Dear Friend of the Conservancy:

The New York Landmarks Conservancy joined in the citywide celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the City's Landmarks Law this year. Ironically, while panels, exhibitions and award celebrations hailed the Law's achievements and contributions, significant threats to preservation emerged.

The Conservancy contributed to the celebrations with a panel at the Morgan Library in May that decided New York has room for both preservation and development. Later that month, our Sacred Sites Open House Weekend brought some 3,000 people into historic houses of worship.

Our Chairman's Luncheon honored the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for restoring and incorporating the historic Corbin Building into the new Fulton Transit Center in Lower Manhattan. We also honored architect Robert A.M. Stern for his leadership on issues ranging from designating more modern buildings, to protecting the landmark Four Seasons Restaurant from inappropriate alterations, and for his encyclopedic series of books on one hundred years of the City's architecture. In December, we held a dinner honoring former early board member James Wolfensohn for his key role in the Conservancy's first project: finding a new use for the former U.S. Custom House on Bowling Green.

On the other hand, it took a concerted effort by Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, the Conservancy, and our colleague groups, to convince the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) not to toss out 95 buildings and sites the Commission had let linger on the books without a decision. LPC listened, holding hearings on all 95, and the Conservancy testified on each one. LPC will announce which of these they will designate early next year.

The Mayor proposed a citywide upzoning that would spend forty years of community planning and hard earned height limits, to allow taller buildings in contextual districts throughout the City. These districts often overlap with historic districts, which could also face out of scale development. While the administration linked this to "affordability" there was no requirement that affordable units be built and no accounting of currently affordable units that could be lost. We consistently testified against the scheme.

The City did succeed in upzoning Vanderbilt Avenue, across from Grand Central Terminal, and getting approval for a mammoth 1,500' foot new tower at Vanderbilt and 42nd Street. It will replace a lovely Warren and Wetmore designed building that complemented the Terminal. The Yale Club and Roosevelt Hotel, both distinguished buildings on Vanderbilt Avenue, could now be threatened.

The Conservancy was part of a group tasked with zoning and other recommendations for a larger portion of Midtown East. While the group asked the Landmarks Commission to move ahead with designating buildings in the area, LPC did not. The final recommendations also allow taller buildings in return for transit improvements. This will lessen the impact of a recommendation that all landmarks within the study area be allowed to transfer air rights. And landmark buildings will have to turn over a portion of any air right sale to the City.

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The City Council proposed a bill that would set time limits on LPC deliberations and prevent any building LPC did not landmark from being considered again for five years. The Conservancy did not oppose reasonable time limits but argued against the five-year moratorium. The Council postponed action on the bill. We responded to the sponsors' requests for input and hope to continue discussions when the bill is brought back.

While public policy issues dominated the year, our financial and technical programs continued to assist property owners. We loaned and granted more than $1.9 million for restoration projects.

One big lesson of the year is that, while we think the benefits of preservation are obvious, we have to continue to make the case. The Conservancy hired PlaceEconomics in Washington, D.C. to do a first-ever comprehensive look at the many areas where preservation has helped New York's economy, tourism, and quality of life. We’ll promote the results next year.

Peg Breen, President
Speaking Out for Preservation

“In an ever-changing city, we constantly need to fight to preserve our unique architectural and cultural history. That’s why the New York Landmarks Conservancy has been so critical in our efforts to preserve both buildings and districts that animate that heritage. The results of your thoughtful advocacy are spread throughout New York City, and in every historic building and neighborhood that has been preserved for future generations.”

- City Council Member Daniel R. Garodnick

PUBLIC POLICY - As we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Landmarks Law and the remarkable achievements of preservation, we were also vigilant in safeguarding the Law and New York’s outstanding architecture from a series of proposals, originating in the public and private sectors, which would diminish our heritage. The Conservancy delved into the intersection of preservation, planning, and politics, where threats to our finest buildings were more ambiguous than that of a wrecking ball, but just as dangerous. We worked to improve proposed zoning changes that would have encouraged a generation of demolitions, and pushed back against legislation that would confine the Landmarks Preservation Commission’s (LPC) activities for the next half-century. We held the LPC accountable for its “backlog” of sites that deserved a public hearing, and commented on proposals before the agency that would chip away at the integrity of historic districts. At every step of the way, our advocacy was informed by the support of New Yorkers, who added their voices to the fight that we all share: protecting and preserving the City’s landmarks.

South Street Seaport

Since our earliest days, the Conservancy has had a special role in the evolution of the Seaport. Our first Chair, Brendan Gill, supported the founding of the Seaport Museum and the designation of the Historic District, and we have testified in public many times on alterations to buildings within the District.

The Seaport is composed of about 120 buildings that date back to the early nineteenth century and of piers that were the wellspring of commerce essential to New York’s history. It is a low-scale oasis built on a human scale that connects us to our past. At its heart is the South Street Seaport Museum, housed in its historic buildings, and with a collection of both artifacts and historic vessels that are the City’s last link to the commercial maritime history that fueled New York’s economic success.

In 2015, a plan to transform this historic enclave into a bland shopping center pierced by a luxury condo high-rise raised concerns among Conservancy board and staff. Board member Stuart Siegel convened a special Task Force of the Public Policy Committee to focus on a development plan comprised of a tower that would have overshadowed the District, the installation of some 70 units of affordable housing within the 1830s Schermerhorn Row buildings, and a reduction of the Museum.

The Task Force met several times, convening South Street Seaport shareholders and initiating a public exchange with the City and the developer, seeking to understand the complicated series of leases that govern the District and the Seaport Museum, and how that relationship would affect the future of the Seaport.

The Conservancy also testified in public twice on Seaport issues. At a Community Board meeting, we questioned whether the developer appreciated the unique qualities of the Seaport, and asked again for a full accounting of its plans. At a Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) hearing we testified against the demolition of the Link Building and Head House Building at the western end of Pier 17, the retail center that is supposed to be the economic engine of the District. While these buildings are not from the Seaport’s period of significance, their design was approved by the LPC to complement more historic structures. Their removal would create a location to move the historic Tin Building, before plans for its redevelopment were complete. The Commission approved the demolitions.

Following heavy pressure from advocates and a lack of support from elected officials, the developer decided to abandon the tower, but the future of the Seaport is by no means assured. The character of the historic buildings, and the South Street Seaport Museum are a natural magnet to attract New Yorkers and tourists, and they must be strengthened to ensure the area’s future economic viability. In 2016, the Conservancy will be monitoring plans for the Tin Building and continuing to support the Museum.

Limits on Landmarks

The Conservancy testified at a City Council hearing on a bill which would set time limits on Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) designations. The legislation would require LPC to vote on individual landmarks within one year of proposing them and give two years for historic districts. The bill would also prevent the agency from bringing back items for five years if it missed that deadline. While the Conservancy was not against deadlines, we requested that:

- The proposed deadlines of one year for designating individual landmarks and two years for historic districts should be extended by at least a year.
- Exceptions for unforeseen events should be included.
- The five-year moratorium on reconsidering items that have not been completed by the deadline be abandoned. The moratorium would prevent the LPC from fulfilling its core mission, and along with the deadlines, could be used to delay designation and allow ample time for demolition.

At the hearing, Council Member David Greenfield, who chairs the Land Use Committee, indicated that, based on input from advocates and electors, there would be some changes to the bill, including some exceptions to the deadlines and a reduced moratorium. The Conservancy will be working with the Council and LPC to amend the bill in 2016.
Zoning for Quality and Affordability and Mandatory Inclusionary Housing

The Conservancy was a critical voice against these two City-wide zoning proposals, which the Mayor and Department of City Planning rolled out in tandem. Zoning for Quality and Affordability (ZQA) would change the building envelope parameters in the dozens of contextual districts found in all boroughs. It would increase heights, and in some cases, increase floor area ratios (FAR), which determine building bulk. These changes would take place despite the years of work that residents, elected officials, and City Planning staff put into creating and passing the contextual districts. The stated goal of the plan is increased affordable housing, but the plan provides no such guarantees.

Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) would create a framework that would apply in future rezonings, requiring affordable housing in new developments. While increased affordable housing is a laudable and necessary goal, the framework created income requirements that would render many apartments unavailable to current residents. The plan ensures that affordable housing will only be achieved at the cost of enormous new market-rate housing development, which will change neighborhood scale and context.

We spoke out against the plans at a Department of City Planning scoping session, and at hearings of the Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and the City Planning Commission. We questioned why these two plans are receiving less than full seven-month Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) that the full seven-month Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) that could be lost to demolition. At both hearings, we questioned why these two plans are receiving less than

The City Council is expected to hear these proposals in early 2016.

Midtown East.

Plans for Midtown East rezoning continued in two phases: Vanderbilt Avenue and the larger area. The Conservancy’s Public Policy Committee met several times to view plans for One Vanderbilt, a tower approximately 1,500 feet tall, set to go up across the street from Grand Central Terminal. The Committee found the tower’s glass-clad, asymmetrical base to be inharmonious with its landmark neighbor. Regarding the proposal to upzone the full stretch of Vanderbilt, they raised concerns about other properties which the Conservancy believes are landmark worthy, including the Yale Club, 52 Vanderbilt, and the Roosevelt Hotel.

We testified on the Vanderbilt Avenue proposal at the Community Board, City Planning Commission and at the City Council, which approved the proposal. At the final vote, local Council Member Daniel Garodnick requested that the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) consider designation of landmark-quality buildings along Vanderbilt Avenue and across Midtown East.

The East Midtown Steering Committee met throughout 2015 to consider zoning changes for the larger area. The Conservancy went into this process with two goals: the designation of several landmarks and enhanced protections for historic buildings. The first goal received the endorsement of the Steering Committee and its co-chairs, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Council Member Garodnick, who have pressed the LPC to vote on the five buildings calendared in 2013, and to act on any other additional sites.

The plan to require developers to purchase rights from landmarks will provide financial support for their owners and should create an incentive for owners of buildings under consideration for designation. The recommendations are complex, but essentially set a formula where sites are awarded the potential for additional development based on several criteria, including proximity to transportation or location on an avenue, then the owners can obtain the floor area ratio (FAR) in exchange for completing MTA-approved transit improvements or by purchasing them directly from landmarks owners.

The East Midtown Steering Committee released its final recommendations in October. They included a call for the LPC to “calendar and designate as landmarks as many historic resources as it deems appropriate and do so no later than the certification date of the rezoning of Greater Midtown.” In addition to the protections that designation would offer, it is critical for the City Planning Department to know how many development rights will be available from landmarks as it finalizes the plan. LPC has indicated that it will act, but has not given a timeline for designation.

The Department of City Planning is expected to release a rezoning proposal based on the recommendations in 2016.
Riverside Drive – West End Avenue Historic District Extension II

The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the final stretch of West End Avenue in June, but only after carving out nearly 10% of the district as originally proposed. The agency removed more than twenty buildings along Broadway, and took out some side streets altogether. We welcomed the completion of an initiative to unite all of West End Avenue under landmark protection, but found that the process was deeply flawed. While it is not unusual for the LPC to change boundaries, there was little prior notice or detailed explanation as to why a large number of buildings were suddenly excluded, and there was no opportunity for public testimony. The Conservancy had testified on this designation, which received overwhelming political and public support when it was first heard in 2011. At that time, the real estate board of New York specifically asked that Broadway be excluded. This vote rebuked the lengthy and detailed work of the agency’s own staff, who researched and recommended the original boundaries and then worked with building owners in a series of community meetings and one-on-one for years. The Commission also ignored a long list of elected officials who asked that those boundaries remain intact, including U.S. Congressmen Jerry Nadler, New York State Assembly Members Daniel O’Donnell and Linda Rosenthal, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and local Council Member Helen Rosenthal.

Conservancy staff supported the designation of the Corbin Building (11 John Street) as an individual landmark. In the aftermath of 9/11, the Conservancy, along with colleague organizations, formed the Lower Manhattan Emergency Preservation Fund. The Fund distributed grants for restoration work, participated in the Section 106 process that saved the Survivor’s Staircase at Ground Zero, and commissioned a survey of Lower Manhattan’s historic resources. Among the many historic structures threatened with demolition, the Corbin Building was one of the finest. We undertook an advocacy campaign, successfully nominated it for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and brought in engineers to assess its structural stability and determine that it could be adapted for reuse as part of the Fulton Transit Center. This building merits designation for both its history and its exemplary architecture. The 1889 “skyscraper” was the first tall office building by Francis Hatch Kimball, architect of a series of major structures in Lower Manhattan. As the National Register for Historic Places nomination notes, Corbin “was designed as an artistic statement, with high quality materials on the street façades and exceptional ornamental highlighting.” The brownstone and brick façades feature elements derived from the French Second Empire style of early 19th-century France. Kimball, who was a pioneer in the use of architectural terra cotta, deployed it exceptionally well here at fine arches, belt courses, cornices and parapets, all festooned with richly textured figurative and geometric decor. The LPC voted to designate Corbin.

In June the Conservancy staff testified on two individual landmarks in Brooklyn, which the Commission heard in 2013, but then convened a second round of hearings. As previously, we supported designation of the Henry and Susan McDonald House (129 Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn). Built in 1853-54, it is an excellent example of a freestanding Italianate wood frame house with Greek Revival detail. While buildings such as this were not uncommon on Clinton Avenue and in this section of Brooklyn, they are more typical south of Myrtle Avenue. This building is fortunate to retain much of its historic fabric, including the projected bracketed eaves and full porch. The House is a contributing building to the Wallabout National Register Historic District, and paired with a neighboring land- mark, the Greek Revival 1836 Lefaffre-Laidlaw House (136 Clinton Avenue,) it creates a fascinating window into pre-Civil War history of Brooklyn, and deserves landmark designation.

We also spoke in support of designating the Renken Dairy Building (580 and 582-84 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn) for a second time. The 1892 Renken Dairy Building is a fine example of the commercial Modern style on a thoroughfare where 19th century architecture and new construction are more typical. The Dairy Building’s intact light brick façade contrasts with darker brick horizontal bands, which contribute the streamlined quality of Moderne. Details include a historic entrance with original lettering and signage on the side façade. Along with a nearby garage building that still bears the Renken name, the Dairy is a charming reminder of an earlier period for this section of Brooklyn. The Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to designate both buildings.

The Conservancy supported designation of the Stonewall Inn as an individual landmark. The Stonewall Inn was the birthplace of the Stonewall Rebellion and a site critical to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) history. The building, while already included within the Greenwich Village Historic District, deserves an additional layer of recognition, as the District designation preceded the significant historic events at the Stonewall, which are not included in the designation report. Individual landmark status will ensure that features of the building associated with the era of the Stonewall Rebellion will receive protection from the Landmarks Preservation Commission, especially if there are future applications for substantial alteration. The Conservancy applauded this designation and hoped that it would be the first of many recognizing milestones in LGBT history and in other recent cultural movements significant to New Yorkers.

Conservancy staff supported designation of the Mount Morris Park Historic District Extension. Twenty years ago the Conservancy retained Andrew Dolkart to produce the successful nomination to extend the boundaries of the Mount Morris Park National Register district. Decades have gone by, but the core of the extension remains much the same. As stated in the nomination, it features “a significant concentration of architecturally distinguished nineteenth and early twentieth century residential design …” The six blocks of the extension still feature intact streetscapes composed of these buildings. Many are exceptionally fine examples of Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, and Neo-Renaissance row houses, with original scale, massing, materials, and decorative elements. While the majority of the National Register extension is included in this proposal, we regretted that several blocks, including most of the north side of 122nd and all of 124th streets were excluded. The loss of buildings on these and nearby blocks has only sharpened the need to designate the extension, so that the Commission can provide owners there with the same protection and guidance demonstrated in the original district. The Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the extension in September.

Speaking Out on Issues

Throughout 2015, proposals for alterations to individual landmarks and new construction within historic districts came before the Conservancy’s Public Policy Committee and staff, who reviewed these plans, leading to statements at public agencies. These statements reflect the Conservancy’s position that there is room for preservation and growth across the City. The Conservancy testified in support of a proposal to restore the lobby of the Time Life Building, an interior landmark at 1271 Avenue of the Americas. The Public Policy Committee deemed that this proposal to re- place the terrazzo floor and glass tile ceiling to match the original fabric, removal of walls, relocation of an entrance, and removal and installation of furniture and security equipment would improve the overall appearance of the lobby, by removing cluttered furniture and equipment that had been installed in a piecemeal fashion, and replacing the floor and ceiling material to match the original, without the patches and seams that had accreted over many years. The Commission approved this application.
We had a mixed response to a proposal to restore and alter 378 West End Avenue and to replace the neighboring existing building at 260 West 78th Street with new construction. Both buildings are in the West End Collegiate Historic District Extension. They are adjacent to the 1892 individual landmark West End Collegiate Church, which owns and is developing both properties. We supported the restoration work at 378 WEA and suggested that a visible two-story rooftop addition be reduced to maintain the consistency of visible flat roofs that is a hallmark of the District. We do not oppose demolition of the existing 1967 building along 78th Street, and found some aspects of the proposal, such as lovely decorative elements at the windows and a materials palette, to be very compatible with the neighboring Church; however, we found the height, scale, and massing to be problematic, as the highly-visible south-facing facade would tower over and nearly abut West End Collegiate. We called for a more appropriate building for this location, which would be lower and somewhat simpler, maintaining the existing footprint, with a similar awning separating it from the Church. The Landmarks Preservation Commission approved the application.

We did not support the plan to construct a glass rooftop addition at Union Square’s Tammany Hall. We found the proposal for a 30-foot glass dome would necessitate removing intact historic fabric at the original slate roof. The new dome would be highly visible from many vantage points and would treat the landmark as its base, altering the proportions of this classical structure. The Landmarks Preservation Commission approved a modified version of this proposal.

We raised concerns regarding a proposal to alter the plaza and base of 28 Liberty Street (Former One Chase Manhattan Plaza-Madison). Skidmore Owings, and Merrill returned to their 1964 landmark to craft a plan that would have inserted glass panels all along the recessed black granite base and raised corners of the flat 2-1/2 acre plaza. We were concerned that the glass, along with anticipated signage and lighting for the retail use, would create a visual cacophony. Instead, we asked the Landmarks Preservation Commission to work with the architects to find a more consistent treatment for the base and reconsider the raised elevations at the plaza in order to align with the original design intent. The Commission approved a modified version of this proposal.

We supported an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 118 West 76th Street, a house that had been featured on the Conservancy’s website as part of our Endangered Buildings List, which chronicles buildings that faced threats such as neglect or abandonment, despite landmark designation. Of all the buildings across the five boroughs, this is the one that inspired the most phone calls and emails, from the neighbors and from potential homebuyers or investors, all assured that a beautiful landmarked building was in such deteriorated condition. We commended those neighbors for their continued interest and thanked Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and her staff, for helping bring the sale to fruition, so the building could be stabilized and restored, and once again make a positive contribution to its neighborhood. The Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to approve the application for a rooftop addition and alterations to the rear facade.

The Public Policy Committee objected to a plan for a 3-story addition at 1143 Fifth Avenue, a seven-story building in the Carriage Hill Historic District. The architect of the 1923 redbrick building was J.E.R. Carpenter, who designed it in a neo-Federal style. We found that the addition would be out-of-scale and would render the historic building merely as a base, and that it was clearly inappropriate in terms of scale, proportion, and placement. The Landmarks Preservation Commission directed the architects to come back with a new proposal.

The Conservancy joined our preservation colleagues and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer in presenting a plan to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to address its list of “backlog” sites. These were the nearly 100 buildings and districts that the Commission had placed on its calendar but never took a vote, some going back to the 1960s. Late in 2014, LPC had proposed simply removing all 100 in an administrative action, without a hearing or a vote on the merits. Following a strong backlash, the agency reconsidered, and eventually outlined a process that closely followed what the advocates had suggested: a series of special hearings, organized by borough, with every site getting its day in public.

The Conservancy was one of the few organizations that testified on all of the sites at the four hearings in October and November. We testified on the following, and supported most; opposition is noted in the list, which is organized in the order of the LPC hearings held (borough, then community district). The LPC has stated that it will make its list of priorities for designation public in early 2016 and vote on those priority sites by the end of next year.

BRONX
1. Immaculate Conception Church, 378 East 151st Street
2. 85 Schofield Street
3. Samuel O. Babcock House, 5525 Independence Avenue
4. 6 Ploughman’s Bush Building
5. First Presbyterian Church, 730-736 East 225th Street

BROOKLYN
1. 183-195 Broadway Building, 183-195 Broadway
2. Williamsburg Trust Co. Building (Ukrainian Church in Exile/Holy Trinity Cathedral), 177 South 5th Street
3. St. Barbara’s Roman Catholic Church, 138 Bleeker Street
4. St. Augustine’s Roman Catholic Church and Rectory, 130 6th Avenue (49 Sterling Place)
5. Lady Moody-Van Sicklen House, 27 Gravesend Neck Road
6. Green-Wood Cemetery, 500 25th Street
7. Coney Island Pumping Station, 2301 Neptune Ave

QUEENS
1. Old Calvary Cemetery Gatehouse, Gale & Greenpoint Avenues
2. Fairway Apartments, 76-09 34th Avenue
3. Spanish Towers (10 buildings), Jackson Heights
4. Lydia Ann Bell and J. Williams Ahles House, 39-26 213th Street
5. Pepsi Cola Sign, Long Island City
6. First Reformed Church and Sunday School of College Point, 118-09 14th Avenue
7. Bohave Street Community Church, 38-01 Bowene Street
8. Douglaston Historic District Extension

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STATEN ISLAND
1. Sailor's Snug Harbor Historic District
2. Curtis House, 234 Bard Avenue
3. Muller House, 200 Clinton Avenue
4. Woodbrook (The Jonathan Goodhue House), 304 Prospect Avenue
5. Garner Mansion, 355 Bard Avenue
6. St. Mary's Church, Rectory and Parish Hall, 347 Davis Avenue
7. St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church and Rectory, 1107 Bay Street
8. St. John's P.E. Rectory, 1331 Bay Street
9. Cunard Hall, Wagner College, 631 Howard Avenue
10. Sunny Brae House, 27 Colonial Court
11. 92 Harrison Street House
12. School District #3 Building, 4108 Victory Boulevard
13. Nicholas Killmeyer Store and Residence, 4321 Arthur Kill Road
14. Lakeman House, 2286 Richmond Road
15. Fountain Family Graveyard, Richmond and Clove Roads
16. Richmond County Country Club, 135 Flagg Place
17. Vanderbilt Mausoleum, Moravian Cemetery, 2205 Richmond Rd
18. St. Paul's M.E. Church, 7558 Amboy Road
19. 3833 Amboy Road
20. 6136 Amboy Road
21. 5466 Arthur Kill Road House
22. 122 Androvette Street House
23. Dorothy Day Historic Site, 457 Poillon Avenue
24. Brougham Cottage, 4746 Amboy Road
25. Prince's Bay Lighthouse and Keeper's House

MANHATTAN
1. 57 Sullivan Street
2. 2 Oliver Street
3. IRT Powerhouse, 11th Avenue at West 58th & 59th Streets
5. Excelsior Power Company Building, 33-43 Gold St.
6. 143 Chambers Street Building
7. 315 Broadway

9. 138 Second Avenue
10. Hotel Renaissance/Columbia Club, 4 West 43rd Street
11. Osborne Apartment Building Interior, 205 West 57th Street
12. Empire Theater, 236-242 West 42nd Street
13. Union Square Park
14. Liberty Theater, 234 West 42nd Street
15. Lyric Theater (Individual and Interior), 213 West 42nd Street
16. New Apollo Theater Interior, 215-223 West 42nd Street
17. Selwyn Theater Interior, 229-231 West 42nd Street
18. Times Square Theater ( Individual & Interior), 215 W. 42nd St.
19. Victory Theater (Individual & Interior), 207 West 42nd Street
20. Bergdorf Goodman Building, 754 Fifth Avenue
21. Sire Building, 211 West 58th Street
22. Edgar J. Kaufman Interiors, 809 United Nations Plaza
23. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 227 West 99th Street
24. 412 East 85th Street
25. St. Joseph's Church, 401-403 W 125th Street
26. President Chester A. Arthur House, 123 Lexington Avenue
27. 150 East 38th Street House
28. D.G. Yuengling Brewing Co. Complex
29. YMCA Building, Harlem Branch, 181 West 135th Street
30. St. Paul’s Rectory, 113 E 117th Street
31. St. Paul's Church and School, 121 East 117th Street
32. Loew’s 175th Street Theater, 4140 Broadway

Excelsior Power Company Building - 33-43 East Street, Manhattan
Edgar J. Kaufman Interiors - 8th United Nations Plaza, Manhattan
St. Michael’s Episcopal Church - 227 West 99th Street, Manhattan
Loew’s 175th Street Theater - 4140 Broadway, Manhattan
YMCA Building, Harlem Branch - 181 West 135th Street
Providing Technical Expertise

“We’re grateful to the Landmarks Conservancy for serving as our fiscal agent as People for the Pavilion sought its official status as a nonprofit organization with the IRS and the State of New York. They also worked closely with the Queens Borough President’s office to test various lighting schemes for the Pavilion.”

- Matthew Silva, Co-founder
  People for the Pavilion

NEW YORK STATE PAVILION, FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK, QUEENS

The Conservancy has been involved in the cause to save the New York State Pavilion since last year. We have supported local groups and the Queens Borough President’s office in pushing forward the restoration and exterior lighting of the original 1964 World’s Fair structures in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Philip Johnson designed the Pavilion in 1963. It is a grand reminder of the Fair and its era. After many meetings and much planning, the Borough President announced in early May that the repainting of the pavilion structures would commence in the summer of 2015. Thanks to an anonymous donor and to a local union of professional painters, the original color, a bright yellow hue, was recreated. The repainting is crucial to the preservation of the steel structure and will arrest the rust and deterioration that was visible on the massive ribs and ring elements of the buildings.

The other project that we hope can begin soon is the architectural lighting of the towers. Tests were conducted and a plan developed. Now the funding needs to be raised.

THE RENAISSANCE CASINO AND BALLROOM, MANHATTAN

After pleas from the Harlem community to help save at least some portions of the Renaissance Theater and Casino, the Conservancy hired engineer Ed Meade, from Silman Associates, to look at the buildings and produce a conditions report. The site, on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard between 137th and 138th Streets, is slated to be cleared and a new building to be built.

The owners, BPR Development, have told us that they have reconsidered their architectural design and have told the community that they are willing to save at least some portions of the historic façade and incorporate them into the new structure. But they have also stated that the majority of the buildings are too deteriorated to salvage.

Conservancy staff and Meade visited the site on February 13 and performed a visual inspection and evaluation of the buildings. Meade’s report concludes that at least the street façades of both the north and south buildings could be stabilized and incorporated in to a new building. It does stipulate that the northern building appears in more fragile condition than the southern one.

The southern building was built first and included a theater on the rear portion of the lot that has been demolished; the northern building was built a few years later and contained a large multi-purpose ballroom and upstairs restaurant. Together they were the premier black event space in the city. During the Harlem Renaissance, all of the legendary names of the jazz age performed at the Renny including Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington and Count Basie. They were once under consideration to become landmarks but were never designated. It was our hope, and that of the community, that significant elements of the existing building could have been preserved and incorporated in to the new building as a reminder of this site’s importance to the cultural and social history of Harlem and the country. Unfortunately the building was demolished in March and only certain decorative elements are to be incorporated into the new façades.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE - The New York Landmarks Conservancy’s Technical Services Department provides countless hours of one-on-one advice and technical assistance to building owners throughout the City. From site visits to referrals, we do whatever we can to answer specific questions about building repairs and rehabilitations. We also help owners understand the New York City landmarks regulatory process by explaining the standards involved in each repair and the steps needed to acquire a permit from the City. Technical Services helps regular people understand how historic preservation affects them, and we offer practical recommendations that address a wide variety of questions and issues.

PROJECT GUIDANCE HIGHLIGHTS

NY STATE PAVILION, FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK, QUEENS

The Conservancy has been involved in the cause to save the New York State Pavilion since last year. We have supported local groups and the Queens Borough President’s office in pushing forward the restoration and exterior lighting of the original 1964 World’s Fair structures in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Philip Johnson designed the Pavilion in 1963. It is a grand reminder of the Fair and its era. After many meetings and much planning, the Borough President announced in early May that the repainting of the pavilion structures would commence in the summer of 2015. Thanks to an anonymous donor and to a local union of professional painters, all the originally painted elements of the structures were prepared, primed and painted. The original color, a bright yellow hue, was recreated. The repainting is crucial to the preservation of the steel structure and will arrest the rust and deterioration that was visible on the massive ribs and ring elements of the buildings.

The other project that we hope can begin soon is the architectural lighting of the towers. Tests were conducted and a plan developed. Now the funding needs to be raised.

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Former Smallpox Hospital, Roosevelt Island

The Conservancy has had a long history with the Smallpox Hospital, also known as The Renwick Ruin, near the southern tip of Roosevelt Island. The last major conservation campaign took place nearly ten years ago. At that time the ivy overgrowing the walls was cut down and all the walls that were at least fairly structurally sound were stabilized in place. A central portion of the north wall, which engineers found was leaning severely, was taken down stone by stone. The stones were numbered and stored on site. Likewise parts of the projecting, stepped cornice were taken down, the stones numbered, and stored on site. The balance of the ruin was stabilized with steel trusses and cables.

The Four Freedoms Park Conservancy, which runs the adjacent FDR memorial, wishes to finish the stabilization and restoration of the ruin. They plan to build a new visitor’s center within the open walls of the ruin. But first, the site needs to be studied and the ruin fully stabilized. Four Freedoms issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) in early August to several architectural firms for a proposal to prepare a detailed site, historic preservation, and stabilization-related report. The project is in part funded by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation through Title 9 of the Environmental Protection Act of 1993. The Conservancy was contacted by Four Freedoms and asked to take part in a Selection Committee to review and rate the responses received. The Conservancy reviewed all the submissions in detail and chose the top five candidates and conveyed that information to Four Freedoms to assist them in their selection process.

Four Seasons Restaurant, 99 East 52nd Street, Manhattan

The owner of the Seagram Building proposed alterations to the Four Seasons restaurant. Part of the changes called for the replacement of the entry canopies to both the Four Seasons and the Paragon restaurants. The traditional opaque canvas roof panels were to be replaced with new transparent roof panels. Because the Conservancy holds a preservation easement on the exterior of the Seagram Building, the canopy alterations need to be reviewed and approved by the Conservancy before being considered by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). We met with the project architect, Amanhelle Tellier, who explained the details of the change. After the presentation we rejected the proposal and suggested that the canvas roof be replaced in kind. The canopies were meant to be secondary entrances and were meant to be different from the much taller and grander glazed canopies leading to the main lobby. Additionally, the entry sequence to the Four Seasons was intended to contrast the light-filled dining level with the windowless entry level. The canopies were never intended to have transparent roofs. That portion of the proposal was therefore eliminated. The proposed interior changes drew many speak- ers to the Landmarks Commission’s public hearing. In addition to the Conservancy, a host of distinguished individuals and organizations spoke in opposition to the interior changes. Among these was Phyllis Lambert, who commissioned Philip Johnson to design the restaurant. Our easement does not cover any part of the interior although the Conservancy does have title to the two hanging Lippold sculptures in the Grill Room.

Bartow Pell Mansion, Bronx

The Historic House Trust informed the Conservancy that they have noticed floor settlement along the east and west walls of the first floor double parlors and the second floor bedrooms of the landmarked Bartow Pell mansion in the Bronx. They asked for our assistance in finding an engi- neer to look into and prepare a conditions report to encourage further exploration of the report. We reached out to Old Structures engineering who has visited the site and conducted a thorough inspection that included the opening up of several floor joists to look at the underlying problems in the floor construction. The report indicates that there is considerable rot at the ends of several floor joists that are supported by pockets in the masonry wall. These joists will need to be replaced or sistered with new joists that are supported by pockets in the masonry wall. These joists will need to be reviewed and approved by the Conservancy before being con- ducted during a period of weeks when the house was closed to the public.

Apple Bank for Savings, 2100 Broadway, Manhattan

The Conservancy holds a preservation easement on this property, which means that they need to review all proposed alterations before the Landmarks Preservation Commission can issue a permit. Originally the building housed the Central Savings Bank. It was bought in 1925-26 and designed by the firm of York and Sawyer in the style of a Renaissance Palazzo. The ironwork was designed by Samuel Yellin Studio. It is an Individual Landmark and one of the finest his- toric banks in New York. It is one of the few historic bank buildings that still functions as a bank. Apple Bank for Savings wants to make the interior more welcoming, especially to older customers and is proposing a new ramp up to the south entrance as well as a self-opening door. There are several other changes proposed such as changing the operation of historic iron doors from swinging in to sliding back. Other changes include adding ATM’s to the side reveals on either side of the entry. The existing ATM location on the north side of the building has been a problem for the bank due to vandalism, va- grants, and a perception by the public that it is unsafe. After careful review of the plans, the Conservancy found that the proposed alterations were in keeping with the special historic character of the building and that they meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Preservation.

Gould Memorial Library, Bronx Community College, Bronx

The technical services director visited the great dome building and inspected the damage done to the interior by leaks coming from the dome and its sur- rounding tower and skylights. The building, designed by Stanford White and built from 1894 to 1912 is one of the treasures of NYC. It is the centerpiece of the campus that was built as the uptown home of New York University (NYU). In the 1970s when NYU was at the brink of bankruptcy, the City bought the grounds and created the Bronx Community College. The beauti- ful campus boasts many architecturally significant buildings from a variety of periods including ones by McKim, Mead & White, Marcel Breuer and Robert A.M. Stern. The College is seeking advice about fundraising for the major work that will be required to restore the great domed structure. The Conservancy was invited to take part in a committee chaired by Sam White and including representatives from the college, CUNY, and the architects involved in the current and future phases of restoration. We will continue to advise and assist the college about this and hopefully other projects.

TWA Terminal, JFK International Airport, Queens

The review of the proposed project at JFK airport incorporating the landmark TWA Flight Center concluded with the final meeting of the Redevelopment Advisory Committee (RAC) July 16th in Manhattan. The members of the RAC, including the Conservancy, had asked for modifications to the newest pro- posal to build two new hotel buildings on the silver of land between the landmark terminal and the Jet Blue terminal. A similar scheme was approved by the RAC in 2014 but unfortunately that hotel developer backed out of the deal citing a change in direction for their business. The prior scheme called for 390 hotel rooms. The new scheme proposed by a different hotel developer, calls for 900 rooms making the new buildings bulkier and taller. All the local conservation parties recommended a decrease in bulk and height but the Port Authority and its developer partner did not change the proposal. As a result all the private local parties opposed the design as presented. Now the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (ACHP), which arbitrates these Section 106 reviews when needed, will step in to accept or modify the proposal. Two senior staffers from the ACHP attended the July meeting.

The ACHP is an independent federal agency that promotes historic preservation and oversees other federal agencies in matters involving historic re- sources, including Section 106 reviews. In this case, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the lead federal agency. ACHP advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy. The agency’s head is appointed by the President. Their offices are in Washington DC. The Advisory Council’s most recent letter Dated July 16, 2015, agreed with the local preservationists on matters discussed at the last meeting. Since then, we have not heard what the final outcome is. As soon as we do, we will inform the Board.
Sailors and Soldiers Monument, Riverside Park, Manhattan

The Conservancy partnered with the Riverside Park Conservancy to raise funds for a conditions report and conservation study that would analyze in detail the current state of the landmarked 1902 Sailors and Soldiers Monument. The white marble monument is one of the finestBeaux Arts memorials in the city. Dedicated to the Union soldiers and sailors who fought in the Civil War.

Meetings with officials at the Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation confirmed that a detailed conditions report is needed by the Parks staff to obtain capital funds for the monument’s restoration. We were told that no public funds were available to fund such a report, therefore the support of the Landmarks Conservancy and other private groups was crucial. The last meaningful repairs occurred in the 1960’s. Today, the marble is stained and in many areas painted with grey paint to cover up graffiti. Many of the mortar joints are open allowing water to penetrate the exterior walls.

The Conservancy drafted a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) that would be released to a select number of Architecture firms. While the draft was being reviewed by the Department of Parks and Recreation we received word from the Riverside Park Conservancy that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) had decided to use certain special funds to pay for the report. The City would take the project on itself. According to the Riverside Park Conservancy, the Capital Division of the Department of Parks and Recreation will issue the RFP in January 2016.

Fort Washington Avenue Armory, Manhattan

This landmarked armory between 168th and 169th Street in Washington Heights was originally the home of the 22nd Regiment and the Army Corps of Engineers. Today it is known as the home of the New Balance Track and Field Center, widely regarded as one of the premier indoor track and field facilities in the country. The Track and Field Center takes up the front portion of the building. At the rear there is a one hundred bed homeless shelter. The Shelter uses an original secondary entrance on 168th Street. The non-profit group that runs the shelter contacted the Conservancy for advice on changes they would like to make to their entry. They explained that neighborhood residents, including the many people that walk on 168th Street to get to and from the Columbia Presbyterian Hospital complex on Fort Washington Avenue, have complained that the shelter’s entrance looks shadowy and dangerous. Because the building is an individual landmark, any proposed changes will need to be approved by the LPC. We are following through with the officials at the shelter and proposing new lighting, plantings and the restoration of the doors and transom as well as the construction of new steps and ramp. It is hoped that the improvements will improve the public perception of the facility and also provide the residents with a cleaner and safer entry.

Former YMCA, Governors Island

The historic Governors Island YMCA is a colonial revival structure featuring a tiled dome with five oculi and rectangular nave. The building’s west facade faces ashlar limestone on the ground the second and third stories feature identical but are unified by the use of rusticated limestone masonry on the first story. The Old Guard building has an all-limestone bow front; the entire front façade bows out. This is an unusual feature in New York. The façade features ashlar limestone on the ground the second and third stories feature rough-lights, the bay window is pedimented. The parapet surmounts the portico. Flanking the entry are two windows with decorative wrought-iron grilles. To the side of the western ground floor window is a door that is covered with a marbled trim containing two large dormer windows topped by oars-shaped pediments. The roof was originally covered with barrel tiles (as can be seen next door at no. 307). The building has a very well-preserved condition. The building on this block, along with all the other buildings, was replaced in 1962-63.

Sailors and Soldiers Monument, Riverside Park, Manhattan

The Conservancy has been a very strong proponent of getting this work done and your input and expertise has been very supportive in highlighting the need for making these repairs."
West 57th Street, Manhattan

West 57th Street is a street under threat. After having lost all but one of its historic townhouses, which represent the street’s first wave of development as well as other distinguished buildings such as the Chickering & Sons Piano Building designed by Cross and Cross with colorful terra-cotta Legion of Honor medals on its roof tower. Conservancy Board Chair, Lloyd Zuckerberg and the director of technical services took a walk down the street and identified buildings worthy of preservation and protection. Seven of these structures have been formally nominated for individual landmark designation to the Landmarks Preservation Commission through a process called an “RFE” Request for Evaluation.

The Conservancy has submitted seven Requests for Evaluation (RFE) in hopes of saving some of the most distinguished surviving historic buildings on the street. None of these buildings are yet designated. We have received responses from the LPC on all seven.

The following is a list of the seven buildings proposed with the LPC response to each. We disagree with the Commission and are disappointed that they found several of the nominations not worthy of individual landmark status.

West 57th Street Nominations

Tiffany & Co., 727 Fifth Avenue
Disqualified due to a penthouse addition.

The Crown Building, 730 Fifth Avenue
While it may merit designation, it does not fit within current priorities.

The Vanderbilt-Bowne House, 35 West 57th Street
Will be considered.

The Bainbridge Building, 37 West 57th Street
Disqualified due to lack of significance.

Calvary Baptist Church, 123-141 West 57th Street
Will be considered.

The Medical Arts Building, 57 West 57th Street
While it may merit designation, it does not fit within current priorities.

Bergdorf Goodman’s, 744 Fifth Avenue
On the backlog list of items heard but not acted on. We testified in favor of designation at the public meeting of November 5, 2015.
Preserving Sacred Sites

“Thank you for your hard work and dedication to the Astoria Center of Israel, as we work towards the restoration of our valued synagogue building. The interest you express and demonstrate in helping to preserve and improve the structural integrity of our building is invaluable, and for this we are so grateful.”

> Cynthia Groopman
Co-President, Astoria Center of Israel

SACRED SITES PROGRAM - The New York Landmarks Conservancy’s Sacred Sites program offers congregations throughout the entire state of New York financial and technical assistance to maintain, repair, and restore their historic buildings. The program was launched in 1988 and is the only statewide program in the nation responding to the preservation needs of historic religious properties. Since its inception, Sacred Sites has awarded 1,325 grants totaling more than $93.3 million to 750 congregations throughout New York, regardless of denomination. These grants have leveraged restoration projects totaling over $850 million. The program offers a range of matching grants, to suit a variety of projects: Consulting Grants of up to $7,500, Sacred Sites grants of up to $10,000, and both Sacred Sites Challenge grants and Jewish Heritage Fund Challenge grants of up to $75,000.

Fifth Anniversary of Jewish Heritage Fund

Five years ago, the Conservancy established the Jewish Heritage Fund to focus on New York City’s culturally significant historic synagogues by providing challenge grants of up to $75,000 for major restoration projects. To date, the Jewish Heritage Fund has pledged 15 challenge grants totaling $495,000 to synagogues from Flushing to Harlem.

These grants have enabled congregations to perform over $4.7 million in restoration projects to structural framing, roofs, masonry façades, and stained glass windows. Twelve of these projects are now complete, and highlights include: Congregation Ezrath Israel (Actors’ Temple) in Times Square, awarded a $30,000 Jewish Heritage Fund Grant for the restoration of a monumental stained glass window assembly; Community Synagogue in the East Village, awarded two grants totaling $50,000 for structural repairs, roof and cornice restoration; Temple Beth Emeth in Ditmas Progressives; Shari Zedek in Brooklyn awarded $40,000 to replace a leaking roof and deteriorated masonry parapet; Congregation Beth Elohim in Brooklyn, awarded $50,000 for roof and masonry restoration; and The Free Synagogue of Flushing in Queens, awarded $40,000 for restoration of a monumental stained glass window.

Launched in 2010 with lead support from the David Berg Foundation and the Roy J. Zuckerberg Family Foundation, as well as continuing support from the David Berg Foundation, Michel David-Weill Foundation, and the Nash Family Foundation, the Jewish Heritage Fund initiative followed the Conservancy’s survey of 560 historic and architecturally significant synagogues throughout the five boroughs. These buildings are critical to celebrating and understanding the history of American Judaism and documenting the contributions of Jewish Americans to our collective culture and history.

Before the grants are awarded, Conservancy staff members meet with congregation leadership, conduct hands-on reviews of building conditions, and refer congregations to expert architects, construction managers, and contractors. The substantial Jewish Heritage challenge grants provide a real incentive for the congregations to tackle projects in a newly-prehensive manner. This process can lead to more professional project management and more long-lived building repair and restoration.

Additionally, the Fund underwrites the preparation of a National Register nomination for at least one synagogue per year. Initial funding from the Preserve New York program of the Preservation League of New York State helped list 10 synagogues. This year, the Fund underwrote a nomination for the Manhattan Beach Jewish Center, a mid-century modern synagogue with a Guastavino tile sanctuary. To date, the Conservancy has funded or facilitated the listing of 15 synagogues, qualifying these institutions for Conservancy grants as well as potential New York state restoration funding.

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Fifth Anniversary of Jewish Heritage Fund

At the end of 2012, the David Berg Foundation, lead funder for the Conservancy’s Jewish Heritage Fund, offered a substantial year-end gift for one synagogue restoration project. Conservancy staff suggested the Astoria Center of Israel, a Classical Revival, 1925 Astoria Synagogue, designed by “Shul with Pool” synagogue-center innovator architect Louis Alien Abramson, and featuring extraordinary decorative murals by Beaux Arts trained Art Deco painter Louis Pierre Rigal. The Conservancy funded an initial roof assessment by CTA Architects, which identified $300,000 in needed repair and reconstruction to the synagogue’s badly leaking front parapet. The Conservancy helped design and install temporary waterproofing at the parapet, and pledged a $30,000 Jewish Heritage Fund grant, but funding the balance of the project was a daunting for this small though growing congregation. The David Berg Foundation allocated a special, one-time gift of $200,000 to the project, stipulating that the congregation contribute at least $50,000. The congregation raised the matching funds in 2013 with a generous bequest from the estate of late member Dorothy Horowitz, and engaged an architect, Plus Labs, in 2014. Construction took place this year, with the Conservancy acting as owners’ representative, assisting with contractor selection and monitoring construction progress.

Yates Restoration was selected as general contractor. Restoration work included replacement of badly corroded steel lintels, installation of new matching brickwork, removal of a deteriorated cast stone balustrade, re-pointing of the cast stone cornice, installation of new copper flashing at the cast stone cornice and parapet, installation of new flashing and metal cladding at the interior face of the parapet, chimney repairwork, associated asbestos abatement, minor roof and scupper repairs, structural repairs to steel framing and stabilization of the underside of the concrete roof slab at second floor classrooms. With the project complete, the congregation once again has access to second floor classrooms, which are used both by the synagogue, and by a church that leases the facilities on Sundays.

Astoria Center of Israel, Queens (above) - Architect Illya Azaroff Inspects Flashing (below)

Astoria Center of Israel, Astoria, Queens

Interior, Astoria Center of Israel, Astoria, Queens (Photo Credit: Peter Paul)
Fifth Annual Sacred Sites Open House Weekend

A theme of this year’s open house was the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Landmarks law, and a concerted effort was made to recruit New York City landmarks to participate. This year, we exceeded expectations, with 64 New York City sites participating. An additional 82 sites around the state also participated, and this was our biggest year in terms of visitor numbers, with 3,000 visitors at sites from Niagara Falls to Sag Harbor over the course of the weekend. St. Patrick’s Cathedral participated for the first time, along with a dozen Manhattan Roman Catholic Churches. The New York Episcopal Diocese sent an email to all the churches in the diocese to encourage them to participate, resulting in the participation of a number of additional sites in Manhattan, Staten Island, Westchester and the lower Hudson Valley. On the Upper East Side, three Roman Catholic churches recently scheduled for merger and closure participated in the open house as part of their promotion and advocacy efforts.

A new initiative this year was three pre-booked, “insider” docent tours of participating Sacred Sites: Lucy Moses winners Temple Emanu-El on the Upper East Side, and Brown Memorial Baptist in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn, as well as the Bialystoker Synagogue on the Lower East Side, which features rich zodiac decorative painting on walls and ceiling.

Press coverage in advance of the weekend included several local television spots. The Conservancy sponsored a photo contest, which garnered participation from several talented professional and amateur photographers. Additionally, Conservancy staff worked with Sacred Sites Open House sponsor EverGreene Architectural Arts to convene our third annual pre-weekend workshop: “Planning, Paying, Proceeding, the 3 P’s of Restoring, Renewing, and Renovating Your Worship Space,” with a panel featuring Emily Sottile of Evergreene, preservation architect Tom Fenniman, and Thomas Kissane, Principal of CCS, a large, national fundraising firm whose clients include the Brooklyn Diocese. Evergreene Architectural Arts also designed and underwrote the cost of 20 banners distributed to sites to promote the weekend. Other weekend cosponsors included Acheiman Doyle Architects, AIA NY Historic Buildings Committee, Explore Buffalo, Faith & Farm, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, Historic Districts Council, Historic Thaca, Landmark Society of Western New York, Landmark West!, Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy, Morgan Stanley, DTESEGO 2000, Preservation Association of Central New York, Preservation Association of the Southern Tier, and Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities. This year, preservation organization regional and neighborhood partners helped drum up visitor ship for the weekend with announcements to their membership in newsletters and social media posts.

The Sacred Sites Open House initiative was inaugurated in 2011 in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Sacred Sites program. The Open House has three objectives: to encourage sacred sites to open their doors to the public in a means of building broad community support for the ongoing preservation of historic institutions; to inspire residents to be tourists in their own town, introducing non-members to the history, art and architecture embodied in sacred places, and developing a local cultural tourism ethos to support these important places; and to publicize the many programs and services religious institutions offer their neighbors, benefiting the entire community.

With each passing year, fans of ecclesiastical architecture from around the city and state make sure to include the event in their calendar. New York City resident Mark Sielucka noted: “This is such an important concept and program to offer. These structures will never be built again. We need to find a way to preserve them for future participants and citizens to enjoy.”
Sacred Sites and Consulting Grants for Projects Under $100,000

The New York Landmarks Conservancy awards Sacred Sites and Consulting Grants to congregations that are planning or undertaking the restoration of historic religious properties. In 2015, the Sacred Sites program pledged a total of $195,700 in the form of 35 basic Sacred Sites and Consulting grants to 35 religious institutions undertaking repair and restoration projects of under $100,000 throughout New York State.

To be eligible, properties must be located in New York State, owned by a religious institution and actively used for worship, and listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places or designated pursuant to a local landmarks ordinance by New York State. Eligible properties include churches, synagogues, meetinghouses, mosques, and temples. The maximum Sacred Sites grant is $10,000. In 2015, the average Sacred Sites grant award for bricks-and-mortar repair and restoration was about $5,200. The maximum Consulting Grant, for project planning costs, is $7,500. In 2015, the average award for Consulting Grants was about $5,600.

2015 Grantees include: (listed by borough/city)

Albany
Albany Friends Meeting - $4,000
State Roof Restoration
Cathedral of All Saints - $1,500
Conditions Assessment of Lafayette Rose Window

Bronx
St. Anselm’s Church - $7,500
Updated Conditions Assessment and Construction Documents

Dutchess
Congregation Beth David, Amenia - $9,000
Roofing, Gutter and Leader Repair

Smithfield Presbyterian Church, Amenia - $1,500
Architectural Fees
St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, New Hamburg - $9,000
Stained Glass Window Restoration

Erie
Baker Memorial United Methodist Church, East Aurora - $6,000
Masonry Repairs
Delaware Avenue Baptist Church, Buffalo - $7,500
Documents for Roof and Drainage Repair and Replacement
St. Luke AME Zion Church, Buffalo - $5,000
Roof Replacement and Masonry Restoration
Trinity Episcopal Church, Buffalo - $10,000
Protective Glazing at Stained Glass Windows

Kings (Brooklyn)
Bridge Street African Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal Church - $1,500
Restoration of Entrance Doors
Congregation Baith Israel Ashkenazi Tzemach - $7,500
Construction Documents for Exterior Restoration
Congregation Chaverim L’Ha’Atzavut - $2,700
Conditions Assessment
Holy House of Prayer - $10,000
Architectural Fees for Roof Repair and Masonry Façade Restoration
Manhattan Beach Jewish Center - $8,000
Conditions Assessment

Kings (Brooklyn) continued
Congregation Kef Israel - $2,000
Scope of Work and Budget for Exterior Envelope Repairs

Lewis
Forest Presbyterian Church, Lyons Falls - $8,000
Chimney, Spire, Basement Windows, and Foundation Repair

Montgomery
Glen Reformist Church, Fultonville - $6,000
Restoration of Two Stained Glass Windows

Nassau
St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Sea Cliff - $6,000
Restoration of Stained Glass Windows

New York (Manhattan)
Stanton Street Synagogue - Cong. B’nai Jacob Anshei Brezeanu - $8,000
Construction Documents, Roof and Masonry Restoration

Onondaga
Grace Episcopal Church, Utica - $3,500
Tower Engineering Structural Assessment

Tabernacle Baptist Church, Utica - $5,000
Architectural Work for Roof, Tower, Steeple and Spire Restoration

Ontario
First Baptist Church of Geneva - $7,500
Roof Drainage Upgrades and Repointing
Orange
Baptist Temple Church, Newburgh - $9,000
Gable Masonry Repair
Grace Episcopal Church, Middletown - $4,000
Roof and Chimney Repair

Otsego
Cooperstown United Methodist Church - $1,000
Design & Implementation of Improved Site Drainage
Fly Creek United Methodist Church - $4,500
Stained Glass Restoration
Main Street Baptist Church, Oneonta - $5,000
New Slate Roof

Queens
New Life Fellowship Church, Elmhurst - $7,500
Documents for Restoration of Secondary Elevations

Saratoga
Bethesda Episcopal Church, Saratoga Springs - $1,500
Building Conditions Study
West Charlton United Presbyterian Church - $4,000
Bell Tower Repairs

Seneca
First Presbyterian Church of Waterloo - $10,000
Masonry Repair

Suffolk
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Huntington - $4,000
Tower Masonry Restoration

Sullivan
Parksville United Methodist Church - $6,500
Roof Replacement

Tioga
First Baptist Church of Owego - $2,000
Develop Repair Scope for Roof Replacement

In 2015, the Sacred Sites program pledged a total of $195,000 in the form of 35 basic Sacred Sites and Consulting Grants to 35 religious institutions undertaking repair and restoration projects of under $100,000 throughout New York State.
Jewish Heritage Fund - In 2015, five grants were awarded, totaling $150,000.

Sacred Sites Challenge Grants for Major Restoration Projects

In 2015, six grants were awarded, ranging from $25,000 to $50,000, with an average pledge totaling $30,000.

2015 Grantees include:
(listed by borough/city)

Dutchess
Smithfield Presbyterian Church, Amenia - $25,000
Portico, Façade and Columns Restoration

Erie
First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo - $30,000
Tower Masonry Restoration

Madison
St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Cazenovia - $25,000
Roof Shingle and Associated Copper Flashing Replacement

New York (Manhattan)
Church of the Transfiguration - $30,000
Restoration of South Wall and Historic Stained Glass

Queens
New Life Fellowship Church, Elmhurst - $40,000
Terrace Waterproofing, Façade, Window and Skylight Restoration

Suffolk
First Congregational Church, Riverhead - $50,000
Structural Stabilization of Failing Roof Truss

Jewish Heritage Challenge Grants for Major Restoration Projects

The Jewish Heritage Fund allows the Conservancy to make challenge grants of between $25,000 and $75,000 to assist major repair and restoration projects at New York City synagogues. In 2015, five grants were awarded, totaling $150,000. The average grant pledge in 2015 was $30,000.

Since its launch in 2010, the program has pledged 10 challenge grants totaling $485,000, facilitating over $4.7 million in restoration projects.

2015 Grantees include:
(listed by borough/city)

Kings (Brooklyn)
Manhattan Beach Jewish Center - $25,000
Façade Repair
Young Israel of Flatbush - $25,000
Restoration of Entrance Doors

New York (Manhattan)
Community Synagogue - $25,000
Structural Stabilization of North Wall and Sanctuary Ceiling
Congregation Ramath Orah - $50,000
Replacement of Roof Membrane and Flashing, Masonry and Flue Repair
Park East Synagogue - $25,000
Roof Repair and Stained Glass Window Restoration

2015 Grantees include:
(listed by borough/city)

Dutchess
Smithfield Presbyterian Church, Amenia - $25,000
Portico, Façade and Columns Restoration

Erie
First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo - $30,000
Tower Masonry Restoration

Madison
St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Cazenovia - $25,000
Roof Shingle and Associated Copper Flashing Replacement

New York (Manhattan)
Church of the Transfiguration - $30,000
Restoration of South Wall and Historic Stained Glass

Queens
New Life Fellowship Church, Elmhurst - $40,000
Terrace Waterproofing, Façade, Window and Skylight Restoration

Suffolk
First Congregational Church, Riverhead - $50,000
Structural Stabilization of Failing Roof Truss
Funding Historic Properties

“We are a small co-op, and our full exterior restoration was by far the biggest project that we have ever undertaken. We truly could not have accomplished this without the support, expertise and, of course, funding, from The New York Landmarks Conservancy. They were with us every step of the way, helping us define the scope of the project, advising and guiding us through architect and contractor selection, and following through until the completion of construction. We now have a beautiful, historically restored building that in our view has made a big impact on our block and neighborhood.”

- Harold Wolpert, Shareholder, Clint Housing Corp.
193 Clinton Street, Brooklyn

HISTORIC PROPERTIES FUND - Established in 1982, the New York City Historic Properties Fund is the Conservancy’s main financing vehicle for restoration work throughout New York City. With over $3 million in assets, it is one of the largest revolving loan funds for historic preservation in the nation. Since its inception, the Fund has made over $26 million in investments—more than $25 million in loans and $423,000 in grants—for restoration work on 248 buildings in the five boroughs of New York City. The Fund's lending record continues to be exemplary, with near zero losses on loan repayments.

Fund loans are geared toward underwriting restoration work on small residential properties in the lower- and moderate-income historic districts of New York City, as well as historic properties owned by nonprofit organizations and religious institutions.

Loans on one-to-four family row houses generally range between $50,000 and $150,000; loans for multi-family apartment buildings and nonprofit facilities are usually in the $200,000 to $300,000 range. Collateral on residential properties is usually a first, second, or third mortgage; security on religious buildings and nonprofit facilities is most often in the form of assignments of assets. Interest rates are usually 5% to 7%, but may be as low as 3% for more needy borrowers; terms are generally between five and ten years. Small grants sometimes accompany loans to bridge budget gaps in difficult projects.

Project management assistance is an important component of the Fund program. Fund staff work closely with borrowers to develop loan packages that are tailored to their specific needs. Project management assistance is provided throughout the loan process. With outside professionals, Fund staff help borrowers to define a scope of work, prioritize components of the project, engage qualified architects, engineers, and contractors, monitor construction, and ensure that all work is performed correctly. The importance of such assistance, particularly in the planning stages of projects, cannot be overstated. Property owners often lack objective expertise in identifying and prioritizing the needs of their buildings. In many cases, they retain contractors and craftsmen who are unfamiliar with historic buildings. Unnecessary, inappropriate, or overly aggressive measures may be taken which result in irreversible damage and wasted financial resources.

Since its inception, the Fund has made over $26 million in investments—more than $25 million in loans and $423,000 in grants—for restoration work on 248 buildings in the five boroughs of New York City.

Highlights from the 2015 New York City Historic Properties Fund Projects

The Fund advanced over $1.2 million in loan proceeds used for restoration work in 2015 on a dozen projects. Three row houses in Brooklyn stand out for their transformations:

52 South Oxford Street
Fort Greene Historic District
52 South Oxford Street is one of 12 Italianate-style brownstone row houses built c.1884 and located in the Fort Greene Historic District. In the 1960s, the façades of eight of the grouping were “modernized” with faux brick and with an additional level constructed at the top. While not re-clad, 52 South Oxford Street did receive another story, and its façade was stripped of its historic detail.

The building was previously used as an S.R.O. when the current owner purchased it in 2009. He then had a considerable amount of renovation and restoration work performed inside before he focused on its exterior and closed a Fund loan to finance work by Progeny Restoration. Mary Kay Judy was engaged as the preservation consultant. The 2015 restoration entailed the entire re-surfacing of the front façade, recreation of all decorative elements, and the installation of a new wood cornice.

30
Restored 193 Clinton Street - Cobble Hill, Brooklyn

The shareholders came to the Historic Properties Fund for a small loan in 2012. Long ago, the once-stately front façade of the building had lost many of its Italianate features. The brownstone architectural details and parts of the cornice were stripped, the areaway was paved in concrete, original ironwork was replaced with masonry, and the vestibule doors were replaced with a modern steel door. Unsure of what work scope would be desirable and affordable, Fund staff began to work with the shareholders on refining a desirable restoration project and its costs, as well as on framing a financing package that would be acceptable to the five apartment owners.

A Fund loan of $250,000 was authorized in December, 2012. The shareholders were repaying a first mortgage that would be retired in May of 2016. To help keep loan repayments lower, the Fund loan was structured so that the owners would be paying interest only on it until May 2018. Thereafter, the Fund loan would amortize, i.e. there would be constant monthly payments of principal and interest.

The first half 2013 was spent obtaining a written consent from the first mortgagee, for the Fund’s second mortgage lien. Once accomplished, the owner selected Easton Architects as the project architect. Easton prepared the plans and specifications and oversaw a bidding process which culminated in a contract with Presby Building Restoration Management, Inc. With a better understanding of the work scope, the shareholders decided to take on additional items; to accommodate them, the Fund loan was increased to $375,000. The restoration was informed by historic photographs and drawings, as well as matching buildings in the neighborhood. Most of the brownstone work was completed in 2014, including the installation of cast stone door and window surrounds that replicated the building’s historic ornamentation. Details on a neighboring building were laser-scanned to create the molds for 193 Clinton Street’s cast stone. In addition, new cast iron railings and newel posts were installed at the stoop, new wood and glass vestibule doors were custom made, and masonry repairs were done at the rear of the building. When the scaffolding was erected, it became apparent that squirrels had chewed away the tops of the wood cornice brackets. Some brackets were repaired, and others were replaced with new replicas. The project wrapped up in the summer of 2015.

In late 2013, the owners and the Fund closed a loan to finance restoration work that would restore the front façade to its appearance in the 1940 tax photograph for the property; a seemingly brownstone façade with ornamental window surrounds. Project architect Gormanschweyer Architects immediately had a probe of the façade performed to determine exactly what was underneath the vinyl siding.

The probe revealed several modern layers of siding over the original façade, which turned out to be wide, thick wood boards that were installed flush (as opposed to a traditionally lapped arrangement). To everyone’s surprise, the façade was never made of brownstone; rather, it was painted to look like brownstone at some point. Furthermore, an analysis of finishes performed by Jablonski Building Conservation revealed that the original coating was actually beige-colored paint with sand added to give the appearance that the building was made of limestone. At some later time, an owner painted it to look like brownstone.

These discoveries required a different approach to restoring this building. It was likely that the original wood, which was thick but laced with nail holes, would not be the best final finish; removing it completely might trigger other elements. In the case of 1325 Dean Street, these features were paired wood and glass entry doors, a decorative entry surround, and a bracketed cornice. Vinyl siding, thought to have been installed in the mid-1980s, covered its two bay façade.

In 2015, the Fund advanced over $1.2 million in loan proceeds used for restoration work on a dozen projects. After a bidding process, the owner engaged Burda Construction Corporation to perform the work. There were still some unknowns about the condition of the wood under the vinyl and the structure of the stoop, which was to be re-constructed as part of the project, if it was in stable condition. Hence, Burda removed the vinyl in early October of 2014 and performed a probe of the foundation of the masonry stoop. While it was found that the siding was in good condition and that there were even visible “ghosts” of the ornamented sills and lintels that would be very useful in re-creating them, it was also revealed that the stoop had no footings at all and was severely deteriorated.

Clearly, the stoop needed to be rebuilt, which provided another option for its design. It was highly likely that the original stoop was wood, and the existing masonry stoop was built in the 1950s or 1960s. The borrowers elected to reconstruct the stoop in wood to match the presumed appearance of the historic stoop. To accommodate the changes in the work scope, the original Fund loan was increased and restructured to fit within the owners’ budget.

The new wood stoop was fabricated and assembled in a shop off site. After Burda constructed a cement foundation, the entire stoop was lifted into place by a crane; Burda then secured and finished the stoop at the end of 2015. From vinyl siding to an all wood façade with carved ornamentation over the windows and door, as well as a wooden stoop – the restoration of the façade at 1325 Dean Street presents an exemplary historic preservation project and, as it turned out, a Lucy Moses Award winner from the Conservancy.

In 2015, The Fund advanced over $1.2 million in loan proceeds used for restoration work on a dozen projects.
Assisting Nonprofits and the Public Sector

“We are indebted to the rapid action of the Landmarks Conservancy for coming to our rescue; we are comforted by the staff’s genuine concern not only for the landmark building, but for the social and cultural history of Henderson Place, a legacy which the foundation celebrates.”

- Carmen Dell’Orefice, President, and Sheila Shapira, Treasurer
8 Henderson Place Foundation, Manhattan

NONPROFIT & PUBLIC SECTOR ASSISTANCE - Nonprofit organizations, both secular and religious, and the public sector are often the custodians of some of New York City’s most historic and eccentric properties. In addition to fielding dozens of calls for help from owners, providing counseling and troubleshooting advice, and offering referrals for qualified professionals, the Conservancy frequently takes on projects in a more significant manner via grants, loans, and project management assistance. Two grant programs, especially, have been of great assistance to nonprofit organizations:

- The Emergency Preservation Grant (EPG) Program provides funding to nonprofit organizations to address immediate repair needs and/or professional services to remedy dangerous exterior conditions (falling masonry, spot water leakage, etc.) and/or deteriorated interior structural elements of buildings. Most grants range between $10,000 and $15,000 and are accompanied by the project management assistance of Conservancy staff. Over 40 nonprofit facilities have been helped to-date, with an aggregate project expenditure total in excess of $350,000.

- The City Ventures Fund (CVF) provides grants of up to $25,000 to preserve the character of landmarked and non-landmarked, but architecturally significant buildings, which are being used for or converted to affordable housing and/or other community facilities that benefit the public and, especially, lower income people. Since 1986, CVF has invested almost $1.5 million in more than 60 buildings with a total of 1,221 affordable housing units and various community services.

Several projects were assisted by the EPG and CVF programs in 2015:

8 Henderson Place Foundation
8 Henderson Place, Manhattan

Tucked away on the upper east side of Manhattan, north of 86th Street and west of East End Avenue is the Henderson Place Historic District, designated in 1969 and consisting of 24 Queen Anne style row houses; the original grouping of 32 was designed in 1881 by the architectural firm of Lamb and Rich. The house at number 8 was the home of Gregory D’Alessio and his wife, Hilda Terry, for the mid- and latter part of the 20th century. They were both acclaimed cartoonists and artists in other media. Their house served for many years as a gathering place for their famous friends, who included Carl Sandburg and Andres Segovia. In 1975, the 8 Henderson Place Foundation (Foundation) was established to preserve the legacies of D’Alessio and Terry by making an archive and house museum of their work. The building, vacant since the passing of Ms. Terry in 2006, still contains numerous oils, drawings, books, and other artifacts of the owners. The Foundation owns the property now and is seeking financing to fulfill its mission. Its executive director contacted the Conservancy in late 2014 about a large, wooden bay window that was visibly shifting out of position. The Conservancy enlisted the help of architect Jonathan Raible, who quickly sketched out a way of stabilizing the window in place and repairing the gutter above to prevent the water penetration that had caused the problem in the first place. This work was completed in the spring of 2015 with an emergency grant of $7,175.

Former Dean Sage House
839 St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn

A City Ventures Fund grant of $5,000 helped fund a conditions assessment for this mansion which is located within the Crown Heights North Historic District. It was designed circa 1869-70 by a prominent architect of that time, Russell Sturgis, who was commissioned for the work by a wealthy lumber dealer and philanthropist, Dean Sage. Originally built in the Gothic Revival style, the mansion received an addition in the 1940s that was constructed in a similar period fashion, even incorporating some elements (window openings and cornice) from the 1870 façade into the new façade.

Over the years, the building was used as a convent and as a senior citizens center. The Institute for Community Living (ICL), a nonprofit mental health services and housing provider, purchased the property in 1998. It is used now as a 48-person residence for people affected by or at risk of mental illness. ICL engaged the firm of Easton Architects to survey the building, to assess the condition of all of its interior and exterior components, and to prioritize necessary repairs and restoration work.

Former Dean Sage House
839 St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn

839 St. Marks Avenue, circa 1905

Henderson Place Sketch by Woldemar Neufeld, circa 1948
The town of Rossville on Staten Island, colloquially known as “Sandy Ground,” was once the location of a free black community in the mid-19th century. Black oystermen migrated from Maryland to Sandy Ground as a result of racially restrictive commerce laws that were enacted in Maryland. At Sandy Ground, they bought land, built houses, and started commercial businesses. In 1892, the Rossville A.M.E. Church was erected with a cemetery beside it. Though the Church moved to another location, the cemetery remained as the primary burial place for Sandy Ground’s residents.

By the end of the 19th century, the waters around New York City had become polluted, destroying the oyster industry and Sandy Ground with it. Today, little remains of what was once a thriving black community. The original Rossville A.M.E. Zion Church Cemetery, however, is one of its few surviving elements. The cemetery was thought to contain about 100 burials, with markers documenting the settlers and their families, their prosperity, and their downturn over 175 years. Many people visit the cemetery regularly, traveling far distances to pay homage to their ancestors. The cemetery is a designated City landmark and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

With a grant of $18,000 from the Richmond County Savings Foundation and a City Ventures Fund grant of $5,750, the consulting firm of Jablonski Conservation completed a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the Rossville A.M.E. Zion Church Cemetery.

The CLR in general is composed of the following subjects:

- History of the “Sandy Ground” community, church, and cemetery;
- An analysis and evaluation of existing conditions (systems, spatial organization, topography, vegetation, fencing, markers, etc.) in the cemetery;
- A preservation treatment plan for the future, including recommendations for plants that are appropriate for sandy soil demarcations for pathways, and handling of markers and other physical features in the cemetery.

As part of the CLR, a ground penetrating radar survey was conducted to ascertain locations of graves that are not (or have never been) marked. Just about every foot of the cemetery was covered to a depth of 9.8 feet. While the Church suspected that several burials would be found, everyone’s surprise, over 500 possible burials appeared in the data analysis of the survey.
**MOSES AWARDS** - The Lucy G. Moses Preservation Awards are the Conservancy’s highest honors for excellence in preservation. The coveted awards are named for Lucy Goldschmidt Moses, a dedicated New Yorker whose generosity has benefited the City over many decades. Since 1991, the Awards have recognized more than 265 individuals, organizations, and building owners for their extraordinary contributions to the City.

Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel received the Preservation Leadership Award for her many contributions to the field, capped by the widespread success of her most recent endeavor: founding and chairing the NYC Landmarks50 Alliance. This consortium of more than 185 preservation, cultural and arts organizations commemorated the Landmarks Law's 50th Anniversary. Through this coalition, Diamonstein-Spielvogel created a powerful platform for public programs and celebrations that reminded New Yorkers of preservation’s greatest successes and most lasting achievements.

Diamonstein-Spielvogel’s career has been entwined with New York landmarks. She served as an LPC Commissioner for 15 years, chaired the Landmarks Preservation Foundation, where she created and underwrote the Historic District street sign program, and is the founder and Chair of the Historic Landmarks Preservation Center, whose Cultural Medallion program documents NYC’s history. She is the author of *The Landmarks of New York: An Illustrated Record of the City’s Historic Buildings*, now in its sixth edition. Few grass-roots groups have been as successful as the West End Preservation Society, recipient of the award for outstanding preservation organization. Founded just eight years ago to combat the threat of demolitions along West End Avenue, in 2015 WEPS celebrated the third major historic district extension centered on the thoroughfare. Due to the planning, preparation, and dogged advocacy of board and staff, some 750 buildings in the Upper West Side are now under the protection and guidance of the LPC.

36 Gramercy Park East, a Gothic Revival apartment building dating to 1910, is known for its ornate glazed white terra cotta ornament, featuring winged grotesques, oriels, sculpted faces, corner rope moldings, and more than 120 putti flanking shields. After the façade's underlying steel structure was reinforced and waterproofed, the terra cotta was cleaned, repaired, and restored. Where replacement was necessary, glazes were matched to the original units, so the entire façade would shine in a uniform fashion.

Standing guard over the Harlem River, the twin terra cotta eagles atop the 369th Regiment Armory Building emblemize its Art Deco heritage and pay tribute to its African-American history. After nearly 80 years, their perches were crumbling along with many significant features at the home of the “Harlem Hellfighters,” a racially-segregated and highly-decorated squad that served in World War I. Work on the 1933 armory building required 2,000 pieces of terra cotta in approximately 200 different molds. Once new eagles were installed, the originals found a new home on display inside the armory.

The Central Park Obelisk has been comprehensively conserved and cleaned for the first time in its long history. The 79-foot tall Obelisk was created around 1425 BCE and arrived in New York to great acclaim in 1880, but the city’s gritty environment and some ill-advised repairs took a toll, leaving the treasure dull and uncelebrated. A team of experts scanned and surveyed the Obelisk and oversaw an innovative laser cleaning. The results are dramatic: the Obelisk’s color and texture have been revealed and its hieroglyphs are legible again.

For decades, the small, vacant Coignet Stone Company Building stood at the edge of an empty Gowanus field, inspiring curiosity and piquing the interest of advocates, who feared its demolition. The 1872 building, which advertised its company’s pioneering concrete products, had been abandoned and was in a perilous state of decay, when a development deal for the adjacent property saved it. Prompted by the Landmarks Commission, the operator undertook a project that saved this historic edifice.

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*Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel
Lucy G. Moses Preservation Leadership Award Recipient

**Honoring Excellence**

“Thank you for this singular honor. Although the NYC Landmarks50 Alliance celebrates its achievements, we know this is a time for moving forward purposefully. A time of new beginnings, an opportunity for new initiatives. A time when we will try to ensure that our City’s architectural patrimony is protected. While giving progress, and change, their due, we will not permit the best of the past to vanish.”

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*Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel
Lucy G. Moses Preservation Leadership Award Recipient*
The Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum has been transformed into a modern facility worthy of the design artifacts it houses. The challenge was rethinking how a Gilded-Age mansion should function as a 21st-century facility. This goal was realized by re-establishing public spaces for exhibition use, moving collections off-site, and aggregating non-public functions to adjacent row houses, in a choreographed series of construction projects. The Cooper Hewitt has been reimagined and reinvigorated, allowing the building to function more strongly, and the collection to shine ever-brighter.

Hanging 1 & 2 at Floyd Bennet Field had been vacant and in poor condition for years, until an innovative partnership repurposed the space and reclaimed the historic architecture. The National Park Service leased the hangars to house energy services equipment, provided they were rehabilitated following preservation guidelines. A Historic Structures Report informed restoration of iron-spot brick, steel sash industrial windows, and the aluminum hangar doors, while the interior was adapted for its new use. Now the public is able to experience and enjoy these buildings that recall aviation history.

For the first time in over 50 years, the High Bridge, a monumental span connecting the Bronx to Manhattan is open to pedestrians and bicyclists. Inspired by ancient Roman aqueducts, the 19th century High Bridge was part of the system which carried water from Westchester County to the City. The NYC Parks Department, which took jurisdiction after water service ended, fulfilled a long-held promise by restoring original elements and adding safety and accessibility features, to honor history, invite recreation, and create community.

The owners of the Piros Residence, a row house in the Crown Heights North Historic District showed a remarkable commitment to their building as it revealed some major surprises. They intended to restore the inappropriately altered 1874 Italianate/Neo-Grec façade to its original brownstone. Architects discovered that it was actually wood siding finished with a sand paint to simulate brownstone, and that the original stoop wasn’t stone, but also wood. The owners embraced these findings and persevered to create a stunning façade that is an inspiration to their block.

Restoration of the Old Brooklyn Fire Headquarters demonstrates how affordable housing and preservation can work together. The Brooklyn Fire Department’s former headquarters is an 1889 Romanesque Revival landmark converted to apartments in the 1980’s. Pratt Area Community Council intervened on behalf of tenants who lived under deplorable conditions for 20 years. From the splendid new red tile roof to the antique elevator cab serving as an artifact, this complicated project brought the building back to its original splendor, allowed tenants to remain in place during construction, and financed 18 permanently affordable residential units.

Glorious St. Patrick’s Cathedral has been integral to New York’s heritage and religious life since its dedication. In 2006, interior cracks and exterior falling stone chips led to the first major overhaul in over 70 years. This immense project has touched every part of the Gothic Revival building. Removing decades of pollution revealed fine detailing; the exterior marble was repaired and the creamy interior plaster brought back to architect James Renwick Jr.’s intent. Restoration of stained glass windows, woodwork, monumental brass doors, and the organ, and upgrades to safety systems were all completed in time for a visit from Pope Francis.

In 2001, St. Paul’s Chapel and Churchyard served as a refuge for 9/11 responders working at the former World Trade Center site. Since then, thousands have visited every day, drawn by the history and architectural merit of this hallowed place. Responding to long-term building needs and this recent increase in activity, two projects were undertaken. Exterior work reversed past inappropriate repairs, restored masonry, windows, and re- framed the clock in a shining steeple. Landscaping treatments have improved the trodden churchyard, with new soil and plantings, upgraded irrigation systems, and visitor-friendly pathways that respect the historic grave markers.

The Staten Island Museum has moved into Sailor’s Snug Harbor Building A, realizing its goals of expanding exhibition and program space, honoring the borough’s history, and respecting the built and natural environments. Years of neglect and failed renovations had left the Greek Revival landmark’s interior severely compromised, requiring vast removals and installation of a new structure that controls temperature and humidity levels. Original wood framing was salvaged for flooring, while upgraded historical windows remain visible. Restored exterior walls, roof, landscaping, and a new geo-thermal energy system complete the project.

Celebrating Living Landmarks

“We thank the Landmarks Conservancy … we could not be more enthusiastic about the supporting work that the Conservancy does.”

- Robert E. Wankel
2015 Living Landmarks Honoree and President / Co-CEO of The Shubert Organization

2016 Living Landmarks Honorees

Photo (left to right): Philip J. Smith, Robert E. Wankel, Susan L. Solomon, Dr. Susan Weber, Brooke Garber Neidich, Daniel Neidich, and Ken Langone.
22nd Annual Living Landmarks Celebration

For more than two decades The New York Landmarks Conservancy has honored New Yorkers who have made extraordinary contributions to the City and recognizes them as Living Landmarks at a black-tie gala. The 22nd Annual Living Landmarks Celebration was held on November 5 at The Plaza in honor of philanthropist and celebrated co-founder of The Home Depot Ken Langone, co-founder of the Child Mind Institute Brooke Garber Neidich, founder of Dune Real Estate Partners, and dedicated philanthropist Daniel Neidich, Co-CEOs of The Shubert Organization Philip J. Smith and Robert E. Wankel, co-founder & CEO of the New York Stem Cell Foundation Susan L. Solomon, and director & founder of the Bard Graduate Center Dr. Susan Weber. A record $1.4 million was raised. Daryl and Jordan Roth served as Honorary Co-Chairs. The Living Landmarks Celebration is a “must attend” on New York’s social calendar and attracts trend-setters and opinion leaders from across the City’s unique “only in New York” intersections of art, commerce, education, entertainment, fashion, finance, government, and media. In addition to being a fun and festive evening, the gala provides critical support for the Conservancy’s unique financial and technical assistance programs.

All Living Landmarks photos by James Salzano unless noted.

first row
Timothy Cardinal Dolan & Ken Langone
James Capalino, Ray Kelly, David Einisns - photo: Noél Sutherland
Brian Stokes Mitchell

second row
Fred J. Stareme, Jr.
Peg Breen & George C. Wolfe
Paul Selver & Julio Peterson
Daniel Neidich, Paul Binder & Brooke Garber Neidich

third row
Daniel Ryrie & Susan Weber - photo: Noél Sutherland
Philip J. Smith - photo: Noél Sutherland

fourth row
Marla Sabo, Michael Braner, & Christina Chang - photo: Noél Sutherland

first row
Robert E. Wankel, Bernadette Peters, & Joel Grey
Paul Goldberger & Susan L. Solomon
Michael & Karyn Christensen - photo: Noél Sutherland

second row
John & Marie Spofford
Donald & Barbara Tober - photo: Noél Sutherland
Iris Love, Stan Warshawsky, Martin Camins, Joan Camins, & Sandra Warshawsky

third row
Daryl Roth - photo: Noél Sutherland
Guy Robinson & Elizabeth Stribling - photo: Noél Sutherland

fourth row
Maria Sabo, Michael Braner, & Christina Chang - photo: Noél Sutherland
Chairman’s Award Luncheon

The Landmarks Conservancy’s Chairman’s Award is one of the industry’s most esteemed honors recognizing exceptional individuals and organizations that have demonstrated their dedication to New York by protecting and celebrating the City’s world-renowned historic architecture.

At a luncheon on June 18 at The Metropolitan Club, the Conservancy recognized Dr. Michael Horodniceanu, president of MTA Capital Construction for the renovation and incorporation of the historic Corbin Building into the new Fulton Transit Center; and architect, teacher, and historian Robert A.M. Stern, Founder and Senior Partner of Robert A.M. Stern Architects.

Fred Bland, Beyer Blinder Belle; Craig Covey, ARUP; Page Cowley, Page Ayres Cowley Architects; Frank J. Sciamme Jr., Sciamme Construction and Development; and Elizabeth F. Stirling, Stirling Associates; served as Honorary Co-Chairs.

Young Landmarks Council

The Young Landmarks Council engages the next generation in protecting the City’s architectural treasures. This year, the group hosted “An Evening with Christopher Gray,” at the Union Club. Best known for his “Streetscapes” column which ran in the New York Times from 1987 to 2014. Following a brief interview by Conservancy President Peg Breen, Mr. Gray addressed questions from the audience for an interesting, entertaining, and provocative evening.

We are especially grateful to our Young Landmarks Steering Committee.

Justin Abovey, Oscar K. Anderson, III, Gus Christensen, Daniel F. Crowley, Martin, Erik Oken, Charles Preusse, Marla Sabo, and J. Russell Friedman.

TOURS AND OTHER EVENTS

Professional Circle Tours

The Conservancy offers a wide variety of networking, promotional, and educational activities for its Professional Circle members, an active group of real estate, design, development and construction professionals, preservationists, property owners, and businesses interested in the art, architecture, and history of New York.

Professional Circle members are invited to exclusive tours of restoration projects throughout the year. Tours included the U.S. Custom House on Bowling Green, the TWA Terminal at JFK, and The Basilica of Saint Patrick’s Old Cathedral. The Conservancy also organized sessions on using social media to grow your business and mastery.

The Conservancy joined forces with longtime Professional Circle member EverGreene Architectural Arts to present a four-part series titled “Understanding Traditional Techniques in Historic & Contemporary Spaces.” Following a kickoff session to get the series underway, members were treated to hands-on workshops in stained glass, architectural painting, plasterwork, and decorative finishing.

Other Landmarks Conservancy Events

In 2015, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the groundbreaking New York City Landmarks Law, one of the strongest in the country, and a model for cities around the world. The year began with a panel discussion at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse about the catalyst for, impact of, and future of the Landmarks Law.

Members also enjoyed “Preservation and Development: Is There Room in This Town for Both?” – a moderated conversation at the Morgan Library with thought-leaders and opinion-makers about the balance between protecting our cultural heritage in a City that is constantly growing and changing.

Members were invited to behind-the-scenes tours of the Alice Austen House, South Side of Ellis Island, and the South Street Seaport Museum, as well as special exhibitions at the New York School of Interior Design on "Interior Landmarks," and the Museum of the City of New York’s show, “Saving Place.” The Conservancy, Friends of the Upper East Side, and The American Friends of Georgia presented an illustrated talk at the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen on how the Georgian government is promoting tourism by preserving the country’s architectural and cultural heritage.

Supporting Preservation Education

Bronx International High School

To support the next generation of architects, engineers, and design and construction professionals, in 2014, the Conservancy formed a partnership with Bronx International High School, which is housed in the landmark Morris High School (C.B.J. Snyder, 1890-1904).

Via field trips to architecturally significant sites, workshops, and internships opportunities, the partnership is meant to expose juniors and seniors in the Preservation Technology Program to the profession of historic preservation and the various career paths in the building conservation and restoration fields.

Mystery Photo Contest & Tourist Video Series

The Landmarks Conservancy continued its popular Mystery Landmark contest and Tourist In Your Own Town video series.

The Mystery Landmark was launched in January 2011 and was an instant hit. It’s a monthly competition to identify a close-up cropped image of a New York City landmark. Winners receive a set of the Conservancy’s walking tour books or other publications.

The first episode of Tourist In Your Own Town was posted to YouTube in August 2011. The series invites New Yorkers and visitors alike to explore the City’s extraordinary abundance of historic landmarks. A total of 41 videos have been produced through the end of 2015 and the entire series has been viewed more than 90,000 times.

2015 Tourist In Your Own Town videos included Fraunces Tavern, the Woolworth Building, Church of Our Dame (Morning Side Heights), the Four Seasons restaurant, and the Old Stone House and the Battle of Brooklyn.

Watch our Tourist In Your Own Town videos at Youtube.com/nylandmarks

Professional Circle Luncheon

Conservancy President Peg Breen at the Morgan Library Panel Discussion: “Preservation and Development: Is There Room in This Town for Both?” With Guests: Justin Davidson, Morris Alpine, Richard Anderson, Ingrid Godd Olle, Roberta Gratz, and Michael Shelden.

Reception at the Landmarks Conservancy’s Downtown Office

It was standing room only for the Conservancy’s annual Summer Solstice Open House in June when friends and colleagues enjoyed food, drink and sweeping panoramic views of Battery Park, Ellis Island, and New York Harbor.

General Society of Mechanics & Tradesmen Lectures

In 2015 the Conservancy continued its partnership with the General Society of Mechanics & Tradesmen of New York City and members were invited to a series titled “Landmark Lectures.” Subjects included Terracotta Preservation, Conservation Goals and Methodologies for Landmarks, and Cross & Cross Architects.

Holiday Party

The Conservancy concluded the year in December with its annual Winter Solstice Party at its office at Bowling Green. It was a fun and festive evening – a perfect way to kick off the year-end holidays.

Mystery Landmark Contest

Mystery Landmark was launched in January 2011 and was an instant hit. It’s a monthly competition to identify a close-up cropped image of a New York City landmark. Winners receive a set of the Conservancy’s walking tour books or other publications.

The first episode of Tourist In Your Own Town was posted to YouTube in August 2011. The series invites New Yorkers and visitors alike to explore the City’s extraordinary abundance of historic landmarks. A total of 41 videos have been produced through the end of 2015 and the entire series has been viewed more than 90,000 times.

2015 Tourist In Your Own Town videos included Fraunces Tavern, the Woolworth Building, Church of Our Dame (Morning Side Heights), the Four Seasons restaurant, and the Old Stone House and the Battle of Brooklyn.
TOURS AND OTHER EVENTS

Judy Glickman and Leonard Lauder with Family of James and Elaine Wolfensohn
Dinner at the Metropolitan Club Honoring James Wolfensohn

Interns With Landmarks Proclamation from Bronx Borough President, Ruben Diaz, Jr.

Professional Circle Tour - South Side of Ellis Island

Light Testing at New York State Pavilion, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens

Summer Interns from Bronx International High School and Skidmore College

Lena Kiladze, Peg Breen, Tara Kelly, and Mary Kay Judy - The American Friends of Georgia
presented an illustrated talk at the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen

TOURS AND OTHER EVENTS

Professional Circle Tour at The Bowne House - Flushing, Queens

I Heart NY Landmarks Photo Contest Winner - Pi Gardiner, Merchant’s House Museum

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer Speaking at Chairman’s Award Luncheon

Summer Interns from Bronx International High School and Skidmore College

Professional Circle Tour - Bowne & Co. Stationers, South Street Seaport Museum

TOURS AND OTHER EVENTS

Professional Circle Tour - Bowne & Co. Stationers, South Street Seaport Museum
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### The New York Landmarks Conservancy’s success depends on the annual support of our individual, corporate, and foundation donors. Each year we raise more than 50 percent of our operating budget from partnerships with the following supporters during 2015. If any names have been listed incorrectly or omitted, we accept their apologies and let us know how we may adjust our records.
Statement of Activities

Year Ended December 31, 2015

Support and Revenue
Contributions $ 2,355,253
Special Events, net of direct benefit to donor 1,234,977
Investment return used for operations 90,713
Program services income 20,120
Total Support and Revenue $ 3,701,063

Expenses
Program $ 1,872,638
Development 800,916
Administration 259,649
Total Expenses $ 2,933,203
Support and Revenue over (under) Expenses $ 767,860

Non-operating Activities
Non-operating investment return -121,866
Change in Net Assets 645,994
Net Assets, Beginning $ 10,353,830
Net Assets, Ending $ 10,999,824

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2015

Assets
Cash and cash equivalents $ 3,440,250
Pledges receivable 520,000
Loans receivable 79,621
Due from NYCHP Fund, Inc. 38,321
Prepaid expenses and other assets 44,973
Investments 5,632,358
Property and equipment, net 24,329
Prepaid expenses and other assets 44,973
Due from NYCHP Fund, Inc. 38,328
Loans receivable 79,671
Cash and cash equivalents held for other agencies 109,074
Restricted Investments 2,357,068
Total Assets $ 12,286,051

Liabilities
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities 3,493
Grants payable 976,705
Deferred rent 121,055
Due to New York City Historic Properties Fund, Inc. 75,300
Amounts held for other agencies 109,074
Total Liabilities $ 1,286,227

Net Assets
Unrestricted
Undesignated 867,476
Total Unrestricted 7,245,078
Temporarily Restricted 1,357,678
Permanently Restricted 2,397,068
Total Net Assets $ 10,999,824
Total Liabilities and Net Assets $ 12,286,051

A copy of the complete audited financial statements for 2015 may be obtained upon written request from The New York Landmarks Conservancy, One Whitehall Street, New York, NY 10004.

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Photo on page 2 of Peg Breen, and all Chairman’s Award photos by James Salzano

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