
Appendix C: Coordination with NYS Historic Preservation Office

In January, 2006, the NPS conducted a site visit at the Wesleyan Chapel with the representatives from the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The purpose of this visit was to inform the SHPO about the effort by the NPS to develop alternatives to preserve the chapel for future generations. The SHPO agreed with the need to preserve the chapel and indicated that continued maintenance of the chapel (i.e., the No Action Alternative – Alternative A) is not a viable option to achieve long-term preservation. Throughout the process, SHPO has been kept informed about meetings and findings. The NPS will continue to consult with SHPO to maintain SHPO's concurrence with the chosen NPS alternative and any necessary mitigation measures identified to offset impacts.

A letter was received from the SHPO on January 30, 2006, which stated:

“As we discussed, the condition of the remaining historic fabric of the Chapel is of concern; current commemorative treatment of the Wesleyan Chapel has left the remnants of the historic Wesleyan Chapel exposed and that exposure has caused evident loss of and damage to the historic brickwork. I strongly encourage you to explore alternative treatments which would better ensure the long-term preservation of the chapel.

I am hopeful that any alternative treatment would not only enhance the preservation of the historic fabric of the Wesleyan Chapel, but would also be sensitive to the character of the Seneca Falls Historic District so as to not create an adverse effect on the district. I look forward to working in consultation with you and the National Park Service in upcoming months on this important project.”

Several months later, after site visits, meetings and continued involvement, SHPO sent a letter dated May 15, 2006, which stated the following:

“Thank you for the opportunity to preview the conceptual alternative treatments for the Wesleyan Chapel. We concur with the National Park Service's selection of the preferred preliminary alternative “D,” rehabilitation of the Chapel to reestablish the building's envelope and secure the historic walls and roof structure from the elements.

We can endorse this preliminary rehabilitation proposal as providing for the long-term preservation of the Chapel in a manner that clearly distinguishes the historic material from new work in a sympathetic manner and presents the historic volume of the chapel to better present its historic presence in the streetscape.

The preferred alternative also appears to be more appropriate to the character of the Seneca Falls Historic District than the existing commemorative design or other proposed alternatives.”

Consultation with SHPO will be ongoing throughout the implementation process of the preferred alternative.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Women's Rights National Historical Park
136 Fall Street
Seneca Falls, NY 13148
Phone: 315-568-2991 Fax: 315-568-2141

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H4217 (WORI-Ch, CR)

May 8, 2007

Mr. James Warren
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Dear Mr. Warren:

Since 1993, the National Park Service has carefully monitored the condition of the Wesleyan Chapel at Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, N.Y. In the early 2000's, we observed increasing brick loss. Studies undertaken in 2005 concluded that brick loss was due to the Chapel's open treatment and constant exposure to the elements. Additional studies found that public programming was adversely affected by traffic noise generated by heavy truck traffic on the adjacent state highways Routes 5 and 20 that pass directly in front of the Wesleyan Chapel.

In conjunction with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and National Environmental Policy Act, the NPS has developed and evaluated treatment alternatives to address these preservation and programming concerns. This analysis can be found in "Rehabilitation and Preservation of the Wesleyan Chapel Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect" provided to you in hardcopy for your review. The agency's preferred alternative, Rehabilitate Chapel with Non-Historic Brick Masonry Units, proposes to reestablish the building's envelope and secure the historic walls and roof from the elements in a manner that clearly distinguishes the historic material from new work in a sympathetic manner. Where sufficient evidence exists, window and door treatments will be included. Rehabilitation and maintenance will take place under a new programmatic agreement.

We seek review and concurrence of this preferred alternative under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Please do not hesitate to call me at 315-568-2991 extension 30 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Tina Orcutt
Superintendent

Enclosure



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643
www.nysparks.com

Eliot Spitzer
Governor

Carol Ash
Commissioner

May 25, 2006

Ms. Tina Orcutt, Superintendent
Women's Rights National Historical Park
136 Fall Street
Seneca Falls, New York 13148

Re: National Park Service
Wesleyan Chapel
Seneca Falls, Seneca Co.
07PR02570

Dear Ms. Orcutt,

It was a pleasure to meet with you again at the joint NYSHPO – National Park Service meeting at Peebles Island State Park. I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect for the proposed rehabilitation and restoration of the Wesleyan Chapel you were able to hand deliver and am please to provide comment in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The New York State Historic Preservation Office remains supportive of the NPS preferred Alternative D in both stabilizing and completing a building envelope now suffering from exposure of the historic brickwork to the elements.

Alternative D and C both adopt similar approaches and minimize the insertion of incompatible materials and forms in the historic setting, but we believe the use of non-historic brick as infill will maintain the visual texture of traditional brick masonry construction while providing an adequate distinction between the historic brick and new work.

Thank you for your continuing consultation on this important and sensitive project. Please call me at (518) 237-8643, extension 3283 or email me at james.warren@oprhp.state.ny.us with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

James Warren
Historic Sites Restoration Coordinator