



# THE ALLENTOWN JOURNAL

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## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

by Diane Cummings Bennett  
Housing Specialist

Now and again we have to remind ourselves as to why we have endorsed this preservation of our architectural heritage.

Historic preservation has proven to be increasingly popular as a tool to stabilize and support urban revitalization. People are becoming much more aware of the benefits available in our older housing stock. Aside from the obvious use of quality materials, as opposed to what has become affordable at current construction costs, design, details and craftsmanship are now recognized as exciting qualities in our older buildings. It is also a fact that rehabilitation or restoration of these structures makes sense economically in that it is labor intensive, thereby beneficial to the economy in general.

The idea is that these wonderful structures were built to last a long time if properly maintained. In many cases inappropriate treatment was executed simply because we did not have the knowledge to deal with the problems. Maintaining architecture is not something that an average homeowner understands, but as owners of older structures we should know. It is for this reason that the technical abilities of the City of Buffalo's Department of Inspections and Licenses and the Buffalo Landmark and Preservation Board are made available to us.

### How?

A Certificate of Appropriateness is a document issued by the Buffalo Landmark and Preservation Board which authorizes your exterior work in accordance with the Department of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The rule of thumb is that a Certificate of Appropriateness is required for all exterior surface changes, (with the exception of painting) for all property located in Allentown. This includes, but is not limited to, roof, window, door, porch, siding repairs and replacements.

The City of Buffalo requires building permits for all work totaling \$500 or more. Due to our designation as a Historic District, a Certificate of Appropriateness must be submitted before obtaining a building permit.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Submit application for Certificate of Appropriateness describing proposed work. Applications may be obtained in City Hall Department of Planning, 313 City Hall.
2. Proposed work is reviewed by representatives of the Buffalo Landmark and Preservation Board. Applications are generally reviewed on a weekly.
3. A Certificate of Appropriateness is then mailed to the applicant, if the proposed work is approved, a request for

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## SAVING THE ALLENDALE

The Allentown Association has plans to acquire and restore the Allendale Theater if funds can be secured. The Theater is best known for its recent flirtations with art films, yet it has a rich history of live theater.

During the early twenties the Allendale was home of the Isadora Duncan Dance Company. In the late twenties it was the center for a community theater group that presented six shows per year of Shakespeare, O'Neill and Shaw.

The Depression brought movies to the Allendale and they became its mainstay. Now the theater sits empty. On the inside, burlap wall coverings and a drop ceiling veil the unique Renaissance style theater still there. Wall paintings, stencilings and plaster ornamentation lie hidden from view. A full stage with rigging, catwalks and dressing rooms is concealed behind the movie screen.

If we are successful in our fundraising efforts, the theater will be restored to its original 1920's character when it was used for live theater.

Small theater and dance groups in Buffalo find that stage space is scarce. The theater district is oriented strictly toward larger, professional productions, making it difficult for any group that is not well established to "break in" to the business. We will change that. Our doors will be open to the smaller community theater groups, local dance troupes and theater companies just starting out. We can create an "off Broadway" for Buffalo. We also plan on bringing movies back to Allentown and opening a community art gallery for area artists. We call this new concept the Allendale Arts Center. The advantage of the Allentown Association owning this facility is that in reality it will be owned by the community. Any profits will go right back into the community through theater or neighborhood projects.

The Allendale is an important commercial anchor on Allen Street. The successful reopening of the theater for movies, live theater and dance would attract people to the area, encouraging new businesses to draw on the crowds. But unlike the Theater district, the Allendale will be a mix of community actors and cinema. This will make it unique in the city.

One of the reasons the Allendale was forced to close its doors was the high cost of heating it. We have found a viable solution to that problem. In addition to structural repairs and restoration, the Allendale will be equipped with roof mounted solar panels that would provide 70 to 90 percent of the heating needs. A modern steam heating system tied to the solar collecting system would provide efficient, even heat to the building.

In keeping with the Association's policy of serving the

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## LETTER FROM THE COUNCIL

Dear Resident,

As you may know, you are now part of the Niagara Councilmanic District due to reapportionment. Currently, I am the Niagara District Councilman. Upon learning that your neighborhood was to be included in my district, I immediately began familiarizing myself with the area and its character. In addition, I have already started attending community meetings and helping residents with problems.

I am a firm believer that each neighborhood has a unique character. While I will always recognize and respect this, I will also work toward maintaining a cohesive and unified district. Commercial and residential revitalization is also very important to me, as I'm sure it is to you. I will continue to work toward the betterment of our neighborhoods and, in turn, our entire city. At the same time, however, historic preservation will remain a

priority to me.

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce my staff--Annette Montesano, Pamela Meyer and Patrick Ruffino. Do not hesitate to call on them as they are always eager to help. Also, for your convenience, my home address and telephone number is 259 Pennsylvania Street, 14201, 881-1263.

Our community will face many challenges in the coming years. I would like to be your councilman...your advocate who will assist you in cutting through red tape and helping you solve any problems you may have. I hope that I can count on your support in November.

Respectfully,

JOEL A. GIAMBRA  
NIAGARA DISTRICT COUNCILMAN

## A Message From the Executive Director

Welcome to the first issue of the Allentown Journal. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce our staff.

The first person you would come in contact with at our office is Marian Condon, our Administrative Assistant. None of the Association's activities could ever be efficiently organized with out Marian.. She began working at the Association last December, but she is no newcomer to the neighborhood. She has worked at the Bell's in Stuyvesant Plaza for the last five years. Her bookkeeping and computer skills will be helpful to area businesses. Marian attended Buffalo State College and received a degree in administration from the Sawyer School of Business.

Patrick Helmbrecht is our Commercial Development Director. He has been working in conjunction with the city and the Allentown Commercial Revitalization Committee on the Allen Street Project since June. Pat is a graduate of the SUNYAB School of Architecture and Environmental Design. He has had extensive experience in real estate in the Allentown area and has acted as a consultant to local small businesses. This year he received an Allentown Association Beautification award for the rehabilitation work he has done on his own building, the Burchfield House, on Franklin Street.

And I'm the Executive Director, Dan McCormick. My experience is largely in residential and commercial community planning. I worked for three years with a state regional planning agency in Michigan before returning to my home town and beginning this job. My responsibilities with the Allentown Association include neighborhood improvement, grant writing, program development and general agency direction. My degrees are in Business (Plattsburgh University) and Urban Planning (Buffalo State University College).

Perhaps most important of all to the survival of our organization are our volunteers. For all its activities, the Association is dependent on the input and work hours generated by this dedicated group of souls. Allentown residents and businesspeople comprise our board, organize activities and events, and pitch in when the staff needs assistance for both mundane and exciting tasks. New volunteers are always welcome, and can have a broad hand in initiating activities that they would like to see happen in Allentown. Please call Marian if you would like to volunteer, and feel free to call any staff member if you have questions or concerns at 881-1024. We are here to serve you.

## COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

Although all of us would like to see everything in Allentown run smoothly and without a hitch, there are times when it just doesn't work that way. We want you to know that the Allentown Association is here to help you. Our office has three staff people (Dan McCormick--Executive Director, Pat Helmbrecht--Commercial District Director, Marian Condon--Administrative Assistant) and several volunteers ready to work on your problem.

### How It Works

1. You discover a problem, whether it be the lights from the building next door shining in your windows at night, a building that you feel is a hazard to the community,

garbage that isn't being picked up, or anything else that is a concern, and you call us.

2. One of our staff members completes a form registering your complaint. This begins a process to ensure that the problem is addressed.

3. A) If possible the complaint is handled right then and there.

or

B) The problem is referred to the correct person: One of our staff people, a city department, etc. The complaint will then be filed in the Pending File.

4. At every staff meeting the Pending File will be examined. Each complaint will be assigned to a staff

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## NEW BUSINESS IN ALLENTOWN ART GLASS

by Donna Miceli

It is fitting that Jon Lombardo has chosen to live in Allentown. As an artist who specializes in designing leaded glass windows and etched plate glass and mirrors, he has been involved in the restoration and revitalization of the Allentown area since he first entered the business in 1980.

His first commission as a stained glass artist was a large, sandblasted mirror, which he did for the former Buffalo Bar and Grill on Allen Street. He also did works for the Inner Circle and Coco's restaurants. From those jobs came an opportunity to work on the restoration of four homes on Elmwood Avenue, between Allen and Virginia. Under contract to "Buffalo Restoration", he created all leaded and etched glass for the homes.

"Through referrals and word of mouth, I've moved around quite a bit, but I always seem to come back to what's happening in Allentown," Jon commented. "I moved here in March of this year, because it is an art community and I like being near my work."

Jon's business, "Diversified Art Glass", also includes repair and restoration of existing windows and doors, painted murals, supergraphics and logos. He has done work for over two dozen restaurants in the Buffalo area, including Santora's La Stanza, Cambria's Old Spain, and Court 51, which is now The Docket, as well as various residences throughout Buffalo.

A self-taught artist, Jon is currently working at Garcia's, a new three-story restaurant in downtown Buffalo. "I'm doing six leaded, beveled windows, eight clear glass, leaded windows, as well as etching and painting on mirrors for them," he said.

Most of Jon's work is obtained through referrals, and it is all "strictly by commission." He provides custom designs or uses a design provided by his client. "In all cases, I like to work closely with the customer to get a feel for what he or she wants," I go ahead with the work, using the highest quality materials available today."

A Buffalo native, Jon graduated from Cardinal Daugherty High School, in 1970. Before devoting full time to his current vocation, he worked in the commercial print business and in graphic design. He is a member of the Allentown Association.

## COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

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person who will check on the current status of it. When resolved, it will be filed for future reference.

5. If you supply us with your name and address, you will be sent notification of the initial action taken, periodic update if the situation warrants it, and a copy of the resolved complaint report.

Remember, the Allentown Association is your community organization. We're here to help you. If you have a problem, please feel free to call us at 881-1024.

Marian Condon

## New Housing in Allentown: ROOSEVELT APARTMENTS OPENING SOON

Opening soon in Allentown is the Roosevelt Apartment development, located at 921 Main Street on the corner of Main and Carlton Streets. Complete with sparkling facelift, new and eager residents and efficient new management, the former Roosevelt Hotel will soon begin a new chapter in its colorful life.

Much of its terra cotta facade and historical elegance has been preserved and The Roosevelt, built in 1914, has now been designated as an historical landmark building. In the past, The Roosevelt was the residence of actors temporarily touring Buffalo, and more recently it has housed apartments and offices.

The M.J. Peterson Sales Corporation is responsible for the revival of The Roosevelt. They are converting the building to 113 one bedroom apartments designed specifically for senior citizens and handicapped adults. The building is ideally situated for easy access to public transportation, shopping and medical services.

Rent subsidies will be provided under Section 8 of the National Housing Act and will be available to all eligible residents. Eligibility and rent levels will be based upon federal regulations pursuant to Section 8. Eligible residents will pay approximately 30% of their income as rent.

The Roosevelt will open early in 1984. Interested persons can get their names placed on the mailing list by writing to:

*The Roosevelt Apartments  
c/o Westchester Park Office  
55 Ralston Avenue  
Kenmore, New York 14217*

For further information, call Paula Tomasulo at 875-5521, Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

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community, the restoration project would employ city youth, minorities, unemployed artists and area construction workers.

The Allentown Association is planning a fundraising drive for this fall. The funds from this drive will provide local matching funds for whatever grants or loans the Association can acquire.

Anyone wishing to join in the effort to restore the Allendale can contact Dan McCormick, Allentown Association Executive Director, at 881-1024.

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more information, suggestion by the Board, or a denial will be mailed to the applicant.

4. With Certificate in hand, you may then obtain a building permit if necessary.

### NOTE:

The homeowner is responsible for all required paperwork. The homeowner may assign the task of procuring all necessary permits to a contractor, however, don't assume that this will be done. Either obtain the paperwork yourself, or make sure that your contractor does so. **THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY RESTS WITH THE HOMEOWNER.**

**Preservation:****Save Sagamore**

Allentown is a historic district. Because of this, our children, grandchildren and their children as well will be able to see many fine examples of architecture dating back to the 1890's. We feel it is important to remember the past. As a member of the Preservation League of New York State, it has come to our attention that a very important part of New York State's history may be lost due to neglect or deterioration. If this happens, future generations will be denied the opportunity to see and appreciate a part of our state's heritage.

Sagamore, a palatial late-19th century Adirondack camp once owned by the Vanderbilt family, is located near Raquette Lake. It contains 25 structures, including a log-style main lodge, residences, cabins, dining hall, recreation building, barns, ice house, and blacksmith and carpentry shops. One of the finest architectural and cultural resources of rural New York, it is open to the public for tours and educational and recreational programs.

The problem is half of Camp Sagamore--11 buildings known as the caretaking complex--is on state land. The only viable, long-term solution for the preservation of all of Camp Sagamore is to reunite the complex. The state Constitution requires a public referendum to approve any land exchange in the Adirondack Forest Preserve.

On November 8, Proposal 6 will be brought before the state. If passed, it would allow the state and Sagamore Institute, the non-profit, educational institution which owns Camp Sagamore, to trade land--without cost to taxpayers. In exchange for the ten acres and the endangered buildings at Sagamore, the Institute will purchase and then donate to the state a 200 acre parcel of wild forest land in the Adirondack Park--a tract which the state wants.

Advocates of this trade say it will help to:

- \*Reunite and preserve Camp Sagamore, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, for future generations
- \*Save 11 historic buildings from decay or destruction
- \*Add 200 acres of wild forest land to the Adirondack Forest preserve
- \*Do this all at no cost to the taxpayers of New York State.

For more information, please contact:

Preservation League  
of New York State  
307 Hamilton Street  
Albany, NY 12210  
(518) 462-5658

Sagamore Institute  
Sagamore Road  
Raquette Lake, NY 13436  
(315) 354-5311

ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION, INC.  
45 Elmwood Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14201  
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30

**CLASSIFIED**

**VOLUNTEERS** needed: The Allentown Association needs you. If you have time to give, you can help to improve your community. Please call, Monday - Friday, 9 - 4:30, 881-1024

College student seeks reasonably priced desk. Please call 881-1537 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Garage space wanted in Allentown area. Will rent year round if necessary. Please call 885-2113 after 6 p.m.

Used Stove and Refrigerator wanted. Please call 881-1025, M-W 9-4:30.

FOR LEASE 1ST Floor Commercial Space on Elmwood Avenue in the Heart of Allentown. Rent negotiable. 216-864-8359

INTERESTED in putting a classified ad in our next issue? Please call 881-1024 M-F between 9-4:30.

**WRITERS!** Do you want to see your articles, short stories, and poems in print? A new magazine, THE ALLENTOWNER will give you that opportunity. As Western New York's Cultural Magazine, we welcome articles for consideration. The deadline for our first issue in February is December 7. The general theme of the issue will be Buffalo's Renaissance. Please mail your typed, doubled-spaced copy to The Allentowner, 45 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14201.

**HOUSEKEEPER** - Senior Citizens Apartment Complex. Full Time - Day - City of Buffalo - Good Working Conditions - References Required. Looking for person who has pride in their work, pleasant disposition. Call 875-5521 Monday-Friday, 9-5.