

October 5, 2023

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351 Stewart Avenue
Garden City, NY 11530

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Dear Village Administrator Suozzi and Members of the Garden City Board of Trustees:

The Preservation League of New York State is writing to voice our support for the preservation and adaptive reuse of St. Paul's School.

Jay DiLorenzo
President

The Preservation League of New York State empowers all New Yorkers to use historic preservation to enrich their communities, protect their heritage, and build a sustainable future. We believe saving St. Paul's would be of great value to residents of Garden City. We also believe the value of this local landmark extends beyond the Village borders – it is a building of significant statewide importance. The League included St. Paul's on our 2003 Seven to Save list of endangered historic sites. In the 20 years since that listing, the building has continued to languish. However, with roof stabilization work completed in 2021 and the recent Comparative Analysis prepared by Westerman Construction, it seems like there is a path forward for St. Paul's.

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St. Paul's is a High Victorian Gothic-style masterpiece, designed by noted architect Henry G. Harrison. Despite years of vacancy, the building is in remarkably good shape and retains much of its original character, including terra cotta details, stained glass windows, Minton tiles, and wood craftsmanship throughout. Its prominence in the Village cannot be overstated. To tear down such an architectural gem would be a major loss.

A rehabilitated St. Paul's would serve as a statewide model for reuse and economic development. There are myriad possible uses that could reinvigorate the building and provide space for much-needed public services. And with more building space needed to provide Village residents with things like Universal Pre-K, we strongly urge the Village to repurpose the building you already have. The costs associated with new construction are likely to outweigh those associated with adaptive reuse – especially when issues of sustainability are factored in. Even after 20 years, a new construction is unlikely to have overcome its initial carbon output. Data suggests that it would take anywhere from 10-80 years for a new construction to overcome the negative climate change impacts from its construction (*sourced from Architecture 2030's CARE Tool*). Environmental remediation will be necessary whether the building is rehabilitated or demolished. And the material waste associated with demolition adds to the landfill while detracting from the Village's cultural heritage.

We are hopeful that renewed public interest in preserving St. Paul's will allow for fruitful conversations about how best to put the building back to active use. We strongly encourage the preservation of this incredible public space.

Sincerely,



Jay DiLorenzo, President, Preservation League of NYS