

# The Advocate

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Over 55 people participated in the August walking tour of the five sites of the 1850 Cazenovia Convention. Here, Carl Stearns describes the visible and hidden Federal architectural features of the Johnson House Tavern where Frederick Douglass and Gerrit Smith stayed during the Convention.

## Protecting Our Past, Preserving Our Future

With a summer of hurricanes, fires, and floods around the country and world, let's talk about climate change.

Wait – climate change in a preservation newsletter? Yes. The intersectional issues of preservation and climate change became apparent 15-20 years ago, but are still often overlooked. Back in 2007, the President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation highlighted how preservation can contribute to furthering sustainability and combatting climate change. How? First, some facts:

Buildings contribute 39% of annual carbon emissions (aka “greenhouse gas” emissions) worldwide, more than industry or transportation. There are about 125 million buildings in the U.S. About 50 million are over 50 years old.<sup>1</sup>

Buildings’ contribution to carbon emissions is due to both the operation of buildings – *operational emissions*, such as heating, lighting, etc. -- and *embodied emissions*, those incurred in the production, assembly, and transportation of materials (ex., concrete), finishes, and site improvements for a new building.

Even for a new building that is 30% more energy efficient than a comparable existing building, it can take 10-80 years to overcome the negative climate impacts incurred when an existing structure is replaced.<sup>2</sup> Placing solar panels on a new replacement building is a positive step, and indeed, it is better than nothing; but the “greenest” building is one that is already built. (continued on page 2)

## ***Protecting Our Past, Preserving Our Future*** (continued from page 1)

The protection of what is called our “built environment,” our “built heritage,” is a key mitigation against climate change. As stewards of older buildings, we preservationists are well positioned to help reduce carbon emissions and mitigate climate action through conservation, retrofitting, and re-use of buildings.

Tear-downs and demolitions are a climate issue. Filled dumpsters vs re-use of salvageable materials is a climate issue. Repair vs replacement is a climate issue. And, not surprising, they have long been preservation issues. While we may never feel comfortable talking about “avoided carbon” or CO<sub>2</sub> metric tons, certainly we can help others to grasp these fundamentals.

*Protecting Our Past, Preserving Our Future* is more than just our tagline. It’s essential to the future of climate.

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<sup>1</sup> Preservation Buffalo Niagara, “Preservation Priorities Task Force, Sustainability & Climate,” Fall 2021, accessed via [www.pbnsaves.org](http://www.pbnsaves.org) 27 Sep 2021

<sup>2</sup> “The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse,” National Trust Green Lab 2011, accessed via [www.forum.savingplaces.org](http://www.forum.savingplaces.org) 30 Sep 2021

## **High, Medium, or Lower Priority? What Are Your Preservation Concerns and Priorities?**

Over the past six months, we’ve received numerous ideas from you as to what you would like us to focus on – not unsurprising, since all of you care about how to make Cazenovia better – but more ideas than we can take on all at once. And, there are other topics out there that likely have not been forwarded to us. We’ve decided to put the question to you, our constituents. On **Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Library**, a public meeting will be held for you to identify issues and concerns, and the work you would like us to facilitate in the upcoming years.

Some of the topics received affect only the Town and others, only the Village, and others affect both. Here is a sampling, just to get your thinking going:

- Lack of upkeep, exterior maintenance of Albany Street commercial buildings
- Random placement/proliferation of signs along streets and roads (ex., traffic related, tourism sites, churches, no parking, etc.)
- Protection of National Register Properties in Town and Village from demolition
- Environmental pollution to historic structures due to increased traffic on neighborhood streets
- Expansion of Village Historic district/creation of new districts, in the Village and/or Town
- Gothic Cottage renovation
- Implementation of Historic Preservation Law for the Town
- Stronger architectural review process, both Village and Town

After reviewing your concerns and ideas, we’ll ask you if the topic has a high, medium, or lower priority. Based on the results, Cazenovia Heritage will then create teams in 2022 of the top 3-5 issues. These teams would be comprised of residents, government officials, and property owners that would work to identify, analyze, propose, and execute recommendations. The full list of prioritized topics will be published in the winter newsletter.

**So, we want to hear from you!** If you can’t make the meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>, or if you are too shy to speak up (really?), you can go to the “Contact” tab on our website to submit your idea for review at the meeting:

[www.cazheritage.org](http://www.cazheritage.org)

### **Recognizing Our Charter Members**

In this first year of operation, Charter Members are allowing us to jump-start our ability to implement our mission. **Hats Off** and **Many Thanks** to the following Charter Memberships processed July 1 through September 30th!

Eric Beyer  
Bobbi and Bob Constable  
Sharon Cooney  
Marion Hancock Fish and Michael Fish  
Susie and Russ Grills  
Muffy and Baird Hansen  
Michaela and Aaron Hugo  
Katharine and Richard Lorr  
Karen and Richard Lounsbury  
Cherry and Bob Ridler  
Vanessa and Michael Roets  
Pringle Symmonds  
Christopher Terrell

Those signing up during October – December will be listed in the Winter newsletter. Charter Memberships will continue to be accepted through May 2022.



### **Gothic Cottage Renovations – Update**

Last April, this newsletter published an opinion piece that called the potential Town plan for renovations of the Gothic Cottage incompatible with preservation standards and requiring unnecessary destruction of the interiors and cost.



The feedback from many of you were for staying in the Gothic Cottage, some opting for no or minimal changes, others wanted whatever changes were necessary to

ensure the offices remained there. Still others proposed moving to or building another municipal office to avoid interior damages, while others offered everything in between. The Town’s own analysis of this has been going on for ten years. That’s not a typo. Ten years.

To break this log jam, Cazenovia Heritage chose to act as a facilitator, to re-open the feasibility of staying at the current location versus requirements, and to address the concerns and objections to the proposed plan. The result is what we view as a winning compromise: a plan that keeps the Town Offices at the Gothic Cottage but minimizes interior demolition; removes high intensity uses from historically sensitive areas; provides for adaptive re-use; and adds a large public meeting room.

This compromise plan better meets the requirements, while ensuring that this iconic building endures not just for the next 20 years, but for future generations. It is a

compromise plan that Cazenovia Heritage can say it heartily endorses and hopes that the Town will view favorably.

Detailed elevations and architectural drawings, currently under development, will be published in a special edition of *The Advocate* later this month. We look forward to your feedback.

## One We're Watching

“For rent: 2 bedroom apartment in a historic Village home, quiet neighborhood, near schools and shopping center.” That’s an advertisement that would be a welcome sight in Cazenovia, providing affordable housing for young adults, families, or settled seniors. Instead, several months ago, a big red X and “Order to Vacate” were placed on the building.



Located at the intersection of Williams and Farnham Streets, the building is a well-known anchor for that corner. The main entrance at left is a fine example of the Greek Revival period in Cazenovia. The property went to auction in September for lack of tax payments and may now have been sold. Whether it can be rehabilitated or will be demolished is yet to be known.

Once again, it begs the questions as to how it was allowed to reach such a state of disrepair and how inaction has led to it becoming a potential victim of demolition-by-neglect. We hope demolition is not the case and that the new owner will want to rehabilitate this asset for the neighborhood and community.



## Coming Soon on October 13th!

### Bob Corby to Speak on Preservation and Community Planning

Bob Corby, former Mayor of the Village of Pittsford NY, will present his perspectives on “Historic Preservation, a Tool for Community Planning and Development” on **Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>**, at **7:00 PM** at the **Cazenovia Public Library**.

In 1993, when Mr. Corby began his first of five terms, Pittsford faced the pressures and challenges common to many upstate rural communities: farmlands succumbing to suburban residential development and sprawl, and economic competition from big box retailers and nearby shopping malls. Rather than giving in to these trends, Pittsford became a model of the proper use of planning and design to reverse these trends.

Come learn how Pittsford did it, and how we can learn from them. And don't forget your favorite mask!