

Academy Lofts rehabilitation scheduled to begin

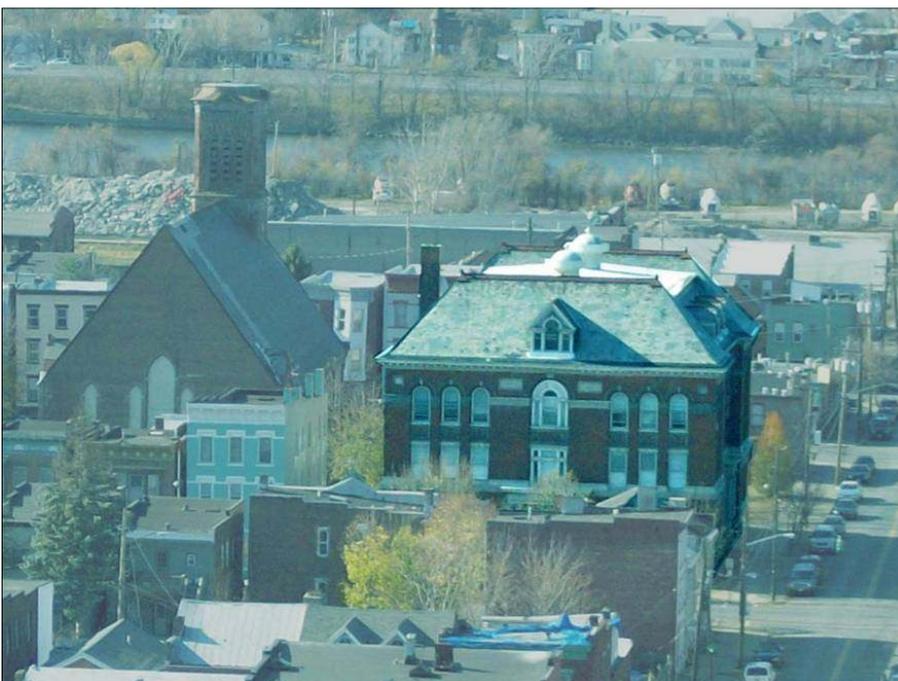
Three years in the making, the rehabilitation of the former St. Joseph's Academy in Albany is set to start in January.

The Academy Lofts will feature 22 loft-style apartments, plus multi-purpose space for The Barn, an arts organization.

The school is located at Second and Swan streets in the Ten Broeck/Arbor Hill Historic District of Albany. The low-income housing will be geared toward artists.

TAP has been involved since the project began by securing historic preservation tax credits that amount to 40 percent (\$3.8 million) of the cost of the \$9.6 million rehabilitation. The work involved documenting the highly deteriorated current conditions of the building and comparing them to the planned rehabilitation to assure the state and federal governments that the historic integrity would not be affected.

Architect Dave Sadowsky was hired by Norstar Development USA, LP to detail the project and prepare contract documents. Dave chose TAP to continue on as part of the development team. Academy Lofts will be owned and operated by the Albany Housing Authority.



Renovation savings spell more repairs at School 10 Apts

Substantial savings on the cost of School 10 Apartments' recent rehabilitation will allow TAP to carry out other needed repairs.

Originally budgeted at \$1.7 million, the first phase of rehabilitation cost far less, leaving funds to repair the masonry and to expand the parking lot.

The 2010 rehabilitation included a long list of improvements.

Troy projects remain TAP's mainstay

Bike Rescue has a home

The Troy Bike Rescue has purchased a building at 3280 Fifth Avenue. The Bike Rescue joins the Sanctuary for Independent Media, the new Freedom Square, Collard City Growers and the Missing Link Street Ministry, as one more sign of rejuvenation in the Uptown Neighborhood (formerly North Central). Residents like Tina Urzan, Xenia Allen, Peggy Kownack are making positive things happen in a neighborhood that is turning in the right direction.

The Bike Rescue building has received financing for the purchase and repair from TAP's good friends at the Community Loan Fund. TAP will be working with Andrew Lynn, and Ryan Jenkins as they work to insulate and repair a building that was once a movie theater. You would not guess that it used to be a theater from the size of it, but if you've been to a multiplex lately, you'd feel right at home.

The Bike Rescue has been an instant success in the neighborhood and local kids flock there to work on bikes.

TAP aids residential tax credit project

In 2011, TAP assisted in upgrading a brick row house at 41 Second Street, allowing its owners at the same time to take advantage of the New York State rehabilitation tax credit for homeowners. The prominent building has historic features such as tiger oak wainscoting, chandeliers, pocket doors, plasterwork and mantels with encaustic tiles.

The owners are eliminating two apartments to re-establish a single-family home. They've also added a new roof, heating system and insulation.

The owners are eligible to receive a 20 percent state tax credit based on the amount of rehabilitation costs.

TAP-TRIP partnership continues at Middleburgh



Rendering by Randy Rumpf

TAP and TRIP continued their partnership, with TAP providing plans and specifications for the TRIP-sponsored building at 69 Middleburgh Street. The layout for the three-units will be reconfigured to create more spacious living areas.

The agencies collaborated last year on a similar project at 2232 Fifth Avenue.

Fraternity settles into former church property

Phil Sigma Kappa, the Rensselaer fraternity, has made its new home in the rectory of the former

St. Francis Church on Congress Street.

TAP modified the rectory floor plan, allowing for 14 sleeping rooms and bathrooms on the first and second floors.

The rehabilitation comes with a number of green measures, including energy-efficient lighting and low-flow plumbing fixtures.

Both the church and former rectory received new smoke and fire detection systems. The grounds were improved with a larger parking lot and pruning.

The fraternity plans on using the church as a multi-purpose cultural center.



TAP studies sustainable potential in North, South Troy

TAP in 2010 was one of four applicants statewide funded by the Sustainable Neighborhoods Demonstration Program, created to encourage revitalization plans that are distinguished by the energetic involvement of neighbors in attacking disinvestment and blight.

TAP earlier this year spent six evenings in church and social halls, meeting with neighbors to hear how – through goals large and small – distress in North and South Troy may be reversed. Meanwhile, TAP investigated a concise set of factors designed to transform the targeted neighborhoods to places where people will want to invest, financially and emotionally.

This data included the number and condition of vacant land and buildings; the number of tax-delinquent properties, which indicates level of disinvestment; and homeowner-ship and rental vacancy rates, as well as other neighborhood characteristics.



See "Sustainable," Pg. 4

Capital District Habitat transforms once-decimated Alexander Street



TAP is working with Capital District Habitat for Humanity on its most ambitious project to date — the construction of 16 affordable homes in Albany’s South End. There are 10 homes under construction at 37-51 Alexander Street, and another 6 planned this spring on nearby Delaware Street. The Alexander row is called “Morton’s Walk,” named after long-time residents who donated some land for this project, and it is located on a block where several homes succumbed to emergency demolition. The existing homeowners who struggle to preserve their neighborhood welcome the addition of 10 new homeowners.

TAP designed the row houses to meet a long list of criteria. Not only do the Alexander Street sites require design approval from the city Historic Resources Commission, but Habitat wanted the facades to fit in with the existing streetscape. Mike Jacobson, Executive Director of CDHFH, calls it “raising the bar” for affordable housing design.

TAP designed four different facades repeated throughout the row, with different color brick fronts, cast stone window lintels and sills, unique cornices, front stoops, and box bays on several of the homes.

The interiors had to be modern and livable, yet modest in size, so we created large open living spaces on the first floor, adequate closets, and modest bedrooms on the second floor, along with full basements. Habitat required energy efficiency and LEED Silver certification, which we are achieving with site density, SIP walls, locally made building materials where possible, and high-efficiency furnaces.

The first 3 homes in Morton’s Walk are scheduled to be occupied by February, the next 3 by spring, and the remaining 4 by year’s end.



Habitat homes, under construction
Alexander Street, Albany

Main Street, preservation seminars, among projects that continue

The **New York Main Street** state program this fall allowed funds that TAP has been administering for downtown Waterford to be diverted to help victims of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. The storms damaged about 168 buildings in the village.

Because of **Watervliet’s Main Street program**, the longstanding business Woodburning Warehouse received a major facelift based on TAP’s design.



Woodburning Warehouse, Before



Woodburning Warehouse, After

TAP in 2011 inspected 401 properties funded by the **Community Preservation Corp.**

TAP continues its efforts to help congregations with complicated maintenance and preservation. At right is the restored steeple of **Vineyard Community Church** in Cohoes. Much of this work accelerated after TAP and Historic Albany Foundation took on the issue of vacant churches in a 2009 educational series.



See Ongoing, Pg. 4

“School 10,” from Pg. 1

The 20-unit building, owned by TAP since 1991, received a new roof, 90 new windows, 20 energy-efficient boilers and Energy Star refrigerators, plus attic insulation and a number of “green” measures.

In the coming year, School 10’s elaborate brick and terra cotta masonry will be re-pointed and gently washed. Tenants will get an additional three parking spots in a newly paved lot.



Leslie’s Garden, right, also was completed and dedicated in October. The memorial is named after the late Leslie Jarushewsky Adler, a former TAP employee and director of design services at Homes and Community Renewal. Leslie was known for her careful attention to the design of affordable housing.

The New York State Housing Trust Fund Corp. awarded the grant in June 2009. HTF activities are administered by the NYS Homes and Community Renewal.

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“Sustainable” from Pg. 2

Because these facts are most relevant, they also are the ones that can be readily updated, thus becoming part of a working document, instead of a report fixed in time.

In the sessions, neighbors were encouraged to concentrate on “do-able” tasks, such as park planning, cleaner streets, trash bins and bike racks, to start setting small goals that would boost morale while leading to bigger projects.

Residents also faced the fact that not only are their neighborhoods pockmarked by vacant buildings, but that they stand poised to inherit more of them via city tax foreclosure. Once presented with powerful images of vacant buildings, and maps full of tax-delinquent properties, neighbors were able to brainstorm. They identified when rehabilitation would work better than new construction.

Such input allowed TAP not only to create an implementation schedule based on what people said, but to introduce its own recommendations for staving off blight and encouraging reinvestment.

“Ongoing,” from Pg. 3

Emma Willard fence restoration phased in

TAP continued its work, supervising the re-painting of the historic metal fence at Emma Willard School. The painting went from the main gate to Elmgrove Avenue.

St. Mary’s reuse sought

TAP’s long association with Washington Park continues as residents seek to buy and to find a proper reuse for the former St. Mary’s Church on the northeast corner of the park. The park group is trying to obtain the necessary zoning and planning approvals to allow them to buy and hold the building while exploring all appropriate

avenues for support funding and a responsible and positive reuse.

Preservation League seminars continue

2011 was the sixth year that the Preservation League’s Enhancing Main Street workshop included Joe Fama, TAP’s Executive Director, presenting his talk, “How the Building Code and Preservation Work Together.” This year’s presentations were given in Dansville, Saranac Lake and Kingston. League staffers Tania Werbizky, in the western part of the state, and Erin Tobin, in the eastern part, continue to do a brilliantly efficient job of organizing and running the workshops.