



Preservation League of NYS

Philharmonic Hall's *Orpheus and Apollo* and Elmhurst's African American Burial Ground Designated Seven to Save Sites

This biennial list from the Preservation League highlights the most at-risk historic places in New York State

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Albany, NY, 02/05/2020 — Since 1999, the Preservation League has highlighted New York's threatened historic sites through the Seven to Save list, which provides enhanced services from the League to bolster visibility and build support for preservation. Through partnerships with groups and individuals, threats to dozens of at-risk buildings, landscapes, downtowns, and neighborhoods have been reduced, and in many cases, eliminated by the Preservation League's listing and subsequent actions. Press conferences, tours, grants, and new legislation are among the strategies the Preservation League uses to secure the future of at-risk historic places. The League also collaborates with advocates, elected officials and other stakeholders to craft preservation strategies and put these plans to work.

"These Seven to Save selections bring attention to fascinating diverse aspects of The Empire State's rich, eclectic built history," said **Preservation League Seven to Save Committee Chair Caroline Rob Zaleski**. "Each threatened site represents a particular approach to engineering and architecture, as well as specific public purpose and sociology."

"Our 2020-21 Seven to Save list helps tell the story of the many people who made our state unique," said **Preservation League President Jay DiLorenzo**. "A sacred burial ground, a vulnerable lighthouse, a reimagined high school, a susceptible beachside enclave, an iconic canal system, a para-architectural installation, an imperiled research center; each site speaks to what makes our state special."

The Preservation League announces two of our Seven to Save sites are in New York City:

- **Richard Lippold's *Orpheus and Apollo*** | New York County
Threat: Development pressure, lack of public awareness

Richard Lippold's monumental *Orpheus and Apollo* hanging interior para-architectural installation was removed from Avery Fisher/David Geffen Hall in 2014. Initially, Lincoln Center claimed this was a temporary circumstance due to the safety of the public and the art, but Lippold's work would return following forthcoming renovations. Since that time, Lincoln Center announced sweeping changes to the Hall which currently do not include reinstallation. *Orpheus and Apollo* was the first major piece created specifically for Lincoln Center and a key commission for Richard Lippold, an internationally-renowned artist known for his site-specific work. Lincoln Center's National Register Eligibility determination noted "the complex is ... a



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collection of buildings, interiors, landscapes and art that is unparalleled as an experience of the variety of American postwar design in a single location.” *Orpheus and Apollo* remains in storage and could be repatriated with its' architecture, as part of a renewed Avery Fisher/David Geffen Hall. This Seven to Save designation will call attention to the importance of *Orpheus and Apollo* as not only publicly accessible art, but also a key feature of the Philharmonic Hall itself.

“This important installation engages the Philharmonic in conversation about the performing arts through a visual arts dialog across the plaza with the Ballet and the Opera. Without it, the Philharmonic stands mute,” **said Page Cowley, Chair, LANDMARK WEST!** “*Orpheus and Apollo* is frozen music physicalized as high art. Architecturally speaking, this construction serves as a pivot, drawing locals into the plaza from the neighborhoods of the Upper West Side.”

- **Elmhurst African American Burial Ground** | Elmhurst, Queens County
Threat: Development pressure, lack of public awareness

In 2011, construction workers in Elmhurst working in a vacant lot discovered the over 100-year-old grave of a woman in an iron coffin. Research revealed her identity and the existence of many unmarked graves of citizens of Newtown, a community of freed African Americans established in 1828. Development now threatens to erase this history altogether, and the Elmhurst History & Cemeteries Preservation Society is working with others to halt this. This Seven to Save designation will help promote Newtown’s forgotten history and bring attention to the many unmarked African American burial grounds throughout New York State, highlighting the conversation around these important parts of our history.

“This designation by the Preservation League of NYS is truly an inspiration for us to continue our work in getting the proper recognition and long overdue preservation of the African American burial ground in Elmhurst, Queens,” **said Marialena Giampino, President, Elmhurst History and Cemeteries Preservation Society.** “For Elmhurst (formally Newtown) to have this tangible site that is in one of the first freed African American communities in New York State, we must strive for affirmation and preservation of this sacred burial ground. The Elmhurst African American burial ground has a deep purpose to tell the narrative of the African American community in Newtown and the greater New York State.”

The 2020-21 Seven to Save List also includes:

- **New York State Barge Canal System** | Multiple Counties
Threat: Development pressure, lack of public awareness, loss of visual/architectural integrity
- **Hudson-Athens Lighthouse** | Hudson River, Greene County
Threat: Deterioration, lack of public awareness, loss of visual/architectural integrity
- **Central Technical High School** | Syracuse, Onondaga County
Threat: Deterioration, development pressure, lack of public awareness, loss of visual/architectural integrity, vacancy
- **Parrott Hall** | Geneva, Ontario County
Threat: Demolition, deterioration, loss of visual/architectural integrity, vacancy
- **Sag Harbor Hills, Azurest & Ninevah Subdivisions (SANS)** | Sag Harbor, Suffolk County
Threat: Demolition, deterioration, development pressure, lack of public awareness, loss of visual/architectural integrity, vacancy



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More information about these historic sites and the Seven to Save program can be found on our website: <https://www.preservenys.org/seven-to-save>

Interviews with leaders from the Preservation League, Landmark West!, and Elmhurst History and Cemeteries Preservation Society 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.

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