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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**LANDMARK SOCIETY ANNOUNCES 2015 FIVE TO REVIVE:  
PRESERVATION PRIORITIES IN WESTERN NY**

*List features sites in Rochester, Cattaraugus County and across Western New York*

(ROCHESTER, NY, October 26, 2015) The Landmark Society of Western New York today announced its 2015 Five to Revive – a list of historic sites it has identified as opportunities for targeted, strategic revitalization. The announcement was made at the Landmark Society headquarters on South Fitzhugh St. in Rochester. The list includes:

- Former Wollensak Optical Company, Rochester, NY
- Main St. East/North Clinton Avenue Retail District, Rochester, NY
- Lockwood-Alhart Cobblestone House and Retail Plaza, Rochester, NY
- Fraternal Meeting Halls - Rochester/Genesee Valley/Western New York region
- Cattaraugus County Memorial and Historical Building, Village of Little Valley, Cattaraugus County

“The Landmark Society of Western New York continues to be focused on preservation and community revitalization,” said Wayne Goodman Executive Director. “This is the third year we are announcing a Five to Revive list which has been very effective in calling attention to key properties in western New York that are in need of investment.”

“The Five to Revive initiative continues to enhance the organization’s ongoing efforts to promote preservation and adaptive reuse as an effective strategy for revitalization in Western New York,” said Tom Castelein, Vice-President of Preservation on The Landmark Society Board who chairs the Five to Revive initiative.

The 2015 Five to Revive list represents a diverse selection of building types located across Western New York, and illustrates a range of preservation issues.. One spot on the list addresses a thematic subject, the inherent potential represented in fraternal organization meeting halls which have fallen into disuse. “The inclusion of these meeting halls – and we have three excellent examples - underscores the on-going challenge these iconic buildings face,” said Castelein.



### **Significant Progress**

“Each year, these five properties become priority projects for Landmark Society staff and programs as we work collaboratively with owners, municipal officials, and developers to facilitate investment and foster rehabilitation,” said Goodman. The ultimate goal is to return these important historic resources to a place of prominence in their respective communities, as economic and social assets that spark even more investment and revitalization.

Most of our 2014 Five to Revive properties have moved closer to that goal: The Hillside Cemetery and Chapel in Clarendon/Holley, Orleans County was recently awarded a major grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation to assist with repairs to the chapel, while several new special events at the cemetery have attracted many first-time visitors, who are now aware of this important community asset. The former Trinity Episcopal Church in the village of Seneca Falls is the focus of on-going discussions for its rehabilitation and re-use by a local developer. The Erie Canal Warehouse in Brockport received a grant and local advocates are completing a final report highlighting potential uses for the building. The Landmark Society and the City of Rochester are partnering on a multi-year project to survey historic properties throughout the city and update the City’s Designated Buildings of Historic Value list.

The Eastman Dental Dispensary was on the inaugural list of Five to Revive in 2013. “I think this is the biggest success yet,” said Goodman. “This was a clear case of how the Five to Revive list called attention to the building and its needs and helped leverage significant funding to make its rehabilitation possible.” The building is currently being converted to senior housing, a project that gives a boost to that area of Rochester and is creating many local jobs while saving an irreplaceable historic resource.

### **Background on 2015 Five to Revive sites Former Wollensak Optical Company**

872 Hudson Avenue  
City of Rochester, Monroe County

Built in 1918 from plans by renowned Rochester architect J. Foster Warner, the Wollensak Optical Company building is an outstanding example of early 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial design. It served as the headquarters and production facilities for the Wollensak Company, which became one of the largest manufacturers of camera shutters in the United States. Founded in 1899 by Andrew Wollensak, a former machinist at Bausch and Lomb, the company continued production in Rochester until 1971, when its manufacturing operations moved to West Virginia. Its distinctive design features brick and terra cotta construction, highlighted by an elegant cast iron-and-beveled glass canopy over the main entrance. Located on the corner of Hudson and Avenue D, this highly visible landmark is an important anchor in the 14621 neighborhood. Long vacant, it has great potential for adaptive re-use, as demonstrated by other similar industrial buildings in the city that have been successfully renovated as apartments and commercial offices.

**Main St. East/North Clinton Avenue Retail District**  
**132-226 E. Main Street and 1-17 Clinton Avenue North**  
City of Rochester, Monroe County

Located in the heart of the city's historic shopping district, this block-long collection of retail buildings features important examples of commercial architecture constructed between the 1860s and 1940s. Architectural styles range from 19<sup>th</sup> century Italianate and Romanesque Revival to 20<sup>th</sup> century Neoclassical and Streamline Moderne. After the great Sibley fire of 1904, when this entire block suffered major devastation, new retail buildings were constructed here to accommodate larger stores such as E.W. Edwards & Son, H.L. Greene, and Neisner Brothers. By the 1970s, however, a number of these retail operations had closed. Many plans for new uses have been tried or proposed, but as a group they remain an underutilized asset in the very heart of our Downtown.. Today, renewed interest in these buildings, combined with the on-going rehabilitation of many adjacent properties, signals an opportunity to rehabilitate one of the city's most distinctive commercial blocks.

**Lockwood-Alhart Cobblestone House and Retail Plaza**  
1090 Culver Road  
City of Rochester, Monroe County

Built c. 1835 for Roswell Lockwood, this distinctive Greek Revival house is the only surviving cobblestone building in the city. Originally part of the the town of Brighton, this handsome residence was once surrounded by a 100-acre farm, which extended east to Merchants Road and north to Hazelwood Terrace. By the early 1900s, this neighborhood was annexed into the city and many new residential streets were laid out. The brick south wing was added to the house in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As commercial development came to Culver Road, this location became a prime retail site. By the late 1940s, the Alhart family purchased the house and subsequently built the Mid-Century Modern retail plaza next door, anchored by their electronic and hardware store. In recent decades, the house was converted into apartments and the retail plaza greatly changed. With its unique character and prominent location, this historic house is a major landmark in the Culver-Merchants-Beechwood area. Renovation of both the original house and retail plaza could serve as an important catalyst for further revitalization in this historic neighborhood.

**Fraternal Meeting Halls**  
Rochester/Genesee Valley/Western New York region

Among the most iconic buildings in American communities during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were meeting halls for fraternal and social organizations. Groups such as the Grange, Masons, Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.), and Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) drew thousands of members to their ranks. Meeting halls served as major venues for community activities. Three distinctive examples of these important buildings in our region are the Grange Hall (1884) on North Huron Road in the town of Huron, Wayne



County; the Carter Memorial G.A.R. Hall (1906) on Main St. in the village of Nunda, Livingston County; and the former I.O.O.F. (Independent Order of Odd Fellows) Hall and Commercial Block (1890) on Route 5 in the hamlet of Stafford, Genesee County. With changing times, many fraternal organizations have disbanded or have dwindling membership and financial resources, leaving their historic meeting halls in jeopardy. An important cultural and historic resource, these signature buildings have great potential for adaptive re-use.

### **Cattaraugus County Memorial and Historical Building**

302 Court Street

Village of Little Valley, Cattaraugus County

Built in 1911, the Cattaraugus County Memorial and Historical Building is a unique and important example of a Civil War Memorial that was designed for use as a municipal building. One of the first major projects for the Jamestown architecture firm of Freeburg and Fidler, the Memorial Building is located in Little Valley, the county seat for Cattaraugus County. Its prominent setting on the village green is adjacent to State Route 353 and the county office building. An elegant and sophisticated building of Neoclassical design, it once housed a library and, until 2004, the County Historical Museum. In 2014, county officials announced plans for its demolition. A community organization – Citizens Advocating Memorial Preservation (CAMP) – formed to promote the rehabilitation of this iconic building and is working with local officials, community residents, and preservation organizations. A highly visible landmark for over 100 years, the Memorial Building has excellent potential for rehabilitation and re-use as a community resource in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

For more information visit [www.landmarksociety.org](http://www.landmarksociety.org).

***About The Landmark Society:*** *The Landmark Society of Western New York, Inc. is one of the oldest and most active preservation organizations in America, serving nine Western New York counties. Formed in 1937, The Landmark Society continues to protect the unique architectural heritage of our region and promote preservation and planning principles that foster healthy and sustainable communities. For additional information about The Landmark Society, visit [www.landmarksociety.org](http://www.landmarksociety.org). The Landmark Society is supported in part by New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.*