

## TAP partners study re-use of factory buildings

TAP, Inc. partnered with the Preservation League of New York State to create development, reuse and rehabilitation plans for vacant and underused industrial buildings in Troy, Albany, Schenectady and Amsterdam. From the completion of the Erie Canal, through the middle of the 20th century, area businesses and industry thrived. A major economic downturn took place in the second half of the 20th century when industry all but left upstate New York for other regions. When they left, what remained were massive buildings, factories and communities as vestiges of the way things were. These buildings and factories still remain vacant in many upstate communities and present significant challenges for redevelopment.

The League, with funding from the J.M. Kaplan Fund, National Grid and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor embarked on a demonstration project targeting historic industrial buildings and specific needs for redevelopment including building code guidelines, cost estimates, zoning requirements and financial options.

This project is an outgrowth of a series of successful workshops conducted by the League over the last 9 years titled "Enhancing Main Street: Making Upper Floors Work Again." TAP conducted feasibility studies for 5 Capital District buildings to assess zoning, planning, code and environmental considerations and options for a prospective owners. The Upper Floors Workshop Handbook is available at: <http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/UpperFloors/UpperFloorsGuidebook.pdf> and The Industrial Heritage Re-use Project Reports are available on line at : [www.preservenys.org/industrial-heritage-2014.html](http://www.preservenys.org/industrial-heritage-2014.html).



*The former Lindy's Hardware in Troy, NY*



*The Clock Tower Building in Amsterdam, NY*



*309 Clinton Avenue, Albany, NY*

## Survey begins of Albany Land Bank property

TAP was retained by the Albany County Land Bank to conduct field work, photograph and prepare inspection reports for 120 properties in the Arbor Hill, West Hill and the South End neighborhoods of Albany, NY. Of these properties, roughly half were existing buildings while the remaining were vacant lots. This work begins the Land Bank's planning process to address the prevalence of vacant and abandoned properties in these neighborhoods. We encountered a full range of conditions while conducting the field work from the need for minimal rehabilitation to get the building back on line to very deteriorated conditions with a few perilously close to collapse and imminent demolition. Currently, TAP is working on the first rehabilitation project consisting of three adjacent masonry buildings located at 309, 311 and 315 Clinton Avenue.



## *TAP's partnership with Habitat for Humanity continues*

### **Fox Hollow in South Troy nearly finished**



Capital District Habitat for Humanity has nearly completed their ambitious new construction project located on formerly vacant land along Burden Avenue and Cross Street in South Troy. The Fox Hollow development has completed 13 planned single family homes. TAP, PC provided a full range of architectural services for these affordable units. The attached row houses have a mix of two and three bedroom homes, and the three stand-alone homes have four bedrooms and a garage. Unique to Habitat developments is a rear common space and off-street parking.

### **ReHabitat begins in Lansingburgh**



77 Fifth Avenue, Troy

**ReHabitat: Repair. Restore. Return.** This program is an arm of Capital District Habitat for Humanity and rehabilitates existing housing stock and stabilizes neighborhoods. The City of Troy offered Habitat, 77 Fifth Avenue, an early 20th Century property in Lansingburgh which is located in a neighborhood which has experienced demolition, fires and acts of vandalism with regard to vacant and abandoned properties. Habitat hired TAP, Inc to prepare building permit drawings for this two unit house, with the prospect of full rehabilitation in 2015. TAP was involved in a similar project last year at 126 Lark Street in Albany where a vacant two unit rowhouse was successfully rehabilitated and reoccupied.

## **Pilot rehabilitation project results in sale of vacant properties**

An innovative pilot program that tested the theory that vacant buildings will more readily sell to responsible owners if stabilized resulted in promising sales of three dilapidated city-owned buildings.

TAP in 2013 received a \$135,000 Urban Initiatives grant from NYS Homes and Community Renewal to fund repairs to 3056 and neighboring 3058 Sixth Avenue homes, as well as a row house at 3270 Sixth Avenue.

The work, which mainly focused on minor repairs such as fixing roof drains and removing deteriorated components, was complicated by the presence of asbestos in an amount greater than anticipated.

The 3270 Sixth Avenue building was sold to a non-profit that specializes in rehabilitation training programs, using the building to groom small contracting firms. The City Council recently approved winning bids, from one prospective owner, for 3056 Sixth, expected to be a single-family home, and the three-unit next door at 3058 Sixth Avenue.





## Historic tax-credit projects take off in the Capital Region



*The former Tilley Ladders in Watervliet*

TAP currently is juggling 10 historic tax-credit projects, ranging from old factories with illustrious histories, to former schools and a hotel. Among the projects are Franklin Plaza, the ballroom banquet house, the former Mooradian's, and factories and warehouses between River and Front streets in Troy.

Developers use the tax credits to lower their own tax liability, or syndicate them so banks and other commercial concerns may use them to lower their own taxes. In return, owners must adhere to federal and state historic guidelines to preserve the integrity of the buildings even as they are re-used. TAP advises to ensure a sensitive re-use.



*The former Mooradian's in Troy*

## Schools, churches, downtown buildings find new uses

### Independent Living Center work continues

The Independent Living Center headquartered at 15 Third Street in Troy utilized an Urban Initiatives Grant to transform the formerly deteriorated third floor into program space, with the assistance of TAP. The work included new restrooms and energy-conserving measures.



### "Lofts" wins preservation awards

The Academy Lofts, a former parochial school in Arbor Hill, Albany, captured two preservation awards, one from Historic Albany Foundation and the other from The Preservation League of New York State. Norstar USA developed the affordable housing project; Pearl Overlook, a LLC of the Albany, is the owner.



### Fraternity occupies former Troy church

TAP worked with a General Contractor to negotiate the contract for full renovation of the former First Baptist Church.

Phi Gamma Delta now occupies the rehabilitated Education Building as residential space and, the former sanctuary for special events, while below day to day events take place in the community room.



### Christ Church, Troy Public Library get preservation help

TAP, Inc. assisted the Troy Public Library with bid documents for repair, painting and energy conservation improvements of the paired first floor casement windows.

TAP also provided a building needs assessment for Christ Church located on State Street.



## Rice Building sells after TAP's long partnership



This five story office building located at 216 River Street was erected in 1871 by Benjamin H. Hall and originally called the Hall Building. Sometime thereafter, and we do not know why, the Hall Building became known as the Rice Building. It is attributed to Vaux and Withers, an important architectural firm of the day. The building had a sixth floor, a total of three roof towers one with a prominent clock originally which succumbed to fire in 1913. Over time, the building was occupied by a veritable “who’s who” of Troy. Unfortunately, by the 1990’s the building was completely vacant, deteriorated and in need of major restoration work. A \$2.5 million renovation project began in 1998 under the auspices of the Rice Building Inc., a joint venture of three member corporations: Troy Savings Bank, Rensselaer and TAP, Inc. Primary sources of funding came from both the NYS Economic Development Corporation and the Environmental Bond Act. The rehabilitated space was intended to attract both emerging technology companies and bring technology jobs to downtown Troy. Rehabilitation enabled that to be achieved and the building was occupied by early 2000.

The Rice Building was offered for sale in March 2014 to prospective owners with a demonstrated record of historic building stewardship. The building is located in both a Local and National Register Historic District. Both a bid was selected and an agreement signed in April 2014, however a series of unforeseen and unexpected bureaucratic hold-ups and requests prevented the transfer of this landmark building. As of this writing, the sale is expected to be finalized in the spring of 2015.

### Special Thanks to

#### **NYS Homes & Community Renewal**

Which has supported TAP through the Neighborhood Preservation Program and other Programs since 1978.

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### **Preservation League seminars in ninth year**

2014 was the ninth year that the Preservation League’s enhancing Main Street workshop included Joe Fama, TAP’s Executive Director.

His presentation, “How the Building Code and Preservation Work Together,” was given this year in Batavia and Corning. This year the Main Street workshop was published as a workbook. *See the story on page 1.*

TAP also co-sponsored a Preservation League workshop on tax credits at the Rensselaer County Historical Society with several other Troy companies.