exemption under the POL, we have authority to have board members participate remotely and be counted as part of the quorum. Though today's meeting is a hybrid meeting with videoconferencing, it is taking place in a publicly accessible location that was advertised and noticed in advance.

Case Studies of Historic Tax Credits in New York State

A presentation on the historic tax credit program was given by DHP Commercial Tax Credit Coordinator Beth Cumming and tax credit reviewers Ashley Barrett, Theresa Moriarty, and Lisa Petruzzelli. Beth gave an introduction and concluded with a sampling of multiple projects completed in 2024. Ashley gave a program overview, while Theresa presented a case study on the Queensbury Hotel and Lisa presented the work done at Preservation Hall in Saratoga Springs.

National Register Nomination Reviews

Chelsea Towers welcomed the nomination sponsors, consultants, and property owners who have worked very hard alongside our National Register and Tax Credit Part 1 staff to prepare the nominations being presented today. She noted that, since the last board meeting, the Survey and National Register staff has grown. We have recently welcomed Julie Maresco to the unit. Julie has a master's degree in public history and historic preservation from Middle Tennessee State University. Johnathan Farris has recently joined Kath's Part 1 Tax Credit team and has been assigned the Buffalo territory. He has an architectural history degree from the University of Virginia and a PhD from Cornell.

Chelsea noted that we have 14 new nominations and one additional documentation nomination. Some of the nominations are for large historic districts with the potential of adding 3,800 properties to the registers. The nominations come from 12 counties across the state recognizing significance in a wide range of areas including architecture, LGBTQ history, entertainment and recreation, social history, and ethnic heritage. Twelve of the nominations are honorary designations and three are for commercial tax credit projects. With the inclusion of today's nominations, the board has reviewed a total of 73 this year, adding thousands of properties to the National Register.

For our guests joining us remotely and who have a special interest in the nominations presented here today, you are welcome to offer comments following the presentation of your specific nomination. Each virtual attendee should have the ability to unmute themselves when it is their turn to speak.

Nomination 1: Nunda Village Historic District, Nunda, Livingston County

Sara Evenson

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Community Planning & Development

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: ca. 1831-1955

Discussion:

Kristin inquired as to the nature of the two objection letters received for the district.

Sara said that the letters were generic letters from property owners expressing concern over their property rights and the ability to manage their buildings. Wint asked about the use of the stylistic term Minimal Traditional.

Motion to approve: Wint Aldrich

Second: Kristin Herron

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 2: Wrayholm at Meadowood, Rush, Monroe County

Sara Evenson

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1912

Sara noted that we received one letter of support for the nomination.

Discussion: Wint asked what a Jack and Jill bathroom is, as it was mentioned in the nomination. Sara said that it was one bathroom accessible by two separate bedrooms. Doug asked what the central cleaning system in the house looked like. Sara explained that the house had a vacuum system where one could hook up a hose into openings in various rooms and the dust and debris would be sucked into one central basement location. While the machinery in the basement is no longer there, the original iron caps for the openings on the baseboards and some flooring remain.

Motion to approve: Erika Krieger

Second: Jennifer Lemak

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 3: First Presbyterian Church of Springport/Frontenac Historical Society & Museum, Union Springs, Cayuga County

Sara Evenson

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1840-1961

Sara noted that the research and early drafts of the nomination were prepared by Linda Albrecht and Pat Kimber of the Frontenac Historical Society. We received one letter of support.

Discussion: Wint asked if French Colonial interests reached as far south as Cayuga Lake and if that is where the Frontenac name comes from. Sara said that she was not specifically sure about the derivation of the name but there is evidence of Jesuit missionaries in this area so the French connection would not be surprising.

Motion to approve: Carol Clark

Second: Jennifer Lemak

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 4: Rome Residential Historic District, Rome, Oneida County

Erin Czernecki

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Community Planning & Development

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: ca. 1840-1970

Erin said that the nomination was sponsored by the city of Rome and written by Bero Architecture. This nomination project took about five years to come to fruition. This summer the city was hit by a tornado and that impacted the residential district. We have already been receiving homeowner tax credit applications from owners needing to do work on their homes, and there is also some interest in the commercial tax credits. This historic district has been part of Rome's rehabilitation efforts. She mentioned that the district has 139 primary buildings and 44 non-contributing and that we've only received four objection letters.

Discussion: Doug said that the district maps were very good, and they show that there is no place in the district where non-contributing parcels form a critical mass that would cause concerns.

Kristin asked if, in cases such as this district, we have to go back and edit the nomination to note houses that were damaged by the tornado. She wanted to know if we routinely go back into nominations to update them to reflect changing building conditions, especially in light of more extreme weather events. Erin said that in the case of this district, the building list in the nomination was based on the condition of buildings from the beginning of the summer, before the weather event. But, yes, there are instances, particularly with older nominations, when a nomination will get an update which may include a change to the period of significance and revisions to the annotated

building list to reflect major alterations to buildings and their contributing or non-contributing status. We recently did a major update to a district in Albany. Amendments to nominations are usually driven by the sponsor or owner(s) and may be due to tax credit projects. When we do substantial amendments and/or boundary increases to existing nominations we bring those before the board.

Kristin asked if any of the buildings in the district had been destroyed. Erin said St. Mary's Church suffered major damage when the tower fell into the roof.

Wint said that there is a library in the district that was originally the home of John B. Jervis, who was a nineteenth-century phenomenon. Jervis was a genius as an engineer designing the Croton Aqueduct, the Mohawk and Hudson River Railroad, and the Delaware and Hudson Canal. The community of Port Jervis was named in his honor. He was the driver of the financiers and civic officials who were probably, from time to time, uncertain about these tremendously ambitious projects. Wint said he is not sure why Jervis came back to Rome, but this is where his roots were. Jervis is someone worthy of remembering even today.

Motion to approve: Carol Clark

Second: Kristin Herron

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 5: Tuttle-Peck House, New Lisbon, Otsego County

Erin Czernecki

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: ca. 1800-ca. 1892

Erin noted that the nomination was written by consultant Jesse Ravage.

Discussion: Gretchen asked if there was a porch on the house. Erin said that, yes, there was a porch, but the current owners are not quite sure when the original porch was removed and replaced by the current, smaller, porch at the center entrance.

Owner Glen Noto, who joined the meeting remotely, spoke about this house that he and his wife Mary purchased about three years ago. He said that his neighbor had previously lived there, and she was well into her 90s and none of her children wanted the house. There was even talk of tearing it down because it needed so much work. He said that they were not going to allow that to happen, so they bought it and are committed to doing some of the repairs. They have already put on a new roof and done some electrical work and are scheduled to do some foundation work in the spring. Once they do this work, they will then sell the house, as they live next door in the recently listed Joseph Peck House, and they can't afford another old house. They are committed to

selling the Tuttle-Peck House to someone who will be dedicated to preserving the historical and architectural character of the home. Glen concluded by thanking the board, Erin, and especially Jesse Ravage, who is an incredibly knowledgeable, articulate, valued resource and friend.

Motion to approve: Erika Krieger

Second: Gretchen Sorin

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 6: The Little Genesee Schoolhouse/Genesee District No. 1 School, Allegany County

Dan Boggs

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Education

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1903-1931

The nomination was prepared by consultant Gina DiBella.

Discussion: none.

Motion to approve: Jay DiLorenzo

Second: Doug Perrelli

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 7: Village of Wellsville East Historic District, Wellsville, Allegany County

Dan Boggs

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Community Planning & Development

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: ca. 1850-1958

Dan noted that the district has 491 contributing primary buildings and 172 contributing secondary. We received just one letter of objection. The nomination was prepared by consultant Megan Klem of the Landmark Society of Western New York.

Discussion: Kristin inquired as to the nature of the objection letter. Dan said that the property owner listed several bullet points that reflected a general distrust of government and the listing process.

Motion to approve: Carol Clark

Second: Wint Aldrich

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 8: Westcott-University Neighborhood Historic District, Syracuse, Onondaga County

Olivia Holland

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Community Planning & Development

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1840-1945

Olivia said that the nomination was prepared by Samuel D. Gruber, Bruce G. Harvey, Andrew Roblee, Tamara Pilson, and Susan Lynch. To date, we have received two letters of objection and three letters of support including from the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board and Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh.

Discussion: Carol asked Olivia if she found anything special that stood out with this large district. Olivia said that she was surprised to learn that the development of the neighborhood was not dependent or influenced by the expansion of Syracuse University, which is adjacent to it.

Motion to approve: Carol Clark

Second: Erika Krieger

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Kath noted that she is about to receive 80 commercial tax credit applications for properties in this Syracuse district, which is exciting news.

Nomination 9: Eastchester Houses, Bronx, Bronx County

Kath LaFrank

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Politics Government; Social History

Period of Significance: 1949-1950

This is a New York City Housing Authority property that has an approved Part 1 tax credit application. We have letters of support from the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission and NYC Parks.

Discussion: Linda Santoro of Heritage Consulting thanked Kath and said that this has been a very interesting project with many layers of history.

Wint said that it is really painful to read about the performance of government – city, state, and federal – in this connection. It is really important that this painful history be

documented as it was in the nomination, and he hopes that government does better. Gretchen said that the nomination was very well done. Carol learned from reading the nomination that Wallace K. Harrison was also responsible for the Empire State Plaza, which is where we are meeting today.

Motion to approve: Carol Clark

Second: Erika Krieger

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 10: Hotel Martinique, New York, New York County

Chris Brazee

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Commerce

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1897-1910

The building was designated a local landmark in 1998 and we have received a letter of strong support from the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission. Chris said that the nomination was prepared by Higgins Quasebarth & Partners. This is a tax credit project with an approved Part 1.

Discussion: none.

Motion to approve: Wint Aldrich

Second: Carol Clark

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 11: St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church Complex, Corning, Steuben County

Chris Brazee

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Commerce

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1897-1910

The nomination was prepared by Preservation Studios. This is a tax credit project with an approved Part 1.

Discussion: Doug asked if we know what the plans are for adaptive reuse of the complex. Chris said that he believes the church building is going to be a daycare center and that the school building and the rectory behind it may be used for housing.

Wint said that he hadn't seen reference before to "Llenroc," but it is Cornell spelled backwards and, he guessed, is a proprietary treatment of bluestone that was somehow associated with Cornell University.

Motion to approve: Erika Krieger

Second: Kristin Herron

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 12: Temple Israel Reform Congregation, Staten Island, Richmond County

Campbell Hagle

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1961-1964

Campbell said that this is an honorary nomination that was prepared by consultant Anthony Robins. We received a letter of support from the Landmarks Preservation Commission and no letters of objection.

Discussion: Carol said that Samuel D. Gruber, who wrote *American Synagogues: A Century of Architecture and Jewish Community*, published by Rizzoli in 2003, was quoted in this nomination. Gruber wrote that, "Goodman . . . is one of the least-known best American architects of the 20th century. He was a technical master in design drawing and, a visionary and seeker in his quest for knowledge and understanding of the built world and human condition." Carol said that Campbell did a fine job with their presentation but she wanted to add this quote as part of our discussion today as an exclamation point.

Gretchen asked if Jewish people on Staten Island had to live in a particular neighborhood due to restrictive covenants much like African Americans who had been excluded from large parts of the island. Campbell said that they were not familiar with any exclusions that the Jewish community faced on Staten Island. Carol said that she didn't think that the Jewish population on Staten Island suffered in the same way that the Black population did.

Motion to approve: Erika Krieger

Second: Wint Aldrich

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 13: Joseph Rodman Drake Park and Enslaved People's Burial Grounds, Bronx, Bronx County

Jeff Iovannone

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Settlement; Ethnic Heritage/Black; Community Planning & Development
Periods of Significance: ca. 1720-1865 and 1904-1962

Jeff said that the nomination was sponsored by New York City Parks and Recreation and was prepared with contributions from the 2023 NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designation report. LPC, which is a CLG, is in support of the nomination.

Discussion: Doug asked for confirmation that the iron fence, shown in the image on the screen, is not around the enslaved Black people's cemetery. Jeff said that is correct. It is his understanding that part of the rationale for installing the iron fencing in 1962 was to give better indication of where the enslaved people's burial ground was located because it's directly south of the family cemetery, across the current pathway. Doug said that this is an interesting project, and he liked the fact that the local school was involved in the documentation. He commented on a footnote in this nomination that suggests that the enslaved people were moved to the larger portion of the cemetery. Jeff said that based on the available evidence and the fact that there were markers and certainly some of the burials were disturbed when the park was created in the early twentieth century, it is difficult to know the original extent of the enslaved people's burial ground. A 2016 archaeological investigation found four burials that were confirmed but we don't know how many more existed at the height of the burial ground's use.

Doug said for clarification that when we refer to archaeological investigations, we are talking about documentary research that was non-destructive and did not involve excavation; human remains were not excavated or exhumed. Jeff confirmed that that is correct. He said that it was a ground-penetrating radar study, and this is the project that involved the public school. Doug asked if it is known how much fill was brought into this site historically to regularize the grade. Doug added that the site seems flat to him, and he doesn't see evidence of much fill. He asked this question for two reasons: 1) one topographically - how deeply buried are the human remains suspected to be and, 2) when you're using ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and non-destructive prospection techniques to scan through fill there's a high probability of metal fragments and other debris being in the transported fill that's covering the site, which can result in profound disturbances to the GPR signal. GPR has to be used very cautiously and judiciously in this kind of setting, hence, his question about the depth of fill. He asked Jeff if we had any more information about the depth other than what was presented in the nomination. Jeff said he doesn't have any more specific information on that point. However, he said that research from the LPC designation report suggests that when the park was created in the early twentieth century there were significant changes to its topography.

Motion to approve: Doug Perrelli
Second: Carol Clark
Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Daniel added that in 2014 and 2017 the *New York Times* had two lengthy articles on student engagement and research at this park. He hopes that the New York Times will take a new interest in the site and the nomination. When he read the 2017 story, he saw the opportunity for National Register listing, and he is very appreciative of the job that Jeff did in bringing this forward. This is long overdue, and it would be nice to present the school with a National Register certificate and to recognize its extraordinary efforts researching the site.

Nomination 14: Lavender Hill Commune, Newfield, Tompkins County

Jeff Iovannone

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Social History/LGBTQ

B: Literature

Criteria Consideration: G

Period of Significance: 1973-1988

Jeff said that he prepared this honorary nomination working with colleague Dr. Stephen Vider, Associate Professor of History at Bryn Mawr College. The nomination was edited by Kath LaFrank. We received seven letters of support.

Discussion: Jeff read written remarks from two members of Lavender Hill starting with David Hirsch who is the current owner of the main house. In his December 5, 2024, letter Hirsch wrote, *"Lavender Hill is now and has been my home for decades. My feelings for this spot are infused with the history of the place, and while those don't occupy my daily thoughts, they are a vital part of my presence here. I'm proud to be with my partner John Campione, the current caretakers, of all who have lived here and helped create the reality of Lavender Hill. It's a joy to see the seasons and growth of the surrounding gardens and woods. How exciting to have the uniqueness of our community time here acknowledged as a part of history of that era."*

Jeff next read Yvonne Fischer's letter of December 5, 2024. Yvonne wrote, *"Lavender Hill changed my life profoundly. My experience over the years made me who I am. Coming from an immigrant family with a Holocaust background, I always felt like an outsider when I was growing up in Flushing, Queens, NY. I never fit in, and I was terribly shy. Meeting the people of the commune and living together at Lavender Hill allowed me to feel that I had really found my family. We had so much love and acceptance, all of us outsiders who came together to, literally, build a house and build a life together. We combined simple living in nature, justice, fairness, deep equality, feminism, and respect with exuberance, theatrical gay sensibility, fun, pleasure, humor, and community. What an amazing way to live! I never would have known how much deep satisfaction and purpose could infuse my life and my relationships. Because of Lavender Hill, I went on to become a psychotherapist to help others find their authentic selves and their own joys and passions and purpose in*

life. I am forever grateful and in love with this group of people, my family still, Lavender Hill."

Mitchell Karp, who was participating in today's meeting via WebEx, spoke about his experiences at Lavender Hill. Mitchell began by saying that he came to the commune as the *other* Mitchell, not Larry Mitchell, the author. He was part of the younger generation at Lavender Hill. Having listened to the last few presentations he said that the concept of space [at Lavender Hill] is not just a physical space but land as a canvas; as a place for sculpture, for architecture, for gardening, for interactive theater. When he thinks about Lavender Hill he thinks about three things: caring, connection, and creativity. In today's time of polarization, we often forget what a radical concept it was to create community, to create this sense of caring, and to embrace across differences. It was a magnet for people in town, it was not isolated. It was a place where people felt that it was a haven. In the nomination, he told the story of somebody saying, "oh, you're going to hippie haven" and he thinks that it is very hard today to put Lavender Hill into context. For him, the legacy and the lasting impact of Lavender Hill is that it was a place of hopefulness. For so many people in the queer communities and other marginalized communities, it's easy to feel hopeless so the legacy of Lavender Hill is that it is a landmark for all of us to stay hopeful. He can't say enough wonderful things about the experience of Lavender Hill and how it has not only touched our lives but touched so many lives of the people in the Ithaca, Tompkins County, area. He said it has been a pleasure to have an opportunity to share some of this today.

Kristin praised both the thoughtful, detailed nomination and all the sentiments that have been expressed today. She added that she is a Moosewood fan, but she had no idea of its connection to Lavender Hill. There are images of Lavender Hill in the cookbook, but she was not aware, until this nomination, of that connection.

Wint asked if the property continues to be used by anyone other than Mr. Hirsch. He was curious if, for example, reunions are held there. Jeff responded that David Hirsch owns the main (south) parcel where the main house and outbuildings are located. The eight-acre parcel to the north, which contains the family burial plot, is collectively owned by all living members of the group. Even though David lives on that main parcel individually and the group is not living there communally, so it wouldn't technically meet the academic definition of a commune, they all still consider themselves family and the land continues to be a gathering space. They had their 50th anniversary celebration at Lavender Hill in 2023 and they still have Thanksgiving and holidays together so they very much function like a family unit.

Motion to approve: Kristin Herron

Second: Jennifer Lemak

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Nomination 15: Ausable Club Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation, St. Huberts, Essex County

Leslie Krupa

Criteria/Areas of Significance:

A: Entertainment and Recreation

C: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1885-1964

Leslie noted that this proposal has the full support of all current owners and that we have received no letters of objection. This is an honorary nomination sponsored by the Adirondack Mountain Reserve (AMR) and the Ausable Club. The nomination was prepared by Norm Hetrick. She also thanked Dr. Richard Longstreth for his involvement in the research.

Discussion: Wint said that he knows the property quite well and was very surprised that conservation as an area of significance is not included. He stressed that the buildings, apart from the original hotel, would not be here today were it not for the commitment of those people who acquired the 25,000 acres from the lumber company to protect the property. This is one of the first and most dramatic examples of private land conservation in the area of the State Forest Preserve. He understands that we're celebrating the built environment, but there would be no surviving buildings if these individuals weren't committed to the tenants of wilderness protection and wilderness recreational enjoyment in that part of the Adirondacks. The acquisition was a great landmark act by the members of the Adirondack Mountain Reserve. He added that the second part of this story is that they ran short of funds. The buildings were in rather poor shape by the 60s and 70s, as the nomination indicates, and the people of the State of New York came to their rescue. In the mid-1970s the Environmental Conservation Department, managing the 1972 Environmental Quality Bond Act, had funds to acquire lands to add to the State Forest Preserve and, eventually, established conservation easements in connection with that; it wasn't limited to fee acquisition. About 1977 an arrangement was made for the state to acquire a portion of the highest elevation lands of the Adirondack Mountain Reserve; this included the upper elevations of Noonmark Mountain and other mountains. This provided the funds for the building restoration work that is described in the nomination. The state became a partner in the preservation of these buildings and the continuation of public and private enjoyment of these lands. Wint said that he had the privilege of being one of many people, including his former boss, Peter Burley, then Environmental Conservation Commissioner, who climbed Noonmark Mountain where they signed the deed of conveyance that conveyed that portion of the acreage that freed up public funds to carry out the restoration and the continuing management. He remembers the event well and what they were celebrating was the commitment of these people 75 years earlier to this part of the Adirondacks. He believes that private conservation of natural resources is very much a part of this place and should be a part of the nomination.

Leslie thanked Wint for his comments and addressed some of his points. She said that the area of Conservation wasn't adequately covered in the original nomination; there was not a specific section on that history, as the nomination primarily covered the built history rather than the development of the AMR. As such, we took that as a lead on this revision and did not feel that conservation pertained to the addition of these specific structures. That being said, she feels that it may be justified to have future amendments to this listing simply for those reasons.

She added that Wint's mention of the easement is absolutely important to the site, but that history falls outside of the period of significance allowed by the National Register. You'll see that the period of significance only goes to 1964 because that's when the last building was constructed so, while this more recent history is wonderful, it didn't fit in with the period of significance and the purpose of this specific nomination.

Wint thanked Leslie and understood what she was saying. Doug then asked if what Leslie was saying is that because conservation wasn't well supported in the original nomination it was therefore not included in the amendment. Leslie said, no, the reasoning was that the focus of this nomination amendment was specifically on adding the cottages, which we didn't feel pertained directly to the conservation history of the AMR. She said that the trails and physical landscape would be more pertinent to conservation, which was not the goal of this boundary expansion.

Doug was glad that Wint brought up the conservation history and added that he was surprised about the removal of social history as well. Doug then asked Wint if Blake and Colvin were two of the High Peaks that would have been given to New York State as part of the transactions that he described. Wint said that he doesn't remember the names other than Noonmark Mountain, but they were all the higher elevations surrounding the Ausable Valley which were owned by the AMR. Wint thought that the membership was reluctant to part with anything, which was admirable after 75 years of ownership, but they were suffering financially, so there had to be some sort of a compromise, and it was with the highest elevations and public access to those trails which had been developed by the private individuals in the club. There was a good deal of compromise and a good deal of negotiation.

Leslie thanked Doug for his comments about the removal of social history. She said that the reasoning behind that is we didn't feel like there was justification under the National Park Service definition of social history whereas we did feel that the entertainment and recreation focus was more appropriate within the context of the added buildings.

Motion to approve: Carol Clark

Second: Kristin Herron

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Recommended 9 in favor, 0 opposed

Deputy Commissioner's Report

Daniel Mackay

Daniel thanked Doug, Peter, and Gretchen for their remote participation in the meeting, noting that we had some flexibility in achieving a quorum today due to the snow emergency declaration by the Governor. As a reminder, these quarterly meetings feed several processes including federal and state rehabilitation tax credit reviews and grant projects. These nominations take a great deal of work to publicly notice. We are required to provide public notice to municipalities and other local contacts on a 30- or 60-day basis depending on if a CLG is involved. If we had had to cancel the meeting, we would have had to re-notify all property owners, including those in large districts, which is an extraordinary lift for our staff.

Daniel gave updates on the following commissions:

- Erie Canal Bicentennial (2025):

The commission held its third meeting in mid-November. It is chaired by Canal Corporation Director Brian Stratton and First Gentleman William Hochul. NYS Parks, ESD, and DOS are represented on the commission, as is the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. A statewide celebration for the Erie Canal Bicentennial is in the planning stages including events on the Hudson River and in NYC. The World Canal Conference is coming to Buffalo in September 2025.

- Rev War Semiquincentennial (250):

The commission recently held its second meeting, split between two sites: Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, NY, and the Schomburg Center in Harlem. The commission is co-chaired by SED and NYS Parks. The most recent meeting had several presentations regarding the 1777 Clinton Sullivan campaign. The strategic plan for the commission has been in development and is being refined through a commission subcommittee for presentation for potential approval at the March 2025 commission meeting. That meeting will be held at Philipse Manor Hall SHS in Yonkers.

- NYS Capital Restoration Commission:

The commission is being re-established and re-appointed after a hiatus since 2018 and OPRHP is represented. It hosted an initial on-boarding meeting in mid-November and will meet formally in early 2025.

- African American Heritage Commission:

Established by the Governor in 2022, this commission released its report in June 2024. It is chaired by NYS DOS. DHP staff is working closely with DOS on implementation strategies for report recommendations. He will be able to share more details in 2025.

- 2027 Enslavement to Freedom Commemoration:

NYS Parks will be the catalyst for a statewide commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the first enslaved men arriving in New Netherlands in 1627 and the end of enslavement in New York in 1827. The program will inform activities at the NYS Archives and the NYS Museum, but it will be centered within the NYS Park system, our collections, and our site-based and traveling exhibitions. Site exhibits include supplemental exhibits at Philipse Manor Hall, Lorenzo State Historic Site, and John Brown Farm State Historic Site.

OPRHP Building Code Unit: Peebles Island will be hosting newly hired OPRHP Capital Program staff assigned to code enforcement and design reviews. We are pleased that this will provide for easy access and close collaboration between our respective disciplines. Joint training opportunities have already been undertaken and our hope is that the Codes team will present a detailed orientation of their responsibilities to our historic site managers and support teams once their unit is fully staffed in early 2025.

Daniel noted that we have the following pending grant applications:

- National Maritime Heritage Grant – 2025 round
- Semiquincentennial Grant – 2025 round
- African American Civil Rights Grant – 2025 round

Commissioner Search: The agency's expectation is that an Acting Commissioner will be named by the Governor later this month. Commissioner Pro-Tempore Randy Simons is in the pool of finalists.

DHP Staffing: Daniel said that he expects to have a fuller staffing report in March as we are going to have additional new people to introduce. Staffing levels at the Division are at the highest level with over 100 staff at the SHPO and Bureau of Historic Sites. This record-high staffing level is the result of support from the Human Resources staff at Parks, executive staff, and the Commissioner.

In the spring we'll know more about the state budget as well as the federal budget.

New Business

The board approved the following meeting dates for 2025: March 12, June 11, September 10, December 3.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Erika and seconded by Wint. The motion was carried by unanimous consent and the meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by board secretary Kathy Howe.