



Washington Park Association

www.WPA-TROY.org

Troy, NY

Washington Park Receives Grant for Historic Preservation

...Original Paving Surface of Washington Place to be Preserved

The Friends of Washington Park was notified by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation of the award of \$90,000 in Environmental Protection Funds for the preservation of Washington Place. Washington Place is one of the few remaining original pavement material streets in the Capital District. Most of the original 1840's granite pavers are in place but the surface of the street is in deplorable condition from accumulated years of patches of the street due to utility line work, normal wear and tear, lack of appropriate routine maintenance and road bed settling. The street no longer handles the gentle horse and buggy, but cars and trucks.

The preservation of Washington Place will be the second capital project undertaken by the Friends of Washington Park in cooperation with the City of Troy. The first was the stabilization of 8 Washington Place, which resulted in the preservation of the collapsed structure near the east end of Washington Place. That shell was sold in September 2005 to an owner-occupant who is undertaking the extensive rehabilitation project.

The preservation of the road of Washington Place has long been a goal of the Washington Park neighborhood. Designated as the city of Troy's first historic district, Washington Park has striven to uphold the architectural integrity of the area. Lynn Kopka, president of the Friends of Washington Park notes that this is a unique project. "Very few neighborhoods would attempt to build a road using 1840's pavers. However, the desire to preserve this small piece of Troy's heritage was the deciding factor in our decision to push forward," said Kopka.

The EPF application was supported by the City of Troy, with City Council member-at-large Clem Campana introducing legislation authorizing the submission. Mayor Harry Tutunjian stated that, "The Washington Park neighborhood is to be commended for undertaking such a major historic preservation project. One of the City of Troy's biggest attractions is its historic assets."

The Friends will work closely with National Grid as well as with city engineering staff to complete the project. Total project costs are estimated to be \$180,000. The grant must be matched by \$90,000. Assembly member Ron Canestrari, a strong supporter of historic preservation, has provided \$5,000 for the archeological survey. Kopka notes that the property owners on Washington Place have pledged a portion of the match. Peter Lucas, owner-occupant of 6 Washington Place, is more than happy to contribute to the endeavor. "Preservation of the historic pavers of Washington Place is the final piece of the revitalization of the southern end of the Park. In a year from now, all of the ten row houses along Washington Place will be occupied, with a drivable street in front," said Lucas.

The restored street will enhance walking and driving safety, improve access along the south side of the Park, augment previous EQBA sidewalk and curb work around the Park and aid the rehabilitation of the ten houses which front Washington Place. The project will also aid the residents of the buildings fronting Washington Place as well as other residents in the immediate area who use this street daily.

Kopka notes that the benefits derived from the restoration of Washington Place are threefold - historic preservation, quality community enhancement and safety. None can be measured in typical fashion - it is unknown how many additional tourists will walk on the street, how many cars will use it - but the preservation of one of the remaining granite paved streets is a gift to future generations.

For press info, contact Lynn M. Kopka, 518-274-6434



Washington Park Association

www.WPA-TROY.org

Troy, NY