

PRESERVE STATEN ISLAND

February 1, 2006 ~ Newsletter of the Preservation League of Staten Island

NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE OLD HOUSE



1 Pendleton Place, a 2005 winner

What's your favorite old house on Staten Island? Have you admired an elegant, historically accurate facelift on your walks around town? Or have you been curious about a tattered but proud survivor from the 1800s? Now is the time to make your appreciation known.

Nominate your favorites for the 2006 Preservation Awards Program. The Preservation League of Staten Island honors the great historic structures and sites that are Staten Island's legacy and true identity, as well as those who have dedicated themselves to saving this heritage.

Awards are given for:

- Restoration of an historic building or site. We honor people who have preserved their houses intact, year after year, simply because they love them. In doing so, these people give more to all of us and to future generations.
- A structure that is important because it is an early house, even if it has been altered. We wish to recognize and appreciate these structures, which express our heritage and are often endangered. It is important they be seen, honored, and saved.

We also give special awards to individuals who have dedicated themselves to saving, restoring, and respecting our great past.

Please send your nominations to Preservation League of Staten Island, 54 Port Richmond Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10302, or to esken2@aol.com. Include an address or location, the reasons for your nomination, and as much information about the owners or stewards as possible.

Spring Lectures

All talks start at 7:30 p.m. and are held at Historic Richmond Town in the Courthouse. Suggested donation is \$3; members free. Refreshments included.

Identifying Staten Island Architectural Styles: Friday, February 17



Kathleen Taylor will discuss several styles of architecture popular on Staten Island during its development as New York's most suburban borough.

Kathleen Taylor, a resident of the North Shore and an urban planner, has researched historic districts and architectural styles throughout the borough.

Landmarking the W.S. Pendleton House: Friday, March 17

Edwin Calderon will talk about the evolution of his newly landmarked house, the W.S. Pendleton House.

Edwin, a physician assistant certified as an HIV specialist and a medical practitioner for the past 17 years, collects and restores antiques and studies Victorian interiors.



Preservation Initiatives by Our Legislators

Preservation means good neighborhoods, beautiful surroundings, economic well-being, and respect for those who came before us and those who come after us. By supporting preservation legislation, we can save our island and our legacy.

New York City Council

These bills, introduced but not voted on in 2005, must be reintroduced in 2006.

Councilman McMahon (Staten Island), Intro. 317, amending Chapter 3, title 25, of the Administrative Code: This is the "Demolition Delay" or Historic Buildings Preservation Bill. The bill gives the Landmarks Commission a chance to see if a building fifty years old or older should be landmarked before builders can demolish it.

Councilman Avella (Queens), Intro. 679: When downzoning has been voted for by City Planning but not yet by the City Council, this bill stops demolition of buildings that could be destroyed under the old zoning. It addresses the problem of builders rushing to knock down old houses and put in new foundations before the new zoning takes effect.

Avella, Intro. 15, amending Section 26-103 of the Administrative Code: This bill would allow the Building Department to enforce restrictive covenants.

Avella, Intro. 170: This bill reforms the Board of Standards and Appeals, which often goes against communities, especially outside Manhattan. The bill allows the Borough Presidents, the Public Advocate, and City Comptroller to make appointments to the board and lets the City Council review land-use decisions.

Councilman Perkins (Manhattan), Intro. 705: Perkins, due to term limits, is no longer on the City Council, so this bill needs a

new sponsor. The bill would let the City Council mandate landmark hearings for all sites that are either eligible for or already on the State Register of Historic Places.

New York State Legislature

A bill by Assemblyman John Lavelle, which must be reintroduced in 2006, would remove the license of any architect who has submitted plans in violation of the law three or more times.

Send Letters!

The Preservation League of NY State has asked us to support the state's Neighborhood Reinvestment Act (2005: A.8252/S.3794-A).

The proposed legislation would provide a 15 to 25 percent state income-tax credit for some rehabilitation expenses for owner occupied residential structures listed on the National Register or locally landmarked, especially in economically distressed neighborhoods. The maximum tax credit would be \$50,000.

Support this bill by contacting your state representatives (please CC preservesi@aol.com if you use email):

Assembly, District 60
Honorable Matthew Mirones
34 Dumont Ave., Staten Island NY 10305
Phone: 718-667-5891
mironem@assembly.state.ny.us

Assembly, District 61
Honorable John W. Lavelle
114 Central Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301
Phone: (718) 442-9932
lavellj@assembly.state.ny.us

Assembly, District 62
Honorable Vincent Ignizio
4345 Hylan Blvd., SI, NY 10312
Phone: 718-967-5194
igniziv@assembly.state.ny.us

Assembly, District 63
Honorable Michael J. Cusick
1911 Richmond Ave., SI, NY 10314
Phone: 718-370-1384
cusickm@assembly.state.ny.us

Senate, District 23
Honorable Diane J. Savino
36 Richmond Ter., 1st Fl., SI, NY 10301
Phone: 718-727-9406
savino@senate.state.ny.us

Senate, District 24
Honorable John Marchi
358 St. Marks Pl., SI, NY 10301
Phone: (718) 447-1723
marchi@senate.state.ny.us

United States Congress

The House of Representatives passed a bill that would prevent any state from receiving federal funds if that state allowed property to be seized using eminent domain for the benefit of private developers.

The Underground Railroad houses (circa 1849) on Duffield St. in Brooklyn would be protected by this law. However, the Senate has yet to hear or vote on this bill.

—Linda Eskenas

New Grants for Tottenville Survey

The Staten Island Bank and Trust Foundation has awarded the Preservation League \$10,000 and the New York City Council approved an allocation of \$5,000 for a survey of historic architecture on Staten Island.

The survey will identify and record buildings of historical and architectural importance and present this information to the community.

The initial focus will be Tottenville. Channell Graham, executive director, will coordinate the project with the Tottenville Historical Society. Barnett Shepherd, local historian and founding president, will be the principal investigator. The work will start immediately.

Expect to hear more in our next newsletter.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Join the Preservation League

I would like to make a special appeal for you to consider joining the Preservation League.

PLSI is the only islandwide organization on Staten Island that seeks to preserve and stabilize our historic neighborhoods and towns.

We have incredibly active volunteers who attend meetings of the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission and advocate for the preservation and landmarking of Staten Island's significant built environment.

Preservation advocacy alone should be reason enough to get you to join the League, but there are other advantages to membership.

We will have interesting members-only events this year, as we did in 2005, including lectures, walks, and this interesting newsletter, of course. (This newsletter was mailed to more people than usual to reach lapsed members and find new ones. To receive further issues, you will want become a member.)

There will also be a fabulous members-only fundraiser coming up in the spring.

Consider Joining Our Board

We are looking for some new members for the PLSI Board of Directors who have a sincere belief in our mission and would like to contribute their time and efforts to an exciting organization.

We have eleven regular board meetings a year. These meetings are always lively, exciting experiences that deal with preservation issues and practice on Staten Island. They are never dull or overly reactive to current circumstances. The PLSI board has always been a creative pro-active group where all members speak and offer ideas.

If you become a board member, we would expect you to attend meetings and participate in one of the PLSI committees such as Landmarking, Events or Fundraising. Unlike other corporate or non-profit organizations, our board member donation is a small \$100.

If you are interested in board membership, please contact George Bramwell, chair of the Membership Committee at his email, george9337@yahoo.com.

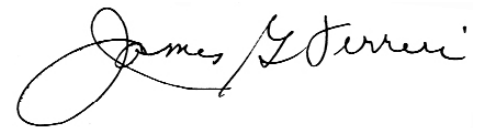
Selected new members will be appointed at the PLSI annual meeting in April.

Include PLSI in Your Will

An estate donation to the Preservation League of Staten Island could make a major contribution to the future quality of life in this borough. It has happened in other cities like Seattle and Dallas, where individuals donated their houses, money and land to the preservation organization.

PLSI has played an important role in the development of Staten Island in the past 29 years and we have the potential to play an even greater role in the future. Preservation of the historic built environment is no small matter. It is one of the yardsticks that planners use in determining the livable quality of a city.

Your estate can make a difference in Staten Island's future. We can help with the estate planning. If you are interested, give me a call and we can discuss it further: 718-720-4946.



Changes at the National Lighthouse Museum



Administration Building on the Lighthouse Museum site

The NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has taken bids to sell off the landmarked administration building and the two adjacent buildings at the site of the National Lighthouse Museum (NLM), next to the Ferry Terminal.

The bids, taken in mid-December, included a provision that allowed the bidder to provide development funding for the NLM using pass-through tax credits.

The tax credits could provide the financing to finally establish the long awaited museum on Staten Island. The museum would occupy the two buildings (numbers 10 & 11), located a right angles to the three to be sold under the bid proposal. No mention in the bid form was made of the vaults, which are a major feature of the historic site. EDC has not released any information about the bids.

Mark Your Calendar

April 2, PLSI Annual Meeting. At the Reformed Church on Staten Island starting at 3:00p.m. The church is at 54 Port Richmond Avenue, just off Richmond Terrace. The public is welcome to attend this free event.

This year's featured speaker will be Kathleen Howe, Historic Preservation Specialist with the NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Ms. Howe works with property owners and citizens in the five boroughs of New York City who want to list properties on the State and National Register.

According to PLSI President Jim Ferreri, "Kathy Howe must have one of the more interesting positions in historic preservation. On Staten Island, her projects include the Reformed Church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Grotto in Rosebank,



Kathleen Howe

and the Calvary Presbyterian Church." Other NYC projects include the Lower East Side Historic District, which tells the story of immigration in America; Bohemian Hall, a Czech-American social hall and beer garden in Queens; 65 subway stations in celebration of

the 100th anniversary of the NYC Subway; the TWA Terminal; and the World Trade Center site.

In addition to a slide presentation on her projects, Ms. Howe will discuss the application process for State and National listing on the National Register of Historic Places. We promise an interesting and informative afternoon. Please come!

April 21, Spring Lecture: Edward J. Sargent, Architect.

At Historic Richmond Town, Courthouse, 7:30 p.m.

Dean Sonnenberg, board member and associate designer for Vera Wang, talks about the work of architect Edward J. Sargent.

May 14, Annual PLSI Preservation Awards. Location to be announced.

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