



CITY OF ITHACA

108 E. Green St. — Third Floor Ithaca, NY 14850-5690

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, BUILDING, ZONING, & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Division of Planning & Economic Development

Telephone: Planning & Development – 607-274-6550

Community Development/IURA – 607-274-6559

E-Mail: dgrunder@cityofithaca.org

ITHACA LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION (ILPC)

NOTICE OF MEETING & AGENDA

The regular monthly meeting of the ITHACA LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 16, 2021. City Hall remains closed to the public. This meeting will be conducted remotely via the online platform Zoom, pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 202.1. A live stream is available at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7RtjN1P_RFaFW2IVCnTrDg.

Scheduled Public Hearings

There are two options to participate in a public hearing:

1. Submit comments by email no later than 4 p.m. on the day of the meeting (contacts below), and they will be read into the record. Each comment is limited to three minutes. Indicate in your email that the comment is for a public hearing.
2. To speak at the meeting, sign up and receive instructions through the contact(s) listed below.

General Public Comments

Send written comments to the contact(s) listed below. All comments received will be forwarded to the ILPC for their consideration. Written comments received well in advance of the meeting give the Commission time to fully consider them. A minimum of 15 minutes will be allotted at the beginning of the meeting to read comments, if needed. Please indicate if you would like your comments read into the record. Each comment is limited to three minutes. The Chair will make an effort to read as many comments as time permits.

All comments and questions can be emailed to Anya Harris at aharris@cityofithaca.org or Bryan McCracken at bmccracken@cityofithaca.org or call (607) 274-6550.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- None

II. PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS OF INTEREST

III. NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion: City and Town of Ithaca Historic Preservation Collaboration [*Rod Howe, Town Supervisor, and Sue Ritter, Director of Planning, to attend.*]

IV. OLD BUSINESS

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 12/15/20
- 01/19/21

V. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- Review: 2020 Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission Annual Report

ACCESSING ONLINE MEETING MATERIALS:

Online meeting materials, like applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness and supporting materials, are available electronically via the "Document Center" on the City web site (www.cityofithaca.org/DocumentCenter), under "Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission" > "Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness" and in the relevant address folder. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or you need any assistance accessing the meeting materials.

If you have a disability and would like specific accommodation in order to participate, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 274-6570 by 12:00 p.m., no later than 2 days (not including weekends and holidays) before the meeting.

- Zoning Appeal Advisory Review: 222 South Geneva Street, Henry St. John Historic District
[Materials distributed under separate cover.]
- Board Elections: Chair and Vice Chair
- Announcement: 2021 New York Statewide Historic Preservation Conference

VII. ADJOURNMENT



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MEMORANDUM

From: Bryan McCracken, Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner
To: Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission
Date: February 10, 2021
Subject: City and Town Historic Preservation Program

The purpose of this memo is to provide information on a collaborative City/Town historic preservation initiative currently in development. Adopted in 2014, the Town of Ithaca's Comprehensive Plan established a goal to "preserve, enhance and promote [their] historic resources" and recommended creating a historic preservation program to help achieve it. In pursuit of this goal, the Town of Ithaca contacted the City's Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner for information on the City's historic preservation program and guidance on creating their own. These conversations led to the idea of establishing a shared City/Town historic preservation program that might include reciprocal landmarks ordinances, a combined City and Town of Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission, and joint staffing.

The Town of Ithaca is committed to exploring this opportunity for intermunicipal collaboration and has allocated funds in their 2021 Municipal Budget to help assess its feasibility. The budgeted funds will reimburse the City for the time spent by its Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner on investigating the appropriateness and practicality of a shared historic preservation program. Should both the City and Town find this type of shared service mutually beneficial, the Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner would also be responsible for its implementation.

Anticipated work to be completed by the Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner includes the following:

- exploratory research related to the establishment of a historic preservation program in the Town and the creation of a combined Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission;
- evaluation of the Town's existing survey of historic resources and preparation of recommendations for their protection;
- draft revisions to Landmarks Preservation Commission Ordinance (Chapter 73 of the City of Ithaca Municipal Code) that address the Town's interests in historic preservation and the establishment of an expanded, combined City and Town of Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission;
- draft revisions to the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 228 of the City of Ithaca Municipal Code) that address specific considerations associated with the identification and preservation of historic resources in the Town;
- coordinate the review and approval of the above referenced codes by the New York State Office of Historic Preservation pursuant to the requirements of the Certified Local Government agreement; and
- coordinate City and Town review and adoption of the above referenced codes by the end of 2021.

As an important first step in exploring this opportunity, the Town Supervisor, Rod Howe, Town Director of Planning, Sue Ritter, and City staff would like to discuss in detail the project with the members of the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission. Supervisor Howe, Director Ritter and staff will provide a summary of the research completed to date, including two potential structures for the shared historic preservation program, and the Commission will have the opportunity to provide invaluable guidance and insights as well as voice concerns. The Commission will remain involved throughout the planning and implementation process and a subcommittee of the ILPC that includes members of the Town will be formed to help guide in this effort.



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To: Svante Myrick, Mayor and Members of Common Council
From: Bryan McCracken, Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner
Re.: 2020 Annual Report of the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission
Date: January 26, 2021

As required by §73-6 of the City Municipal Code, I am pleased to submit the following report concerning the activities of the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission (ILPC) for the period January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020. A brief note about staffing: The Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission was staffed by Senior Planner Megan Wilson while Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner Bryan McCracken was furloughed from May through August.

DESIGN REVIEW

During the reporting period, the ILPC held eleven regular meetings, one special meeting, and three site visits. The Commission heard 18 cases requesting Certificates of Appropriateness for exterior alterations to locally designated historic properties. The Commission approved 16 of these applications and denied two. This represents an 89% approval rate for applications reviewed by the Commission during the reporting period.

In addition to the applications reviewed by the Commission, staff administratively reviewed and approved 34 projects at locally designated properties. Staff level reviews included in-kind roof replacements, masonry repairs, door and siding replacements, and exterior mechanical equipment installations. **In total, the ILPC or its staff approved 50, or 96%, of the 52 projects reviewed during the reporting period.** The number of projects reviewed by Commission and its staff decreased by 37% during the reporting period, a result of the on-going global pandemic.

The ILPC and staff also conducted advisory reviews of several development projects adjacent to historic districts or impacting individual buildings with historic or architectural value. Projects reviewed include:

- **137-39 E State St, Harold Square** – As a condition of the project's site plan approval, the exterior rehabilitation of the historic Sage Block was reviewed and approved by the ILPC. Specific components approved include window restorations and replacements, metal cornice replacement, brick repair, and the storefront design. The Sage Block is listed as a contributing resource in the National Register-listed Ithaca Downtown Historic District.
- **430 W. State St.** – The ILPC reviewed the proposed redevelopment of the former Mama Goose building site and submitted comments to the Planning and Development Board supporting the reuse and incorporation of the mid-19th century building into the overall design for the site. 430 W. State St. was identified as a "Historic Resource Worthy for Further Research" in a reconnaissance-level survey of the State Street corridor.
- **600 Thurston Ave, Balch Hall** – As requested by the Planning and Development Board, ILPC staff reviewed the proposed exterior rehabilitation plan for Balch Hall, a recognized but undesignated historic resource on the Cornell University campus. Staff provided specific recommendations on the

selection of replacement windows to ensure the aesthetic value of this architectural element is retained.

- Cascadilla Boathouse Rehabilitation** – In early 2020, staff reviewed proposals and gave guidance on the selection of a design professional for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)-funded exterior rehabilitation project at the Cascadilla Boathouse. Later in the year, staff reviewed drawings and specifications prepared by selected design professional, Bero Architecture. The rehabilitation project should be completed during the 2021 building season. The Cascadilla Boathouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES OR THE “ITHACA LAW” (444A-2)

In 1997, the City of Ithaca became the first New York State community to adopt a tax abatement program for historic properties. In brief, the program provides a ten-year window of tax relief (City and County, only) on the increase in assessed value resulting from the substantial rehabilitation of or investment in a structure.

There were 10 properties enrolled in this program in 2020. See the table below for information on the property tax savings for the individual property owners and the total public investment in historic preservation from this program.

Address	Year Enrolled	Cost of Rehab	Assessment Increase	Property Tax Savings in 2020 (City and County only)	Property Tax Savings Since Enrollment (City and County only)
210 Kelvin Pl	2018	\$685,493	\$280,000	\$5,058.35	\$15,390.84
126 Kelvin Pl	2018	\$94,900	\$10,000	\$180.66	\$549.67
410 University Ave	2017	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$1,445.24	\$5,895.60
420 E State St	2014	\$185,837	\$60,000	\$650.36	\$7,244.32
416 E State St	2018	\$500,000	\$275,000	\$4,968.02	\$15,116.01
408 E State St	2014	\$700,000	\$970,000	\$10,514.13	\$117,116.43
310 E State St	2020	\$1,057,179	\$385,000	\$6,955.23	\$6,955.23
201 W Clinton	2015	\$125,000	\$35,000	\$505.83	\$3,793.13
226 S Geneva St	2015	\$9,182	\$9,000	\$130.07	\$975.38
110 Titus Ave	2016		\$85,000	\$1,535.57	\$7,850.95
Total Public Investment in Projects				\$31,943.46	\$180,887.56

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- Unseen Ithaca: 2 Fountain Place Tour:** In March 2020, staff volunteered as a docent for an open house sponsored by Historic Ithaca at 2 Fountain Place in the East Hill Historic District. Completed in 1893 and designed by noted Ithaca architect William Henry Miller, this grand Romanesque Revival residence was built for, Ithaca business owner and Cornell Trustee George R. Williams (1843-1907) and Ellen Douglass Boardman Williams (1847-1944). It served as the home of the Ithaca College

President for many decades and was converted into a bed and breakfast in 2021. During the event, staff guided tours of the property while discussing the architectural and historic significance of the resource.

- **2020 New York Statewide Historic Preservation Conference:** At the virtual 2020 New York Statewide Historic Preservation Commission, staff co-presented a session titled *Aspirational Cities: The Good, Bad and Ugly* with staff from Historic Ithaca and Saratoga Springs Preservation. The session explored and compared the histories of historic preservation in Ithaca and Saratoga Springs, each communities' early and recent advocacy and rehabilitation successes, and the challenges associated with balancing historic preservation with rapid economic and physical growth. The session was attended by over 90 conference participants.

HISTORIC RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

During the fall semester, staff worked with Cornell University students enrolled in the graduate-level Fieldwork in Historic Preservation class to survey 24 potentially historic properties in the South Hill neighborhood. Students examined the architecture and historic significance of each property and presented their findings to city staff, Historic Ithaca staff and members of the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation in late December. The completed Historic Structure Inventory forms will be an invaluable resource for future neighborhood planning efforts on South Hill.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Adopted in 2014, the Town of Ithaca's Comprehensive Plan established a goal to "preserve, enhance and promote [their] historic resources" and recommended creating a historic preservation program to help achieve it. In pursuit of this goal, the Town of Ithaca approached City staff in late 2019 and early 2020 for information on the City's historic preservation program and guidance on creating their own. This led to the development of a partnership between the City and Town that may result a shared historic preservation services program. The Town committed resources in their 2021 Municipal Budget to fund the time spent by the City's Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Planner on investigating the appropriateness and practicality of this shared service. Following the execution of the Memorandum of Agreement between the City and Town, staff will begin work on this project in early 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan McCracken
Secretary, Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission