

**Village of Skaneateles**  
*Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission*  
**December 9, 2009**

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In the matter of the application submitted by Mary Jacqueline Keady for a Certificate of Approval from the Commission to remove the existing structure with saving/restoration/repairing of the Genesee Street façade, and with using other salvaged components and construct a new 3 ½ (4 ½) story concrete and steel mixed use structure on the property located at 4 East Genesee Street in the Village of Skaneateles.

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Present:        Kihm Winship, Acting Chairman  
                  Mona Smalley, Member  
                  Pat Blackler, Member  
                  Andrew Ramsgard, Member

Jorge Batlle, Clerk to the Historic Commission

Robert Eggleston, Architect for the applicant  
Jackie Keady, Applicant  
Ted Kinder, Contractor

Arnold Rubenstein, Adjacent property owner  
Kevin Gadra, the Seitz Building rep.  
Richard Schmidt, East Genesee Street  
Julie Sharpe, East Genesee Street  
Steve White, Borodino & others  
Holland Gregg, Jordan Road  
Joe Panzarella, East Genesee Street

Absent:        David Neibert, Member  
                  Mary Fran Strodel, Member  
                  Karlene Miller, Member  
                  Charles Williams, Chairman  
                  Katharine Dyson, Member

Acting Chairman Kihm Winship opened the public hearing at 7:34pm announcing the application of Mary Jacqueline Keady for 4 East Genesee Street.

Robert Eggleston, Architect for the applicant made the presentation. He said, “this application is a ‘macro’ review, in that it’s a fairly complicated application that involves all the Boards and we did come to the Historical Commission during workshop sessions just to work

out some details to make sure we were on the right track – which I think was helpful in re-directing how we decided to approach the application.

We are looking for the ‘macro’ concept of the removal of the existing building and the reconstruction of a new building – reusing the various façade elements. We will come back after we have gone through the other Boards for a ‘micro’ review where we will look at colors. We will look at specific materials and specific details. So we don’t need to get involved with the finer details. But it is the ‘macro’ that we are looking for, the ‘macro’ approval.

First of all, in reviewing the building and the condition of the building – we have felt that this building has reached the end of its useful life. We have looked at various options and we have done structural repairs. I first want to address the necessary component of this application and that’s the structural necessity to remove the building. Jorge Batlle has on record since 1889 to 2009 various inspection reports raising concerns to the applicant relative to the structural stability of the building. There was a report done by John Stopen in 2006 which said, while the building is safe to remain occupied, it is in guarded condition and should be periodically reviewed. These are part of the record. This is my copy in case you want to refer to it. I won’t get into the specifics. It is a matter of public record. In Jorge’s files.

Number 2 - we then hired St. Germaine & Aupperle to do a report to look at the structural stability of the building as it is today. The main elements that came out of that were – observation that the building currently leans eleven and twelve inches to the west. It is currently leaning on, and we believe structurally supported by 2 East Genesee Street, the adjacent building. We have 1987 photographs when the sidewalk works was done, the front wall of the basement collapsed during that excavation for the underground utilities. Jorge Batlle has a series of pictures that I can share with you, if you want. And, at that time he took a picture of the leaning of the building. At that time there actually was air space between the 2 cornices of 4 East Genesee and 2 East Genesee. In the 2006 report, John Stopen noticed that the cornices were touching each other. In photographs that we have now, as part of the Aupperle Report, you can see the 2 cornices are totally engaged on the entire length of the 3 foot cornice. We feel that this building has stopped moving because it is being supported by 2 East Genesee Street.

The floor levelness, he goes into the fact that there is over 4 inches of variation in the floors on various levels. In a four foot run it is as much as a ½ inch out of level. Pretty significant. The basement is filled with a forest of steel columns that have been put in place to try to jack things up and keep things in place. That the original structure has been cut and compromised many times over during its lifetime. That the north (basement) wall in 1987 that was replaced – one of the questions is just repair piece-by-piece – even though it was put in in 1987, that’s beginning to crack. It’s very difficult to reinforce basement walls with a structure on top of it. I think that’s one of the reasons they didn’t get good reinforcing in it, so it’s already begun to crack and fail, even though it’s only 20 some years old.

The west wall, which is the wall that the wood structure is leaning into the Rubenstein building (2 East Genesee) that wall has the greatest concern to the engineer in that it is a brick wall. The brick is in poor condition. It’s crumbling. There are a number of places where the wall has shifted. We also have structural data from when Arnie Rubenstein did his project in the

1990s. He has soil tests done. We understood from historical data that 2 East Genesee Street building was actually built 47 foot long tapered pilings that were pounded into the ground and then grade beams put on top of it. Obviously, it's been very successful because the building is probably about as straight as when it was built in the late 1920s. The engineer explains that the 68 foot soil depth test that was done in the late 90s, shows intermittent layers of clay and soft sand, and it's a very malleable unstable soil condition. That then precludes simply coming in and putting in steel reinforcing because you really have to get into good foundations or any of the work you do – trying to put steel in, to try to reinforce the existing structure will not be successful. It is his recommendation that the foundations are so poor that it is unrealistic to salvage and reinforce the leftover – what is left over of the foundation system. It's highly impractical to construct a steel frame within the existing structure due to the poor soil conditions and due to the amount of wood frame structure that it is leaning to the west.

So, we submit those 3 pieces of evidence to support the fact that the building is at the end of its useful life. That the only reasonable solution is to remove the building. As we begin to explore that avenue, we are driven to look at the Preservation Briefs, which is put out by the Secretary of State for guidelines of dealing with historic buildings. First is the Architectural Identification of the building. This building historically – there are sketches from when it was built in the mid 1800s – as a Second Empire. It's an excellent example of a Second Empire building. It was first built as the Lakeview House as a hotel/tavern type structure. They even has porches that wrapped around now on the current Rubenstein property.

The building has been expanded 3 times in the back. It was probably originally 40 feet deep. Then it went 80 foot deep, and it has some more porches put on the back since. We also have photographs of the later 1800s, when it still had its original store front façade where it has 2 separate entrances. It had double hung windows matching the second floor on the first floor. Again, the use was quite different.

Of this original structure, what is remaining intact is the cupola, the Mansard roof with the slate and the 4 dormers. Those windows have been physically replaced within the dormers. Some of the detailing is missing on the side. On the second floor, all that remains is the wide corner boards and the 4 double hung windows in its current location with the heavy hood arm ornamentation over the head, which is typical of the Second Empire. There are some cornice bracket details that are still there, although some of those have been covered with aluminum.

The first floor is totally gone from what was originally built. There were a couple of different store fronts which gets us into the second Preservation Brief conversation about store fronts and the necessity of store fronts have evolved as with this, we have at least 3 different store front configurations that this has seen where it comes to its current front which was done in the 1950s or 60s. It's totally out of character with the historic nature of the Village.

What we have chosen because it is a retail store front that we are looking for versus a hotel/tavern type store front, is we've taken our clues to go back to the 1920s look at it is in this photograph – probably 1929 or 1930, where we have some transom windows, doors and large windows kind of broken up across the front. Some other concepts that we looked at in looking at how to deal with the new building with the old building is adding an additional half floor up on

top above the existing roof line. What we have proposed is to set that back and in profile we have carefully documented the front to put back the second floor, the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and the cupola in the exact locations as far as even the heights, so that the cornice levels have the same relationship to the Rubenstein and to the former Cooney building to the east. But in putting back the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, we have set that back – different from our original attempt. We have placed the cupola in the exact location where it has been all along. The concept being that when you stand back anywhere on Jordan Street, Genesee Street, across the street, you still have the same historic relationship of the front of the building and the cupola as you always had.

Then, rather than putting a sloping roof of which this kind of grows out of, we've maintained its crown position on the roof and then set-back the fourth level of the building so that it's distinctly behind the cupola. It's underplayed. The roofline is lower than that of the cupola. Also, in playing with the heights, we've kept this down so really we are only a half level above then actual roof level. We've kept the fourth floor level as low as possible and as understated from the street as possible. Then this will just be a simple bevel sided – some small windows, cornices in the back to keep it understated in the back.

So, what our proposal is – we will be removing the existing building which currently has 6 dwelling units and a storefront. We will put back 1 larger storefront area and 5 dwelling units. They will be treated as condominiums, not that that's germane to your consideration. What we'll be doing is in the back, using the basement for parking, because parking is a serious consideration. We do want to provide adequate parking on-site by providing parking in the basement as well as the parking across the alley in the back that will be outside. When it came to the back of the building – the front of the building as we've said, we are going to replicate the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, second floor, cupola. What we plan on doing is actually coming in when we begin taking down the building – we'll actually get a crane. We can cut the cupola free of the building and lift it and set it on a truck. Send it into Syracuse where it will be restored. Likewise, we'll take off the slate shingle, the existing slate shingles. We will then remove the dormers and put them on a truck and send them in and we'll look at how much we can restore versus having to replace parts. There's quite a bit of deterioration in the moldings and things like that. The bottom line is we will then bring back dormers that replicate the exact dormers that have been removed. As well as taking off the crown molding brackets and then taking out the second floor window trim treatments and then saving that. The rest of the building will then be demolished and put back exactly as it is.

We are acquiring this space. Right now there's a space between the Rubenstein and Keady buildings that 3 ½ feet wide at the street. It reduces to about 1 ½ feet in the back. We are acquiring that property, so we will build the new building directly up adjacent to Arnie Rubenstein's building. What we've done with this connection piece is we are going to set the connection back as shown in this side section 16 inches from the face of 4 East Genesee. It will be one foot back from the face of 2 East Genesee Street. Right now, Jackie's building is 4 inches in front of Arnie's building. We choose that location because the Neo-Classic Style building of Arnie Rubenstein's has a limestone façade that returns back 12 inches. Then just very generic brick begins after that, which was never intended to be seen. So, we are going to set our building back that one foot so that we respect the formal limestone façade and cover up the utilitarian part. We'll then treat this in clapboard, whereas this is a cove siding in the original pictures,

photographs. We'll put this back as tongue and groove cove siding. The side we'll put back with just the 6 inch corner board which is existing there now with bevel siding as it is now to replicate that. The infill we are going to do in stucco feeling that we wanted to keep a non-descript material there so that the existing materials of 4 East Genesee Street will stand forward and be the pronounced. Then all this respects the simple façade of the limestone on the front. Again, keeping it back so that the limestone is forward. A suggestion that we are going to pick up on from the Planning Board was that at the ground level there's probably a 3 or 4 foot high band coming around Arnie's building. We will probably replace that bottom portion in limestone as opposed to stucco only because we need to have something that will take the abuse of people walking up next to it. Probably pick up on a couple of the lines on the 2 East Genesee Street building. But then this will be stucco.

What we are going to do – the cornice on 2 East Genesee Street sticks out probably about a foot, and extends back about 3 feet. We are actually going to keep that in place. We are going to build our building around it so the actual stone on Arnie's building will remain in place. Then, we'll just build up and around it at that point, preserving that. Relative to the back façade, it was decided that there's been – no historic merit to the back façade. It's just been constantly rebuilt over the years to satisfy the current occupants requirements and needs. So, we've just maintained - there will actually be 5 levels with overhead doors in the bottom level. There will be decks that actually step back and just using simple window and door arrangements just to set up some logical arrangement on the back, maintaining probably a fiber cement board siding, respecting the fact that the original building was a wood building. Even though this will be a concrete building of non-combustible construction leading up and there might be metal studs façade infill on the back. But, we'll leave it as a beveled cement board siding, trims, windows adding some balance grids in the back. Just trying to make a reasonable organized façade on the back. With that, I'll open this up for any questions that the Board may have relative to our conceptual redevelopment of the building.”

Ted Kinder said, “Bob, you might want to point out one more thing. On the ground floor we are going to be lowering the first floor elevation down to grade so we have an handicap accessible situation.” Eggleston added, “right now there's about a foot and a half transition from the sidewalk to the first floor. What we are going to do to accommodate accessibility is we are going to lower that down so that maybe there's just a slight incline up at the threshold of several inches and make the building accessible. Internal, not relative to your review, the resident's entrance will be on the left. The store entrance will be on the right. The left will go back. it will ramp up into a level that will have an elevator. So, the basement, first, second and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor levels are accessible by elevator.”

Acting Chairman Winship opened the floor for public comment, or questions. He opened the floor for those in favor of this application. Arnold Rubenstein said, “I own the next door building, 2 East Genesee and as long as I drove out here I might as well say something. We are very much in favor of this project.” Richard Schmidt said, “my wife and I own 26 East Genesee Street. I've been through this building 3 times and definitely the building needs to come down. To preserve it the way they are I'm really in favor of that. The Second Empire French façade is certainly something that should be preserved. I am totally in favor on the project.” Julie Sharpe said, “I'm in favor of the project. I've been looking at it for years and watching it lean further

and further. I'm very curious as to why they are being forced to preserve what they can of a crumbling façade? I suspect that Thayer House was allowed to rebuild with current materials that have better durability perhaps. I'm not positive of that but I think they did quite a bit of rebuild on the historic aspects of Thayer House. And for a consistency I'm just wondering why this is being the issue it seems to be? I'm certainly all for the project because Jackie has been a good neighbor, and obviously the building is in deplorable condition at this time."

Acting Chairman Winship asked, "Bob, do you want to address the way in which we are saving those elements?" Eggleston said, "right, and I do believe on the Thayer House and I wasn't directly involved in the project, a lot of what was intact was kept. It was the reconstruction of things, the new materials were used. We are proposing to use new materials on the back obviously, using cement board but keeping it in the right appearance. Our original proposal was to just go to a brick building, even though we are keeping it Second Empire, and make it something totally different. Then I think the point was made by the Historic Commission and rightfully so, that in that it is a significant building, one should be able to come to Skaneateles and have their pictures taken, go home and look at grandma's pictures and compare her trip 50 years ago and say – yup – that's the same town and that type of thing. So, that where, even though the building will be removed, they felt that it should be put back as close as possible to the original so that it does maintain, because it is a significant building, and we all agree that it plays a visually important part in the history of Skaneateles, that we should do everything that we can to put it back. As far as the slate roof, I think if we are careful with it, we can take the slate off and we can keep it and reuse it. As far as the detail on the dormers, I can't promise that it will come back 100% wood because it's only maybe 75% wood and 20% air and 5% caulk. As far as the windows down here, we do and we will expect once we do the micro review at a later stage, that we will ask to have modern day windows that are thermally insulated. Typical of what is commonly approved which is a simulated divided light. It gives you the insulated glass but gives you the same visual appearance of the 2 over 2 double hung windows. So, we will be asking to do new replacements there. We are thinking – we don't know what the condition of this siding is. In that it has had one or two different sidings on it. It's probably full of holes. We suspect that we might be replacing that with a material in-kind to match the original. We will have the original material that we will salvage so that we can replicate it. Our goal is - it would be nice if we could put back 70% of the original materials of the second, third and cupola – definitely 50%. We will be using new materials where we have to – where we can keep the original materials we will try our best. To keep the original materials." (Side B)

Acting Chairman Winship said, "...essentially what can be saved and reused will be. And you'll be using those as a template for anything that's new and create. You'll be using the older materials as a template for them." Sharpe asked, "is there a significant cost difference between replicating it as it is and trying to restore what's there?" Ted Kinder replied, "it's certainly going to be more expensive to selectively demolish the front of that building. You are going to save some on material cost. But you'll more than eat that up on the labor. Is it significant? Probably on a project of this size, probably not. On Thayer House we actually tried to save everything we possibly could also. There were parts to Thayer House that were totally torn off - elements that had to be completely rebuilt from scratch just to get it back to what it was pre-1950 or 1960. Those obviously had to be built with new material. But, everything that was there, the slate roof, the cornices, and anything that was there from the original that was still in reasonably good

shape, we kept all that. So, we are really not doing too much different here except removing the entire structure behind it. The storefront, that's all new. We are changing the material on that to go back to the 1920s. That will essentially be all new glass and new trim work and doors."

Member Blacker asked about the storefront, "you've got 2 doors and the one on the left is for the building and the one on the right is for the store – so it is just going to be one?" Eggleston said, "it will be one store, and then there will be the residential entrance." Member Blackler said, "if it were separated in the future then another door would have to be put in." Eggleston said, "yes, if for some reason they wanted to subdivide this up differently, then they would have to reconfigure whether they put an entrance here and made this one unit and this another unit. That's possible." Member Blackler said, "I also have a minor question. At the Planning Board, one of the members specifically said something about the windows. That those on the second floor are off. There is not the same dimensions between the windows and one said – here's our chance to make those windows right. He was very firm about it. I would like to hear from Ted what you think about that? Do you want them *right* so-to-speak?" Kinder replied, "my preference would be to line them up. The historical reason of why there are like they are has been taken away. If you look at the middle picture the 1870s and is actually clearer on the upper picture, you can see why they were like they were because there was actually windows on the ground floor that they line up with. It's not there anymore, so I think to avoid having people drive through town and say Wow, that contractor really screwed up, I probably would like to line them up." Member Blackler asked, "how about you, Jackie?" Jackie Keady said, "I never in all the years that I lived there noticed them."

Eggleston said, "I think as we looked at it and talked about it – when I came up with this drawing November 11<sup>th</sup>, it was in direct response to – we had brick, we had 5 windows. It was a totally different building. But yet, it was teasingly too close to what was there. That's what this Board has a problem with. One of the things that we were – which is an obligation of ours as the current stewards of the building, is to meticulously document what's there. So, that's what we did. We went back. We measured meticulously the building and that's when we discovered – that never lined up, which no one really saw. That's why we presented it that way." Member Blackler asked, "what is your personal preference?" Eggleston said, "I agree with Ted that maybe keeping this because what's down here doesn't relate. It might be better suited for the next 200 years for it to line up and make sense. I think that I would lean that way. Again, that's something that if you want to give us some guidelines on we'd be glad to take in the conceptual. Then once we do the micro review, we'll come back with it."

Acting Chairman Winship said, "I think you will hear from some people that that is part of the character of that building lies in the fact that there's a little anomaly over here on the 2<sup>nd</sup> story. Just personally, not speaking as the Acting Chairman, just personally, it strikes me as a little compulsive to want them all to line up. I kind of like it the way it is." Kinder said, "quirky has its merits too" Acting Chairman Winship said, "I am probably prone to quirky sometimes." Member Blackler said, "another member of the Planning Board did say that in the olden days they always did that – make sure something was off." The Acting Chairman said, "I think it's probably because there was a wider entrance below on the right hand side here. As you pointed out in the middle, and that was probably the saloon door." Eggleston said, "yes, there was the 3 bays for one use, and the one bay for the other use possibly and that's why it came off that way."

Steve White said, "I am married to the lady and officially represent her tonight who owns the building at 18 East Genesee Street. And I represent unofficially a bunch of other owners along here that weren't able to be here tonight, but who have expressed at other time the desire to see this project go through. I'm much happier with the second proposal than the first, and much in favor as is my wife of the project as it is presented. I don't care if the windows line up or not. Jackie has picked an architect and contractor who know this business inside out. They have come to the conclusion, along with several engineers, whose reports that I've read, that the building has to come down. I'm sure there's people think that it shouldn't but, in this case they are probably people who haven't familiarize themselves with what's there, other than the façade. We agree in concert agree with the concept as it's coming through now – are most enthusiastic about having the building stand up straight again. I am probably the person in the room that has more experience in that building than anybody else here. I met my first wife in that building. I want to know where the entrance to the bar is going to be? I've been in and out of that building since I was 15 years old. So that's 55 years of familiar with it. I watched the deterioration for the last 20 or so years. For myself and all the people that I represent, I can't imagine anybody at this stage of the game not agreeing with what Ted and Jackie have proposed. It's a viable project and deserves your consideration and votes. I encourage you to support the project as it's given."

Joe Panzarella said, "I'm the owner of *Imagine* ...having been in that building for the last 17 ½ years, I've seen it go through rolls and waves. We had to prop it up with jack posts and everything else underneath so the floor wouldn't bounce too much and me being a small guy was afraid that I might go through it more than one time. Having talking with Ted and having been brought in on the plans and hopefully the future of that building, I'm hoping that you will approve the plans that they have presented."

The Acting Chairman opened the floor to anyone wishing to speak in opposition to the project. No one spoke. Battle said, "now you have to do a motion to close the public hearing if you so choose." Holland Gregg asked, "can I make just comment? I'm not in opposition. I just have a question. I am curious about the back side. Do you guys have a color scheme picked out there and what are the materials?" Eggleston said, "I was driving down Jordan Road and I was inspired by splashes of purple (clothing being worn)... actually because of the complexity of the project we have 3 other Boards to go through. Historically – normal protocol is the Historic Commission is the last stop. Unfortunately too many decisions get made in the process. What we chose to do on this project is we had some workshops first with the Historic Commission. So that's why a lot of the macro details have been worked out successfully. What we are looking for today is a 'macro' approval. In other words we want them to approve the concept of the removal and re-salvaging the building parts. That way we can get on with the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Critical Impact and get those details worked out. Then in that time period we'll work out the micro. So, we will be back for another public hearing to look at the micro issues which will involve color. And it will settle any of the material use issues. What we are looking for is a macro concept which is the removal – allowing us to remove the building. To rebuild using the façade parts for the second, third and cupola, and creating the 4<sup>th</sup> level. So, it's really a macro approval at this point."

Gregg said, "my only comment was, I hope that you give as much thought to the backside as you do the front side. The front side, you've have done a marvelous job on kind of re-creating

that. I'm just wondering about the backside. My only comment is – I can see that it's very functional from a design standpoint. Hopefully the people on the boats and things like that who have to look at it (faded out)..." Eggleston said, "when it comes to colors, we want to get away from the white and the split faced shingles and all that. We'd really like to do justice for the Second Empire colors. They tend to be rich darker colors. We'd like to be true to them."

The Acting Chairman said, "I need a motion to close the public part of the hearing." Member Blackler moved to close the public comment portion of the hearing. Seconded by Member Smalley. The vote was 4-0 in favor of the motion.

The Acting Chairman asked for a motion for the approval of the project. Member Ramsgard said, **"I would make a motion that we approve the macro conceptual approval, per the 3 drawings dated November 11, 2009. And approve the concept of the demolition of the building, the salvaging of the cupola and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor façade components to be re-worked into the new façade, and the inclusion of the fourth level. And that the project will be back for micro approval and a second public hearing on the remainder of the details."**

Member Smalley asked, "how about the spacing of the windows?" Eggleston said, "that we can actually save for the micro." The Acting Chairman said, "yes, let's save it for the micro."

The above motion was seconded by Member Blackler. The vote was 4-0 in favor of the motion. The meeting was closed at 8:16pm.

cc: Eggleston, Kinder, Ramsgard, Williams, Dyson, Miller, Smalley, Blackler  
Winship