



# The Advocate

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## **The View from the Cupola**

This issue is full of news for all Cazenovians. But before getting into that, an update on the Gothic Cottage deliberations:

As you well know, the Town Board will be evaluating two options regarding the future of the Town Offices -- an offsite location and one that keeps the Town Offices at 7 Albany. There are two choices for remaining at 7 Albany: Plan C and the Compromise Plan proposed by Cazenovia Heritage. We believe the Compromise Plan should be the option compared to any offsite location.

At the December Town Board meeting, Supervisor Bill Zupan proposed that Plan C be the on-site option for evaluation against the offsite. We asked that before making that decision a public meeting be held for the public to evaluate Plan C versus the Compromise Plan. After all, the public has seen no elevations on Plan C, nor has there been a public meeting on Plan C. Surely the Board would want the public to better understand and have a voice in which on-site option it prefers? Bill agreed to further discussion at the February work session.

We want you especially to understand the critical differences between the two on-site plans. And then the Town Board is going to need to hear from every one of you – we will let you know how and when. (You can refresh your memory by reviewing *The Advocate* issue devoted to the Gothic Cottage solutions here: <https://cazheritage.org/documents/GC%20Advocate%20SE.pdf>).

We do not support abandoning the Gothic Cottage to an unknown fate by moving offsite. But we also cannot support the excessive defacement and design flaws of Plan C that will hasten its demise. ***Our mission calls for us to advocate on behalf of historic buildings in developing workable solutions.*** The Compromise Plan does exactly that.

And now for the big news inside this edition: For the first time ever, Cazenovia property owners now qualify for Rehabilitation Tax Credits for projects on historic properties. Second, we give you the results of the Community Preservation Priorities meeting last October. Next, meet the new members of the Cazenovia Heritage Board. And last, but not least, two threatened properties have been saved!

## Thinking of Doing Some Work on Your Property? *Take Advantage of Rehabilitation Tax Credits!*

Owners of historic homes have long known there are few grants available to support rehabilitation and preservation of private homes. New York State, however, is one of several states that does offer an incentive, but such programs are based on being located in “qualifying census tracts.” In 2021, the Town of Cazenovia, including the Village, became qualified. Under this program, property owners are eligible for a state income tax credit equal to 20% of qualified rehabilitation expenses associated with repair, maintenance, and upgrades, up to \$50,000. The property needs to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, **which makes any home within the Village Historic National Register District eligible.** Individual **Town residences or Village residences outside the district that are on the National Register are now eligible.**

For **income-producing properties** (such as commercial business buildings, rental properties) there is **both** a 20% Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit and a State Credit of 20%-30% for qualifying properties. Applications for residential and income-producing properties must be submitted prior to work being undertaken.

If you’ve considered applying for a National Register listing but have been putting it off, this Tax Credit program provides a nudge. Cazenovia Heritage will host a public meeting in April with representatives from SHPO to further explain the process for applying for the tax credits and to be listed on the National Register. Watch for details.

### Ones We’re Watching

For once, some good news!

#### Williams & Farnham Streets



In the last issue, we alerted you to the house at Williams and Farnham Streets with a big X on its exterior that had gone to county public auction. The corner Gothic Revival house was part of Farnham’s Woods development in the 1830s and by the 1870s had been subdivided into two residences. You will be pleased to learn that **Dan Kuper** of Cazenovia purchased the property and rather than seek demolition, Dan is bringing the building up to code to provide rental residential units. We look forward to seeing the progress.

#### 7 Liberty Street

Caz Heritage became aware that this early 1800’s Federal house was about to be advertised as “an opportunity to demolish this and build your new home!”. Cazenovia Heritage worked with the realtor and previous owner to change the listing to promote the house’s history, architectural features, and ability to rehabilitate, rather than destroy. The even better news? The property has now been purchased by **Larry and Glenda Wetzel** of Cazenovia, who have the experience of rehabilitating seven historic homes to their credit. They are working with a consultant on how to best preserve the historic integrity of the main house, while adding an addition to the rear. We look forward to future updates!



*If you see Dan, Glenda, or Larry, please pass along your appreciation for their support of preservation!*

## ***Welcome to Our New Board Directors***

We're delighted to announce that at the first Annual Meeting of Cazenovia Heritage held January 19th, the following nominations were approved and elected as new Directors joining the Board of Cazenovia Heritage:

- Dale Bowers, President of Bowers Builders, Inc.
- Libbi Murray, Principal, Elizabeth Manley Murray Educational Consulting
- Bob Ridler, President of CRIS, Vice President of CazCares

The range of experience and skills of these new directors will bring added depth and breadth to our efforts as we take on new initiatives in preservation education, advocacy for historical resources, and long-term funding. Please extend your congratulations and lend your support!

## ***Discover the Past: Cazenovia Cemetery of West Side Settlers***

Hidden off Route 20 and west of the lake, off Grassy Lane, lies a small, forgotten cemetery of about 40 graves of some of Cazenovia's earliest settlers. It has long been abandoned, many of the headstones lying flat and shrouded in weeds and leaves. Sited within a hundred acres, the 40 graves lie in silence, as they have for the past 150 years or more.

*Cut to the present:* The cemetery is on land belonging to Eric Beyer, a Charter Member of Cazenovia Heritage who brought it to our attention. After visiting the cemetery with a tombstone professional – who described it as “a beautiful sanctuary” -- we realized it could be brought back to some of its previous dignity.



If asked to recall early settlers of Cazenovia, most of us can roll off the names of Lincklaen, Ten Eyck, Ledyard, Forman, and others in the Village. Yet many of the early settlers came to Cazenovia to purchase land for farming, and located in the Town.

On the west side of the Lake, such large farms included those of Tillotson, Reed, Beckwith, Farnham, Burr, and Hitchcock. This cemetery contains the families of Ephraim Tillotson (born 1787), John Reed (born 1775), and Jonathan Farnham (born 1780), among others.

For Preservation Month this coming May, **we're inviting those of you in Cazenovia Heritage, as well as members of CPF, to work together on an initial clearing** of the weeds to reveal hidden headstones. You needn't be particularly strong, just good with a digger, rake, or at pulling a tarp. This will be a multi-stage process, with another clearing planned for the fall, followed by righting headstones. More info will be provided in the Spring newsletter.

***Not a member of Cazenovia Heritage yet?*** Really? Then start the New Year off right and join your many neighbors in protecting this place we love and call home. It's not too late to become a Charter Member, and Individual and Family Memberships also are available. See our website to join now:  
<https://cazheritage.org/support.html>

## ***And now . . . the Top Three***

At a public meeting on Community Preservation Priorities last October, attendees had a chance to provide input to what they would like Cazenovia Heritage’s advocacy efforts to focus on over the next few years. Of the 29 items submitted, attendees were asked to designate High, Medium, or Lower priority. For any item rated High, the attendees then weighted its importance, noting a 1-5. The ranked list of all items can be found here: <https://cazheritage.org/documents/CH-Pres-Priorities-2021.pdf>.

Not surprising, the Gothic Cottage Rehabilitation/Town Offices came in first place at 72 points.  
#2: The deteriorating appearance of many of the commercial buildings on Albany Street (58 points).  
#3: Demolitions: Strengthening the Village process and adoption of a Town process that recognizes historic architecture and resources (52 points).

We heard you. We’re willing to work on these in 2022 and for as long as it takes. And we can’t do this alone. Whether it’s project work, letter writing, or physical presence at government meetings, doing as little or as much as you want, if you’d like to be involved, contact us at: <https://cazheritage.org/contact.html>

### **Monthly Education Programs Continue**

We have a full schedule of interesting Programs and Events for 2022. Mark your calendar for these upcoming programs:

Jan 29, 2:00 PM “What Colors Did They Use?” – Ted Bartlett  
Feb 23, 7:00 PM “The Abolitionists of Cazenovia” – Matt Urtz  
Mar 30, 7:00 PM “Women of Cazenovia & Madison County” – Matt Urtz

All programs will be held at the Presbyterian Church Meeting House. Social distancing will be observed and masks are required.

You can see the complete list of 2022 Programs on the website at: <https://cazheritage.org/programs.html>

### **Your Talents Wanted Here!**

With the significant growth of CazHeritage in its first year, we are in need of some volunteers to keep the good work going. How can you help?

- Communications Support: Social media posts, press releases, newsletter articles
- Program Support: Book venues, undertake set-up, coordinate specific events for a program tract, etc
- Grant writing support
- Advocacy projects

If any of that sounds like some of your skills, please contact us at <https://cazheritage.org/contact.html>