

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT NOMINATION FORM

VILLAGE OF WILLIAMSVILLE, NEW YORK

Village of Williamsville Historic Preservation Commission

Your name: n/a Telephone: (716) 632-4120 Date: 9/24/19

Your address: c/o Village of Williamsville, 5565 Main St., Williamsville, NY 14221

Organization (if any): Village of Williamsville Historic Preservation Commission

A. PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION – Properties included in the district.
See Appendix A

B. NAME
South Cayuga Road Historic District

C. DESCRIPTION
Number of Proposed Resources: 39

Contributing: 32
Non-Contributing: 7

Existing Local Landmarks Included in Proposed District:

20 Milton Street (Calvary Episcopal Church)
72 S. Cayuga Road (Hopkins Schoolhouse)

D. BOUNDARY
The boundaries of a potential historic district are shown in Appendix B. These boundaries were defined based on several factors:

North end: The justification of the north boundary line is the same as the justification for the north line of the survey area described in Section 2. A parking lot (5571 Main Street) and contemporary office building (30 S. Cayuga) are incompatible in scale and use with the residences along the east side of the street, whereas a large apartment complex (Williamsville 56 Court, 41 S. Cayuga) similarly breaks the cohesion along the west side of the street.

South end, east side of the street: 204 S. Cayuga is the southernmost property included in the district boundary. 208 S. Cayuga (the last property north of the village boundary)

is not included because 208 would be non-contributing if included, as it contains a contemporary home (constructed 1977) and an older barn that has been altered. As a general rule, historic districts are not defined in such a way that end properties are non-contributing, so this boundary end has been chosen so that the district has contributing edge properties at each end.

South end, west side of the street: 193 S. Cayuga Rd. is the southernmost property included in the district boundary. The adjacent properties to the south, 207, 211-215, and 229- 235 were surveyed and inventory forms are included in Appendix 1. However, these properties are not included within the district boundary because they are the product of different development patterns unrelated to the creation of Williamsville Park as a streetcar suburb in the early 20th century.

E. PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

South Cayuga Road experienced two major periods of development. The first began in 1840 and lasted until about 1860, coinciding with the subdivision and sale of lands along the road by the early settlers who had bought up large tracts of land after Western New York was first surveyed by the Holland Land Company. While no houses within the survey area are recorded to have been constructed between 1860 and 1903, many houses received additions during that era. The second major spurt of occurred from approximately 1912 to 1930, coinciding with the sale of the large tract of land on the west side of Cayuga that allowed for its subdivision and sale as the Williamsville Park development, constructed in the template of a streetcar suburb. A few homes continued to be constructed during the 1930s and 40s and the last major structure constructed on the street was Calvary Episcopal Church in 1952. Given that it has been located in the neighborhood since the early twentieth century, the church has long been a neighborhood institution and is part of its fabric; as such, the church should be included as a contributing structure in the proposed district, and thus the period of significance should be defined to include it. However, the church received a large addition to its south side (the "Education Building") in 1968 that exhibits similarities architecturally to the 1952 church building while also using materials of its own that are contextual to the neighborhood. As such, this addition likewise fits in to the neighborhood. Based on the rationale above, the period of significance for the South Cayuga Historic District is proposed to be 1840-1968.

F. SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The development of the corridor occurred over two distinct periods. The first was in the 1840s and 1850s as land was slowly sold off by the earliest landowners and early pioneers settled in the village along the old Indian trail that evolved into Cayuga Road. The second period was from 1912 to approximately 1930 when the west side of the

street was developed using the pattern of a streetcar suburb that was common during the early 20th century. The subdivision that was constructed under the template of a streetcar suburb was named Williamsville Park and extended from South Cayuga Road west to, and including, the west side of California Drive just south of where it intersects with Main Street. Including 192 lots (though they were not all built upon), it was a vast new neighborhood that redefined the southwest quadrant of the village. The majority of Williamsville Park was constructed between 1912 and 1930 (though a small number of additional homes continued to be added over the next two to three decades.) As such, a question came up early during the research phase: Why are both sides of S. Cayuga Rd. being considered as part of a historic district? Would it make more sense for the west side of the street to be treated as part of the larger Williamsville Park development? However, National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs notes that "although a residential subdivision is a logical unit for study, historic neighborhoods are not necessarily defined by lines drawn on a historic subdivision plat."¹ Advertisements for Williamsville Park when plots were being sold there around 1915 describe South Cayuga Road as "the Delaware Avenue of Williamsville", so the street seems to have had a clearly defined identity by this point. It was already seen as a "place" and the developers were trying to profit from that perception. After Williamsville Park was constructed, did it continue to be a "place"? And, if so, did that "place" extend into and include part of the neighborhood as well or did it remain exclusive to the properties along South Cayuga Road? Despite the different eras of development, a strong argument can be made that South Cayuga Road continued through the 20th century and continues today to form a cohesive whole apartment from the neighborhood to its west. This cohesiveness is defined in two ways:

Physically. Even in the original plot plan for Williamsville Park, the lots along the west side of South Cayuga Road were specially defined. While lots throughout the neighborhood varied in depth due to many of the streets being constructed at an angle to each other, the lots along South Cayuga Road were the only ones that are carefully defined to be exactly 200 feet deep by 50 feet wide. While some lots elsewhere in the subdivision exceeded 200 feet, this was due to being situated at an odd corner defined by an angle street rather than being intentional. Some lots along California Drive, deep in the development, are as small as 50x100. The actual development pattern that occurred only exacerbates the exceptionalness of the street. While homes along the streets west of Cayuga Road were constructed on one lot almost without exception, a house constructed on one lot is the exception along the west side of South Cayuga.

The majority of the homes within Williamsville Park along the west side of South Cayuga Road are built on two lots and some are built on three. The only other area within the development where multiple lots were combined is along California Drive on the west side of the development. However, the reason for this seems to be that this portion of the subdivision was never fully built-out. Most of the lots on the west side of this stretch

and one of those on the east side are dominated by industrial storage yards. Two of the lots along the east side do contain houses, but they are very small. This is reflected in the Sanborn fire insurance map from 1947, which shows that only two small houses had been constructed along this side of the street by that year, and that sparse development appears to largely still be true. The open land adjacent to these houses appears to be a remnant of the weakness of the market for homes in this part of the development rather than a reflection of a desire to project grandiosity and wealth.

The exceptionalness of Cayuga Road is further clarified by the relative size of the homes, and their placement on their lots. The homes tend to be much smaller and more compact and set fairly close to the street along the streets west of Cayuga. In contrast, the homes on the west side of South Cayuga Road are often set much farther back on their lots and are much grander. While both have ample lawns, the homes on the west side of the street are actually set back even farther than those on the east side. As would be expected, the homes along the west side of South Cayuga Road are built using similar architectural styles to those deeper in the development, those that were popular during the 1910s and 20s. However, the examples on South Cayuga Road tend to be much grander expressions of those styles.

Socially. Soon after construction began on the Williamsville Park subdivision, cross-pollination began to occur between the homes on the east side of Cayuga and those on the west, showing that the west side was considered to have the same social prestige by the relatively affluent and established homeowners on the east side. In fact, one of the first two new homes constructed for buyers in the Williamsville Park development, 111 S. Cayuga, was purchased by the newly married daughter and son-in-law of a couple that lived in 86 S. Cayuga on the east side of the street.² Another example of a family moving to the other side of the street is Charles & Helen Burney who lived at 168 S. Cayuga from 1936 to 1947 and in 1960 it was reported that they “now live due to the street’s cohesion, there is a strong justification for it being considered a singular “place” that could formally defined as a historic district.

The proposed **South Cayuga Road Historic District** would be significant under **local criterion 1** as representative of the development patterns of a distinct part of the village of Williamsville and under **local criterion 3** because the architecture of many of the homes are high-quality representative examples of their styles. SEE LOCAL CRITERIA.

G. LOCAL CRITERIA (§ 47-4) for the Designation of Historic Districts.

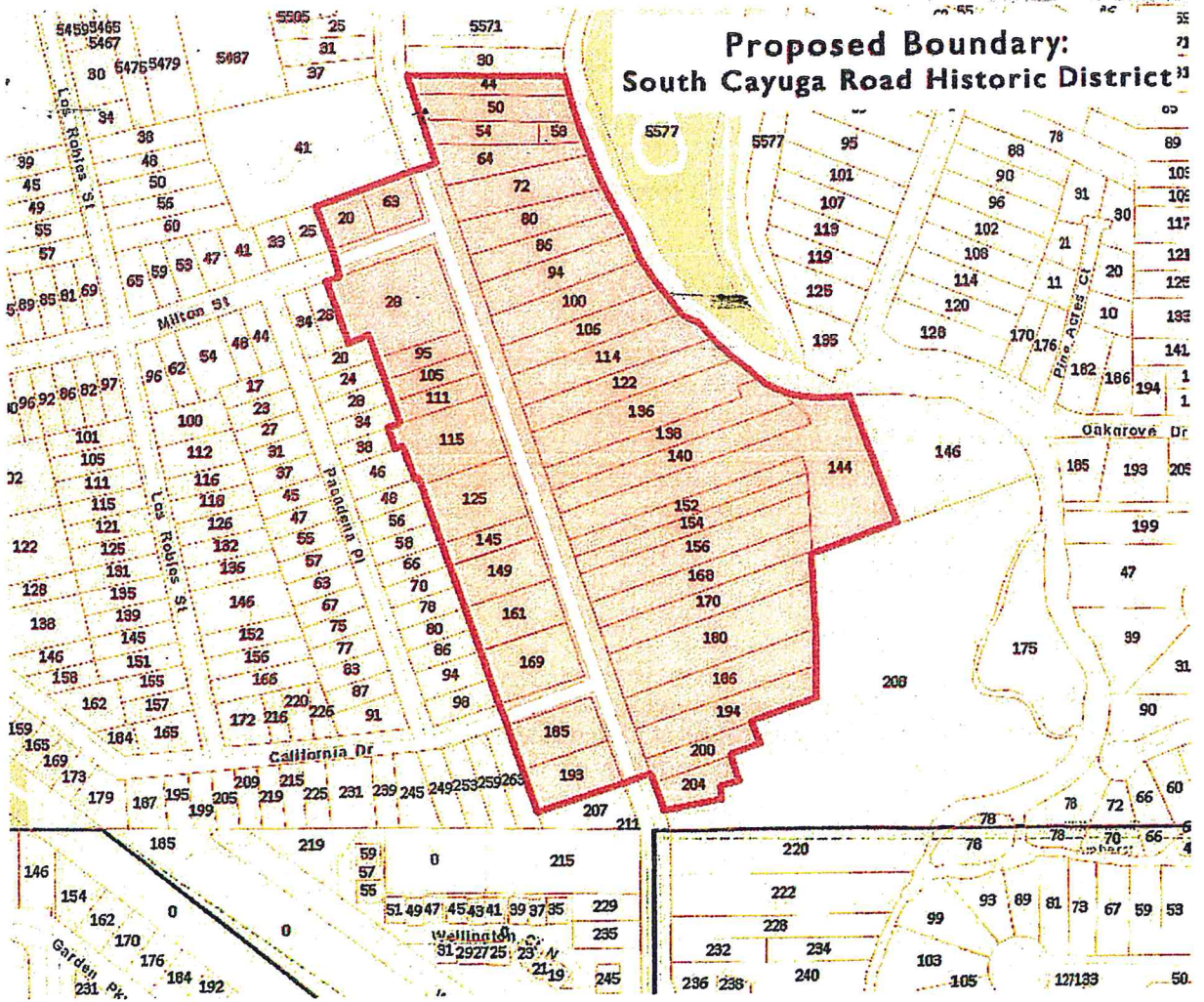
The Commission may recommend designation of a property or a group of properties as a historic site, subject to Village Board approval, if it contains significant historical or cultural sites where buildings or structures no longer exist, such as a battlefield, cemetery or former transportation facility; or sites which may yield information important to area history or prehistory.

The Commission may recommend designation for landmark status, subject to Village Board approval, if it contains properties which meet one or more of the criteria for designation as a local landmark;

- (1) Is associated with the lives of individuals or of people or of events significant in the national, state, or local history.
- (2) Embodies the distinctive characteristic of a type, a period or a method of construction.
- (3) Represents the work of a master architect or designer or possesses high artistic values.
- (4) Represents a significant or distinguished entity whose components may lack individual or special distinction.
- (5) Because of a unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood.

The Commission may recommend designation of a group of properties as a historic district, subject to Village Board approval, if it:

- (1) Is an area that represents several periods or styles of architecture typical of different areas of history;
 - (2) Is an area that has several buildings of the same architectural period or style and thus constitutes unified architectural streetscape consistency or a significant community uniformity of style; or
 - (3) Is an area connected with significant events or cultural happenings or developments involving ethnic, religious groups or other groups of special historical interest; and
- By reason of possessing such qualities, it constitutes a distinct section of the Village of Williamsville; or district.



Address	Name	Built	Style	Integrity	Include in District?	Contributing?	Local Landmark?	NR Eligible?
20 Milton St	Calvary Episcopal Church	1952	Gothic/Tudor Revival	High	Yes	Yes	Existing	Yes
44 S. Cayuga Rd.	Oscar Black House	c. 1850	Greek Revival	Medium	Yes	Yes	No	No
50 S. Cayuga Rd.	William Coe House	c. 1850	Greek Revival	Medium	Yes	No	No	No
54-58 S. Cayuga Rd.		1957		None	Yes	No	No	No
63 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1912	Craftsman	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
64 S. Cayuga Rd.	John Huver House	c. 1840	Craftsman	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
72 S. Cayuga Rd.	Hopkins Schoolhouse	1840	Greek Revival	Very high	Yes	Yes	Existing	Yes
80 S. Cayuga Rd.	Michael Windnagle House	1840	Greek Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
86 S. Cayuga Rd.	William White House	c. 1840	Federal	Medium-High	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
94 S. Cayuga Rd.	Former Williamsville Baptist Church	1844	Greek Revival	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
95 S. Cayuga Rd.		1915		Low	Yes	No	No	No
100 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1850	Italianate	Medium	Yes	Yes	No	No
105 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1920	Craftsman	Low	Yes	No	No	No
106 S. Cayuga Rd.	Ephraim Sweltzer House	1903	Colonial Revival	Medium	Yes	Yes	No	No
111 S. Cayuga Rd.	A.H. Meyer House	1915	Craftsman (Bungalow)	Very high	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
114 S. Cayuga Rd.	Isabelle Cloudsley House	1916	Colonial Revival	Medium	Yes	Yes	No	No
115 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1920	Colonial Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
122 S. Cayuga Rd.	Louis and Julia Treyntor House	1913	American Four Square	Medium	Yes	Yes	No	No
125 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1925	Tudor/Spanish Revival	Very high	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
136 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1840		None	Yes	No	No	No
138 S. Cayuga Rd.		2015		N/A	Yes	No	No	No
140 S. Cayuga Rd.	John Koch House	c. 1840	Greek Revival	Medium-low	Yes	No	No	No
144 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1945	Tudor Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
145 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1925	American Four Square	Very high	Yes	Yes	No	No
149 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1920	Colonial Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
152 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1850	Greek Revival	Medium	Yes	Yes	No	No
154 S. Cayuga Rd.	Abraham Stever House	1845	Greek Revival	Very high	Yes	Yes	No	No
156 S. Cayuga Rd.	David & Anna Spayth House	1847	Greek Revival	Low	Yes	No	No	No
161 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1920	American Four Square	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
168 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1848	Greek Revival	Very high	Yes	Yes	No	No
169 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1920	Dutch Colonial Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
170 S. Cayuga Rd.	John Alshouse House	c. 1841	Greek Revival	Medium-high	Yes	Yes	No	No
180 S. Cayuga Rd.	Thomas Richardson House	c. 1845	Greek Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
185 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1938	Colonial Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
186 S. Cayuga Rd.	Israel Colburn House	c. 1848	Greek Revival	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
193 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1925	Dutch Colonial Revival	Medium-high	Yes	Yes	No	No
194 S. Cayuga Rd.		c. 1910	Craftsman	High	Yes	Yes	No	No
200 S. Cayuga Rd.	Barton and Dolly Seamon's House	c. 1842	Tudor Revival	Medium-High	Yes	Yes	No	No
204 S. Cayuga Rd.	Gardner Green House	c. 1845	Greek Revival	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes