
Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition awarded a Preserve New York Grant

This grant will fund a Building Condition Report for the Southeast Old Town Hall

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALBANY, NY, 07/26/21 — The Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition (CAC) is one of this year's [Preserve New York](#) (PNY) grantees. Their **grant of \$9,600** will fund a Building Condition Report of the Southeast Old Town Hall. The Preservation League of NYS and their program partners at the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) are thrilled to help fund this important work.

The Southeast Old Town Hall (OTH), a historic landmark on the National Register of Historic Places, was erected in 1896 using designs by Child and DeGoll Architects in the Colonial Revival style. A central focal point in Brewster Village, OTH has served the community for over a century as government center and courthouse, community gathering place, theater, movie house, ballroom, teen canteen, museum, and arts center. This three-story architectural gem currently houses a shuttered theater in disrepair on the top floor, the Southeast Museum on the middle, and a small cultural arts space run by CAC, Studio Around the Corner, in the basement. Unfortunately, the building is challenged with an aging infrastructure. The building envelope and entrance stairs need repair, and the mechanical systems require updates. OTH also needs structural improvements to open its exquisite top floor theater: An extra egress as well as an accessible entrance are required.

A \$9,600 Preserve New York grant will enable CAC to hire Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation LLP to produce a Building Condition Report of the Old Town Hall. Expanding upon previous studies—of the mechanical systems funded through donations and CAC fundraising activities and of the building's exterior funded through Technical Assistance Grants provided by the Preservation League—the consultant's report will provide a comprehensive understanding of issues that need to be addressed to appropriately restore and bring the building to its potential. With the theater fully operational, OTH is planned as a regionally-needed cultural arts center, museum, and premiere tourist destination; it is a linchpin for the downtown revitalization of Brewster.

"We are excited to move forward with the in-depth assessment of OTH and are sincerely grateful for the guidance and funding provided by the Preservation League," said **Olenna Truskett, CAC Vice President and Restoration Chairperson**. "CAC has spearheaded efforts to restore and rehabilitate the Old Town Hall since 2010, all the while engaging the community with all kinds of concerts, theatrical events, art shows, the Garden Around the Corner, and the Brewster Music and Fall Festivals. Over a half million dollars have been spent to date on the overall \$4M rehabilitation project. Architectural plans have been developed; 69 windows beautifully restored; professional cost estimates prepared. But much more must happen to bring the OTH theater back to life. The LTRW Building Condition Report will bring us closer to this goal."

At its 2021 meeting, an independent grant panel selected **32 applicants in 25 counties to receive support totaling \$297,995**. Each grant supports important arts and cultural initiatives, as well as

economic development related to our state's arts and cultural heritage. Many of these grants will lead to historic district designation or expansion, telling the stories of communities throughout the state and allowing property owners to take advantage of the New York State and Federal Historic Tax Credits. This is even more valuable now, with the NYS Commercial Historic Tax Credit recently expanded for small projects, granting property owners a 30% credit. With the announcement of the 2021 awards, support provided by Preserve New York since its launch in 1993 totals more than \$3.3 million to 489 projects statewide.

The Preserve New York program is a regrant partnership between the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and the Preservation League, made possible with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation has generously provided additional funds to support nonprofit projects in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Since 1993, Preserve New York has been providing funds to municipalities and nonprofit organizations that need technical, professional assistance to guide a variety of preservation projects. The historic structure reports, building condition reports, cultural landscape reports, and cultural resource surveys funded through this program lead to positive outcomes across New York's 62 counties.

2021 PNY Grant Recipients:

Albany County: Village of Voorheesville/Town of New Scotland - \$10,000; City of Cohoes - \$16,500 | **Broome County:** Tri-Cities Opera Company, Inc. - \$6,000 | **Chautauqua County:** City of Jamestown - \$10,000 | **Chemung County:** Elmira College - \$10,000 | **Chenango County:** Earlville Opera House Inc. - \$8,000 | **Dutchess County:** Van Wyck Council on the Arts and Culture, Inc., dba Howland Cultural Center - \$10,000; Wassaic Project - \$8,160 | **Erie County:** University Heights Collaborative, Inc. - \$9,120; Western New York Minority Media Professionals, Inc. - \$10,000 | **Franklin County:** Malone Revitalization Foundation, Inc. - \$9,150 | **Greene County:** Hudson-Athens Lighthouse Preservation Society - \$10,000 | **Monroe County:** Highland Park Conservancy - \$15,000; Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse Historical Society - \$8,000 | **Montgomery County:** Village of Fort Plain - \$9,150 | **Nassau County:** Science Museum of Long Island - \$10,000 | **New York County:** Ascendant Neighborhood Development Corporation - \$12,000 | **Ontario County:** Town of Canandaigua - \$15,000 | **Orange County:** Chester Historical Society - \$5,200 | **Orleans County:** Medina Railroad Museum - \$8,000 | **Otsego County:** Otsego 2000 - \$12,500 | **Putnam County:** Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition - \$9,600; Town of Carmel - \$6,200 | **Rensselaer County:** City of Troy - \$9,100 | **Saratoga County:** Village of Round Lake - \$8,000 | **Steuben County:** Steuben County Historical Society - \$10,000 | **Suffolk County:** Town of East Hampton - \$5,600; Rocky Point Historical Society - \$6,685 | **Tompkins County:** Friends of Stewart Park - \$6,640 | **Ulster County:** Jewish Federation of Ulster County - \$9,440; Woodstock Guild of Craftsmen, Inc. - \$5,750 | **Warren County:** Hyde Collection - \$9,500

"We are proud to continue our partnership with the Preservation League of New York State to support projects that foster community, and celebrate our State's rich history" said **Mara Manus, NYSCA Executive Director**. "NYSCA remains dedicated to preserving New York State's cultural footprint and we look forward to seeing these vital preservation projects realized. Congratulations to all!"

"Navigating the difficulties and hardships of the past year has been a challenge for nonprofits and municipalities across the state," said **Erin Tobin, Vice President for Policy and Preservation and the Preservation League**. "The League is grateful to our program partners at NYSCA and the Gardiner Foundation for continuing to support Preserve New York, which will grant much-needed dollars to so many worthwhile preservation projects this year."

About the Preservation League of New York State

Since its founding in 1974, the Preservation League has built a reputation for action and effectiveness. Our goal has been to preserve our historic buildings, districts, and landscapes and to build a better New York, one community at a time. The Preservation League of New York State invests in people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. We lead advocacy, economic development, and education programs across the state.

Connect with us at preservenys.org, facebook.com/preservenys, twitter.com/preservenys, and instagram.com/preservenys.

About the Cultural Arts Coalition

We are a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation dedicated to creating and sustaining cultural arts within the Town of Southeast and its surrounding region. We were established as the Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition (CAC) in August 2010 with the purpose, as detailed in the incorporation papers, "... to promote and raise funds for the development and effective management of affordable, accessible performance space that will provide citizens of the Town of Southeast opportunities to participate in and appreciate cultural arts, including lectures, theater, dance, film, music, visual arts, and inclusive community events." Learn more: <https://www.culturalartsco.com/>

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