



**Preservation
League of NYS**

Penn Station Neighborhood One of New York's "Seven to Save"

This biennial list from the Preservation League of NYS highlights the most at-risk historic places across the state

Contacts:

Katy Peace, Preservation League Director of Communications

kpeace@preservenys.org | 518.462.5658 ext. 17

Brad Vogel, Empire Station Coalition Representative (with ESC member City Club of NY)

brad.vogel@gmail.com

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Manhattan, NY, 05/16/2022 — Since 1999, the Preservation League has highlighted New York's most endangered historic sites through its Seven to Save program. The League works closely with local advocates over the course of the two-year listing and beyond, raising visibility, assisting with advocacy, and providing extensive technical services. **The League is thrilled to include the Penn Station Neighborhood on the 2022-2023 Seven to Save list.**

"Multiple New York City blocks dense with historic buildings around Penn Station are at risk of indiscriminate mass demolition," said **Andrew Cronson, a representative of the Empire Station Coalition (ESC)** affiliated with ESC member Save Chelsea. "From landmark structures by famed architects to more than 2,000 residents to huge reservoirs of embodied carbon...the needless losses caused by the proposed Penn Area Plan would be staggering."

New York State's Empire State Development Corporation's proposed Pennsylvania Station Civic and Land Use Project (the "Penn Area Plan") would demolish multiple blocks of historic buildings in the vicinity of Penn Station. All told, over 40 historic buildings and structures stand to be lost while displacing thousands of residents and businesses. The immediate impact on the people who live and work in this neighborhood would be devastating. The needless demolition is an environmental catastrophe. The negative environmental impact related to the embodied carbon that is wasted when buildings are demolished and put in a landfill, combined with the carbon output of major new construction projects, is in direct opposition to New York State's proclaimed climate action goals.

ESC, a group of concerned community organizations led by co-coordinators Sam Turvey of RethinkNYC and Lynn Ellsworth of Human-Scale NYC, banded together in 2020 to fight the Penn Area Plan. ESC has worked tirelessly to push the Plan's many flaws to the forefront of public attention. The League will work with ESC and other local stakeholders to continue to prioritize the retention and adaptive reuse of historic buildings in the proposed redevelopment area in what has emerged as a highly contentious public debate over the future of urbanism in New York City.



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“Alleviating threats and in some cases outright saving these seven sites from demolition will make for challenging approaches,” said **Preservation League Seven to Save Committee Chair Caroline Rob Zaleski**. “The Preservation League staff are up to the task, as has been shown with the Seven to Save program’s remarkable 20-year track record in forming partnerships to help save and protect historic resources in New York State. Our selection committee chose to feature a diverse range of sites: a small African American church reflecting optimism and ingenuity; a Frederick Law Olmsted park during Olmsted’s bicentennial year; three urban districts – rife with history and varied important architecture; a recently closed 400-acre State hospital complex on Seneca Lake; and lastly a wooded site in Eastern Long Island, where the extant studios of two important Abstract Expressionist artists wait to be restored for public view.”

“The individual sites included on this year’s Seven to Save list embody key preservation issues affecting places across New York State,” said **Preservation League President Jay DiLorenzo**. “From the negative environmental impact of senseless demolition to bringing little-known, but important, histories to light, the League is excited to work alongside on-the-ground advocates to save each of these seven at-risk places.”

2022-2023 Seven to Save List

- **Thomas Memorial AME Zion Church, Watertown, Jefferson County**
Threat: Deterioration; Demolition
- **Genesee Valley Park, Rochester, Monroe County**
Threat: Demolition; Development Pressure; Lack of Public Awareness; Loss of Visual/Architectural Integrity
- **Proposed South of Union Square Historic District, Manhattan, New York County**
Threat: Demolition; Development Pressure; Loss of Visual/Architectural Integrity
- **Penn Station Neighborhood, Manhattan, New York County**
Threat: Development pressure; Demolition
- **Downtown Oneonta Historic District, Oneonta, Otsego County**
Threat: Demolition; Deterioration; Lack of Public Awareness; Loss of Visual/Architectural Integrity; Vacancy
- **Willard State Hospital, Romulus, Seneca County**
Threat: Demolition; Deterioration; Development Pressure; Lack of Public Awareness; Loss of Visual/Architectural Integrity; Vacancy
- **James Brooks / Charlotte Park Home & Studios, East Hampton, Suffolk County**
Threat: Demolition; Deterioration; Lack of Public Awareness; Vacancy

The League collaborates with property owners, elected officials, and other stakeholders to craft preservation strategies and put these plans into action. Through partnerships with groups and individuals, threats to dozens of at-risk buildings, landscapes, downtowns, and neighborhoods



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have been reduced, and in many cases, eliminated by the Preservation League's Seven to Save listing and subsequent actions

For more information about the Seven to Save program and this year's list, please visit preservenys.org/seven-to-save

Interviews with representatives from the Preservation League and all the Seven to Save sites are available by request.

About the Preservation League of New York State

Since its founding in 1974, the Preservation League has built a reputation for action and effectiveness. Our goal has been to preserve our historic buildings, districts, and landscapes and to build a better New York, one community at a time. The Preservation League of New York State invests in people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth, and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. We lead advocacy, economic development, and education programs across the state.

Connect with us at preservenys.org, facebook.com/preservenys, instagram.com/preservenys, and youtube.com/c/PreservationLeague

About Empire Station Coalition

Empire Station Coalition members include 29th Street Association, City Club of New York, CNU NYC, Hell's Kitchen Block Association, Historic Districts Council, Human-Scale NYC, RethinkNYC, Limited Equity and Affordability at Penn South, Midtown South Community Council, Penn-Area Residents Committee, TakeBackNYC, Save Chelsea, and the Victorian Society of New York.

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