

2020

PENNSYLVANIA **AT RISK** preservation PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania At Risk puts statewide focus on a building's plight, promotes local action, and rallies statewide support for historic preservation.

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www.preservationpa.org

PENNSYLVANIA AT RISK preservation PENNSYLVANIA

MISSION STATEMENT

Preservation Pennsylvania, through creative partnerships, targeted educational and advocacy programs, advisory assistance, and special projects, assists Pennsylvania communities to protect and utilize the historic resources they want to preserve for the future.

ABOUT US

Preservation Pennsylvania is the commonwealth's only statewide, private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the protection of historically and architecturally significant properties. The organization was created in 1982 as the Preservation Fund of Pennsylvania to operate a revolving fund that would assist in the acquisition and rehabilitation of historic properties. Since its incorporation, the organization has evolved and now organizes the Statewide Conference on Heritage, hosts the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Awards, and publishes an annual list of endangered properties in *Pennsylvania At Risk* in addition to managing a revolving fund and intervention fund. Preservation Pennsylvania also participates in educational programs and advocacy initiatives, conducts special projects, and offers technical assistance to people throughout the commonwealth.

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2020

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From the Executive Director



I want to express our thanks to all of you out there who responded to our call for *Pennsylvania At Risk* nominations this year. Where would we

be without people like you who love the special places that have meaning to your community?

The people who made the effort to nominate places to this year's *At Risk* didn't drive by and say "someone should do something." They did it themselves.

I'd like to encourage all of us to spread the love in 2020. Plan a heart-bombing in February and place valentines on a building you care about. Share a legacy business on social media and help them get new customers. Invite a friend for a night out and take them to a meeting of your local board of supervisors or planning commission. Make a resolution to be more engaged with your local historical society or house museum. Keep tabs on emerging issues. Thank the person working on that great renovation.

The majority of the places on our *Pennsylvania At Risk* list this year need money and/or the voice of the populace. Speak up for old stones and bricks. Old buildings and their history may speak to us, but we all need to be willing to speak up on their behalf.

Finally, I want to thank you for your support of our work and ask you to consider making a donation to Preservation Pennsylvania to help further our efforts to protect and preserve Pennsylvania's historic resources.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mindy G. Crawford".

Mindy Gulden Crawford

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Photographs were provided as part of *Pennsylvania At Risk* nominations, unless otherwise indicated. *At Risk* profiles are based on information from nominations. While we have attempted to verify the information provided, Preservation Pennsylvania does not assume liability for errors.

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Pennsylvania At Risk UPDATES

In Memoriam

Philadelphia's **Mount Moriah Cemetery** (2004 PA At Risk) has a dedicated group of volunteers that is slowly reversing decades of neglect. The beloved leader of the Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery (FOMMCI) effort, **Paulette Rhone**, passed away in 2019. In the words of Matthew Christopher of Abandoned America, "Paulette was someone whom I greatly admired: she was infinitely kind, the sort of person who always let you know she appreciated your efforts and made you feel like a part of the FOMMCI family. Nonetheless, she wasn't a pushover – she'd chase someone dumping garbage in the cemetery, and you always knew that she would stick up for you if you needed it. She was also a great and tireless leader: she was out on the front lines leading cleanup efforts herself, and it was very personal for her, as her husband was buried in the once-neglected cemetery's grounds. FOMMCI is an organization that drew in many people – from student volunteer organizations to regulars who came to organize records, mow down the weeds choking the headstones, and preserve its history. It would be unfair and inaccurate to attribute all of that to one person, but what is undeniable is that she was the heart of that effort and one of its hardest workers and fiercest supporters ... They cleared paths for people to visit their long-lost relatives' graves and took a blighted area in the community and – paradoxically,

since it was a graveyard – filled it with life and hope once again." The work of FOMMCI will continue, a lasting tribute to her memory and an inspiration to all those who wonder if one person really can make a difference!

Progress

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Mount Tabor AME Church (2018 PA At Risk) has been the scene of dedicated volunteer efforts to stabilize and winterize the structure, including our own Julia Chain donning hazmat attire to relocate some local wildlife. In late 2019, the African American Episcopal Zion Church passed ownership to the Mt Holly Springs Borough. "The borough is incredibly fortunate to be able to assist in the preservation of a spectacular piece of history. We are excited to see what the Cumberland County Historical Society and their volunteers, in partnership with the



Associate Director Julia Chain (left) and Dr. Lindsay Varner, of the Cumberland County Historical Society, going above and beyond the call of duty, relocating wildlife at the Mount Tabor AME Church.

borough, are able to accomplish. We hope that it will bring a greater appreciation to the years of history that developed between the walls of the church and the community around it," commented Chief Thomas Day, Mt. Holly Springs Borough Manager.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The Friends of Abolition Hall (2017 PA At Risk) continue their fight to protect and preserve a nationally-significant Underground Railroad and anti-slavery village. As we reported last year, the roadway along which the development will be constructed remains closed due to a sinkhole. The FAH lost its appeal of the Whitemarsh Township decision to approve the developer's Conditional Use application, but the group continues to advocate for a better plan for the site, appearing at meetings to provide public comment on the homestead site plan and historic buildings, as well as wetlands and sinkhole studies. For updates, check our website and follow the Plymouth Meeting Abolition Hall Facebook page.

Lindenwold (2015 PA At Risk) is considered a partial save, since features of the property, such as the Scottish Baronial-style mansion, two carriage houses, iron gates and surrounding property wall remain. (In November, two car accidents destroyed one of the stone entryways.) On social media, local residents expressed grief and surprise when they witnessed the visual transformation of the 45-acre

DD DATES

landscape which was being cleared for construction of 104 townhomes, parking, and a 250-unit senior living facility. The community felt caught off guard, yet this project has been the subject of years of meetings and plan review. The situation offers a cautionary tale about why it's important to participate in civic affairs by checking upcoming agendas, attending meetings, voting and/or running for office. Familiarize yourself with local ordinances on issues that matter to you, and encourage your local officials to plan for identification of and protection for historic resources that matter to the community.

YORK COUNTY

Preservation Pennsylvania, Susquehanna National Heritage Area, The Conservation Fund, and other groups are collaborating to preserve the c. 1800 **Mifflin House farmstead** in eastern York County (2017 PA At Risk). In November 2019, representatives from several public agencies, elected officials, nonprofits, and private foundations were invited to tour the site to discuss the potential for future protection and reuse. While no specific details on the plan or funding are available at this time, progress is being made toward preservation of this important Underground Railroad historic site. We are grateful to the developer and owners for providing a two-year time frame to seek a positive outcome.



Lindenwold



Mifflin House farmstead

The clearing of the landscape at Lindenwold (above) stunned the local community. Executive Director Mindy Crawford welcomed potential stakeholders to a tour of the Mifflin House farmstead, an Underground Railroad site in York County.

LOST

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY

Jewelers' Row (2017 PA At Risk) was the nation's oldest jewelry district; a low-rise commercial area not far from Independence Hall. Toll Brothers' plan for demolition of five buildings in the core of the district for a luxury high-rise will proceed. The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia doggedly pursues the delayed designation of the rest of the district to allow for more carefully managed change in the future.



Jewelers' Row: Threatened buildings (above) and demolition (below).

Photo Credit: Bonnie Halda



2020 At Risk Sites

ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Croatian Fraternal Union

3441 Forbes Avenue

Pittsburgh

Threat: Development Pressure, Demolition

Firstside Historic District

100-102, 104 and 106-108 Market Street

209 First Avenue

Pittsburgh

Threat: Development Pressure, Demolition

LEHIGH COUNTY

Lock Ridge Furnace

525 Franklin Street

Alburtis

Threat: Physical Deterioration,

Financial Capacity

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Meadows Road Bridge

Meadows Road at Saucon Creek

Lower Saucon Township

Threat: Demolition

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY

John Coltrane House

1511 N. 33rd Street

Philadelphia

National Historic Landmark

Threat: Physical Deterioration,

Financial Capacity

YORK COUNTY

Strickler Farmhouse

1205 Williams Road

Springettsbury Township

Threat: Demolition



Croatian Fraternal Union

History

Pittsburgh, with its job opportunities in mining, steel production, and railroad transport, was attractive to immigrants fleeing unrest in southern and eastern European countries in the late 19th century. As early as the 1880s, a Croatian neighborhood enclave developed in Allegheny City, Pittsburgh's present-day North Side, and the new Croatian-American residents chose to organize at the local and national level to ease the challenges of making a home in a new land, and to protect their cultural, social and financial interests.

The Croatian Fraternal Union of America – originally known as Hrvatska Bratska Zajednica or “Croatian Society” – began in 1894 in Allegheny City. Membership grew dramatically, and it became one of the United States' leading fraternal benefit societies. In addition to providing social and cultural opportunities, the organization also offered life insurance, health insurance, accident insurance, and other financial services, plus scholarships, a radio program, and a newspaper. During the 1930s, the Croatian Fraternal Union was also involved with labor organization, as many Croatian immigrants were involved in Pittsburgh's mining and manufacturing industries.

The plan for the Croatian Fraternal Union building, conceived as the organization's national headquarters, was developed in 1927, one year after the national merger of four Croatian-focused organizations to form the Croatian Fraternal Union. The building, designed by architect Pierre A. Liesch, was intended to meet the new needs of the organization, including offices, an auditorium, and a meeting hall. The building is one of only three examples of the Flemish Gothic style in Pittsburgh.



THREAT: DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE, DEMOLITION

The Croatian Fraternal Union occupied the building until 1961 when it moved to its present office in Wilkins Township. As a member-owned and operated organization, the Pittsburgh-based Croatian Fraternal Union of America exists today as the largest Croatian organization outside of Croatia. After 1961, the building was home to the offices of the Allegheny County Health Department.

Threat

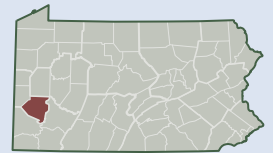
The building is owned by the University of Pittsburgh, which intends to demolish the building to construct an innovation center in partnership with Wexford Development.

As this specific area within the Oakland neighborhood undergoes immense developmental change, it's important to look at managing that change in order to retain the valuable character and human scale of the neighborhood. Pittsburgh has already lost a significant Croatian heritage site, St. Nicholas Church on the North Side. The loss of the former Fraternal Union Building would continue the erosion of our shared heritage and the city's character.

Change

The building was added to the Young Preservationists Association's Top 10 Best Preservation Opportunities in fall 2018.

**3441 FORBES AVENUE / PITTSBURGH
ALLEGHENY COUNTY**



Local preservationists urge the University of Pittsburgh to incorporate the former Croatian Fraternal Union building into its plans for a new innovation center, rather than demolishing the ornate Flemish Gothic-style building.

A nomination for local historic designation was submitted in 2018 by the Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation with assistance from Preservation Pittsburgh. The nomination was tabled while good faith talks were underway. Social media has rallied support for the preservation of the building. If you believe this building should be preserved, join the chorus on social media and let Preservation Pittsburgh know you're supporting them! Here's the opportunity to build support statewide and beyond. The story of immigration in America is a timely one, and this place matters as a testament to the past, present and future of a proud immigrant culture and shared heritage.

We will join with Preservation Pittsburgh to encourage the University of Pittsburgh to think creatively about a design that can preserve aspects of the building. Preservation-oriented funding could include tax credits, foundation and government grants, and support from the Croatian community.

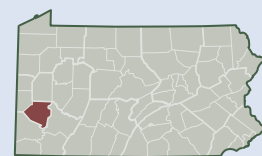


Firstside Historic District

THREAT: DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE, DEMOLITION

100-102, 104 AND 106-108 MARKET STREET AND 209 FIRST AVENUE / PITTSBURGH / ALLEGHENY COUNTY

A National Register Historic District (listed 1988) that represents Pittsburgh's wharf trade history with architecturally significant buildings is threatened with the potential demolition of a block of buildings for which the owner has provided no indication of a redevelopment plan or financing.



History

The commercial, warehouse and office buildings located in the Firstside National Register Historic District (Fort Pitt Boulevard, Boulevard of the Allies, and First Street bounded by Grant Street and Stanwix Street) help tell the story of the once-bustling trade at the Monongahela Wharf (no longer extant) during the mid-19th to early-20th centuries, until truck and rail superseded river transport as the primary means of shipping goods. Called “Firstside” for the proximity to First Avenue, the district’s architecture ranges from vernacular to high styles popular during the period of significance (1845-1938).

In 1945, legislation paved the way for urban renewal projects that resulted in construction of a highway that cut off river access, office buildings and parking lots.

In the “Pittsburgh Renaissance,” many buildings were lost. The Firstside District offers a pocket of human-scaled buildings that provide a respite from the modern development all around it. The buildings here once stored goods from Pittsburgh craftsmen and manufacturers to be shipped across the state and across the country.

Threat

Two buildings (212 and 214 Boulevard of the Allies) have already been lost. While the immediate threat is to four nearby buildings (100-102, 104 and 106-108 Market Street, and 209 First Avenue), preservationists believe that the demolition and new high-rise development would gut the National Register District, and the entire district could lose its listed status (and the benefits that go with it, such as historic preservation tax credits).



The developer wishes to demolish the buildings to consolidate the lots and construct a high-rise office or apartment building. The Planning Department has asked the owner to give further consideration to how to utilize the space, and to provide more details about the project and financing plans.

Change

This project could create a giant hole in this district. This collection of historic buildings is an irreplaceable connection to Pittsburgh's productive manufacturing past. Preservation Pittsburgh is working on local designation to provide some protection, and seeks wider community involvement to show the Planning Department that this project matters to local residents. What's the vision for the future of this place? Once demolished, these buildings are gone forever. The issue is not "there are other buildings" – the issue is that Individual buildings with historic integrity are needed to maintain the fabric and setting of a community.

About the Pennsylvania At Risk Program

For more than 25 years, Preservation Pennsylvania's annual listing of endangered historic properties has raised awareness about preservation issues and rallied statewide support. In this time, several key factors have emerged as consistent threats.

For instance, in areas where real estate markets are strong, DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE often threatens to compromise the setting or result in the demolition of important historic properties. Conversely, a WEAK LOCAL ECONOMY, vacancy and/or abandonment often lead to deferred maintenance, which can result in physical deterioration or demolition.

Even in cases where buildings aren't vacant, if their owner does not have the FINANCIAL CAPACITY to maintain the building, physical deterioration or demolition may occur.

Another common threat is CONTROL CONCERNS. Where there is a LACK OF LOCAL TOOLS to encourage or require maintenance and/or preservation, or where zoning or other ordinances do not support preservation goals, there is often little that can be done to address these control concerns.

FUNCTIONAL OBSOLESCENCE can also put historic properties at risk. When their original intended function is no longer needed in the community, a new way of doing business exists, or users prefer a different type or style of space, buildings can be threatened with inappropriate alterations, physical deterioration, or demolition.

The action(s) needed to protect historic properties from the threats of inappropriate alterations, compromised setting, physical deterioration, or demolition will vary, depending on the contributing factors. Preservation Pennsylvania is in the process of working with property owners and other interested parties to formulate an action plan that will help to protect each of the historic buildings included in this 2020 *Pennsylvania At Risk* list.

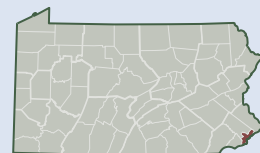


John Coltrane House

THREAT: PHYSICAL DETERIORATION, FINANCIAL CAPACITY

1511 N. 33RD STREET / PHILADELPHIA / PHILADELPHIA COUNTY

National Historic Landmark designation can't save this jazz great's home from slow decline, but willing owners working with a caring community may make it possible.



History

John Coltrane, a jazz composer and one of the most influential saxophonists in music history, purchased this Philadelphia row house in 1952 and lived there until 1958. In the album liner notes for his masterpiece, "A Love Supreme," Coltrane wrote, "During the year 1957, I experienced, by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which was to lead me to a richer, fuller, more productive life. At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music." The spiritual awakening took place in the second

floor rear bedroom of this house. In this room, Coltrane kicked his heroin addiction, with a window view of the railroad tracks leading to New York City and his future. The spiritual awakening informed the remainder of his productive and storied career.

While living there, Coltrane composed the groundbreaking album "Giant Steps." The track "Cousin Mary" is dedicated to his beloved cousin, Mary Lyrly Alexander, described in the album's liner notes as "a very earthy, folksy, swinging person." They grew up together; Coltrane regarding her as a sister – and for years, they shared the house with his and her mothers.

Alexander perpetuated Coltrane's legacy, founding the John W. Coltrane Cultural Society, a nonprofit organization that operated out of the house. The group organized jazz workshops and master classes in public schools. She hosted a concert series in the backyard that featured big name Coltrane friends as well as up-and-coming musicians. She would host tours of the house, proudly displaying original music and paintings done by Coltrane. Recognizing the house's value as a touchstone to Coltrane and Philadelphia's jazz history, she achieved National Historic Landmark status for the house in 1999.

When ill health forced her into nursing care, she sought a new owner who would carry on the Coltrane torch. In that new era, unfortunate mistakes were made. The enthusiastic new owner's collections moved into the house to commingle with the Coltrane material and the Cultural Society files. When the new owner passed away, he left the property in trust to a family member. The jazz community and local preservation groups repeatedly reached out to offer assistance in maintaining the house but were unsuccessful. Water pipes froze and flooded the house. The bronze National Historic Landmark plaque went missing. Today, the house has boards over the windows and is silent. Cousin Mary's dream of establishing a lab for lessons, for local musicians to record where the legend once lived, for creating inspiration for the generations to come has all but died.

Threat

The future is uncertain for the house. Past efforts to offer maintenance and planning assistance were unsuccessful, although the family member involved in those discussions has since passed away. As a National Historic Landmark, the designation provides the house with no protections from demolition, alterations or neglect. The house is listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, which does provide protection from demolition and a process for review of proposed alterations. However, at this time, the house is simply in stasis, while the elements, age and time take their toll.

Change

The preservation and jazz communities still believe in the power of this place and stand by to assist the current owners. They contributed to the plan published in 2013 by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia that outlined possibilities for the use, interpretation and rehabilitation of the Coltrane House and adjacent property (under the same ownership). Assistance could take the form of helping to find a new owner for the house, revisiting prior efforts to offer maintenance and planning assistance, or a crowd-funding effort.



Connect and Get Involved

♥ In February, if there's an *At Risk* place you care about (our website has a list), show a little love and organize a heart-bombing — attach valentines and messages of support to beloved places. Share on social media with #PreservationPALove or email to ssmith@preservationpa.org. We also recommend the National Trust's preferred hashtag: #Iheartsavingplaces. *(Heart-bombing should always respect private property laws and should be reversible, not causing harm to the building.)*

♥ Do your civic duty! Vote. Serve on local commissions. Pay attention to upcoming local government meetings, and attend when there's an issue you care about. Bring along a friend.

♥ Connect with your local preservation organization, historic sites, and historical societies for local issues and events. Become a volunteer and help plan events!

♥ Follow us on Facebook for updates, news about hands-on workdays, advocacy alerts, and other preservation events. Search #PAatRisk on social media.

♥ Sign up for our monthly e-news at our website, preservationpa.org

♥ Donate to Preservation Pennsylvania or become a member to benefit our 2020 work with these *At Risk* sites. Your contributions will help provide direct intervention grant funding and technical assistance. Your membership demonstrates support for preservation policies.

♥ Check individual profiles for ways that you can connect with local advocates and get involved.

♥ Attend the Pennsylvania Statewide Conference on Heritage from June 24-26 in Easton, where you'll learn about the latest in preservation practice and have the opportunity to network with fellow preservationists.

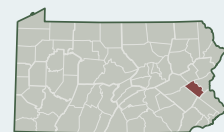


Lock Ridge Furnace: Furnace #7 and Cast House

**THREAT: PHYSICAL DETERIORATION,
FINANCIAL CAPACITY**

525 FRANKLIN STREET / ALBURTIS / LEHIGH COUNTY

A local park and its buildings tell the story of the region's industrial history and a town's founding, yet repairs to secure and reopen the buildings will be a budget strain.



History

In the center of the Borough of Alburty, you'll find an almost 60-acre park featuring the remains of the Lock Ridge Furnace. It was constructed by the Thomas Iron Works in 1868 and would become the largest employer in Alburty, its success resulting in the growth and prosperity of the town and shifting the economic base from agricultural to industrial.

The furnace complex included an office where clerks, a cashier, bookkeeper and weighmaster assisted in running business affairs. The main plant consisted of storage houses for coal, limestone and iron ore; elevators to move raw materials to the top of the furnace; the furnaces themselves to separate the iron from the ore; a boiler and engine house to blow the hot blast of air into the furnaces; and cast houses to mold melted iron into bars.

The furnace ran 24 hours a day, 365 days per year, and required 85 men working two shifts of 12 hours each. Four times a day, men working as casters pulled the plug at the bottom of each furnace and guided the molten iron to the cast houses into molds called sows, and from those into smaller ones called pigs.

When the Thomas Iron Company ceased operations in the 1920s, the assets were sold off, and the buildings sat awaiting their fate. In the 1970s, the Commissioners of Lehigh County acquired the property, and it was transformed into a park and museum. Today, Lock Ridge is one of only two surviving anthracite iron furnace sites in eastern Pennsylvania. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981, the remaining complex consists of the furnace room, engine room and cast room of furnace number 7; the former weighmaster's house;

the oil house; partial ruins of furnace number 8 and its associated buildings; partial ruins of the carpenter's shop; ruins of the blacksmith's shop; and the piers for the railroad trestles.

The park and its history is beloved by the residents of this tight-knit community, many of whom are descendants of Thomas Iron Company employees.

Threat

The furnace has suffered significant structural damage due to rainwater infiltration. Spot repairs to leaky areas have reduced the problem, but a complete replacement is necessary. Deterioration of the trusses and structure will continue until funds are acquired to completely replace the roof and the deteriorated supporting trusses. A 2019 engineering study estimates that the cost of the necessary work will exceed \$1 million.

Once the work has been completed, the interior areas of the cast house and furnace can be reopened for public access to provide visitors an understanding of the furnace and its importance to the Alburty community.

Without a complete roof restoration, further deterioration could result in even more limited public access due to safety concerns and potential demolition of the furnace and cast house building.

Change

Preservation Pennsylvania will help identify grants and other potential funding sources. We'll share updates regarding possible fundraising events and other ways that people can pitch in to help the effort.

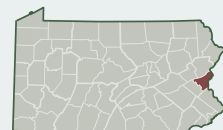


Meadows Road Bridge

THREAT: DEMOLITION

MEADOWS ROAD AT SAUCON CREEK / LOWER SAUCON TOWNSHIP / NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

A beloved and historic stone bridge provides an important connection to the past — and to two sides of a township. Locals want to see it repaired instead of replaced.



History

Your ancestor might have mailed a postcard featuring this picturesque rubble fieldstone bridge over the Saucon Creek. Painters such as Walter E. Baum and Fred Bees set up easels to paint its four arches. But more than being a long-standing part of the scenic landscape, the Meadows Road Bridge (built 1858) is the oldest bridge in Lower Saucon Township. In all of Northampton County, it is one of the oldest surviving bridges and is one of only two examples of a four-span stone arch bridge. Early stone arch bridges predate covered bridges and represent the only technology available to the early settlers for longer, permanent spans. By the 1860s, Northampton County bridge construction primarily used iron span technology.

County records for 1860 show Levi S. Moyer to be the wealthy owner of a nearby gristmill (built 1829) that still stands today. The bridge connected farmers to the mill, just as today it connects local citizens to offices and retail from one side of Lower Saucon Township to the other.

In 1976, when the County announced plans to replace the bridge, several local citizen groups wrote letters requesting that the bridge be saved. The public outcry and support for preservation of the existing bridge led the County to withdraw its plans for replacement.

Threat

The bridge was closed due to safety concerns when a county inspection in April 2018 determined that the structural integrity of the bridge was compromised. The bridge is currently in line for planned rehabilitation or replacement by Northampton County (determination pending).

Change

Preservation Pennsylvania will submit a historic resource survey form (HRSF) to the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) requesting evaluation of the bridge for National Register eligibility. As in 1976, a demonstration of public sentiment will show Northampton County that this bridge matters to local residents who used it every day before its closure. The bridge is part of the local identity, and the preference would be to solve the problems with the existing bridge rather than demolish and replace it.

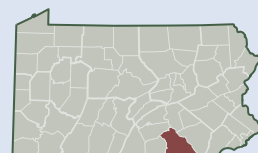


Strickler Farmhouse

THREAT: DEMOLITION

1205 WILLIAMS ROAD / SPRINGGETTSBURY TOWNSHIP / YORK COUNTY

National Register-listed farmhouse located on the county prison property needs to be moved or it may be demolished.



History

The Strickler Farmhouse is noted as one of only a few surviving homes built by the Pennsylvania German settlers of Springettsbury Township. The main stone house was constructed c. 1740, with two brick additions in the 19th century. The Stricklers were residents here for two centuries, beginning with weaver Ulrich Strickler who arrived here from Switzerland. For more than 200 years, generations of Strickler descendants lived in this house and worked their farm. The Strickler family sold the farm in the 1920s, and by the 1940s, it was in the possession of York County.

In 1991, the Strickler Family Farmhouse was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the County undertook a rehabilitation of the building to convert it for use as offices. The work was overseen by Historic York, Inc, a county nonprofit, to ensure that all the work met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Several agencies used the building as offices over the years, including the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency. When Immigration and Customs moved in 2013, the County had an architect evaluate the building, which was deemed to be structurally sound except for the roof. A fundraising effort to cover the

\$30,000 cost of the roof yielded only \$5,000. Since 2013, the County has explored several possibilities for its use, but none have been feasible. The house has been vacant and suffering from deferred maintenance. No longer the centerpiece of a rural farmstead, the farmhouse is now adjacent to the county prison. The Strickler Family cemetery is located between the farmhouse and the prison.

Threat

York County is unable to find a use for the Strickler Farmhouse and is seeking someone to move the property, or to occupy it with an easement. In October 2019, the County engaged A. D. Marble to document the building as a first step toward its demolition. The proximity of the building to the York County Prison and the security restrictions required by this location have severely limited reuse possibilities. Unless a new use is found and deferred maintenance repairs are made, the building will be demolished.

Change

Preservation Pennsylvania will meet with County representatives to discuss the situation and will promote the property to potential movers or users.



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