2016 ‘The Fort Schuyler Club’

Spotlight on a Landmark- by Michael Lehman, AIA

2016 LSGU “Sixteen to Save” List

Most Urgent Preservation Opportunities

The Landmarks Society of Greater Utica defines endangered buildings as being at risk of loss from deterioration, neglect, collapse, demolition or development pressure.

The list does not include every historic at-risk building or site. It identifies 13 buildings and three sites that combine importance with the most pressing need for preservation.

NRHP = Listed on National Register of Historic Places (date listed)
S&HP = Located in Utica Scenic & Historic Preservation District, guidelines apply
NS&HP = Not in Utica Scenic & Historic Preservation District

1. Three townhouses, (c.1850s) 400-444 Lafayette St. NS&HP

Three of only a handful of examples of mid-nineteen century residential buildings remaining in the city. In its heyday, Lafayette Street was lined with many stately homes like these. These buildings are the last evidence of their existence.

2. Utica Turn Verein Hall, (c.1868) 509 Lafayette St. NS&HP

This clubhouse served Utica’s vibrant German immigrant population from 1868-1919 as a social, recreational and athletic club. While there are a few Turner Halls remaining in other US cities, those that have been successfully reused. They stand as an enduring testimony to the contribution of German-Americans to our American story.

3. Witzenberger Building, (c. 1870s) Columbia St near State St. NS&HP

This elaborate Romanesque style commercial building with its prominent gable, mansard roof, dormers, decorative brick work and rusticated stone trim is the last remaining example of its type once common in downtown Utica.

4. Cathedral Church of the Theotokos of Great Grace (c.1870-72) 1101 Howard Ave. at South St. NS&HP NRHP 2008
Former Calvary Episcopal Church designed by English architect Thomas Birt. *The building is currently for sale.*

5. **Warehouse (c. 1880s)** 417-421 Main St. *S & HP*

One of the last remaining examples of meat storage warehouses along with 7-9 First St. This Romanesque style building, which also appeared on the LSGU 2002 list of buildings worth saving, has been left standing alone on a block where all other buildings have been lost. When the REA wing of Union Station is renovated, this structure is in danger of being targeted for demolition to create a parking lot.

6. **Hotel Utica Parking Garage** (c. 1922) Oriskany St. W. at Washington *S & HP*

This last remaining example of an early 20th century urban parking structure is threatened by *plans for demolition* by the new hotel owner.

7. **Mather Bank Building/Daw’s Drugs** (c.1860s) Genesee at Bleecker Sts. *S & HP*

Currently Metro PCS store has undergone several non-conforming renovations despite its highly visible location at the Busy Corner in Utica’s Scenic & Historic District
This is one of the oldest remaining commercial buildings in the CBD. Utica architect Jacob Agne was president of the Mather Bank.

8. **New Century Club** 253 Genesee St. (c.1826/1897) *S&HP, NRHP 1985*

Greek revival townhouse (c. 1826) residence and office of a Dr. Palmer and 1897 auditorium addition designed by prominent Utica architect Frederick H. Gouge, FAIA. This building was home for a progressive 1893 women’s civic, educational, and recreational organization which advocated for youth and the youth justice system. Sale is currently pending. New Century clubhouses in other cities have been successfully repurposed for a variety of uses.

9. **Yates Mansion/Knights of Columbus Clubhouse** (1863-67) 307 Genesee St.*S&HP*

This Second Empire style residence was designed by upstate NY architect Azel J. Lathrop for clothing manufacturer Charles Yates and the auditorium/gymnasium addition by Utica architect Edward Berg in 1917. *The building is currently for sale.*
10. **Rutger/Steuben Park Historic District** (1820-1880s) S&HP NRHP 1973

Deteriorating structures and non-conforming renovations threaten the integrity and cohesiveness of this neighborhood and its National Register status. (ex: 1016 Miller St)

11. **St. Francis de Sales Church** (1888) and **Rectory** (1889), 127 Eagle St. NS&HP

Both buildings are the work of F.H. Gouge FAIA, One of only two churches left of nine that Gouge designed in the Utica area. The church has been stripped of its stain glass windows and interior decorations, which were sold by the current owners. Local community leaders have suggested repurposing of the two buildings for use by Hope House.

12. **Genesee St/ Parkway intersection corridor** (c.1908)–S & HP, NRHP 2008

This intersection adjacent to Utica Parks & Parkway Historic District Two recent demolitions by neglect – the Ivy Cottage and 1604 Genesee St.-have compromised the integrity of the neighborhood. 1606 Genesee St (McCormick House) is also threatened with demolition by neglect and development pressure from adjacent Hertritge Health Care for a parking lot. Should it be lost, three of the four corners of this major intersection will be compromise The Olmsted Brothers’ vision for this residential landscaped Parkway thoroughfare. The fourth corner with houses 1701 & 1703 Genesee Street, designed by Utica architect Linn Kinne, is located in auto overlay zone which would allow uses and renovations inconsistent with the goals of the S & HP district.

13. **Uptown Theater** (1927) 2014 Genesee St S&HP

One of the last remaining neighborhood theaters in Utica. Designed by local architects Albert H. Jennison and Herbert D. Rushmer for the Kallet Corp it originally contained 1,500 seats. *A foreclosure sale is set for October 2016.*

14. **NYS Barge Canal /Mohawk River scenic corridor** (c.1908) NS&HP

The recent Leland Ave. proposed concrete/asphalt plant controversy highlights the need to rethink the use of this area. Uses consistent with Utica’s
sustainable Master Plan and the recent National Register of Historic Places designation of the Barge Canal state-wide should be encouraged.

15. **1793 House** (c. 1793) Hamilton College, Clinton, NY NS&HP

This small frame building was used by the fledging Hamilton-Oneida Academy, precursor of Hamilton College. The future of this building is uncertain due to a change in college administration.

16. **Thomas H. Cackett House** (c.1850) 46 Oxford Road, New Hartford NS&HP

This large frame residence served twice as a private school- Mrs. James Boarding School c. 1863 and the Overlook School for Young ladies. It was also the residence of New Hartford mayor Ellis Morris from 1920-1936.

**Conclusion**

Greater Utica has a proud history. Local residents and events played an important part in the development of New York State and the Nation. Like many cities throughout the East, while reinventing ourselves we are investigating how that past can also be a key to a brighter future. Long term investment in the preservation of our irreplaceable landmarks, which give Utica its unique identify and an authenticy of place, with play a critical role in the rebirth of our residential and commercial neighborhoods and the growth of our local economy.
Utica Turn Verein Hall
417-421 Main St. Warehouse

St. Francis de Sales Church & Rectory
Three townhouses 440-444 Lafayette St.

Rutger/Steuben Park HD 1016 Miller St
Mather Bank Bldg. (Daw’s Drugs)
Cackett House, 46 Oxford Road, New Hartford

Witzenberger Bldg., Columbia St.