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Preservation League adds South Street Seaport properties to Seven to Save list of endangered places for 2009

List highlights Quadricentennial themes of exploration, settlement, commerce

ALBANY, April 20, 2009 – The Preservation League of New York State has named properties in lower Manhattan’s **South Street Seaport** to the nonprofit group’s annual list of the Empire State’s most threatened historic resources, *Seven to Save*.

The Preservation League is using its 2009 list to support and enhance the year-long commemoration of the voyages of Henry Hudson, Robert Fulton and Samuel de Champlain.

The South Street Seaport and Fulton Market are historically linked to Robert Fulton and his ferry to Brooklyn, as well as to the theme of commerce along the Hudson River. The Tin Building (1907) and New Market Building (1939) are threatened by demolition and loss of context. General Growth Properties has proposed out-of-scale new development, requiring demolition of the National Register-eligible New Market Building and the relocation of the Tin Building. This site illustrates the need for careful planning along and stewardship of New York State’s waterfront, especially within historic districts.

“New York State is especially rich in maritime resources and waterfront communities,” said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. “The region from the Canadian border to New York Harbor is celebrated for its beauty, and it boasts a strong tradition of settlement by Native Americans followed by the French, Dutch, English, and others who made important contributions reflected in the area’s buildings and landscapes. Unfortunately, many of the valued historic resources that illustrate this epic tale are threatened by insensitive, ineffective or insufficient public policies, general neglect, and, in some cases, outright demolition.”

“The South Street Seaport is New York City’s oldest intact waterfront community. This neighborhood is the cradle of modern New York, where a settlement by the river grew into the commerce and financial capital of America,” said Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director of the Historic Districts Council, the citywide advocate for New York’s designated historic districts and

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for neighborhoods meriting preservation. “Remarkably, visitors and residents can still vividly experience the city’s early days by walking these venerable streets and visiting these historic buildings. The current plan proposed by General Growth Properties will destroy this unique environment. In the wake of the economic crisis, the time has come to reexamine this proposal and recognize the Seaport for what it really is – an authentic, vital part of New York City.”

According to Erin Tobin, the League’s Regional Director of Technical and Grant Programs for eastern New York, the inclusion of the South Street Seaport properties on the *Seven to Save* list provides the opportunity for the League to work with local advocates to protect the buildings. “We are looking forward to providing strategic attention, extra effort, and new tools to secure the future of these endangered resources for generations to come,” said Erin Tobin, the Preservation League’s eastern regional director for technical and grant programs. “We are delighted to report that through the community involvement and preservation strategies we have created together with local advocates, many significant properties have been saved.”

Since 1999, publicity surrounding the *Seven to Save* designation has led to the rehabilitation and reopening of the **Oswego City Public Library**, the rebirth of **Montauk Manor** on Long Island, and the stabilization of **St. Joseph’s Church** in Albany along with successes at several other locations.

The 2009 Seven to Save designees are, in chronological order:

- Magdalen Island, Red Hook in Tivoli Bays, Dutchess County;
- Jan van Hoesen House, Claverack, Columbia County;
- Gunboat *Spitfire*, Lake Champlain, Essex and Clinton Counties;
- Plumb-Bronson House, Hudson, Columbia County;
- Fort Montgomery, Rouse’s Point, Clinton County;
- Burden Iron Works Museum, Troy, Rensselaer County; and
- Historic South Street Seaport, Lower Manhattan, New York County.

The Preservation League of New York State, founded in 1974, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the protection of New York’s diverse and rich heritage of historic buildings, districts and landscapes. From its headquarters in Albany, it provides a unified voice for historic preservation. By leading a statewide movement and sharing information and expertise, the Preservation League of New York State promotes historic preservation as a tool to revitalize the Empire State’s neighborhoods and communities.