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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

### ***New Rochelle BID Model Development Block to be honored***

ALBANY, NY – May 1, 2008 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the **New Rochelle Business Improvement District Model Development Block** in Westchester County to receive its prestigious Excellence in Historic Preservation Award. This statewide awards program recognizes individuals and organizations for demonstrating an outstanding commitment to the preservation of New York State’s irreplaceable architectural heritage.

“This five-building project, conceived as a model to illustrate the benefits of the restoration of historic properties, owes much of its success to the enormous amount of imaginative and resourceful collaboration among local businesses, state agencies and regional organizations,” said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. “The positive and visible results, including additional commercial and residential preservation and economic development, are already serving as an inspiration to other municipalities.”

Contributing to the success of this effort were the New Rochelle Business Improvement District, Community Preservation Corporation, Susan Doban Architect, PC of Brooklyn, and Polonia Development and Preservation Services of Queens, along with the individual building owners. Funding from the Empire State Development Corporation Main Streets Program, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the City of New Rochelle helped support the project.

The five buildings restored in the Model Development Block project were selected because, though recognized as significant historic structures, they had been hidden for decades behind metal or stucco facades, or had lost their luster through years of neglect.

“The BID’s project has accomplished two significant goals,” said Barbara Davis, City Historian. “First, it beautifully restored five 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings that are important to the

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history of downtown New Rochelle, and second, it increased the community's awareness of all the architectural treasures that exist in our midst."

According to Susan Doban, president of Susan Doban Architect, PC, "It's gratifying on many levels to restore the underlying richly detailed terracotta, stone, and brick facades; it heightens awareness of the historic past, the labor and resources that went into the development of the earlier downtown, and, in this case, it has stimulated new pride in the downtown. The psychological ripple effect is almost palpable, and has already translated into renewed economic vigor as other property owners follow suit and new businesses are attracted to the Main Street area."

The award will be presented at the Preservation League's Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony in New York City at 6:00 p.m. on **Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup>** at the historic **Park Avenue Armory**, 643 Park Avenue.

The complete list of award winners is: Webb Lofts in Buffalo, Erie County; MacNaughton House Stabilization in Newcomb, Essex County; U.S. Post Office & Courthouse, Cadman Plaza, Brooklyn, Kings County; Downtown Revitalization Program, Canajoharie, Montgomery County; Eldridge Street Synagogue, Lower East Side, New York County; Proctors, Schenectady, Schenectady County; Hotel Kirkland, Kingston, Ulster County; Model Development Block, New Rochelle, Westchester County. The Hudson Valley Chapter of the American Society of Home Inspectors will be honored for organizational excellence, and Trude Brown Fitelson of Rochester will be honored for individual excellence. *Preserving New York: Winning the Right to Protect a City's Landmarks* by Anthony C. Wood (Routledge, 2007) will also receive a special citation.

"Excellence in Preservation Awards are our principal means of honoring the preservation community and educating the public about the important contribution that historic preservation projects make to our quality of life throughout New York State," said DiLorenzo. "Each year, we are impressed by the number and variety of laudable projects, and this year was no exception. We are delighted to give the New Rochelle BID's Model Development Block Project the statewide recognition it deserves."

*The Preservation League's Excellence in Historic Preservation awards program is funded by a generous grant from the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation of Miami, Florida.*

*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.*

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