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## **PRESERVATION LEAGUE WORKSHOP: UPPER FLOORS RE-USE KEY TO REVITALIZING MAIN STREETS**

ALBANY, NY – March 4, 2010 – In 2004, the Preservation League of New York State launched an ambitious pilot project of workshops and technical assistance in western New York to address an important aspect of Main Street revitalization: the reuse of vacant upper stories in downtown commercial buildings.

Now, the League is bringing its workshop to Niagara Falls on **Thursday, March 11**, from **9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**, at the **Niagara Falls Public Library, 1425 Main Street**.

“We developed and offered a model workshop, *Enhancing Main Street: Making Upper Floors Work Again*, in six Western New York counties to demonstrate how upper floors can offer attractive housing options,” said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. “Now, with the support of the Empire State Development Corporation, we are continuing to present this program around the state. By bringing together experts in the fields of historic preservation, project development, financing, and New York State building codes in one place at one time, we hope to address many questions facing building owners who are thinking about upper floor conversion possibilities.”

The Preservation League has found that the interest in downtown revitalization is very strong and growing in New York State. Through the Upper Floors program and by monitoring upper floors projects already underway, the Preservation League is building a case for reinvestment in the state’s historic commercial centers.

“Tools such as the enhanced Rehabilitation Tax Credit can help direct new investments to our older industrial cities to make them safer, healthier and more prosperous – places people want to live as well as work.” said DiLorenzo. “Each community faces unique challenges, but with programs like the Tax Credit and the generous sharing of best practices by experts at our

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Upper Floors workshops, the lights are coming back on above many Main Street retailers and offices across the New York.”

According to Henry McCartney, Executive Director of Preservation Buffalo Niagara, the host of the event, “We have too many buildings in Western New York that have a shop on the first floor but whose upper floors are vacant. Reusing these upper floors is an excellent way to add vitality to downtowns and neighborhood commercial areas. Our workshop will feature some very interesting case studies on how upper floors have been successfully reused.” This workshop is one of a series being organized by Preservation Buffalo Niagara with support from the New York State Council on the Arts.

“The Preservation League is proud to partner with Preservation Buffalo Niagara to acknowledge the leadership roles of local and state government, not-for-profit groups, the business community, and many others in encouraging downtown revitalization,” said Tania Werbizky, the League’s regional Director of technical and grant programs for western New York. “We hope that this workshop will spur additional investment in the area’s historic districts and structures, enhance the quality of life in our neighborhoods, and improve the vitality of our business districts.”

The workshop is co-sponsored by AIA New York State, and continuing education credits of 4.5 LUS/HSW will be awarded for attendees. APA/ACIP credits may also be available. Additional support is provided by the Empire State Development Corporation Association.

The workshop is free but advance registration is required. To register, please call 716-852-3300 or email [info@preservationbuffaloniagara.org](mailto:info@preservationbuffaloniagara.org). Arrangements will be made for participants to order lunch.

For more information on the Preservation League of New York State, please call 518-462-5658 or visit the League’s website at [www.preservenys.org](http://www.preservenys.org).

*By leading a statewide preservation movement, sharing information and expertise and raising a unified voice, the Preservation League of New York State promotes historic preservation as a tool to revitalize our neighborhoods and communities, honor our heritage and enrich our lives.*