

# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK



Prepared for the City of Pittsfield  
By the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission  
September 2016

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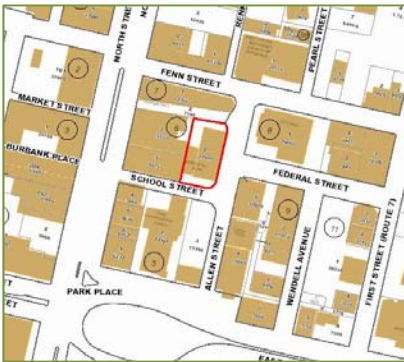
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# 39 ALLEN STREET

The City of Pittsfield Police Station, located at 39 Allen Street, was constructed between 1938-1939. It is a two story brick building with three bays. It has a concrete belt course just under the first floor windows. Windows have three horizontal panes, bottom pane louvered, and are uniform across the front façade. It is roughly Federal Revival in style, with a central bay parapet, angled soldier course with concrete key stone over each window, and an elaborate door surround with a broken pediment. The building is rectangular in plan with a rear one story addition. The north side of the building has another elaborate door surround, with the word "Welfare" carved in the stone. This façade also features a Palladian window at the second story, a common feature of this style.



Parcel ID: H090006002

.273 acres

Currently serves as City of Pittsfield Police Department

Total Assessed Value: \$789,130.00

Land Value: \$60,300.00

Improvements: \$728,830.00

Ward: 2A

City of Pittsfield, current owner

Constructed 1938-1939

No liens, violations, foreclosures, (as of 6/16)

PIT.433 (no individual form)

Contributes to Park Square National Register Historic District (boundary increase),  
listed October 1991





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 39 Allen Street is located in downtown Pittsfield, across Allen Street from City Hall. The former Pittsfield Central Fire Station, c. 1895, is also across the street; it has recently been converted, using historic tax credits, to office space and houses the Berkshire Chamber of Commerce and the Berkshire Visitors Bureau. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Police Department is listed on the National Register as a contributing element in the Park Square Historic District (boundary expansion). The nomination notes that the building, along with the nearby New England Telephone building, illustrates signs of growth in downtown Pittsfield in the 1930s. The area was prosperous at that time but was never as successful as its previous boom in the 1800s. The building is noted as a "stately example of a municipal building in a reserved 1930s neo-Federal style." The architect is thought to be Peter MacLaughlin, who also designed 146-150 First Street.



**Preservation Challenges:** 39 Allen Street was constructed in 1938 as accessory municipal office space and has been adapted to fit the needs of the Police Department. The building is out of date and too small for the current workforce. According to news articles, there is also a lack of facilities for female officers, a lack of private interview rooms, and out-dated technology. In 2013, the City issued an RFP for a feasibility study for the construction of a new station. The resulting study found that the police department needs three times the space available in their existing facility. The City has not considered interior alterations to the existing building. If the department moved to a new facility, 39 Allen Street would be vacated. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but is not permanently preserved through any means. The parcel is zoned BD, or downtown business. This zone encourages high density uses, and includes office space, retail, and high density housing. Immediately across the street the former Pittsfield Fire Station was converted into office space, using tax credits.





# 39 ALLEN STREET: ACTION PLAN

- Prepare an Inventory Form B, as one has never been completed. Information in the National Register nomination is not complete for this building.
- Compile informational packet on National Register benefits and examples of successful tax credit projects in Pittsfield, to include with any potential RFP for sale of the building, as well as examples of the successful tax rehabilitation projects in Boston which have integrated jail cells into new uses.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property if the City decides to dispose of the property to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features.
- Create a downtown local historic district study committee to explore permanently preserving the Park Square district.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of significant properties. The district can follow the National Register district boundaries, or a new boundary determined by the study committee.
- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners of the building (if sold) to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use.
- The building could be utilized for additional municipal office space or new uses in the facility could include restaurant space or upper story office/residential space.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Police Department  
City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Community Development Department  
City of Pittsfield Mayor and City Council

## **UPDATES:**





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

### ADDITIONAL CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS:



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# 69 APPLETON AVENUE

The Elizabeth Mills House is a c. 1890 Shingle-style residence. It is irregular in shape, with a tower at the southeast corner, and a cross gable roof. The building has an open curved front porch supported by rounded and tapered columns. Many balustrades from the front porch are missing. At the current time, all windows are boarded, but a 2009 Google Street View shows the porch in much better condition and what appears to be 1/1 windows.



Parcel ID: I080027026

Acreage: .278

Current use: Vacant

Total Assessed Value: \$86,600

Land Value: \$53,200

Improvements: \$33,400

Ward: 4A

Current owner: Anthony P. Andrews

Construction date: c. 1890

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.371 (last updated 1981)



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

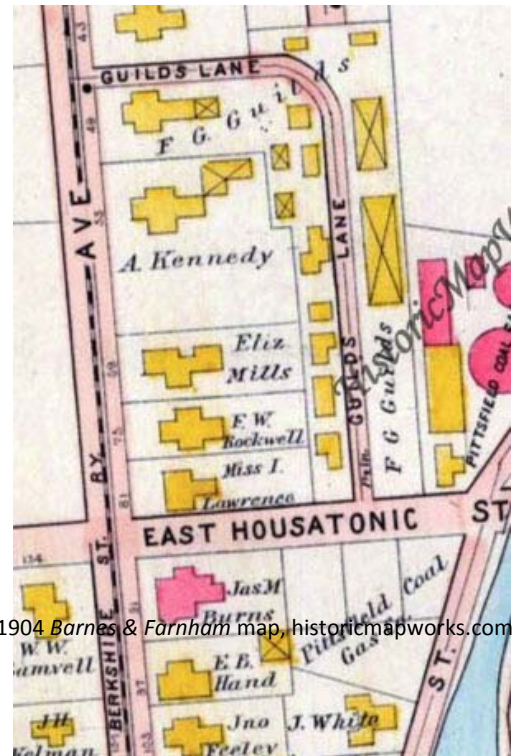
Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 69 Appleton Street is in a well-maintained neighborhood south east from Pittsfield center. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Elizabeth Mills house, at 69 Appleton Ave, is significant as a rare example of the shingle style in Pittsfield. The wood shingles are intact. This house is representative of the boom time in Pittsfield during the 1880s and 1890s, shortly after the City's incorporation. This area in particular was known to be the home of many local businessmen. Elizabeth Mills was the original owner of the home, as noted on a 1904 map stating "Eliz. Mills." In 1905 it was purchased by Henry C. Page, a general manager at the Berkshire Street Railway.<sup>1</sup> It is potentially eligible for the National Register per Criteria A and C.



MACRIS photo, 1981

**Preservation Challenges:** 69 Appleton is currently vacant but secured. The condition of windows is unknown. The building appears to be in sound condition but needs some exterior rehabilitation work. The property is not currently listed on the National Register. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but has no permanent protection. Attempts were made to contact the owner, with no response.



1904 Barnes & Farnham map, [historicmapworks.com](http://historicmapworks.com)

<sup>1</sup> Information from the PIT.371 Inventory Form.





# 69 APPLETON AVENUE: ACTION PLAN

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- Conduct direct outreach to current and any new owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
- Determine if any Community Development Block Grant façade funds could be applied to the building.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. This property is currently zoned RM, which allows for apartment type dwellings with high density. This type of development would be inappropriate for this lot and this street. It does allow for use as a bed and breakfast.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building, or explore a district along Appleton Avenue.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Current Property Owner



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

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UPDATES:

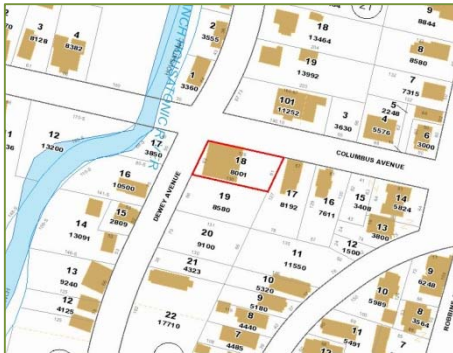
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# 293 COLUMBUS AVENUE

293 Columbus Avenue is a 1920s three story apartment building. It has 1/1 vinyl windows in enclosed openings, indicating the original presence of much larger windows. There are brick sills and brick soldier courses at each window opening. The building is square in plan with a flat roof. It is five bays on the front façade, and 6 bays on the sides. There is one entrance on the front façade. There is evidence in the brick of two larger openings on either side of this entry. This is possibly an infill of two store fronts. The foundation is concrete. The Dewey Street façade has one entrance, and one infilled entrance.



Parcel ID: G090015018

Acreage: 0.184

Current use: Vacant, although Board of Health reports it is being rehabbed

Total Assessed Value: \$265,600

Land Value: \$41,100

Improvements: \$224,500

Ward: 6A

Current owner: Columbus Avenue Estates Inc.

Construction date: c. 1925

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: None





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 293 Columbus Avenue is located just over ½ mile west of the city center. It sits close to the road at the intersection of Columbus Avenue and Dewey Street. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** 293 Columbus Avenue is not architecturally distinctive, but it does represent a slightly later period of Pittsfield's development – the 1920s. This time period saw growth due to the expansion and success of the GE Plant on the other side of Pittsfield. In the 1920s, the building housed shop owners (including Albert Romasco, proprietor of the Fenway Barber shop, 1926), and James J. Savery, employee of the W.E. Tillotson manufacturing Company (1924).

**Preservation Challenges:** This building has been significantly altered from its original 1920s appearance. Windows have been replaced and doors and windows blocked. The original configuration possibly had a commercial storefront on the Valentine Street side. Attempts to contact the owner were unsuccessful.





# 293 COLUMBUS AVE. : ACTION PLAN

- Prepare Inventory Form B.
  - Because the area around this property has not been inventoried, it should be examined as a potential area/district as well.
- Building will require work to restore it to historic appearance
  - Windows were larger, and have been infilled with smaller vinyl replacements.
  - Doors have been replaced.
  - There is evidence that there were possibly two commercial storefronts on the first floor; if possible, locate historic image of building to determine original configuration.
  - Side entrances have been altered.
  - Brick requires repointing in some areas.
- Determine if Community Development Block Grant façade money could be used to support an historic rehabilitation of the property.
- Conduct direct outreach to property owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the local significance of the building.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Current Property Owner



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# 94 DAWES AVENUE

The Birchwood is a c. 1885 residence that is representative of the Queen Anne style. The building is 2 ½ stories in height and has three interior chimneys on an irregular roof. It is roughly three bays wide with irregular massing. The wood shingle-clad building has an asphalt roof and a stone foundation. Distinctive Queen Anne details include grouped columns on the rear porch, bay windows, shallow rectangular windows over main windows, lines of windows, and differing wood textures in the cladding. The house sits back on an almost 2 acre lot. It was once owned by William Stanley, Jr., a prominent Pittsfield resident who sold several of his patents for transformers to General Electric. In 1903, GE moved to Pittsfield after they purchased Stanley's company.



Parcel ID: I070006015

Acreage: 1.947

Current use: Private residence

Total Assessed Value: \$858,600

Land Value: \$95,500

Improvements: \$762,100

Ward: 4A

Current owner: Ralph F. Fontaine for sale as of 6-2016)

Construction date: c. 1885

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: None

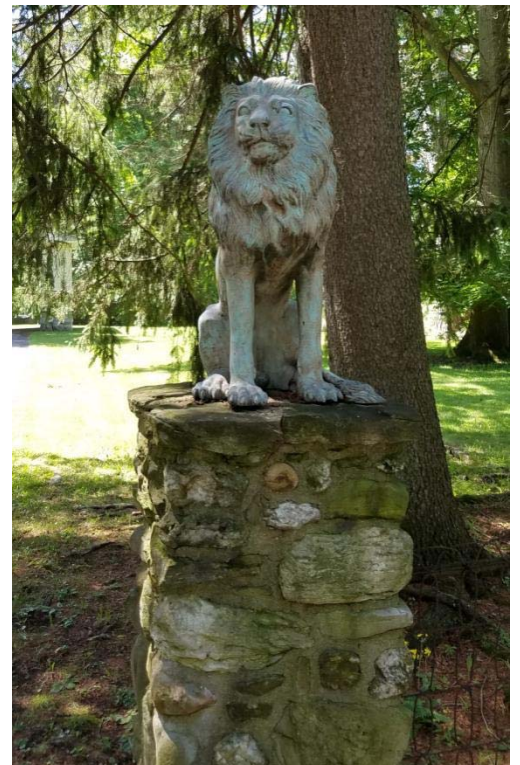


Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 94 Dawes Avenue is located in a well-maintained neighborhood just over a mile from Pittsfield center. There appears to be consistent investment made in the homes in this area, with only one vacant property on Dawes Street. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The "Birchwood" is significant per National Register Criteria A & C. This Grand Estate-era Queen Anne style home was constructed in 1885 and has integrity of design, location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Perhaps its most notable resident was William Stanley, Jr., who held close to 130 patents for a range of electrical devices and transformers. He is credited with the invention of the alternating current induction motor and several key aspects of the incandescent light. He established the Stanley Laboratory Company and the Stanley Electric Manufacturing Company in Pittsfield in 1890, which was later absorbed by General Electric in 1905.



**Preservation Challenges:** 94 Dawes Avenue has been on the market for over a year. There was one interested buyer, but according to the realtor, the neighborhood's negative reaction to the proposal of a Bed and Breakfast ended the option. Additionally, the operation of a Bed and Breakfast is not allowed under current R-12 zoning. The lack of parking could pose somewhat of a challenge for any use other than residential. The building is in exceptional condition, so the costs of general rehabilitation are not expected to be high. The property is not currently listed on the National Register, although its architecture and associations with William Stanley, a prominent local inventor and resident, makes it likely eligible for nomination. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but has no permanent protection.





# 94 DAWES AVENUE: ACTION PLAN

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- Work with the local realtor to market the property.
- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Add 94 Dawes Avenue to BRPC's list of "Great Estates." Although there is no economic benefit or preservation protection from being included in this list, it is important to include Pittsfield's architectural history among the notable Great Estates in the Berkshire area.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Consider the addition of Bed and Breakfast, and other potential uses of the property, as approved uses under the R-12 zone.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Local Realtor (Beverly Milenski)  
Current Property Owner





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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# 154 DEWEY AVENUE

154 Dewey Avenue is a c. 1890s mixed use building. It appears on an 1893 map of Pittsfield. The building has commercial storefronts on the first story, with three entrances on the front façade. The center entrance is steps to the second floor. It is approximately 6 bays deep. The building has a parapet at the roof line. The windows are a combination of original and replacement, with concrete sills and brick soldier courses. Side windows are arched and vaguely Italianate in design. There is an open two story porch at the rear of the building.



Parcel ID: G090019001

Acreage: 0.142

Current use: First floor church; second story vacant.

Total Assessed Value: \$42,000

Land Value: \$42,000

Improvements: \$0

Ward: 6B

Current owner: Church of God in Christ 2nd

Construction date: c. 1890

Liens, violations, foreclosures : None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: None



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 154 Dewey Avenue is just under a mile west of the city center. There are several vacant lots in this neighborhood, and several vacant buildings. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** 154 Dewey Avenue is a rare example of an historic, neighborhood-serving commercial building still extant in a residential neighborhood. The first story of the building is currently being used as a church, while the upper story is vacant. The building is significant for its architecture, as an example of commercial buildings from the turn of the century. It is associated with the development of this neighborhood.

**Preservation Challenges:** 154 Dewey Avenue is not currently listed on the National Register. If it were listed on the Register, and used for an income producing use, it would be eligible to apply for federal and state rehabilitation tax credits. If it was found not eligible for the register, it could be eligible for a 10% tax credit for non-residential, non-historic buildings. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance but is not permanently preserved. The neighborhood surrounding the building should be surveyed as a potential historic district, as there are many residential buildings dating to this period of tremendous growth in Pittsfield. The building is in fair condition. It will require brick stabilization and extensive window repairs. The internal stability of the building is unknown.







# 154 DEWEY AVENUE: ACTION PLAN

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- The structural stability of the building should be examined.
  - Brick repointing will be required at the second story, front façade, and on the sides of the building.
  - The rear open porch should be checked for stability.
  - Front steps are failing in some places.
  - Check foundation beneath storefront windows.
- Conduct a survey of the neighborhood to determine if it qualifies as an historic district. There are many residential buildings in this area dating to the same time period, and they should be evaluated for their eligibility as a collection.
- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
- Prepare Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. Subsequently, submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The upper stories could be used for income producing purposes.
  - If the property were listed on the National Register, the Church could apply for matching development funds through the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. There may be wetlands issues associated with the property due to its proximity to the Housatanic River.
- Pittsfield is investing locally in the West Side Riverway project. Determine if this parcel could be a potential access point or supportive structure for the redevelopment of the riverfront project.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Current Property Owner



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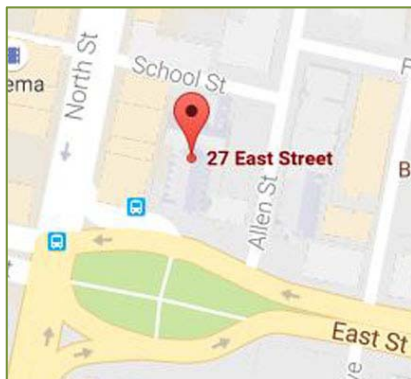
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# 27 EAST STREET

The First Church of Christ, Congregational, is a contributing element in the Park Square National Register Historic District, established in 1975. According to the nomination, the stonework of the church is "laid in broken ashlar and trimmed with square quoins of rock-faced Great Barrington bluestone. The frame of the building is made of chestnut from Pittsfield and nearby Lanesborough. The north-south ridge roof ends in a facade gable with stick style truss work, below which is a three-part Gothic window. The main entrance in the center of the south facade is a heavy Gothic wooden door flanked by small lancet windows. On the southeast corner of the church is a clock and bell tower topped with gables adorned with finials and wooden truss work. A three-gabled nave with Gothic windows projects slightly from the east elevation, and as a counterbalance a small two-story ridge roof ell extends on the west end."



Parcel ID: H090005002

Acreage: 0.601

Current use: Church

Total Assessed Value: \$2,360,100

Land Value: \$144,600

Improvements: \$2,215,500

Ward: 2A

Current owner: First Congregational Parish

Construction date: c. 1880

Liens, violations, or foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

Preservation Restriction, 1998

MHC Inventory: PIT.42; listed on National Register 1975, 1991; last inventoried 2001



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

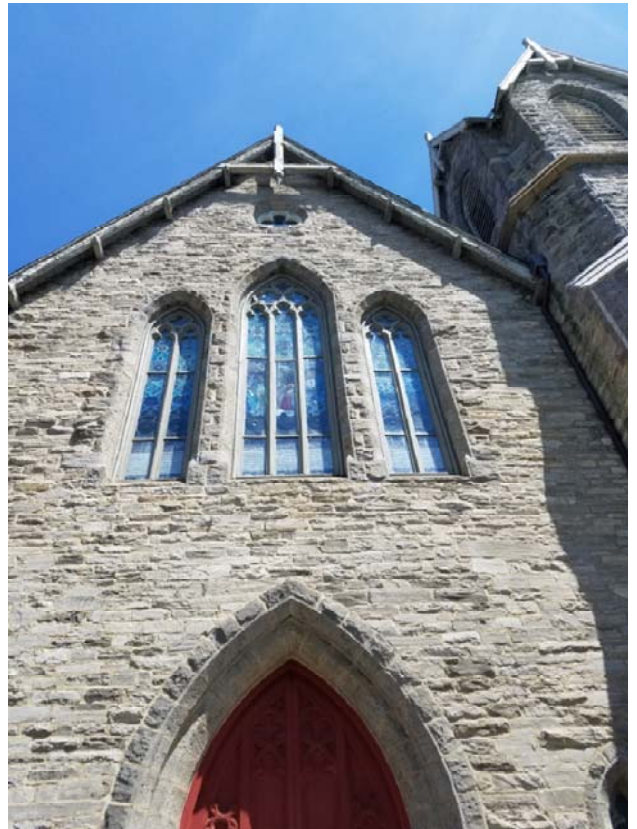
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Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. The First Church of Christ, Congregational, sits in the center of the city, at the intersection of North, South, East, and West streets. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** According to the Park Square Historic District National Register nomination, the First Church of Christ, Congregational (now First Congregational Church) was built in 1853 on the site of the original Bulfinch Church (c.1793) which was destroyed by fire in 1851. The original church clock was saved and installed in the current building. It is a distinctive Gothic Revival building designed by New York architect Leopold Eidlitz. It includes a Tiffany stained glass memorial window



**Preservation Challenges:** There are a number of churches in Pittsfield that the community has become increasingly concerned about. The congregation is also concerned about the building, as it has appealed to the Historical Commission on multiple occasions for assistance. This church holds an especially prominent location on East Street in the middle of the downtown commercial district and has become a community icon. Churches, by their very nature, are difficult to adaptive reuse for other purposes. This property is zoned BD and is in both the Downtown Arts District and the Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD). The church is in excellent condition and has retained a very high degree of integrity. Although the building is under a preservation restriction (held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission), funding is needed to continue to maintain the building.







# 27 EAST STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building, or include the building in a downtown local historic district.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Encourage congregation to open the church for tours to allow the public to appreciate its historic architecture.
- Because the building is already listed on the National Register, if the church is a registered 501(c)3 organization, it could apply for Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant money to support work on the building, or to complete a building reuse study.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Consider the implications and intent of both the SDOG and Art District overlays for their compatibility.
- Encourage the congregation to reach out to other small congregations and consider "church sharing," a practice which not only can help support the existing building but potentially help incubate other small congregations. It can also help expand awareness of the facility and the church, and potentially grow the congregation. Multiple congregations can use the same facility at alternating times and share the cost of building maintenance.
- Determine if the rear of the building could be subdivided into other uses.
- Reach out to cultural groups to offer rehearsal and performance space. Offer space to community groups for public meetings.
- Publish events in [discoverpittsfield.com](http://discoverpittsfield.com); coordinate with City of Pittsfield's Office of Cultural Development and the Upstreet Cultural District to offer event space to other local organizations.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Current Property Owner  
Massachusetts Historical Commission (holder of preservation restriction)



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

UPDATES:

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# 359 EAST STREET

The William Russell Allen House is an outstanding example of the Shingle style, and is a rare example of a large scale residential building in downtown Pittsfield. The three story building is clad in stone and shingles. It has an irregular façade with a cross gable roof. There is an open porch on the east side. The majority of the windows are covered, but there are some visible multi-pane fixed windows in the upper stories. According to the inventory form for the building, "The William Allen House is constructed with foundation walls of granite, the first floor walls are of Great Barrington bluestone, the piazza base consists of ... slabs of Missouri granite. The trim on the porch is of Longmeadow stone and marble... the interior is one of the most important to be found in this area, with finely executed woodwork, tile work, and exceptional stained glass windows." The house sits back on a small lot surrounded by larger institutional buildings.



Parcel ID: I090001002

Acreage: 3.2

Current use: Vacant

Total Assessed Value: \$608,410

Land Value: \$89,200

Improvements: \$519,210

Ward: 1A

Current owner: Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Construction date: c. 1885

Liens, violations, foreclosures : None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.151 (last inventoried in 1978); National Register Listed  
1980



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 359 East Street sits back from a busy road in the center of Pittsfield. It is surrounded by the Registry of Motor Vehicles to the west, and a housing authority property to the east. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The William Russell Allen house is a rare and fine example of the Shingle style in Pittsfield. It was designed by H. Neill Wilson, who came to Pittsfield in 1885 to oversee the construction of this building and stayed. His other work in the Berkshires includes the Red Lion Inn. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980, and continues to have the same integrity today.

**Preservation Challenges:** The primary issue for this building is ownership. Currently, it is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through its Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAMM). Attempts to speak with someone at the agency regarding the building were unsuccessful. There have been numerous efforts to reuse the building, or study its reuse, but none have been effective. A 2003 study placed the rehabilitation costs at close to \$4 million. One past effort proposed a long-term lease on building for the Berkshire Regional Retirement Board (2004). A non-profit group formed more recently to raise funds for the building's stabilization. The building sits tightly between Pittsfield Housing Authority property and a state office building. There is little access to parking. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but is not permanently preserved. The condition of the windows is unknown, but the building appears to be structurally sound. However, there may be eventual code issues including accessibility depending on future use.







# 359 EAST STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Coordinate with DCAMM on their proposed uses of the building. Numerous attempts to contact the state regarding this property were unsuccessful.
- Update the documentation for this building to note its current conditions. The last inventory of the building was completed in 1978, and its current condition and integrity should be evaluated and documented.
- Prepare information for potential owners on the benefits and requirements of the Federal and State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit programs.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property, upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met. The Pittsfield Historical Commission could hold the restriction in perpetuity, but it must be approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building, or include this building in a local historic district for the entire downtown area.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. The lot is currently zoned RM, which prohibits office uses, governmental offices, and cultural uses including museums and galleries. The building is also in the Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD) zone.
- Consult with Pittsfield Housing Authority to assess their space needs.
- Consider adding the building to BRPC's list of "Great Estates," as it was once the summer home of William Russell Allen. It is a unique example of an urban estate. Although there is no direct preservation protection, nor specific economic benefit, from this listing, it is important to document Pittsfield's architecture.
- The parcel is eligible for New Market Tax Credits.
- If property ownership was transferred to the City of Pittsfield, the City could apply for rehabilitation funds through the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF).
  - Funding requires a 50% match from the City. All work must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.



- Continue to closely monitor the roof and wood siding for signs of damage or deterioration.
- Encourage the city to work with the state on a better way to seal the property. Newer techniques, including a clear polycarbonate material instead of wood, for sealing windows can help make the building look less blighted and contribute to the streetscape.
- Consider program similar to the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Historic Curatorship Program ([www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/cultural-resources/historic-curatorship-program.html](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/cultural-resources/historic-curatorship-program.html)). Under this program, "DCR partners with a Curator who agrees to rehabilitate, manage and maintain a historic property in return for a long-term lease. As a result, DCR secures the long-term preservation of threatened historic sites and Curators exchange their hard work and unique skills for the opportunity to live or work in a one-of-a-kind location."

### **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Massachusetts Historical Commission (preservation restriction review)  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM)

### **UPDATES:**

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# 146-150 FIRST STREET

146-150 First Street, or the Fraternal Order of Eagles (FOE) Eagles Home Aerie 358, is a three story commercial building with a one story addition to the rear. The main block is rectangular in plan with a flat roof. Windows are 8/8 double hung sash on the sides and at the third floor on the front façade. Second floor windows on the main façade are multi-paned single-hung sash windows with an arched fanlight. The first floor storefront wraps around the front of the building. The corners are supported by concrete blocks with decorative finials. The windows have multi-paned glass transoms above large paned windows. The decorative surround has rounded columns and a pediment.



Parcel ID: H090015052

Acreage: 0.302

Current use: Partly occupied by office space

Total Assessed Value: \$292,800

Land Value: \$63,300

Improvements: \$229,500

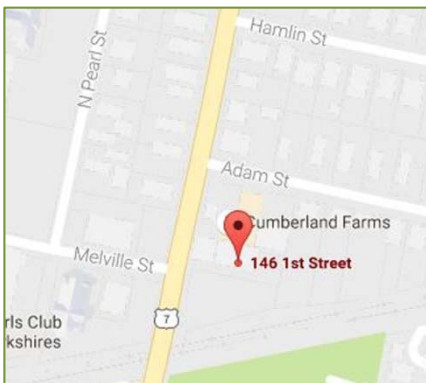
Ward: 2A

Current owner: Eagles Club LLC,

Construction date: c. 1915

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.12 (last updated in 1980)







# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 146 Front Street is bounded to the north by a Cumberland Farms, and to the south by a park. First Street is a mix of commercial and residential buildings. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** This building is a good example of commercial buildings in Pittsfield in the Federal Revival style. The building has retained its original storefronts and details. According to the 1908 inventory form, the building was designed by local architect Peter F. McLaughlin who practiced in the area from 1908 to 1938. In addition to this building designed for the Eagles Club, he designed an Elks Lodge and several local school additions. City directories show that in the 1930s, the building was used, at least partially, as a rooming house or rental. Civic clubs, like the Eagles, were prominent in the community during the turn of the century. The building is significant for its architecture and for its association with the development of Pittsfield.

**Preservation Challenges:** 146-150 First Street is currently largely vacant. The current owner is interested in creating a cooperative work space and converting the rear bowling alley to a greenhouse to support the community. However, he has had difficulty finding project partners and funding. The first two floors have been renovated, but the third floor 'gym' space and the rear bowling alley have not. The building was purchased with the assistance of MassDevelopment. The architect/owner has designs for a sustainable agriculture program within the existing bowling alley space, but has not been able to secure funding for the program. The highest offer for the building has thus far been from the adjacent Cumberland Farms, who wishes to tear the building down for additional parking. The property is not currently listed on the National Register, although its architecture and associations with the development of Pittsfield, make it likely eligible for nomination. If it were listed on the Register, and used for an income producing use, it would be eligible to apply for federal and state rehabilitation tax credits. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but has no permanent protection.





# 146-50 FIRST STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Work with the owner to determine if current plans for the building would require zoning changes, and to determine if there are any funding sources available to assist with development. Consider owner's proposal for greenhouse in rear of property.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Work with neighbor, Cumberland Farms, to determine if there are other options available for addressing their parking needs.
- Consult with MassDevelopment and Tyler Street project manager to determine if additional funding through MassDevelopment is available.
- Support for greenhouse program and/or technical assistance may be available through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program's Get a Farmer program([www.nesare.org](http://www.nesare.org)) or the Carrot Project.  
([www.thecarrotproject.org/financing/massachusetts](http://www.thecarrotproject.org/financing/massachusetts)).
- Consult with the Department of Agricultural Resources Urban Agriculture Program.
- Consult with the Fraternal Order of the Eagles organization (nearest chapter: North Adams) to see if they have interest in supporting the rehabilitation of an original Eagles building.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
MassDevelopment  
Current Property Owner  
Mass Department of Agricultural Resources  
Fraternal Order of the Eagles



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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# 64 FOURTH STREET

The former Robbins and Kellogg Shoe Factory building was constructed around 1870, with a later addition. It is a three and one half story brick building with a rectangular plan. It is built into a slight hill, so the north side of the building has a full basement level, with a foundation of stone. It is roughly 20 bays long and 4 bays wide. Six dormer windows with front gables are on the Fourth Street side of the building. The majority of the windows are enclosed and not visible. The end gable roof has a cornice with a slight return and some decorative brickwork. There are surviving, painted-lettering "ghost signs" on the building's brickwork. There is a small side, front-gabled ell and the south end, and a detached metal storage shed on the property to the north.



Parcel ID: I090010015

Acreage: 0.898

Current use: Storage facility and work shop

Total Assessed Value: \$531,400

Land Value: \$128,300

Improvements: \$403,100

Ward: 3A

Current owner: American Wood Products,

Construction: c. 1870

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.152, PIT.T (Silver Lake) (last individually updated in 1981)



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

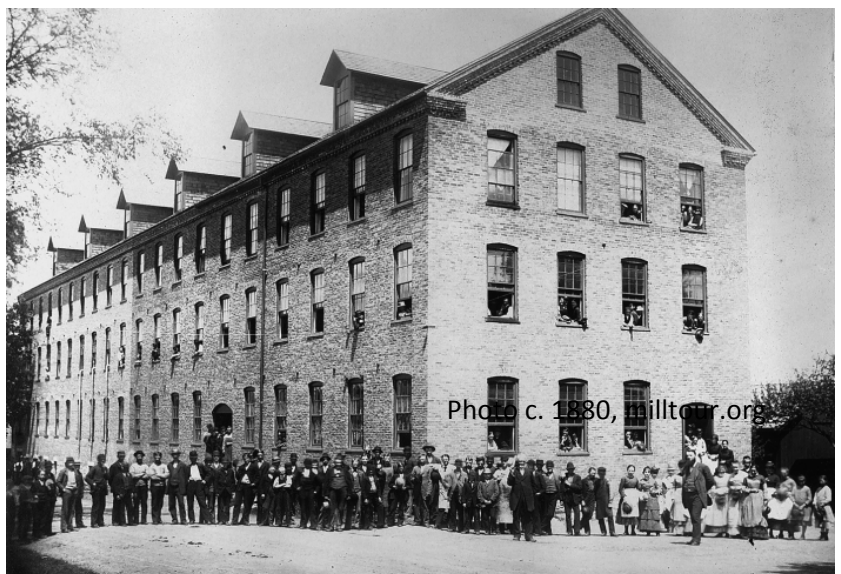
Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. This former industrial warehouse sits in a largely residential neighborhood close to Silver Lake. The property card for this building notes that the "inside is better than the outside." The property is located just over ½ mile north east of the city center in a residential neighborhood. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Silver Lake area inventory form refers to this building as "the central defining landmark in this area." The Robbins Company was largely responsible for the development of this neighborhood, providing densely packed worker housing. Residential development began shortly after this factory building was completed. This building is significant per Criteria A and C, and would also be a contributing element to a Silver Lake Historic District. The 1880s era photo at right could provide important information for the rehabilitation of the building, including the correct window configuration.



MACRIS photo, 1981

**Preservation Challenges:** This building is currently used as a storage facility, and as a workshop. Structurally, the building needs some areas of brick repointed and a complete window survey to determine the status of any original windows. Zoning for this building is Commercial-Warehousing-storage, which will limit the types of reuse options by-right. It is also partially in a flood plain district. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but is not currently permanently preserved.





# 64 FOURTH STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Conduct direct outreach to the current property owners to make them aware of the historic significance of their property. Provide information on the state and Federal tax credit program, and the National Register Program.
- Conduct window inventory to determine if any original windows remain.
- Repoint brick where necessary.
- Explore alternates to plywood for securing the building; new techniques involving clear plexiglass coverings can make the building appear less blighted.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - Should MHC prefer to see the area nominated as a district, move forward with the submittal of the Silver Lake District inventory form.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
  - Conduct a study of the Silver Lake area to determine if additional buildings should be considered, or if a local district is more appropriate.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Building is located partly in a flood plain district, and is currently zoned Commercial-Warehouse-Storage, which prohibits any residential uses – though there are houses in the zone immediately across Fourth Street.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Current Property Owner  
Building Department





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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# 56 JOHN STREET

56 John Street is a two and one half story vernacular building with a cross gable roof. It is a brick building with vinyl siding on the two side facades. The front gable has boxed cornices. The front façade features a store front that has been covered with plywood. The main header beam on the first story is exposed. It has modern replacement doors with a single pane transom above. Second story windows are 1/1 replacements, and at least one of the gable end windows is 2/1 wood. The windows have a slightly arched opening. The cornice line is wood with wood returns. The south side of the building has a two story shed roofed addition with rounded support columns on the first floor and square on the second floor porch. To the rear are a series of additive buildings, all connected.



Parcel ID: G090023014  
Acreage: 0.239  
Current use: Vacant  
Total Assessed Value: \$47,000  
Land Value: \$28,100  
Improvements: \$18,900  
Ward: 6B  
Current owner: Andromeda Research Inc., N/O Robert Keyes  
Construction: c. 1910  
Condemned Oct. 2014; Ordered Demolished Oct. 2015 (has not yet been demolished)  
Open DEP case file  
MHC Inventory: None





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 56 John Street is a two family residential building that backs up to a stream from Pontoosuc Lake. The building is less than a mile west of downtown Pittsfield. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** 56 John Street is a mixed use style building in a largely residential neighborhood. No complete inventory has occurred in this area, so it is difficult to put the building into a larger development context. The building is important in the neighborhood for its age and prominent position on the block.

**Preservation Challenges:** 56 John Street is challenging on several fronts. The city has determined that the building should be demolished, but has not set a date for demolition. The building is in poor overall condition. There is one original 2/1 wood window on the second story; other windows are replacements or boarded. The Commercial windows on the first floor are also boarded, with no indication as to their condition. Entry doors are replacements. The building is brick and vinyl sided. The brick will require repointing and the siding is failing. The side porch is sagging in the center. The foundation appears to need stabilization. It is unclear how long the building has been vacant. Another complication is the brownfields issue: the building currently has an open case file with the Department of Environmental Protection. According to the DEP, there was an oil tank outside the building that had been removed, but all the contaminated soil was not removed from the site. A Licensed Site Professional (LSP) would have to be hired to review the materials and test for compliance. DEP does not believe it will be an extensive issue, but it is something that will need to be addressed. The building is in the R-M, High Density Multi-Family Residential district, as well as in a flood plain district. If the building was demolished, a higher intensity use could be constructed on the site. The building is subject to the Demolition Delay, but is not permanently protected.





## 56 JOHN STREET: ACTION PLAN

- This building is likely only eligible for listing in the National Register as part of a district. The neighborhood should be inventoried and evaluated on an Inventory Form A, along with a Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the district's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. This is the only residential zone that allows multi-family uses (but using the 10% historic credit would prohibit a residential redevelopment of the property).
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
  - Determine status of brownfields issues, and develop mitigation plan, if necessary. According to DEP, the site is not currently out of compliance, but there is a required filing due in November.
    - Berkshire Regional Planning Commission administers the Berkshire Brownfields Program funded by the Environmental Planning Agency (EPA). BRPC is not currently funded for assessment work, but there may be funding available for remediation through their Revolving Loan program. As of 6/2016, the City of Pittsfield is working on a city-wide Brownfields plan.
  - Determine if building's placement in a floodplain district places any restrictions on site development or rehabilitation.





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

### PRESERVATION PARTNERS:

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Community Development Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Current Property Owner

### UPDATES:

### ADDITIONAL PHOTOS (2016):



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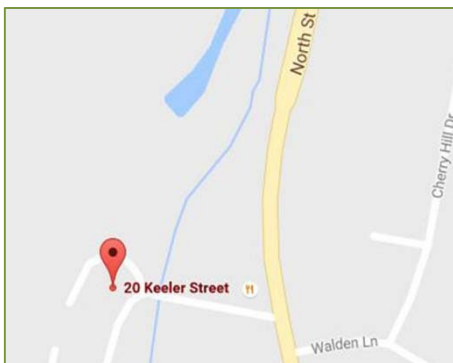
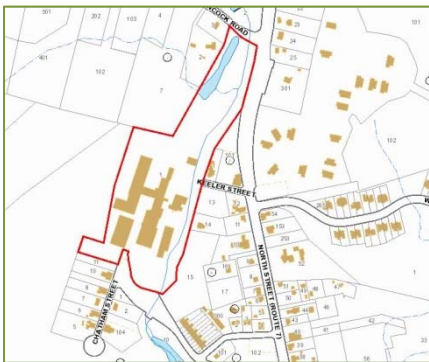
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# 20 KEELER STREET

The Pontoosuc Mill complex is a sprawling, multi-building complex south of Pontoosuc Lake, on the west side of the West Branch of the Housatonic River. Originally composed of approximately 25 buildings, the Mill complex today contains around 6, with several joined over time. The buildings range from one to four stores tall, all in brick. Many have retained their slate roofs. A more complete building description can be found on page 3. The overall condition of the complex is fair to poor, with the vast majority of windows infilled.



Parcel ID: H150001001

Acreage: 14.790

Current use: Commercial and light industrial space, 60-70% occupied

Total Assessed Value: \$774,000

Land Value: \$441,600

Improvements: \$332,400

Ward: 7A

Current owner: Blythwood Realty LLC

Construction: c. 1890

Liens, violations, foreclosures : None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.198, Pontoosuc Mill (last updated 1981)



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. The Pontoosuc Mill complex is located behind a small commercial section of North Street near its intersection with Hancock Street. Across North Street to the east is a section of new houses. It is approximately 2.5 miles from the city center and approximately 2 miles south of the border of Pittsfield and Lanesborough. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance<sup>1</sup>:** The Pontoosuc Mill complex is likely significant per National Register Criteria A and C, for its architecture and as the longest operating mill at the same site in western Massachusetts. Established in 1825, the mill building was constructed over a two year period just south of Pontoosuc Lake (then called Lanesboro Pond) on the site of the Keeler's grist mill. The original mill was 145 feet by 50 feet, four stories high, with a belfry in which hung a bell to call employees to work; this section of the complex is the main building today. It was built of bricks made in a kiln across the lake. The machinery came from New York, up the Hudson by boat then by team to Pittsfield. The company began operations in 1827 under the presidency of Henry Shaw. George W. Campbell and David Campbell, Jr. were the other founding officers.



Shortly after the erection of the mill, a complex encompassing tenements and a boarding house was constructed. The mill's manufactures changed with the times. Before the Civil War, the primary products were drab carriage cloth. For a time it produced cloth for the popular ladies balmoral kilts, and then it turned to carriage lap blankets and blankets for Pullman cars. After the Civil War, the control of the mill was largely in the hands of two well-known Pittsfield families, the Plunketts and the Francis'. Henry A. Francis served as the last president before the mill was sold in the 1930s to Wyandotte Worsted Col., which continued textile operations until about 1963. The mill complex was enlarged through the century by the building of more workers' homes and by additions to the mill in the 1890s. An entire "village" known as Pontoosuc grew up around the factory. Enough of it remains today to serve as a reminder of the vitality and importance of the Pontoosuc Mill to the city's economic development.

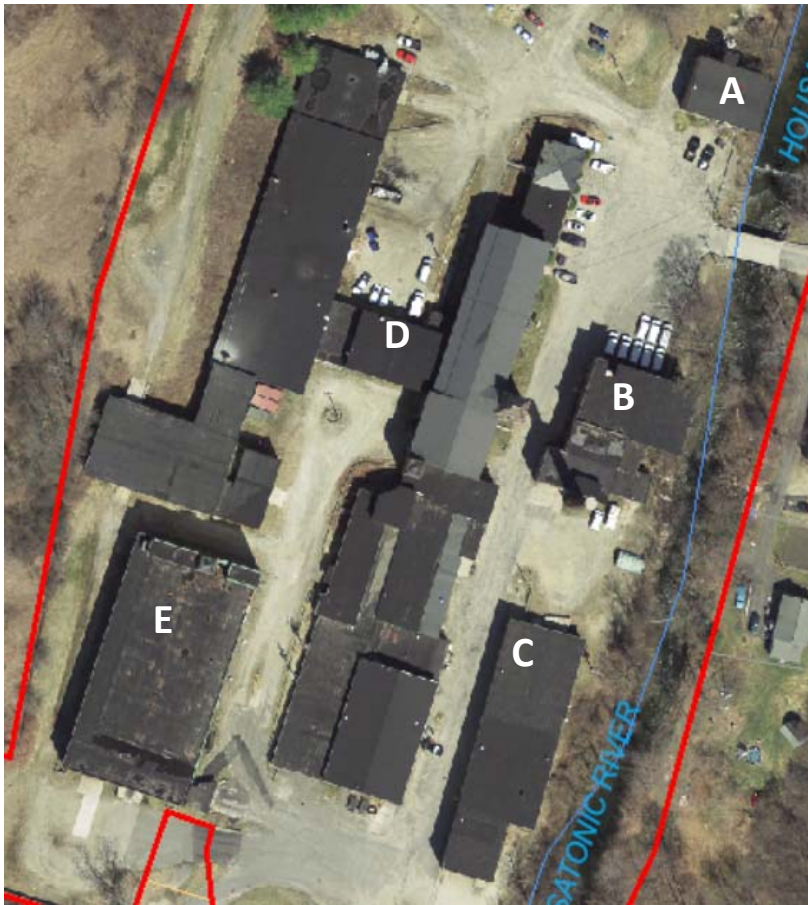


<sup>1</sup> Information in this section is from the Pontoosuc Mills Inventory form, PIT. 198.





**Preservation Challenges:** The Pontoosuc Mill complex is currently home to a small group of industrial and commercial businesses, but not all buildings are fully occupied. The majority of windows are enclosed. According to the property's owner, the buildings are neither "vacant nor endangered," though the challenges of maintaining buildings of this size and age are daunting. He considers the buildings in "serviceable" condition. One major issue is water – little attention was paid to leveling the ground when the site was constructed. As a result it is a challenge to continue to keep the buildings dry. Roofs have been replaced and maintained as necessary, but all buildings will require considerable repointing. The condition of the existing windows is not known. The site is zoned industrial, so to convert to any other use would require a zoning change. There are likely some brownfields issues on the site as well due to the manufacturing processes used on site.



### Building Descriptions:

**Building A:** Two story brick industrial building with a low pitched side gable roof. 7 bays wide by 2 bays deep. Front façade windows are 5x4 paned metal frames windows with a center louvered section. Pedestrian entrance on first floor is a metal door. Second floor center has two wood and glass doors that were likely a loading area. The visible side of the building has had its windows enclosed with brick. Overall condition is fair.

**Building B:** Three story brick industrial building with very low pitched side gable roof. Connected to tall brick smokestack. Visible original windows are 12/12; many have been enclosed in cement block. Window openings are all arched with brick soldier courses above. The rear of the building has a new garage entrance with concrete header and a metal door. Overall condition is fair. Some areas of brick require repointing, and smokestack should be checked for structural integrity.

**Building C:** Two story brick building, approximately 20 bays long and 5 bays wide.

All windows have been enclosed with brick, wood, or concrete. An industrial building with a flat roof with a narrow overhang. Condition is good.

**Building D:** This is a connective set of individual buildings added on over time. There is a five story belfry at the center with a patterned mansard roof with copper detailing. Other portions of the building include a two story industrial office building with a pyramidal slate roof, several flat roofed industrial buildings, and a main block of a three-story, approximately 20 bay wide factory building. There is one metal clad portion towards the rear. This collection of buildings is connected to a second 20 bay wide brick building at the rear of the property. Windows are enclosed. Second floor windows have an arched opening.

**Building E:** This building was inaccessible during survey, but appears to be a multi-bay brick industrial building with a flat roof and enclosed windows.



# 20 KEELER AVE: ACTION PLAN

- Prepare updated Inventory Form A, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the complex's eligibility for the National Register. Upon approval from MHC, submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Create a local historic district around the site to permanently preserve the buildings.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). They are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Current owner is interested in potentially converting to residential use, given the site's location. However, cost of rehabilitation is a factor. The Planning Department should work with the owner to explore tax credits including Historic Rehabilitation, New Market, and/or Low Income Housing credits.
- The creation of a Tax Increment Financing overlay district could also provide incentives for redevelopment by freezing the assessed value at the pre-rehabilitation level during construction.
- Determine status of brownfields issues, and develop mitigation plan, if necessary.
  - Berkshire Regional Planning Commission administers the Berkshire Brownfields Program funded by the Environmental Planning Agency (EPA). BRPC is not currently funded for assessment work, but there may be funding available for remediation through their Revolving Loan program. As of 6/2016, the City of Pittsfield is working on a city-wide Brownfields plan.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Currently the parcel is zoned for industrial use. The current owner recognizes that changing use would require not only relocation of existing tenants, but also a zone change to residential. Accessibility issues would likely require the installation of elevators in some buildings, which can create a challenge with meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

## UPDATES:

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# 55 LINDEN STREET

The George & Mary Baker House, now commonly known as the Polish Community Club, is a Victorian Gothic style building with a major 2 story addition which dates to c. 1913, when it became a Polish Church. The building is brick with brick quoins, and has limestone window and door trim, and a wood bracketed cornice. The main block has a hipped, asphalt clad roof, and the three story square tower with hipped roof has slate shingles. The building is clad in brick with a section of the tower clad in wood clapboard. There are three exterior chimneys. The 2-story front addition is 1 bay deep and is 3 bays wide with a center entrance. It has a pedimented front gable with bracket details similar to those on the original house, and a half-circle window in the gable end. The front entrance is Italianate in style with a limestone door surround. All the windows appear to have been replaced with aluminum clad 1/1 windows, except for the 2/2 wood windows in the tower and in the dormers. Some doors and windows on the rear wing have been infilled.



Parcel ID: H100020201

Acreage: 1.888

Current use: Private club

Total Assessed Value: \$239,940

Land Value: \$153,500

Improvements: \$86,440

Ward: 6B

Current owner: Polish Community Club Inc.

Construction: c1890

Liens or foreclosures: None. Club is currently prohibited from operation due to management issues with their liquor license (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.707 (last updated 2008)



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. The Polish Community Center sits ½ mile from the city center at the corner of Linden and Seymour streets. It sits on a large lot in a residential neighborhood. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The building was originally constructed as the home of George and Mary Baker. It was then converted into a Polish Catholic church, a Catholic School, and finally the Polish Community Center. According to the 2008 inventory form, "The George and Mary Baker house is historically significant for the central role it has played in the history of Pittsfield's Polish community ... the building is a landmark and a



distinctive example of Victorian Gothic architecture. The renovations to it over time have not overly diminished its original architectural style and thus it can offer insight into changing aesthetic tastes and how different functions are expressed architecturally." It is potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register per Criteria A and C.

**Preservation Challenges:** 55 Linden Street has been reimagined numerous times, serving as a residence, a church, a school, and now a private club. The lot is zoned B-G, general business, and is part of both the Downtown Arts district overlay and the Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD). Although the building is not currently listed on the National Register, its architecture and associations with the Polish population in Pittsfield make it likely eligible for nomination. If it were listed on the Register, and used for an income producing use, it would be eligible to apply for federal and state rehabilitation tax credits. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but its placement in a Local Historic District would more permanently preserve the building. The club is currently closed as it undergoes a change in internal management.





# 55 LINDEN STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Request an opinion on eligibility from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, based on the 2008 inventory form and current photographs. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- If the Polish Community Club is a certified 501 (c)3 organization, consider applying for a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund Grant, once the building is listed on the National Register
  - These matching funds can be used for bricks and mortar work on a building, or for pre-development studies regarding a building's structure and reuse.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Consider implications of SGOD and downtown overlay districts.
- Resolve issues with the Licensing Board regarding reopening of the club.
- Have brick on exterior of building checked for repointing and stability.
- Use the prominent position of the club's land on a large corner lot for additional community events.
- Should the club decide to sell the building, consider reuse as a bed and breakfast, but zoning issues would need to be examined.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Community Development Department  
License Commission  
Polish Community Club, current owner



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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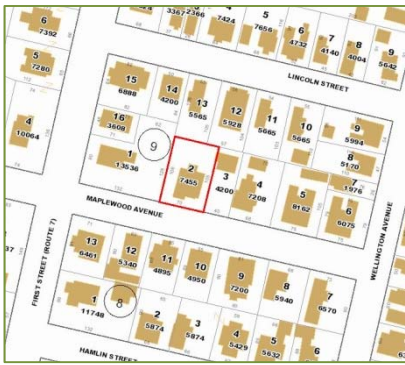
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# 65-67 MAPLEWOOD AVENUE

65-67 Maplewood Avenue is an excellent example of the Italianate style. The building is roughly two bays wide and three bays deep with an el shaped plan. It is a cross gable house with an open porch that wraps around one side, which is the entrance for 65. The columns are turned wood. Number 67 is accessed through a less decorative side porch on the west side of the building. It is clad in vinyl siding, but has retained at least one original and decorative window in the gable end. Other windows are enclosed and their condition is unknown. Original wood hoods over the windows are still intact.



Parcel ID: H100009002

Acreage: 0.171

Current use: Vacant

Total Assessed Value: \$120,400

Land Value: \$26,600

Improvements: \$93,800

Ward: 2A

Current owner: Costigan G J-N/O, Ameriquet Mrtg Sec In.

Construction: c. 1900

Liens, violations (as of 6/16): none. Property is currently in foreclosure.

MHC Inventory: None



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 65-67 Maplewood Avenue is located just under a mile from the city center in a dense residential neighborhood. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** 65-67 Maplewood Avenue is an excellent example of its architectural style. It has retained its porch and cornice railing, along with original wood windows in the front gable and wood hoods over windows on the front façade. 65-67 Maplewood does not appear on an 1876 map of Pittsfield. The building is significant in the community for its age, but is not likely individually eligible for the National Register.



**Preservation Challenges:** 65-67 Maplewood Avenue is currently in foreclosure. The next owner may not recognize the historic significance of the property and choose to make additional alterations that are not appropriate. Its placement in a local historic district would ensure that all exterior treatments are approved by the Historical Commission. The property is not currently listed on the National Register. It is a two family structure in an RM zone. It is possible that original wood clapboard is present under the vinyl siding, and that original wood windows are present. Restoration of individual historic homes presents a challenge due to the lack of funding available for private homeowners.





# 65-67 MAPLEWOOD AVENUE: ACTION PLAN

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- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners or receivers of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic characteristics of the building.
- Determine if façade grants could be made available to a new owner to restore the building to its historic appearance (remove vinyl siding, repair/replace windows as necessary).
  - Porch work is needed on the front and side porches.
  - Vinyl siding appears to be failing in some areas.
  - Gable end windows is missing a pane of glass.
  - Side porch likely had more decorative detailing, similar to front porch.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - Individual listing on the National Register would require removal of the synthetic siding and replacement of wood.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Property is zoned RM, which may make the lot attractive to a potential developer because of the scale of building that could be constructed.
- Proximity to downtown may suggest a low intensity commercial use could be viable in this location.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Current Property Owner; Potential new owner



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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# 26 MELVILLE STREET

The Father Matthew Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society Building, more commonly known as the Catholic Youth Center, was constructed in 1912. The Society was originally founded in 1874 by Reverend Thomas Smyth to provide death and sickness benefits to its members. In 1877 the mission of the organization changed to focus on temperance. It also housed a Ladies Aid Society and provided the community with athletic, social, and religious facilities. The Italian Renaissance style building is 3 stories tall and 5 bays wide. It has a marble and brick clad first floor, with brick above. It is generally rectangular in plan. The building has 1/1 metal windows in larger, partly infilled openings.



Parcel ID: H090018010

Acreage: 1.1

Current use: Vacant

Total Assessed Value: \$4,469,780

Land Value: \$150,300

Improvements: \$4,319,480 (likely includes adjacent building)

Ward: 2A

Current owner: Boys and Girls Club of the Berkshires

Construction: 1912

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: None



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 26 Melville Street is located in downtown Pittsfield, ¼ mile from the city center. It is immediately adjacent to the Boys and Girls Club and the former Notre Dame Church complex. The church now houses the Shire City Sanctuary makers space. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Father Matthew Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society was first founded in Pittsfield in 1874. The society established this headquarters in 1913. According to *Pittsfield*, by the Berkshire Historical Society, "the building housed the Ladies' Aid Society, as well as religious, educational, social, and athletic facilities. In later years, the building housed the Catholic Youth Center." The Society appears to have been originally associated with St. Josephs Catholic Church, nearby on North Street, and not the immediately adjacent Notre Dame Church. The building was purchased by the adjacent Boys and Girls Club in 2015. It is significant as an early cultural society that provided benefits to members upon sickness or death. The turn of the century was a period of tremendous growth in Pittsfield, and benevolent societies such as this one developed along with the growing community.



**Preservation Challenges:** 26 Melville Street is currently owned by the adjacent Boys and Girls Club. It was purchased in 2015 after sitting vacant for 2 years. At the time it closed, the Catholic Youth Center found the structure to be structurally compromised. It is zoned B-D (Downtown Business). According to the Boys and Girls Club, they are currently working on plans for the building. Although immediately adjacent to the Catholic Youth Center property, there is no interior access between the buildings. It would make a logical addition to their facility. The building sits just outside the Upper North Commercial National Register Historic District, and the inventoried Upper North District (PIT.I). It would contribute to an expansion of the NR District. Register listing would allow a qualified owner to apply for federal and state rehabilitation tax credits. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but its placement in a Local Historic District would more permanently preserve the building.



## 26 MELVILLE STREET: ACTION PLAN

- This building is currently vacant. The Boys and Girls Club, immediately adjacent, has purchased the property but has not yet made design decisions. The interior spaces are not connected.
- The exterior of the building appears sound, but there may be internal structural issues. These should be examined.
- Prepare Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. Upon approval from MHC, submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - The building may be a contributing element to the existing Upper North Historic District, with a district boundary increase.
- Any local historic district established in the downtown should include this building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use.

### **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Boys and Girls Club of Berkshires, Inc (current property owner)

UPDATES:



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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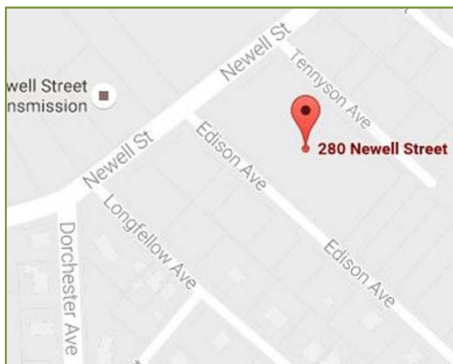
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# 280 NEWELL STREET

280 Newell Street, the Charles Hibbard School, is a two story brick institutional building with a full basement story. It is six bays wide and five bays deep, with a rectangular plan. The Newell Street side of the building has a main entrance that has been converted to a loading dock. There are secondary entrances on both Tennyson Street and Edison Street sides. The Tennyson Street facade features triple nine light windows over 6/6 double hung windows. The building was constructed in 1923 as a K-6 school. The building housed 14 classrooms and a multi-purpose space, with a capacity of 430. It is currently used by the School Department of Pittsfield for district-wide receiving and storage.



Parcel ID: J090016001  
Acreage: 1.800  
Current use: Storage for School Department  
Total Assessed Value: \$3,367,290  
Land Value: \$113,100  
Improvements: \$3,254,190  
Ward: 3B  
Current owner: City of Pittsfield  
Construction: c. 1922  
Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)  
MHC Inventory: None

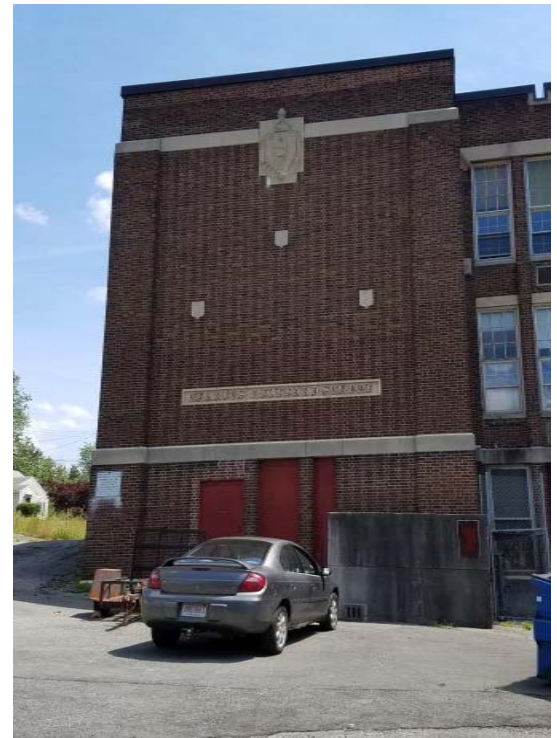


Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 280 Newell Street is located in a well-maintained neighborhood approximately 1.5 miles east of Pittsfield center. There appears to be consistent investment made in the homes in this area. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Charles Hibbard School is significant per National Register Criteria A & C. It is associated with the growth of Pittsfield due to the success of the nearby General Electric plant. Between 1910 and 1940 the population of the city increased by close to 20,000 people. Designed by architect George E. Haynes, the Gothic details on the building are distinctive. It has retained its integrity of style, form, and setting.



**Preservation Challenges:** 280 Newell Street is currently being used by the School District as a central storage facility. It is no longer needed as an educational building, and the school district has considered selling the building in the past. If the property changes hands, there is currently no program in place to permanently preserve this important community building. The building appears to be in sound condition, but a full structural analysis should be completed to determine its reuse potential. The windows appear to be sound, and could be restored and saved. The site has ample parking for a residential use, but zoning considerations would have to be made for the increase in density. The property is not currently listed on the National Register, although its architecture and association with the development of the city, makes it likely eligible for nomination. If it were listed on the Register, and used for an income producing use, an eligible developer could use federal and state rehabilitation tax credits in their financing. The requirements of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation would mean that unique spaces inside the building, such as the multi-purpose room, would potentially have to be retained, which can cause issues with interior layouts for apartments. Should it be adaptively reused, there would need to be special consideration made of the unique spaces inside the building, including the gymnasium/cafeteria space. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but its placement in a Local Historic District would more permanently preserve the building. The building is also located in a critical watershed zone, and a portion of the property is in a flood plain district. The building is only partly used, and this neglect can lead to increase future rehabilitation costs, the longer it sits.





# 280 NEWELL STREET: ACTION PLAN

- Work with the School Department to complete a structural evaluation of the building.
  - Encourage school department to conduct a space evaluation to determine if storage needs can be met in other facilities.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - If the building is determined eligible for the Register, a qualified developer could apply to Preservation Massachusetts' Predevelopment Loan program to support the initial stages of project development. The loan can be used towards "pre-development costs including architectural and engineering studies, environmental assessment, historic and development consultants, application and financing fees, schematic or other drawings, option payments, legal fees."
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. The lot is zoned R-6. The R-6 zone is "established to permit high density one-and-two family residential areas" and to "maintain the integrity" of these areas. The current zoning would not allow redevelopment of the building as residential apartments, but the lot could see the construction of 10 single family residential houses on 7000 square foot lots, should the school be demolished. Conversion into a community center or senior center is allowed under the current zoning, as is conversion to a senior assisted living facility.
- A single building local historic district would permanently preserve the building.
- Other adaptive reuse projects in Pittsfield have been successful. The conversion of this building into housing units could be beneficial to both the neighborhood and the city. If the city were to pass the Community Preservation Act, preservation funds could be put towards the rehabilitation of the building. If any apartments were deeded 'affordable,' housing funds could also be used.
- This neighborhood is also eligible for New Markets Tax Credits, which were designed to promote investment in distressed areas. Combining NMTC, Historic tax credits, and other programs may make a project like this more viable.
- Because of its prominent placement in the neighborhood, a community meeting to help determine the future use of the school would be useful.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
City of Pittsfield School Department



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Zoning Board

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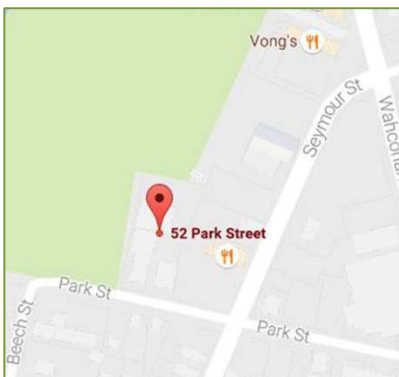
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# 52 PARK STREET

52 Park Street, commonly known as the Haddad's Rug Company warehouse, is a collection of one to two story industrial buildings. The main building is a two story brick building with a very low front gable roof, with a slight overhang. It is three bays wide and 10 bays long, with a rectangular plan. Windows have arched openings and are largely enclosed with wood, but there are a few 1/1 vinyl replacements on the second story. The front façade, facing Park Street, has three windows at the second story covered with plastic. The original entrance on this side has been covered. A rear ell addition is one story and clad in corrugated metal. It houses the current warehouse operation. The other main building on the site is a one story flat roofed garage. It has two garage bays on the Park Street side, and all windows are enclosed.



Parcel ID: H110001101

Acreage: 0.843

Current use: Warehouse

Total Assessed Value: \$264,700

Land Value: \$122,300

Improvements: \$142,400

Ward: 7A

Current owner: E & H Realty Co. Inc.

Construction: c. 1900

Liens, violations, foreclosures : None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: None



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 52 Park Street is approximately one mile from the city center. It sits just off Seymour Street and is bounded by commercial buildings to the east and a park to the north and west. There are residential buildings across the street. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** 52 Park Street is a rare example of light industrial buildings within a residential setting in Pittsfield. The buildings appear to have high integrity. According to US census data, Park Street was the home of many immigrant families from France and Poland. City directories from the 1920s show that this property was home to Samuel W. Keene and Sons Carriage Painters, and in the 1930s to "Kirk's Express."



**Preservation Challenges:** 52 Park Street is a light industrial building within a mostly residential setting. It is zoned C-W-S (Commercial, Warehousing, and Storage). According to the city's zoning ordinance, the CWS district is intended to provide supportive facilities for downtown businesses with non-industrial uses. The rear of the lot designated as a flood plain district. Any changes or alterations to the site will require a special permit from the Planning Board in coordination with the Conservation Commission. The buildings are largely underutilized.



Berkshire, Massachusetts, City Directory, 1923.



# 52 PARK STREET: ACTION PLAN

- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - If building is not eligible for National Register, property could use the 10% federal historic tax credit program, available for non-historic properties constructed prior to 1936. The rehabilitation must meet three criteria: at least 50% of the existing external walls must remain in place as external walls, at least 75% of the existing external walls must remain in place as either external or internal walls, and at least 75% of the internal structural framework must remain in place. However, this credit can only be used for a non-residential use.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Consider low intensity uses for the site due to potential flood plain and wetland issues.
- Consider renting out the front portion or garages of the site, if the main use is not occupying all buildings.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use, including flood plain overlay district conditions.
- Determine status of brownfields issues due to former use as garage, and develop mitigation plan, if necessary.
  - Berkshire Regional Planning Commission administers the Berkshire Brownfields Program funded by the Environmental Planning Agency (EPA). BRPC is not currently funded for assessment work, but there may be funding available for remediation through their Revolving Loan program. As of 6/2016, the City of Pittsfield is working on a city-wide Brownfields plan.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Conservation Commission  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Current Property Owner  
Department of Environmental Protection



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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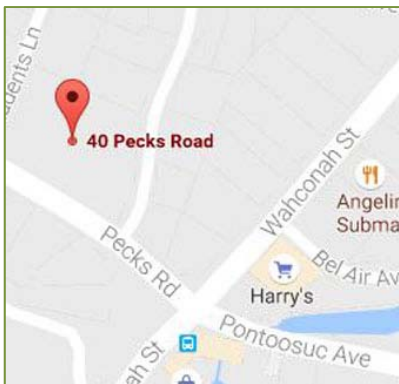
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# 40 PECKS ROAD

The Russell School at 40 Pecks Road is a former school building constructed 1895. It is a two story brick school building with a raised basement and steeply pitched hipped roof, giving the impression of a taller building. It features bracketing at the wide cornice overhang and corbelled brick trim. The raised basement is rusticated stone with six paned wood windows. Windows are original 6/6 wood in arched openings with a triple soldier course. It is three bays wide, with the center bay recessed and three bays deep. There is a parking lot to the south east side of the building. According to the 1981 inventory form, the architect was Frank Irving Cooper. The building is now used as part of an artist collaborative.



Parcel ID: H120016001

Acreage: 1.100

Current use: Artist collaborative

Total Assessed Value: \$239,730

Land Value: \$115,200

Improvements: \$124,500

Ward: 7A

Current owner: Primitive Artisan Inc.

Construction: 1895

Liens, violations, foreclosures, or preservation restriction: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.196 (last updated 1981)



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 40 Pecks Road is just less than 2 miles from the city center, and sits near the corner of Pecks Road and Wahconah Street. That intersection is largely commercial, while the rest of the around the former school is residential. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Russell School building was constructed in 1895 as a result of increasing neighborhood growth. The building was named for Solomon N. Russell, who owned the nearby Russell Woolen Mills. According to the building's 1981 inventory form, the school "initially served the children of families who worked in the mills and often lived in mill housing in the area." The building was comprised of 8 rooms and was built at a cost of \$33,960 with an initial capacity of 320 students. The school closed about 100 years later as the result of a declining school population, one of several schools closed at the same time. The building is currently home to an artist collaborative. It is likely eligible for the National Register per Criteria A and C for its architecture and integrity, and for its association with the growth of Pittsfield and its industrial history through a connection with the nearby mill complexes.

**Preservation Challenges:** The Russell School building is not currently listed on the National Register. It is subject to the Demolition Delay ordinance, but is not permanently protected. The building is currently occupied, but the exterior of the building is in need of rehabilitation. There are areas which need repointing, and the windows are in need of repair. There appears to be roof damage above the main entrance on the front façade at the cornice line.





# 40 PECKS ROAD: ACTION PLAN

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- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. The school site is zoned RM, for high density residential. Conversion to residential would be allowed under this zone.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Current Property Owner



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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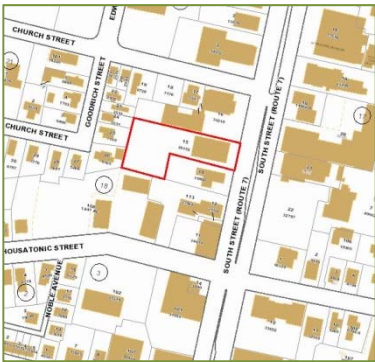
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# 116 SOUTH STREET

The Masonic Temple in Pittsfield was constructed in 1912 in the Neo-Classical Revival style. It is a brick and sandstone building. According to the National Register nomination, it is “sixty feet in height... The heavy pediment is repeated in the central entranceway door surround. Square columns corner the main façade which includes the projecting cornice and pediment. Ionic columns stand parallel to the brick columns and frame the entrance.” The building is rectangular in plan, with a raised basement. It sits back from South Street in a collection of civic and institutional buildings, including the Colonial Theater, the South Congregational Church, First Baptist Church, and the Berkshire Museum. It was designed by Joseph McArthur Vance and constructed by contractors Foote, Jones, and Lester, all Masons.



Parcel ID: H080018015

Acreage: 0.830

Current use: Masonic Temple; currently for sale

Total Assessed Value: \$881,300

Land Value: \$184,600

Improvements: \$696,700

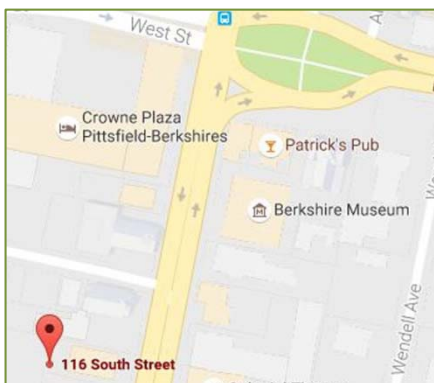
Ward: 5A

Current owner: Pittsfield Masonic Association

Construction: 1914 (cornerstone laid 1912)

Liens, violations, foreclosures: none (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.63 (last updated 1978); contributes to Park Square Historic District (Boundary Increase), listed 1991





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 116 South Street is in the heart of Pittsfield's downtown core, part of a collection of prominent and iconic institutional and civic buildings. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Masonic Temple is a contributing element in the Park Square Historic District (Boundary Increase), listed on the National Register in 1991. The building's original 1978 inventory form calls it "an imposing edifice in its own right as well as being a prominent feature of South Street." The development of this section of South Street between 1880 and 1930 saw the construction of many institutional buildings, including the Berkshire Museum, First Baptist Church, the Masonic Temple, and the Colonial Theater. The NR nomination considers these "indicative of public prosperity and leisure," and helps illustrate the growth of the community during this time period.

**Preservation Challenges:** The Masonic Temple has been for sale since March of 2015. The Masonic Association has maintained the building since it was first constructed in 1912. According to the realtor for the property, part of the challenge is finding a use for the building that will take into account the unique spaces inside the building, which include a 5000 square foot auditorium, large and small "lodge rooms," and a commercial kitchen. These unique features are the same ones that could make the building challenging to adaptively reuse through the use of historic tax credits. The building falls under the Demolition Delay ordinance, but is not permanently preserved through a local historic district or preservation restriction. The building appears to be in sound condition and has a high degree of integrity.



1927 photo, available at [tinyurl.com/pit63masonic](http://tinyurl.com/pit63masonic)



1978 MACRIS photo



# 116 SOUTH STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Work with the local realtor to continue to market the property.
- Update inventory form and/or National Register nomination for the property to reflect current conditions.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a downtown local historic district to permanently preserve the area.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission).
- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. The Temple is part of the Downtown Arts District overlay.
- Coordinate with Colonial Theater to determine if there is demand for additional rehearsal spaces for shows in the interim before the building is sold; space could potentially be rented.
- Consider temporary use as pop-up theater, restaurant, or other entertainment space in support of the Downtown Arts District overlay. Building has a full kitchen.
- Consider live/work artist space as a potential reuse, if a portion of the building could be converted to residential. Some residential uses are allowed in the BG zone. Large auditorium spaces could be utilized for rehearsals or staging art shows.
- If current owner is a registered 501 (c)3, building could be eligible to apply for Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund money for building reuse study.
- Preservation Massachusetts Pre-Development Revolving Fund money could also be used for a preliminary reuse study for the building.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
Local Realtor (Barb Hassan)  
Masonic Lodge Association





UPDATES:

### ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS (courtesy of realtor)



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# 16 TACONIC PARK DRIVE

The Taconic Mill Power Plant is a c. 1890 brick industrial building. It is the last remaining building from the Taconic Woolen Mill complex, and is thought to have been the boiler room which powered the complex. The front portion of the building is a two story building with a low-pitched side gable roof. It is two bays wide and two bays deep. It has slightly recessed windows which are either covered in wood or have metal grates. The offset main entrance has a shed porch addition with wood shingles and narrow wood supports. The rear of the building is a brick one story warehouse with detailing similar to the main block. Both have wide overhanging cornices and covered windows. There is also a smokestack that appears to be only half as tall as it was when first constructed. The original buildings for the Taconic Woolen Mill complex were wood structures that have since been demolished.



Parcel ID: H140002101

Acreage: 0.509

Current use: Unknown

Total Assessed Value: \$215,300

Land Value: \$36,500

Improvements: \$178,800

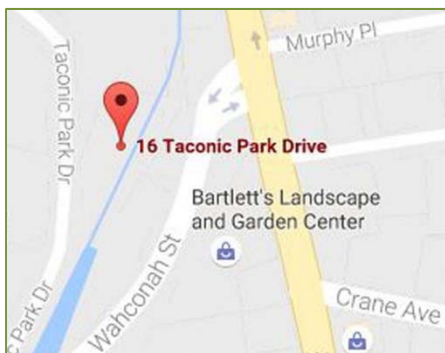
Ward: 7A

Current owner: Thomas W. Phillips (as of 6-2016)

Construction: c. 1890

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

Not on inventory





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 16 Taconic Park Drive sits within an industrial area near the intersection of Waconah Street and North Street, north of the city center. Most of the nearby industrial buildings are more recent additions. 94 Dawes Avenue is located in a well-maintained neighborhood just over a mile from Pittsfield center. There appears to be consistent investment made in the homes in this area, with only one vacant property on Dawes Street. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The Taconic Mill Power Plant is just visible in the left side of this MACRIS image from 1981 (at right). It represents the last remaining piece of the Taconic Woolen Mill complex. It is significant per National Register Criteria A & C at the local level. The building is related to Pittsfield's status as a center of textile manufacturing in the 19th century. The original mill building was constructed in 1856 on the site of Lemuel Pomeroy's musket shop. Company operations began in the 1850s, were suspended from 1873-1880, revived from 1886-1898, and then suspended again. In 1904 the complex expanded to include the nearby Bel Air Woolen Mill. This building is likely the result of the late 1880s revival. This building has retained its integrity despite losing a portion of the smokestack.

**Preservation Challenges:** This parcel is zoned Light Industrial, which does allow for commercial uses but prohibits residential. The building is not currently listed on the National Register. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance but has no permanent protection. The building may have contamination issues as a result of previous uses as a power plant and a cleaners; lead paint and asbestos may also be issues due to the age of the building. The building is in a generally visible location when approaching from Waconah Street. The condition of the windows and interior is unknown.



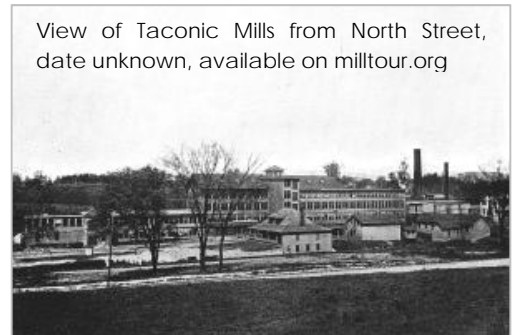


# 16 TACONIC PARK DRIVE: ACTION PLAN

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- Continue outreach to property owner.
- Determine status of brownfields issues, and develop mitigation plan, if necessary.
  - Berkshire Regional Planning Commission administers the Berkshire Brownfields Program funded by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). BRPC is not currently funded for assessment work, but there may be funding available for remediation through their Revolving Loan program. As of 6/2016, the City of Pittsfield is working with BRPC on a city-wide Brownfields plan; the Department of Community Development should consult with the Historical Commission on all properties discussed in the final plan.
- Façade Improvement grants from the City of Pittsfield could be used to support the exterior restoration of the building.
  - Existing original windows should be repaired; current replacement windows should be replaced with appropriate wood windows.
  - Front porch is likely not original and should be removed.
  - Smokestack should be checked for structural stability.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the building, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.

View of Taconic Mills from North Street, date unknown, available on milltour.org





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

- Expand the Taconic Mills' story on milltour.org, a locally written website devoted to the historic mills of Pittsfield. Expand the mill self-tour.

### PRESERVATION PARTNERS:

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Department of Community Development  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Brownfields Program  
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection  
Current Property Owner  
Milltours.org

### UPDATES:

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# 308-312 TYLER STREET

**309-** 312 Tyler Street is a two story brick Art Deco building, constructed c. 1928. According to the 2008 inventory form, "The principal façade faces Tyler Street and contains two ground-floor storefronts divided by a central doorway leading to apartments on the second story above which is a stone block cast with the name "Potter" and the date "1928." Both storefronts have display windows on the front and sides framed by wide brick pilasters with vertical mortar joints and artificial stone blocks forming the bases and belts in three stages at the cornice, transom heads and second-story window sills. The display windows are intact; the store entrances are recessed in the center of the front display spaces and both front and side windows are surmounted by original wood cornices and large leaded-glass transoms. The central doorway is also recessed behind the brick architraves it shares with the storefronts and surmounted by a leaded-glass transom."



Parcel ID: I100015011

Acreage: 0.086

Current use: Mixed use

Total Assessed Value: \$217,600

Land Value: \$42,300

Improvements: \$175,300

Ward: 2A

Current owner: Northeastern Real Estate Nominee

Construction: c. 1928

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/2016)

MHC Inventory: PIT.718 (last updated 2008)





Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 308-312 Tyler Street sits at the intersection of Tyler and Cherry streets. The Tyler Street corridor is a mixed use area, supporting the Morningside neighborhood. It is just over 1 mile from the city center. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** 308-312 Tyler Street was last surveyed in 2008 by Jill Fisher of LarsonFisher Associates. "The Potter Commercial Building is architecturally significant as a distinctive and intact example of an early 20th century commercial building. It retains its original storefront windows with transoms, ornamental brickwork, and other architectural features. As such it contributes to the historic character of the streetscape, neighborhood and city as a whole. In addition, the grocery store that first occupied the building provided an important service for the neighborhood, which was growing rapidly as a result of the expanding General Electric Industrial complex nearby. The Potters lived in the house at the rear of the property and rented out apartments on the second floor of the commercial building exemplifying a typical mix-use development pattern during this time period (which is being advocated as sustainable development by the New Urbanism movement today)."<sup>1</sup>



**Preservation Challenges:** 308-312 Tyler Street is potentially eligible for the National Register, but is not yet listed. It falls under the Demolition Delay ordinance, but the building has no permanent protection. The building appears to be sound, but not fully occupied.

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<sup>1</sup> Information from PIT.718, completed by Jill Fisher, Larson Fisher Associates.



# 308-312 TYLER STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Conduct direct outreach to any new owners of the building to ensure they are aware of the historic significance of the building.
- Submit 2008 Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - Consider the Tyler Street district as a possible area to survey.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the current owner, or upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building, or a local historic district on Tyler Street.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- Consider design guidelines for the street within the zoning code, outside of historic designation.
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Current Property Owner  
Tyler Street Business Group



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

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# 765 TYLER STREET

The Levine Block is a c. 1913 commercial located on the east end of Tyler Street, close to the former General Electric Plant. It is indicative of the growth of the Morningside neighborhood and Pittsfield after GE opened in the city. Residential development near the plant accelerated after the turn of the century and a commercial strip developed along Tyler Street. In 1981 when the building was last inventoried, it was noted that it retained several of its original storefronts, making it an important architectural asset to the city; these have since been altered. It was constructed in 1913 by Joseph Levine, who was in the real estate business.



Parcel ID: I110010001

Acreage: 0.4

Current use: Mixed use (partly occupied), commercial 1<sup>st</sup> floor, 32 efficiency apartments above

Total Assessed Value: \$441,800

Land Value: \$92,300

Improvements: \$349,500

Ward: 1A

Zone: BG

Current Owner: The Providence Nominee Trust

Construction: c. 1913

Liens, violations, foreclosures: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: PIT.150 (last surveyed 1981)





765 Tyler Street is located at the eastern end of this broad commercial street, which will be the focus of a MassDevelopment Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) project. The local Tyler Street Business Group meets regularly to discuss neighborhood concerns. The Tyler Street corridor is focused on the area between North Street and the split with Dalton Avenue. In this area, Tyler Street is a two lane road with wide shoulders and a sidewalk on each side. The majority of the commercial buildings were developed in the early 1900s, with the growth the Morningside neighborhood and the GE plant nearby. Recently Tyler Street has experienced problems with vacancy and crime; the street had a 30-40% vacancy rate as of 2015.

**Significance:** The Levine Block is an important building due to its placement in the Morningside community, and its rehabilitation would be impactful. It is associated with the development of the Morningside neighborhood after the opening of the GE plant in Pittsfield. Advertisements for rooms (specifying “men only”) ran in the Berkshire Eagle regularly in the 1930s and 1940s; these were likely targeted for local GE workers. It would be a contributing resource to a Tyler Street or Morningside Neighborhood nomination.

**Preservation Challenges:** This building is threatened not by abandonment, but by deferred maintenance. Since the building was last surveyed in 1981, it has lost detail at the cornice, had numerous windows infilled with plywood, had changes to the original storefronts, and has lost detailed over windows and doors. The property card for 765 Tyler Street notes the condition of the building as poor to fair condition. A former commercial tenant in the building cited several issues with the property, including rotting subfloors, sub standard wiring, and security concerns, including the upper floors being used as a boarding house. The front windows have moisture issues due to the condition of the exterior of the building, and the parking lot needs work that the current owner is reluctant to complete. The tenant did the majority of the renovations to the space on her own.



The building is not currently listed on the National Register, and is not likely individually eligible. However, it could be part of a district nomination for either Tyler Street or the Morningside neighborhood. If it were listed on the Register, and used for an income producing use, it would be eligible to apply for federal and state rehabilitation tax credits. If the building were found not eligible for the National Register, the property owner could utilize the 10% federal historic tax credit, but only if the building was used for a non-residential end use. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but placement in a Local Historic District would more permanently preserve the building.



# 765 TYLER STREET: ACTION PLAN

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- Outreach to property owner.
  - Façade Improvement grants from the City of Pittsfield could be used to support the exterior restoration of the building.
    - Arched windows in upper floors should be restored.
    - Existing failing replacement windows should be replaced with appropriate windows, in a dark color. 1981 image shows 8-over-1 windows in some locations; research may be required to determine original configuration. Vents that are currently in place through plywood coverings should be removed and the interior spaces reconfigured to prevent them from being required on front and side facades.
    - A stucco concrete band has replaced the original wood storefront cornice. The wood cornice should be replaced, and the transom windows reinstalled (where needed) or reopened where still present.
    - Brick repointing is needed on exterior of building.
    - Original cornice and wood dentils have been removed; explore replacement of cornice trim.
    - There are gaps under the edges of the building near the "771" entrance. Determine if foundation is sound, and resupport the area. New entrance doorway is needed, with a setback. Concrete pad also needs work.
  - Small business loans could allow tenants to improve interior spaces for their own use, but the owner would still have to commit to upgrading utilities, electric, and basic structural issues.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - If eligible, pursue use of state and or federal rehabilitation tax credits. National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - If not eligible, consider pursuing use of 10% historic tax credit. Final use must be non-residential; upper floors would need to be converted to office or other commercial use.
- Work with the TDI fellow and/or Tyler Street Business Group to engage property owner.
- Neighborhood has expressed an interest in neighborhood-serving uses along Tyler Street; owner should consider these types of uses when looking for new tenants.
- Support Tyler Street Business Group efforts to market Tyler Street. Support small scale events on the street to engage the public and rebrand the area as business and resident friendly.





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

### PRESERVATION PARTNERS:

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission; City of Pittsfield Planning Department  
Tyler Street Business Group  
MassDevelopment TDI Fellow  
Current Property Owner  
Preservation Architect

### UPDATES:

### ADDITIONAL CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS (2016)



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# 43 VIVIAN AVENUE

43 Vivian Avenue is a c. 1900 Colonial Revival style building constructed in a Four Square form. It has an open one story porch that wraps around the south side of the building. It is three bays wide, two bays deep, and has a hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles. All buildings have been sealed from the outside, but a 2014 Google streetview image shows original 8/1 and 6/1 wood windows, with several original 2/2 wood storm windows present. It has synthetic siding. The building sits on a prominent position on a large lot, in a neighborhood of more modern homes. It is possibly associated with the nearby Upper Peck Pond mill complex.



Parcel ID: F130004012

Acreage: 0.698

Current use: Vacant

Total Assessed Value: \$151,000

Land Value: \$57,100

Improvements: \$93,900

Ward: 7B

Current owner: Ethel M. Hornyak E/O

Construction: c. 1900

Liens, violations, foreclosures: Back taxes are owed and the building has been condemned as of 11-13. There are unresolved ownership issues.

MHC Inventory: None



Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 43 Vivian Avenue is located in a well-maintained neighborhood just over a mile from Pittsfield center. There appears to be consistent investment made in the homes in this area, with only one vacant property on Dawes Street. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** 43 Vivian Avenue is notable as an example of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Colonial Revival construction. It is a prominent building in the neighborhood and its rehabilitation could have a transformative effect on its neighbors. It is possible that the building was associated with the nearby Upper Peck Mills. The most recent owner, Ethel Hornyack, is noted in the 1958 city directory as being employed by "BW Co," along with her husband Stephen, a truck driver for the Petricca Company.

**Preservation Challenges:** 43 Vivian Avenue is currently closed and sealed. The building has been vacant since 2013 due to estate issues, and has been taken by the city for non-payment of taxes and condemned. These ownership issues will have to be resolved, and currently are an impediment to reuse or rehabilitation. The exterior of the building has some structural issues, including areas of siding that are failing, and some foundation issues along the sides. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but there are no permanent protection measures in place.





## 43 VIVIAN AVENUE: ACTION PLAN

- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Propose a preservation restriction placed on the property by the city, upon sale of the house, to preserve the building's integrity and design.
  - A preservation restriction is a legal agreement intended to protect a significant historic resource. It prevents improper alterations to significant historic features by requiring review from the holder of the restriction. It is filed with the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It can be applied to exterior and/or interior features. Because Preservation Restrictions serve a public purpose by preserving significant historic resources, they can carry with them tax incentives for qualified donors. If the preservation restriction reduces the value of the property, the owner may claim a tax deduction, if IRS regulations are met.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.
- If the City owned the property, an RFP for the purchase and reuse of the property could be issued, with preference given to proposals which include long term owner-occupation of the property.
  - Consider adding incentives for a developer to rehabilitate the building (ie, any funds that could be earmarked for demolition should instead be offered as an incentive in an RFP).
- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Consider the addition of Bed and Breakfast, and other potential uses of the property, as approved uses under the R-12 zone.
- Local neighbors should monitor the property for any break-ins.

### **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Community Development Department



# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

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# 17 WENDELL AVENUE

The First Church of Christ, Scientist, is a two story brick church. It is adjacent to the Berkshire Athenaeum to the north, and the Superior Court building, to the west across Wendell Street. This Neoclassical church is an excellent example of its style and has retained a high degree of integrity. It has a characteristic full height entry porch with a closed pedimented gable supported by four columns. The main block has a hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles. Large multi-paned windows lining the sides of the building are original wood, while some of the smaller upper story windows have been replaced with vinyl. The front façade is symmetrical, with a center entrance featuring a decorative surround with an arched pediment. The cornice has a modest overhang with large dentils. The interior sanctuary space features a large pipe organ and a curved ceiling. Overall the building is in excellent condition.



Parcel ID: H080016016

Acreage: 0.599

Current use: Church

Total Assessed Value: \$349,210

Land Value: \$95,700

Improvements: \$253,510

Ward: 5A

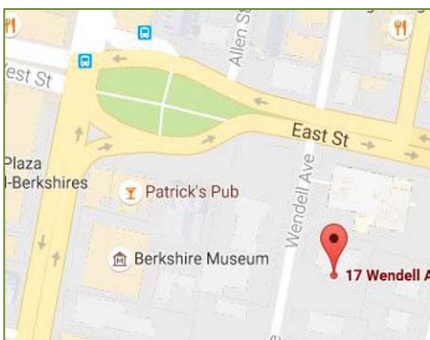
Current owner: First Church of Christ Scientist

Construction: completed 1927

Liens, violations, foreclosures, or preservation restriction: None (as of 6/16)

MHC Inventory: None

Not on MACRIS inventory





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

Pittsfield was named one of the best Old House Neighborhoods in 2013, by This Old House Magazine. 17 Wendell Avenue is located just off East Street in a neighborhood with a mix of institutional buildings and residential buildings that have been converted to office space. The neighborhood is well-maintained. Pittsfield is close to the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in neighboring Lenox.

**Significance:** The First Church of Christ, Scientist, is an excellent example of its style. The building was designed by architect Joseph McArthur Vance, also responsible for the Masonic Temple in Pittsfield. It is located just outside the Park Square National Register Historic District (PIT.K). The church would likely be included in an expansion to the district. With the exception of a few replacement windows, the building has integrity of design, location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. At the time of its construction and occupation by the Christian Scientists, Pittsfield was experiencing tremendous growth. This was reflected in the number of churches and other social organizations established at the turn of the century. This building is notable not only for its architecture and its relationship to the growth of the City, but also for its prominent placement among other institutional buildings.



**Preservation Challenges:** The First Church of Christ, Scientist is currently occupied by an active, if small, congregation of about 15. According to one congregant, they own the building and therefore cannot afford to move – the cost of renting another facility would be prohibitively expensive. Ongoing maintenance continues to be an issue, but overall the building appears to be sound. The parcel is zoned General Business), and is overlaid with both the Downtown Arts District overlay and the Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD). The Arts District was designed to encourage the grouping of entertainment and residential uses and support a pedestrian friendly environment. Under the SGOD district and Chapter 40R, communities are encouraged to create dense mixed use areas which include affordable housing in the downtown. The property is not currently listed on the National Register. The building is currently subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but has no permanent protection.



# 17 WENDELL AVENUE: ACTION PLAN

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- Review existing zoning for obstacles to re-use. Consider the implications and intent of both the SDOG and Art District overlays for their compatibility.
- Encourage the congregation to reach out to other small congregations and consider “church sharing,” a practice which not only can help support the existing building but potentially help incubate other small congregations. It can also help expand awareness of the facility and the church, and potentially grow the congregation. Multiple congregations can use the same facility at alternating times and share the cost of building maintenance.
- Reach out to cultural groups to offer rehearsal and performance space. Offer space to community groups for public meetings.
- Publish events in [discoverpittsfield.com](http://discoverpittsfield.com); coordinate with City of Pittsfield's Office of Cultural Development and the Upstreet Cultural District to offer event space to other local organizations.
- Prepare an Inventory Form B, and Criteria Statement for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for their opinion on the property's eligibility for the National Register. If the owner is on record as supporting National Register listing for the property, prepare and submit a National Register nomination to expand the Park Square Historic District to include the church.
  - National Register listed income-producing properties are eligible to apply for federal and/or state rehabilitation tax credits. These credits can be used for work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - Massachusetts Preservation Projects fund grants could also be used to support rehabilitation work on the building, if the district was expanded.
- Create a single building local historic district to permanently preserve the building, or create a local historic district for the Park Square Historic District that includes this building.
  - A local historic district can require that any changes to the exterior of a building within the district be approved by the Historical Commission (or Historic District Commission). Single building local historic districts are a common tool for ensuring the preservation of the character of individual significant properties.

## **PRESERVATION PARTNERS:**

City of Pittsfield Historical Commission and Planning Department  
Current Property Owner  
City of Pittsfield's Office of Cultural Development

## **UPDATES:**





# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK

### ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS:



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# CITY OF PITTSFIELD

## ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING CASEBOOK



Prepared for the City of Pittsfield  
By the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission  
September 2016

The Pittsfield Endangered Historic Building Casebook has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin, Chairman. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, or the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

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## *Appendices:*

- *Appendix A: Public and Stakeholders Outreach*
- *Appendix B: Bibliography*



# S.1 Introduction

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The purpose of the Endangered Historic Building Casebook is to identify and describe the endangered historic buildings in Pittsfield, and provide prioritized action plans for stakeholders to rehabilitate, reuse, and/or reimagine these properties. The overall intent is to help the City better plan for preservation, rather than just reacting when a developer proposes a new project for an historic building.

The City of Pittsfield Historic Building Casebook represents a detailed look at 25 properties in the city. While many of these properties are not at the moment subject of development/redevelopment plans and may be physically stable in the near term, for a wide variety of factors they are considered endangered by the community and this report is intended to provide a guide for the future to allow for proactive advocacy for their preservation. It brings together information on historic status, zoning, current conditions, and potential in one place. The intent is to provide current and or future property owners or developers a blue print for next steps they could take to better preserve the historic buildings of Pittsfield. The action plan is designed to give the City of Pittsfield guidance for supporting historic preservation planning efforts.

The Casebook is loosely based on the Historic Boston Historic Casebook projects, including their most recent versions which focus on commercial neighborhood revitalization. It also takes cues from the New Bedford Mill Inventory and other building specific studies that have been completed in the Commonwealth.

## S.2 Methodology

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The Pittsfield Endangered Historic Buildings Casebook is based loosely on the work of Historic Boston, Inc., which completed several casebooks between 1991 and 1999. Their projects gathered information on historic properties to guide their investment and rehabilitation plans. They were also intended to provide information to others interested in preserving historic structures and encourage communities to complete similar projects.

This project also benefited from the Historic Mill Inventory completed by the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 2008. The purposes of that study were to “Identify mill sites that will provide the greatest redevelopment opportunities that are consistent with the city’s economic development strategies, infrastructure needs, environmental and land use planning requirements [and] Identify mill structures that possess significant architectural or historical value and therefore reflect the unique character and identity of the community.”<sup>1</sup>

### **How was the list of properties developed?**

The creation of the Endangered Historic Properties list took several phases of effort. The list began with a search of the Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System (MACRIS) for vacant properties. This search was intended to identify any previously identified long-vacant historic properties already listed in the Pittsfield historic inventory. This information was combined with a list provided by the Code Enforcement team, a list provided by the Community Development Department, and suggestions from the Pittsfield Historical Commission. Information was cross checked for duplicates, and historic status data added from the MACRIS inventory. Additional properties were added from public input, the Tyler Street Business Group, and from field work conducted by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC). Several were added from the *Sustainable Berkshires, Long Range Plan for Berkshire County Historic Preservation Chapter*, written by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission in 2014.

The original master list included over 100 properties. A first cut removed properties too recent to be considered historic, buildings already known to be currently undergoing renovations, and /or buildings that have recently been redeveloped or demolished. The City also requested the removal of some properties due to proposed projects or other planning issues.

Following a field visit to the remaining properties, another cut was made to remove those properties that have been severely altered or damaged, those that could not be located in the field, those which were noted as currently undergoing renovations, and those that were poorly maintained but not rising to the level of the selected group..

The remaining properties were then evaluated against the selection criteria. The Historical Commission and Community Development Staff approved the final list. Some Casebook properties may not be found to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, but their rehabilitation could nevertheless have a significant impact on the historic neighborhood around the building.

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<sup>1</sup> City of New Bedford Historic Mill Inventory, p. 5.

The complete list of properties considered as part of this project is included as **Appendix A**.

### **How were the selection criteria developed?**

The 1999 edition of the Historic Boston casebook, which was until recently available online, provided information on 40 properties. The information on each property covers 2 pages (when printed), and includes the same information. It includes square footage, zoning, use, construction date, style, condition, owner, historic status, assessment, a preservation strategy, significance, preservation challenges, and a neighborhood context. The 2002 update to the casebook reports added additional information about ownership changes and building conditions to date. The criteria Historic Boston used to select properties were:

- listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or designated or recommended for designation as a Boston Landmark;
- located at pivotal sites in that they are visually prominent and/or that their location is a bellwether for the future well-being (or decline) of a neighborhood;
- endangered in that their survival may depend upon more than market forces or regulatory controls;
- potential to benefit the community at large in terms of environmental/aesthetic contribution, historical value, social/cultural value, or economic development; and
- likely to benefit from the publicity of Casebook listing which could catalyze or influence other decision makers or become future Historic Boston projects.

The City of New Bedford Historic Mill Inventory (2008) directly linked the redevelopment of the mills to economic development opportunities. Economic development opportunity was the major criteria in determining reuse potential. Their methodology consisted of identifying mills from historic maps and creating a database for fieldwork observations. The data collected included ownership information, estimated gross and rentable space, site and structure conditions, occupancy, current use, and historic and planning status (including National Register status and placement in particular zoning or planning districts). The scoring criteria – which were not selection criteria – also included criteria related to site and structural conditions and historical significance.

The initial selection criteria for the Pittsfield casebook were revised several times based on community feedback and comments from City of Pittsfield Community Development staff and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Properties proposed by stakeholders were evaluated against these criteria to determine whether or not they would be included in the final casebook report.

## **Pittsfield Casebook Selection Criteria**

### **Community Impact and Visual Significance**

- If there are multiple endangered properties in the vicinity, would investment in them have a significant neighborhood impact?
- Are there nearby recent public or private investments?
- Would this project significantly impact the neighborhood and/or encourage additional investment in the area?
- Is there community support for saving this resource? Have multiple groups suggested it be included?

### **Historic Significance**

- Has this property already been listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places? Does it meet any of the National Register criteria?
- Was the property deemed of sufficient interest to be included in the Pittsfield Historic Properties Inventory?
- Is the property significant to the City of Pittsfield (but not eligible for listing in the National Register)?

### **Potential for Reuse**

- Are the owners willing to consider sale, redevelopment, or reuse?
- Are there outstanding code issues or violations?
- Has the length of time the property has been vacant or abandoned affected its condition and reuse potential?
- What is the condition of the exterior?
- What is the condition of the interior of the property (if accessible)?
- Are there unique site, building, or historic characteristics that would help or hinder the building's rehabilitation?
- Would this project be prohibitively expensive, taking into account the overall condition of the property? (dependent on ability to access interior of property)
- Would the building be eligible for state and or federal rehabilitation tax credits? (an income producing use, owner entity eligible, etc.)

### **Economic Impact**

- Is there an existing or proposed economic policy in place that could assist this project?
- Would the project have a positive economic impact on the community?
- Are there other projects in the immediate area that have been successful?
- Would the rehabilitation of the building create jobs (other than those created by the rehabilitation work)?



# Sample building evaluation

This is a sample of the building evaluations that were completed for the initial list of properties, in order to apply the selection criteria.

## 94 Dawes Avenue



1. 94 Dawes Avenue, view to southeast.

- Is there another endangered property in the vicinity? *No.*
- Are there nearby recent public or private investments? *No*
- Would this significantly impact the neighborhood and/or encourage additional investment in the area? *Would positively impact by retaining an important historic resource for the neighborhood and the City.*
- Is there community support for this saving this resource? *Have multiple groups suggested it be included? Property suggested for inclusion by multiple groups. Property may be considered as a Berkshire "Great Estate."<sup>2</sup> Residents initially opposed a bed and breakfast proposal, but when the potential new owner withdrew, some have expressed regret.*
- Has this property already been listed on the National or State Register? *Not currently listed. Likely eligible per A & C.*
- Is the property included in the Pittsfield Inventory? *No inventory form*
- Is the property significant to the City of Pittsfield? *Yes, significant for architecture and for its association with William Stanley, prominent inventor and business owner.*
- Are the owners willing to consider sale, redevelopment, or reuse? *Yes, property currently on the market.*
- Are there outstanding code issues or violations? *No.*
- How long has the property been vacant or abandoned? *Not vacant or abandoned. Building is currently unprotected, with the exception of the Demolition Delay ordinance (which will not by itself permanently preserve the building).*
- What is the condition of the exterior? *Excellent condition.*
- What is the condition of the interior of the property (if accessible)? *Excellent condition according to realtor.*
- Are there unique site, building, or historic characteristics that would help or hinder the building's rehabilitation? *Large site, excellent historic details, large buildings. "Great Estate." Lack of parking. Potential neighborhood opposition to uses other than strict residential.*
- Would this project be prohibitively expensive, taking into account the overall condition of the property? *Not overly expensive due to condition.*

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<sup>2</sup> The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission completed a *Great Estates Preservation Options* report in 2000. 94 Dawes was not included in that study, but should be included in any updates. Copies of the report are available from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

- Would the building be eligible for state and or federal rehabilitation tax credits? (an income producing use, owner entity eligible, etc.) *As bed and breakfast, yes, eligible for parts of the property not occupied by owner, and if owner is eligible.*
- Is there an existing or proposed economic policy in place that could assist this project? *No.*
- Would the project have a positive economic impact on the community? *Yes. Could support tourism to area.*
- Are there other projects in the immediate area that have been successful? *No.*
- Would the rehabilitation of the building create jobs? *Possibly, if income producing use.*

## S.3 Challenges + Opportunities

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The preservation of historic properties is challenging on many fronts. The public is not always clear on the benefits of preserving buildings, and municipal programs do not always support these efforts. Additionally, the economic climate can create an environment where preservation is seen as preventing growth and change. The closing of the General Electric plant in Pittsfield was a tremendous blow to the economy of Pittsfield. At its peak the company employed almost 13,000 people; in 2001 that number was less than 1000.<sup>3</sup> The plant closure especially affected the Morningside neighborhood where the plant was located. The Berkshire Health System is currently the largest employer in the city, but the area has had to adjust to a more diverse economy.

According to the US Census, Pittsfield has a home ownership rate of over 60%. Housing stock is generally affordable. The majority of homes are assessed at between \$100,000 and \$149,000. However 38% of occupied housing units were constructed before 1938; that number is 43% in rental units. This aging infrastructure can be expensive to maintain.

The 2009 Master Plan addresses issues of housing, saying,

"The data ... indicates that affordable housing may not be an immediate problem across the city of Pittsfield. However, there are three important reasons why housing needs should be studied and why housing affordability and quality may need to be acted upon in the near future.

- Some parts of the city currently face affordability and quality of housing stock challenges.
- The workforce for new business will need affordable and quality housing units – sometimes a community may have an abundance of affordable units, but they may not be of the quality that will attract entrepreneurs and workers.
- As the city revitalizes, some areas will suffer gentrification and, therefore, housing pressures will increase. Across the nation, rising housing prices in rejuvenated communities have forced working class and middle class families and individuals to move."<sup>4</sup>

There is a need to create affordable housing while at the same time create styles of housing that will continue to attract new residents. The Master Plan suggests creating supportive home ownership programs to educate the public.

The City's Master Plan also addresses issues of employment and sustainability. Downtown buildings, largely in historic districts, are identified as crucial in maintaining the community character of the area. The challenge is, in some cases, finding appropriate uses for these buildings. Industrial buildings present unique challenges, as well, both in terms of potential environmental contamination and the sheer size of the facilities.

### **State of Preservation in Pittsfield**

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<sup>3</sup> <http://commonwealthmagazine.org/economy/small-cities-face-big-economic-challenges/>

<sup>4</sup> City of Pittsfield. *2009 Master Plan*, p. 47.

The Pittsfield Historical Commission has worked over the years to preserve Pittsfield's built environment. There is currently an active, seven-member Commission in place. An inventory project was undertaken between 1978 and 1980 to document some of the area's well known historic resources. The Historical Commission has also pushed for a demolition delay ordinance in the city, and most recently encouraged the city to change the ordinance's regulations to place the determination of "preferably preserved" status directly in the hands of the Commission.

Since 1996, when Herman Melville's Arrowhead was designated a National Historic Landmark, seventeen local properties have been listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places, and five National Register historic districts have been established, encompassing an additional 150 historic properties. As a result of state and federal preservation project grants, thirteen historic properties owned by non-profit organizations or the City are presently protected by historic preservation restrictions held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Today the Pittsfield Historic Inventory includes 948 entries, between buildings and areas/districts. Most recently, inventory forms have been completed in an effort to allow the use of historic rehabilitation tax credits during rehabilitation projects, or as a result of a demolition delay application. Most of the buildings identified in the Casebook need an updated inventory form as a first step to establish whether or not a property would be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### *Opportunity: Rehabilitation Tax Credits*

Federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits have been used successfully in Pittsfield many times by private developers. Since 2000, 11 projects have been completed using the credits, with more underway.

Historic Name / MHC Inventory Number	Address	Status
Central Block / PIT.126	65-83 North Street	Completed 2002
YMCA Building / PIT.9	292 North Street	Completed 2003
Bradford Block / PIT.114	369-383 North Street & 31-33 Bradford Street	Completed 2005
Colonial Theater / PIT.62	111 South Street	Completed 2007
Berkshire Automobile Garage / PIT.424	109 South Street	Completed 2007
Kinnell - Kresge Building / PIT.127	49-59 North Street	Completed 2009
Wood Brothers Building / PIT.132	421-429 North Street	Completed 2010
A.H. Silk Mill / PIT.167, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767	55 Spring Street	Completed 2012
Frank Howard Building / PIT.747	124-132 Fenn Street	Completed 2014
Burns Block / PIT.447	273-297 North Street	Completed 2015
Onota Building / PIT.49	64-74 North Street	Completed 2016
	592-596 North Street and 2-8 White Terrace	Part 1 approved 2015
Pittsfield Street Railway Car Barn / PIT.483	133 Seymour Street	Part 1 approved 2016

According to the National Park Service, "a 20% income tax credit is available for the rehabilitation of historic, income-producing buildings that are determined by the Secretary of



the Interior, through the National Park Service, to be ‘certified historic structures.’” Buildings currently listed on the National Register, or eligible for listing on the Register, are eligible to apply for federal rehabilitation tax credits, assuming that the building will be used for an income-producing purpose and that the owner of the property is eligible to receive the credit. The credits are transferable, and all work must adhere to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. If a building is not yet listed on the Register, it can be qualified for the program as long as the nomination is approved within three years of project completion. The National Park Service reviews work and projects under this program.

According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, under the state historic rehabilitation tax credit program, “a certified rehabilitation project on an income-producing property is eligible to receive up to 20% of the cost of certified rehabilitation expenditures in state tax credits.” Buildings must be individually listed in the National Register, contribute to a National Register District, or be eligible individually or as a contributing resource to an eligible district, to qualify. The Massachusetts Historical Commission reviews work and projects under this program.

Additional information on the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit can be found here: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/before-you-apply.htm>. Additional information on the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit can be found here: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhctax/taxidx.htm>.

There is also a 10% tax credit available for rehabilitation of non-historic properties constructed prior to 1936. These buildings must not be eligible for the National Register, and the project “must meet three criteria: at least 50% of the existing external walls must remain in place as external walls, at least 75% of the existing external walls must remain in place as either external or internal walls, and at least 75% of the internal structural framework must remain in place.”<sup>5</sup> There is no final review of work for this program; the credit is applied directly through the Internal Revenue Service.

Additional information on the 10% tax credit can be found here: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>.

### ***Opportunity: Preservation through Local Historic Districts***

Local historic districts are an important preservation tool that the Commission could use to permanently preserve significant historic buildings and districts in the city, including those with potential for future redevelopment. According to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40C, the purposes of these districts are to:

- preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of the Commonwealth and its cities and towns;
- maintain and improve the settings of those buildings and places; and
- encourage new designs compatible with existing buildings in the district.<sup>6</sup>

Local historic districts are established and regulated by local ordinance. The ordinance establishes which features require Historic District Commission (or Historical Commission, in the

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Massachusetts Historical Commission. *Establishing Local Historic Districts*, p. 1.

case of a combined commission) approval. Such districts are intended to ensure that the characteristics that make a place or a building unique and significant are protected.

Local historic districts are an important regulatory tool for both collections of buildings and for individual significant properties. Single building local historic districts have been used successfully to prevent demolition and inappropriate alterations to properties throughout Massachusetts.

Thus far there are no such districts in Pittsfield. If the City is interested in pursuing this option, the adoption of a local historic district would require City Council to establish a study committee, which would produce a report about the significance and boundaries of the proposed district. It also requires a public hearing, and a two-thirds majority vote of the City Council.

Once a local historic district is passed, a local historic district commission would be formed to approve all exterior work in the district according to guidelines established by the Commission. Guidelines written for each district will establish standards to be followed for the treatment or alteration of existing properties, and could apply to setbacks, fencing, siding, windows, roof materials, and many other elements affecting the appearance of the district. In many cases they can also help guide potential new development into complementary construction which enhances, rather than detracts from, the district.

#### ***Opportunity: Preservation through Preservation Restrictions***

Preservation restrictions are a well-established mechanism used to assure the long term protection of significant historical properties. In Massachusetts, they are enabled under a state statutory legal framework (M.G.L. Chapter 184, sections 31-33). Through a preservation restriction, the owner of a historically significant property can prohibit, condition, or limit future alterations to the property by conveying the legal rights to review, approve and enforce the terms of the restriction to a qualified entity.

Presently, preservation restrictions on specific properties are currently the only effective permanent protective mechanism in place for historic resources in Pittsfield. The existing preservation restrictions were all conveyed as a condition of state or federal funds granted for the preservation of historic properties owned by non-profit organizations or by the City. These restrictions are all held by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Preservation restrictions that are voluntarily conveyed (not as a condition of a grant or regulatory action) may have a monetary value as a charitable contribution. Owners of qualified properties therefore may be able to take a federal income tax deduction if the restriction meets all Internal Revenue Service requirements. Alterations to buildings or structures with a preservation restriction must be approved by the entity holding that restriction. Governmental bodies or qualified charitable corporations or trusts whose focus is historic preservation or a municipality can hold restrictions. The Historical Commission itself is empowered under the state enabling legislation to be able to hold restrictions.

#### ***Challenge: Zoning***

While Pittsfield's Master Plan identifies the importance of historic preservation, the City's zoning ordinance does not make any similar substantive distinctions. The City has adopted the Downtown Arts

Overlay District which provides greater flexibility in the reuse of buildings downtown, many of which have historical significance. Beyond this accomplishment, Pittsfield is hampered by a largely 1970's era zoning ordinance that speaks to a new suburban development demand versus one that encourages development that meshes with historic land use patterns, especially in relation to the downtown and the City's neighborhood business districts. Many of the zoning challenges are related to situations of non-conforming uses (e.g., buildings that were built for a specific purpose that are no longer allowable) or non-conforming structures (e.g., buildings that were constructed prior to the establishment of setbacks or minimum lot sizes). Section 8 of the City's zoning ordinance does provide relief through a special permit that allows for the re-establishment or alteration of non-conforming uses or buildings, but that process is not predictable and the barrier may result in a property owner or potential property owner not pursuing re-use plans because of the unknown challenges that can present themselves through a special permit or variance process.

Presently the Pittsfield Historical Commission is not provided an opportunity to review such proposals, or to comment on whether a plan would have a potential impact on historic resources significant to the City.

### *Challenge: Churches*

Pittsfield has a number of churches and church buildings threatened with closure. Morningside Baptist, Saint Joe's Convent, Saint Mary's campus, and Zion Lutheran were mentioned numerous times by stakeholders in an effort to preserve these landmark buildings in the city – some with a clear threat to the building and other with the belief that the building may, in the future, be threatened. The buildings have become important not only to the members of the church, but also to the community at large as a symbol of the neighborhood and a familiar sight. The primary issue is the cost of ongoing maintenance. With church memberships declining, many congregations feel the costs of continuing to maintain an aging building to be an impossible task. Redevelopment of the property by a new owner becomes attractive for the church congregation to continue to sustain them in a smaller space.

If pursuing the use of historic tax credits, the reuse of these buildings can be difficult from a development stand point because of the very characteristics that make them iconic – the sanctuaries. Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, required for federal or state historic rehabilitation tax credits, often call for maintaining the "volume of space," which prevents them from being subdivided into smaller units. There have been successful rehabilitations that have used the space for performances and other community events, but the question becomes – how many of these types of spaces can a community sustain?

### *Opportunity: Demolition Delay*

The current demolition delay ordinance was passed in 2007 and amended in 2016. The ordinance covers all properties in the City that are, in whole or in part, 75 years or older. Previously, it was a two-step process, with the Historical Commission making an initial determination of historical significance, and the Community Development Board making the

determination of “preferably preserved.” However, the 2016 amendment gave the sole decision making authority to the Historical Commission.

In order to make an initial determination, the ordinance requires the applicant to submit specific information including a description of the structure (including architectural elements, style, and type of construction), photographs, the “reason for requesting a demolition permit,” and a description of the proposed reuse “if the applicant feels such will contribute to the justification for the demolition.” The applicant is also required to submit an updated Massachusetts Historical Commission “Form B,” or building inventory form. The Commission then considers this information based on one or more of these criteria:

- The structure is listed on, or is within an area listed on, or eligible for, the State or National Register of Historic Places, the Inventory of Historic and Prehistoric Assets of the Commonwealth or the Historic Resources List;
- The structure is importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the city, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the United States of America; or
- The structure is historically important by reason of period, style, method of building construction or association with a particular architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings, structures, or sites.

Information provided by the applicant is considered at an open Historical Commission meeting, but it is not a formal public hearing. Some applicants have chosen to have a professional preservationist or architect complete the Form B and present the information to the Commission, but it is not required. The Commission has 30 days from notification by the Building Inspector to make its determination. If the building is not found to be historically significant, the Building Inspector is allowed to issue the building permit. If the building is found by the Historical Commission to be historically significant, the Commission then notifies the Building Inspector and the applicant, and conducts a public hearing on the proposal. The Commission then must decide if the building should be preferably preserved. If so, demolition is delayed for 12 months.

The owner is not required to participate in any discussions of the future uses of the property other than their proposal, and can simply wait out the 12 month delay. The only requirement is that the structure be properly secured, if vacant. At any time, the owner can come back to the Historical Commission for a new hearing to see if the delay period can be waived, but they must prove that efforts have been made to preserve the building.

The demolition delay ordinance provides an opportunity for a different outcome. The Historical Commission and the City should use the delay time period to discuss alternatives with the developer and reach out to other interested parties. Options could include alterations to the site plans to preserve the building, adaptive reuse of the building, or the potential sale of the building to a different owner who could preserve the property.

### ***Opportunity: Community Development Block Grant funding***

The City of Pittsfield has successfully used Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to assist local businesses with improving their facades. Recently the Kinnel Kresge building (determined eligible for the National Register in 1978 and placed on the Register in 1991)



underwent improvements using funding from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Development Action Grant, and an Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development's Growth District Initiatives Grant. A façade easement was granted by the property owners to the City of Pittsfield. This program also provided the ability for the City to preserve the Capital Theatre marquee and façade as part of the conversion to the City's current Senior Center, and is intended to be utilized as part of a proposal to rehabilitate the marquee in the near future.

The CDBG program has also offered assistance to property owners through its housing rehabilitation program. Qualified home owners can receive assistance with lead paint abatement, accessibility issues, and other rehabilitation issues. Although the program is not exclusively for historic properties, many older homes have been helped. Because the funding comes from the state, the projects must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, if the property is listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register.

### *Opportunity: Funding Sources*

The Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) is a potential source of rehabilitation funding for properties. It is a state-funded 50% reimbursable matching grant program intended to support the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites (cultural resources) listed in the State Register of Historic Places. To apply, the property must be owned by a municipality or nonprofit organization. According to MHC,

"Requests may be submitted for construction activities including stabilization, protection, rehabilitation, and restoration. Grant funding can only be used to cover costs of material and labor necessary to ensure the preservation, safety, and accessibility of historic cultural resources. Development of universal access is allowable as part of a larger project (ideally, no more than 30%). With construction or "bricks & mortar" projects, therefore, the architectural or engineering fees for any project work are not eligible for funding or use as matching share.

Allowable costs: Overall building preservation, building code compliance, and barrier-free access where historic fabric is directly involved are eligible as well as the cost of a project sign, photography, recording of the preservation restriction, and legal ads.

Non-allowable costs: Projects consisting of routine maintenance, upgrading of mechanical systems (i.e., heating, ventilation, air conditioning, electrical, plumbing), renovation of non-historic spaces, moving of historic buildings, or construction of additions will not be considered. Projects involving the interior of buildings actively used for religious purposes are generally not considered eligible. Architectural or engineering fees for any project work are not eligible for funding or use as matching share."

Additional information on this program can be found at:  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcmppf/mppfidx.htm](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcmppf/mppfidx.htm).

### *Challenge: Building Code and Accessibility*

Currently, the assessed value of a building is used to establish a trigger for bringing that building into complete code compliance for various codes. The problem faced in a low demand market like much of the Berkshires is that building values are so low that almost any renovation triggers full code compliance, often for multiple codes. Given the high market demand in other parts of the Commonwealth, such as a Brookline or Newton, the same size building which was similar in nature would be so highly valued that no accessibility, fire or seismic code requirements would be triggered for the same renovation. Given that the return on investment in the high market demand area is so much higher than any potential return on investment in a low market demand area such as Pittsfield, North Adams or Adams, this has no economic logic behind it at all. The end result is that the City is aware of examples of building owners or developers wanting to make investments to improve buildings which are either abandoned or very underutilized, but projects are abandoned due to the significantly escalated costs and inability to realize any return on investment. While there are certainly cases where a developer does move forward with projects, it is often with financial assistance through historic tax credits or other state and local programs that provide tax credits or through tax increment financing/exemptions.

The Fire Code, established in the Office of the State Fire Marshall, is the most problematic, especially requiring that the entire building be provided with a sprinkler system even if the renovation or expansion is only in a small part of the building, is especially problematic in this regard. Part of the problem with the Fire Code is that "Substantial Renovation" has never been clearly defined and the Office of the State Fire Marshall is arbitrarily determining what that means, based on a several decades old court case which did not actually provide much clarity. According to prior research, the Appeals Board has proven to be particularly inflexible and apparently dismisses any arguments regarding the economic viability of compliance.

There are other issues with the various codes which seem to be created by either legislative or regulatory revisions to the International Building Code (IBC), which in most other states is adopted as written. These modifications to the IBC create a variety of problems. For instance, in most states, a fire rated wall can be used to provide fire protection in a building which is intended to allow time for occupants to safely evacuate. In Massachusetts, the State Fire Marshall will not allow their use to meet fire code standards and insists on complete sprinkler systems. There are other code requirements that the legislature has from time to time put into law to address one specific, typically local, issue. There are also conflicting requirements for accessibility between the Americans for Disability Act requirements and those of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. All of these variations from common practice in other states lead to the presumably unintended consequence that stock building materials or designs used in 49 other states cannot be used in Massachusetts which probably helps to drive up construction costs here. It also is especially problematic in parts of the state that are in close proximity to other states and contractors do work in both (or several). In our case, the Berkshires are bordered by three different states and contractors may well do work in two or more and material suppliers may be in a different state.

The National Park Service has tried to address many of accessibility and code issues, with information available on their website: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful->

rehab/codes.htm , but as discussed above, many Massachusetts specific requirements make compliance difficult.

### *Challenge: Demographic and Economic Factors on Redevelopment*

Berkshire County as a whole, and more specifically the City of Pittsfield, are facing a number of challenges which appear to be directly impacting the redevelopment of both public and private properties. It is projected that the City's population will continue to decline in the next 10 to 50 years. This will directly impact school enrollment, the available workforce, and demand for certain amenities and/or services. As part of this demographic change, it is expected that the youth and younger adult populations will decline whereas the elderly population will increase significantly. These factors and trends have direct impacts on redevelopment strategies as well as considerations for new construction vs. adaptive reuse.

In addition, the 2013 median household income of Pittsfield was the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in Berkshire County of 32 municipalities and 13% lower than the county average. In fact over the 4-year period from 2009 to 2013, Pittsfield's median household income actually declined by 2.5%. The availability of disposable income to purchase goods and/or services including food, entertainment, housing, etc. weighs heavily on the desire to invest in an area as part of a redevelopment and, to a great extent, the type of redevelopment

Recognizing some of these limitations that have led to disinvestment, the City has become very familiar with a large menu of funding opportunities that include New Market Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, Tax Increment Financing, Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) Funds, Community Development Block Grant Funds, and Community Preservation Act Funds, among others. Despite the challenges outlined above, these types of programs have made way for significant public and private investment in Pittsfield, especially within its downtown area. Where 20 years ago downtown Pittsfield contained several board up buildings with high vacancy rates, over 100 new housing units have come online in the past 15 years, there are many new restaurants and cafes, and the streetscape has been vastly improved to create a more walkable, pedestrian friendly atmosphere.

## S.4 Public Involvement

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Stakeholder outreach was an important component of this project as a way to develop a complete list of potential casebook entries. The first outreach meeting was with the Historical Commission to discuss the project and begin to brainstorm buildings to include on the list.

Because of the number of buildings of concern on Tyler Street, the Tyler Street Business Group was consulted in February, 2016. Sixteen (16) business owners and residents attended. Also attending the meeting was Director of Community Development Janis Akerstrom, who discussed the potential for economic development in the area. Low interest loans and façade improvement programs will be especially important in this area. The community views itself as a “town within a city” and sees Tyler Street as an important asset to the community. Attendees stressed the importance of rehabilitating the commercial properties in Tyler Street in order to strengthen the residential neighborhoods that have seen decline since the General Electric complex closed. One notable building discussed is the Saint Mary’s Church Complex, closed since 2008. Former parishioners and local residents are concerned about the property as it is a prominent local landmark and an excellent example of sacred architecture. The campus covers over 2 acres and is surrounded by both commercial and residential uses. Other properties discussed included the Morningside Fire Station (225 Tyler Street), 640 and 765 Tyler Street (both underutilized but not vacant), and the World Ministry building. Attendees stressed the importance of neighborhood based, supportive uses along the street, with an emphasis on sustainability.

Two public meetings were held to gather information on the Endangered Historic Building Casebook project, and solicit buildings to include on the list. On March 16, 2016, information on the project and the consultant were available from 12-4pm, followed by an open public meeting at 6pm. A PowerPoint presentation was shown at both meetings, and is included as **Appendix B.**

Over the course of the afternoon, three residents visited to inquire about the project and to present potential properties for inclusion. At 6pm, one resident attended the meeting, in addition to members of the historical commission and city staff. The discussion noted several properties to be included on the endangered building list, the majority of which had already been considered. Concerning the selection criteria, one resident suggested considering how many previous attempts at redevelopment or reuse had already been tried.

As a follow-up, and with renewed public outreach efforts on the part of the Community Development Department, a second public meeting was held March 30, 2016, at 6pm. 15 residents attended to hear about the project and discuss buildings to be included. Residents at this meeting discussed several specific buildings to be potentially included in the list. There was also a discussion of incentivizing redevelopment over new development and what tools could be used to support preservation at the city level. One questioned whether stretch code allowances could be made for historic properties to allow some leniency in the building codes. The meeting was also broadcast on Pittsfield Community Television.

Properties discussed at the public meetings include:



Property	Address	Residents Supporting
Zion Lutheran Church	74 First Street	2
Springside House	Springside Park	3
Tyler Street Fire Station	380 Tyler Street	3
St. Mary's	Tyler St/Plunkett St	4
Dawes Street estate	94 Dawes Street	3
William Russell Allen House	359 East Street	4
Cemetery house on Waconah	Waconah Street	1
Berkshire Place Assisted Living	290 South Street	2
669 Churchill	669 Churchill Street	1
Christian Science Church	17 Wendell Ave	2
Masonic Temple	116 South Street	3
Holy Family Church	133 Seymour St	1
Polish Community Center	55 Linden Street	1
Eagles Club	146 First Street	1
Coolidge House	472 West Street	1
Morningside Baptist Church	475 Tyler Street	3
Mill behind Eagles	unknown	1
St. Joe's	North Street	1
Merrill Road	unknown	1
Abbey Lodge House	870 Holmes Road	1
Bree Mansion	unknown	1

The final public meeting for the project was held September 19, 2016, at 6pm. Fifteen residents came to support the project and provide insight on the buildings selected for the project. In addition, the meeting was aired on Pittsfield Community Television. Sign in sheets for all public meetings are also included in **Appendix B**.

Residents at this meeting were supportive of the list and project. One provided some architect information on three buildings, and another suggested that the Allen House be part of a program similar to the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Historic Curatorship Program. Under this program, "DCR partners with a Curator who agrees to rehabilitate, manage and maintain a historic property in return for a long-term lease. As a result, DCR secures the long-term preservation of threatened historic sites and Curators exchange their hard work and unique skills for the opportunity to live or work in a one-of-a-kind location." More information this program can be found here: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/cultural-resources/historic-curatorship-program.html>.

## S.5 Casebook Reports

# Casebook Entries

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MHC Inventory Number	Property Name	Number	Street	Year Built
PIT.433	City of Pittsfield Police Station	39	Allen Street	1939
PIT.371		69	Appleton Avenue	1885
		293	Columbus Avenue	1925
	William Stanley House	94	Dawes Ave	1895
		154	Dewey Avenue	c1900
PIT.42	1st Congregational Church on Court Square	27	East Street	1853
PIT.151	William Russell Allen House	359	East Street	1885
PIT.12	Eagles Home Aerie 358	146-150	First Street	1915
PIT.T/PIT.152	Robbins and Kellogg Shoe Factory	64	Fourth Street	1870
		791	Holmes Road	1940
		56	John Street	1910
PIT.198	Pontoosuc Mill	20	Keeler Street	1825
PIT.707	George G. Baker House - Polish Community Center	55	Linden Street	1872
		65-67	Maplewood Ave.	1900
	Father Matthew Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society Building / Catholic Youth Center Building	26	Melville Street	1913
	Charles Hibbard School / Hibbard Alternative School	280	Newell Street	1924
PIT.184	Goodrich House	823	North Street	1793/1812
		52	Park Street	1900
PIT.196	Russell School	40	Pecks Road	1895
PIT.63	Masonic Temple	116	South Street	1914
PIT.194	Taconic Mill	16	Taconic Park Drive	
		308	Tyler Street	1925
PIT.726/AA	St. Mary the Morning Star Complex	653	Tyler Street	1913-1943
PIT.150	Levine Building	765	Tyler Street	1913
	Pecks Upper Mill	998	Valentine Road	1844
		43	Vivian Avenue	1900
		56-58	Weller Avenue	1890
	First Church of Christ, Scientist	17	Wendell Avenue	1905

## S.6 SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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The various casebook entries include an action plan, a list of preservation partners for implementing the plan and the responsible parties for each action item. The casebook entries focus on implementation strategies for specific properties and do not include general and/or precursor actions such as appointing a local historic district committee or the actual review of a National Register nomination. These however are included in the summary below.

### **Stakeholder/Preservation Partner**

### **Action Item/Responsibility**

#### *General and/or Precursor Actions*

Pittsfield Mayor

- Create and appoint local historic district committee

Pittsfield City Council

- Create and appoint local historic district committee

Massachusetts Historical Commission

- Conduct National Register eligibility evaluations and administer National Register program
- Administer state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credit programs
- Administer state MPPF grant program
- Review state and federally funded, licensed or permitted projects for their potential effects on historic properties and sites
- Approve preservation restrictions as required under MGL Ch 184, S 32.

Preservation Massachusetts

- Award pre-development funds to worthy projects

#### *Specific Actions – City of Pittsfield*

Pittsfield Mayor

- Assist with exploring public/private property reuse options'
- Consider city ownership of property
- Support tools to be put into place to allow for adaptive reuse as housing
- Consider DCAMM property transfer to the city to be eligible for MPPF funding

Pittsfield City Council

- Assist with exploring public/private property reuse options
- Consider city ownership of property
- Support tools to be put into place to allow for adaptive reuse as housing
- Consider DCAMM property transfer to the



Pittsfield Historical Commission

city to be eligible for MPPF funding

- Outreach to current and future property owners on historic significance
- Assist on preservation restrictions
- Assist on local historic district creation
- Assist and support Inventory Form B preparation and National Register submission

**Stakeholder/Preservation Partner**

*Specific Actions – City of Pittsfield*

Pittsfield Historical Commission

**Action Item/Responsibility**

- Assist, provide guidance, and conduct outreach on public tours of private historic properties
- Support MPPF funding requests
- Compile informational packet on NR benefits
- Promote the historic rehabilitation to an original Fraternal Order of the Eagles Organization building
- Conduct an historic survey of the neighborhood
- Assist in the incorporation of specific properties into a house tour event
- Engage community to provide input on property development and re-use

Pittsfield Community Development Department

- Review zoning obstacles
- Determine if some specific properties can be subdivided into other uses
- Explore public/private property reuse options
- Assist in the determination of floodplain development constraints on properties
- Engage community to provide input on property development and re-use
- Coordinate with DCAMM on building reuse
- Assist the Berkshire Historical Society to determine if it has additional space needs and possible use of specific properties
- Assist on outreach
- Implement a façade improvement program, if allowable
- Assist on Brownfields related issues
- Assist on tax credit options
- Assist on creation of a tax increment

- financing overlay district
- Assist with compiling an informational packet on NR benefits
- Explore public/private property reuse options
- Consider housing rehabilitation through the use of CDBG funds

**Stakeholder/Preservation Partner**

*Specific Actions – City of Pittsfield*

Pittsfield Community Development Dept.

**Action Item/Responsibility**

- Explore Potential Role of Specific Properties in the West Side Riverway Redevelopment Project
- Engage community to provide input on property development and re-use
- Coordinate with DCAMM on building reuse
- Assist Pittsfield Housing Authority in determining space needs for potential use of some specific properties

Pittsfield Office of Cultural Development

- Assist in general outreach
- Assist on publication of available space
- Assist, provide guidance, and conduct outreach on public tours of private historic properties
- Publicize certain properties for event space
- Work with private property owners for assessing use of land for outside events
- Coordinate with Colonial Theater on additional rehearsal space
- Assess need for additional entertainment space

Pittsfield Assessor's Office

- Assist on creation of a tax increment financing overlay district
- Clarify ownership and/or receivership status

Pittsfield Police Department

- Monitor property for break-ins

Pittsfield Licensing Board

- Resolve licensing issues on private property

Pittsfield Law Department

- Clarify ownership and/or receivership status

Pittsfield Housing Authority

- Determine space needs for potential use of some specific properties

Pittsfield School Department

- Determine space needs for potential use of some specific properties

*Specific Actions – State/Regional Entities*

MA Department of Housing and Community Development

- Assist on creation of a tax increment financing overlay district

**Stakeholder/Preservation Partner**

*Specific Actions – State/Regional Entities*

MA Department of Environmental Protection

**Action Item/Responsibility**

- Assist on Brownfields related issues

MA Office of Business Development

- Assist on creation of a tax increment financing overlay district
- Award MOBD monies to worthy projects

MassDevelopment

- Award MassDevelopment monies to worthy projects

MA Department of Agriculture

- Provide technical assistance under the MA Department of Agriculture's Urban Agriculture Program

MA Department of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance

- Coordinate with city on building reuse
- Conduct building condition assessment to determine current condition
- Consider DCAMM property transfer to the city to be eligible for MPPF funding
- Monitor building envelope for evidence of deterioration
- Explore window covering alternatives

MA Department of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance

- Implement a program similar to the MA DCR's Historic Curatorship Program

Berkshire Historical Society

- Determine if the Berkshire Historical Society has additional space needs and possible use of specific properties

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

- Assist on Brownfields related issues
- Add to BRPC's list of great estates

*Specific Actions – Private Entities*

Current/Future Property Owners

- Support local historic district creation
- Support preservation restriction
- Assist and support Inventory Form B

preparation and National Register submission

- Participate in façade grants, if available
- Assist in general outreach
- Assist in outreach on building re-use
- Outreach to current and future owners on historic significance

**Stakeholder/Preservation Partner**

*Specific Actions – Private Entities*

Current/Future Property Owners

**Action Item/Responsibility**

- Explore tax credit options
- Assist on determining status of brownfields issues
- Assist on creation of a tax increment financing overlay district
- Determine use and design options
- Examine and assess structure of building
- Make property available for public tours
- Apply for MPPF funding
- Determine if building can be subdivided into other uses-both private and public
- Publicize certain properties for event space
- Resolve issues with Licensing Board
- Consider use of land for outside events
- Explore future reuse options including temporary uses such as congregation sharing
- Determine floodplain development constraints
- Consider housing rehabilitation through the use of CDBG funds
- Conduct window inventory and explore window covering and energy efficiency alternatives
- Actively market the sale of property
- Coordinate with Colonial Theater on additional rehearsal space
- Consider use for additional entertainment space
- Secure MPPF monies for a building reuse study
- Secure Preservation Massachusetts pre-development revolving fund monies for a building reuse study
- Consult with MassDevelopment and the Massachusetts Office of Business Development for Available Funding



- Seek technical assistance under the MA Department of Agriculture's Urban Agriculture Program
- Seek funding through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

**Stakeholder/Preservation Partner**

*Specific Actions – Private Entities*

Current/Future Property Owners

**Action Item/Responsibility**

- Support conducting an historic survey of the neighborhood
- Support exploring potential role in the West Side Riverway Redevelopment Project
- Conduct a space evaluation of the property
- Consider New Market Tax Credits and Historic Tax Credits to assist in financing redevelopment
- Assist in engaging community to provide input on property development and re-use
- Determine level of work required to restore historic appearance
- Incorporate specific properties into a house tour event
- Consider eligibility under the Abandoned Building Tax Credit Program
- Consult with Partner for Sacred Places for specific properties
- Support on-going collaboration with the Friends of St. Mary's and the Tyler Street Business Group for specific properties

Neighborhood Watch Groups

- Monitor property for break-ins

Milltours.org

- Expand Taconic Mills' story

Discoverpittsfield.com

- Assist on publication of available space

Local Realtors

- Actively market the sale of property

Colonial Theater

- Coordinate with property owners on additional rehearsal space

Northeast Sustainable Research and Education Program

- Provide available funding to worthy and eligible projects

Fraternal Order of the Eagles Organization

- Consider an historic rehabilitation to an

Partners for Sacred Places

original Eagles building

- Consult with property owners for specific properties

**Stakeholder/Preservation Partner**

*Specific Actions – Private Entities*

Friends of St. Mary's

Tyler Street Business Group

**Action Item/Responsibility**

- Support on-going collaboration with the Tyler Street Business Group and owners for specific properties
- Support on-going collaboration with the Friends of St. Mary's and owners for specific properties

# Appendices

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*Appendix A: Outreach*

*Appendix B: Bibliography*

# Appendix A

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*Stakeholder outreach*  
*Public outreach*



# Stakeholder Outreach

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Bob Jaegar, Executive Director, Partners for Sacred Places

Department of Commonwealth Asset Management and Maintenance

Jason McCandless, Superintendent, Pittsfield School Department

Corydon L. Thurston, Executive Director, Pittsfield Economic Development Authority

Melissa Jette Provencher, Senior Planner/Brownfields Program Coordinator - Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Local property owners

Local Realtors

Mark D. Blaisdell, Sr. Code Enforcement Inspector, City of Pittsfield Health Department

Stephanie Provencher, Senior Clerk, City of Pittsfield Health Department

City of Pittsfield Board of Health

City of Pittsfield Assessor's Office

# Appendix B

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*Bibliography*

# Bibliography

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