

**Village of Williamsville**  
**5565 Main St., Williamsville, NY**  
**Historic Preservation Commission**  
**Public Hearing**  
**September 27, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**

Chair Catherine Waterman-Kulpa presented a PowerPoint presentation to provide the public with the history of the area and why the district designation for the Historic Water Mill area.(Copy of slide presentation is attached to these minutes.)

Trustee Mary Lowther, Liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission began by reading the purpose from Chapter 47 of the Village Code for the HPC:

The Village of Williamsville Board of Trustees (the "Village Board") finds that there exist within the Village places, sites, structures and buildings of historic or architectural significance, antiquity, uniqueness of exterior design or construction, which should be conserved, protected and preserved to maintain the architectural character of the Village, to contribute to the aesthetic value of the Village and to promote the general good, welfare, health and safety of the Village and its residents.

Catherine Waterman-Kulpa stated that this (public hearing) is not a conversation, this is for Historic Preservation Commission in taking information for the public record.

On Motion by Catherine Waterman-Kulpa, seconded by Susan Fenster, it was motioned to open the public hearing to hear all those interested on commenting on the proposed Historic Mill District

Motion passed 5 – 0

- 1.) Patrick Kelly  
120 Oakgrove Dr,
  - Looking for the written application
  - Topic was brought up as an off agenda item at the 8/23/22 HPC meeting
  - Several of the listed properties are already designated, already under historic preservation mandates.
  - As a district property is also under mandate. This includes fencing, outside air conditioner units, changes in landscaping, etc. Any changes would need a Certificate of Appropriateness
  - He was an attorney in the 1990's for the Village
  - Commission at that time stated that residential properties would not be designated unless the owner requested it
  - 5570 Main Street, 42 E. Spring Street, 15 E. Spring St – very little remaining from original. Common place buildings. None have ties to the Mill
  - Does not agree with Historic District designation  
(Copy of statement provided to HPC to add to record)

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2.) Nick Roth  
135 Oakgrove Dr.

- Questioned about why, when asked at last meeting, why this couldn't wait for September meeting.

*(Catherine Waterman-Kulpa told Nick Roth that he must stay on topic only. Historic, Architecture or cultural importance of the proposed historic district, that is the topic for this evening's public meeting. Would you like to address this topic?)*

Nick Roth stated the he believed that he is on topic. Asked "May I continue?"

*(Catherine Waterman-Kulpa stated "We'll see where this goes.")*

- Member tendered their resignation the next day after the 8/23/22 meeting...

*(Catherine Waterman-Kulpa reminded Mr. Roth to remain on topic. As Nick attempted to continue, Catherine Waterman-Kulpa asked for the Officer to come into the room.)*

- HPC is made up of volunteers, not elected officials, with no accountability
- HPC – Publicity/sudden awareness of HPC by village residents
- Better approach would be additional meetings for targeted property owners. Open forums to express concerns
- Time for common sense to prevail
- Provide clear, complete information

3.) Phil Johnson  
152 S. Cayuga Dr.

- Appointed to HPC last night
- Principal at a local elementary school
- Hoping to add value to HPC, to find common ground with preserving historic assets and growth of the village
- Residency was challenged
- Board intended to hire an attorney to sue the mayor to reject appointment at the Village expense. In good conscience, he could not go forward with this process, costing the Village residents
- Asked to have his name removed

*(Catherine Waterman-Kulpa stated that we are here specifically to enter information into the record for the historic, architectural and cultural importance of the proposed Williamsville Water Mill Historic District.)*

- Listen & see how many residents, property owners, businesses are in favor of district
- Opposed to district. Who is project for? Who does it serve?
- New voice was threatening to HPC

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- 4.) Tricia Brown  
Eagle House (Family Owners for 45 years)
- Appreciates HPC
  - Important that we have guidance to maintain history
  - Maybe more advisory to Village as a whole
  - Takes pride in owning an historic building
  - Lumped into decision, makes it difficult as a business owner
  - Who does this benefit?
  - Decision should not be rushed
  - Wants more open conversations
- 5.) Nicole Keller  
95 Orchard St.
- Lover of the Village
  - Strike a balance between preserving history and supporting needs of the local businesses & community
  - Too many restrictions cause a loss of businesses
  - Wants businesses to thrive, not just survive
  - Agrees that a board of volunteers should be advisory with limited power
  - Like to see community input
  - Village is more than just the mill
- 6.) Cheryl Meyer  
Willowbrook Dr.
- Need to communicate better
  - Important to pause. Let people have say, get involved
  - Get most input to make decision
  - Advisory board should not be making decisions for the tax payer
  - Recommend them or be elected
- 7.) Deb Rogers  
125 S. Cayuga
- Commission may recommend an historic district if majority approval
  - Just because it says you may recommend doesn't mean you should
  - Who are you hear to serve?
  - You all are seated with board approval, you serve at the request of the Village Board
  - Important to hear every comment; every comment is relevant
  - Very important in your actions, tone of voice, answers, demeanor as you speak to the public

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- 8.) Jim Walfrand  
48 Howard Ave.
- Survey businesses and see their comments
  - Talk to other agencies - SHPO, Dept. of Interiors, WBA, Chamber of Commerce, get their feedback
  - Just because something is old doesn't mean it's historic
  - Lesser value due to restrictions, do an analytic review
  - What is sense of urgency? Take time to see if village, businesses, residents want it
  - Feels committee should be a review board that recommends to Village Board
  - Important to keep history of village
  - Need to make educated decisions
- 9.) Tom Frank  
5403 Main Street
- Walkable Williamsville
  - Include Route 5 Bridge over Ellicott Creek
  - Include Mill to Glen over to Reist, to include the cemetery, which has historic significance
  - Put into library system and school district
- 10.) Dan Hunt  
75 Evans St.
- In favor of district
  - Owns oldest stone home in village
  - Applied for local landmark designation
  - HPC tries to bring positive recognition to Village
  - More recognition, potential revenue as people make this a destination
- 11.) Eric O'Neill  
79 Oakgrove Dr.
- Against historic district
  - Need to be balanced with common sense between need for historic preservation and balanced with local business
  - Consensus, less heavy handed
  - Community based

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- 12.) Cheryl Green  
Attorney for Business Owners at 5590 Main Street
- Oppose historic district as proposed
  - Client is respectful of process
  - The process for a business owner to do anything become exceedingly cumbersome
  - Changes substantially when encumbered by an historic preservation district
  - Hampered economically
  - All alterations/changes must then be approved by SHPO, Dept. of Interior
  - People will not be flooding into Williamsville because of district
  - Bad for business, bad for community
  - Not good to broad brush an entire district without giving extensive, thoughtful consideration.
  - Allowing for a voice of many in the community without any type of fiat

- 13.) Ray Herman  
114 Oakgrove Dr.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Generation resident
  - Family previously owned 5590 Main St.
  - Does not think there should be a district unless there is a business consensus
  - Use to be a row of Elm trees and a side porch that blocked the view of the Mill
  - Historically there was no view of the Mill from Main Street
  - Moor Pat building has been greatly altered (used to be Uncle's veterinary office)
  - Buildings change and adapt
  - Do not rush
  - Many buildings are not historic

*(Catherine Waterman-Kulpa sked Ray Herman if he could submit photos showing the elm trees and side porch.)*

- 14.) Joe Salteri  
23 Rinewalt
- Property is mixed use – a blessing and a curse
  - Supports district and supports committee
  - Compared to other villages – Oakfield, Canada, Lilydale, Ellicottville
  - Need a system of checks & balances

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- 15.) Bob Shabala  
122 S. Cayuga Rd.
- Protect historic districts & properties
  - Enhance the attractiveness to visitors, support & stimulate economy
  - Does not feel that HPC is doing this
- 16.) Chad Schlee  
Owner of 15 Rock Street (listed as 15 E. Spring St.)
- Small business owner
  - Could not survive with all these changes that could take place
  - His building is not historic
  - Opposed to the District
  - Work together
  - More meetings, more communications
  - More involvement
  - Walks the village. Loves it
  - Take time. Involve business owners and residents

On motion to continue the public hearing at 6:00pm on Tuesday October 25, 2022 by Susan Fenster, seconded by Catherine Waterman-Kulpa.

Motion passes 5-0

# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

Public Hearing

September 27, 2022 @ 6pm



# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## Why we are here tonight?

- At the last meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission, the Commission voted to initiate the proposed designation of a Williamsville Water Mill Historic District.
- Per the process, the Historic Preservation Commission holds a public meeting to give the public opportunity to **present testimony or documentary evidence** that will become part of the record regarding the **historic, architectural, or cultural importance of the proposed historic district.**
- After the public hearing, the HPC determines whether or not to send the nomination to the Village Board for consideration.



# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## **Public Meeting Rules:**

- Comments can be submitted in writing until the closing of the public hearing.
- Comments can be made in person by signing in, when called to speak state your testimony or documentary evidence regarding the historic, architectural, or cultural importance of the proposed historic district.
- Speakers are limited to 3 minutes each.

Thank you for participating!

# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## **What is being proposed?**

Creating a Historic District which would include the 13 village properties:

1. 15 Rock Street
2. 42 East Sprint Street
3. 56 East Spring Street (Already a Local Landmark)
4. 60 East Spring Street (Already a Local Landmark)
5. 78 East Spring Street (Already a Local Landmark)
6. 80 East Spring Street (Already a Local Landmark)
7. 5570 Main Street
8. 5574 Main Street
9. 5578 Main Street (Already a Local Landmark)
10. 5586 Main Street
11. 5590 Main Street (Already a Local Landmark)
12. 5596 Main Street (Already a Local Landmark)
13. 5604 Main Street

# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

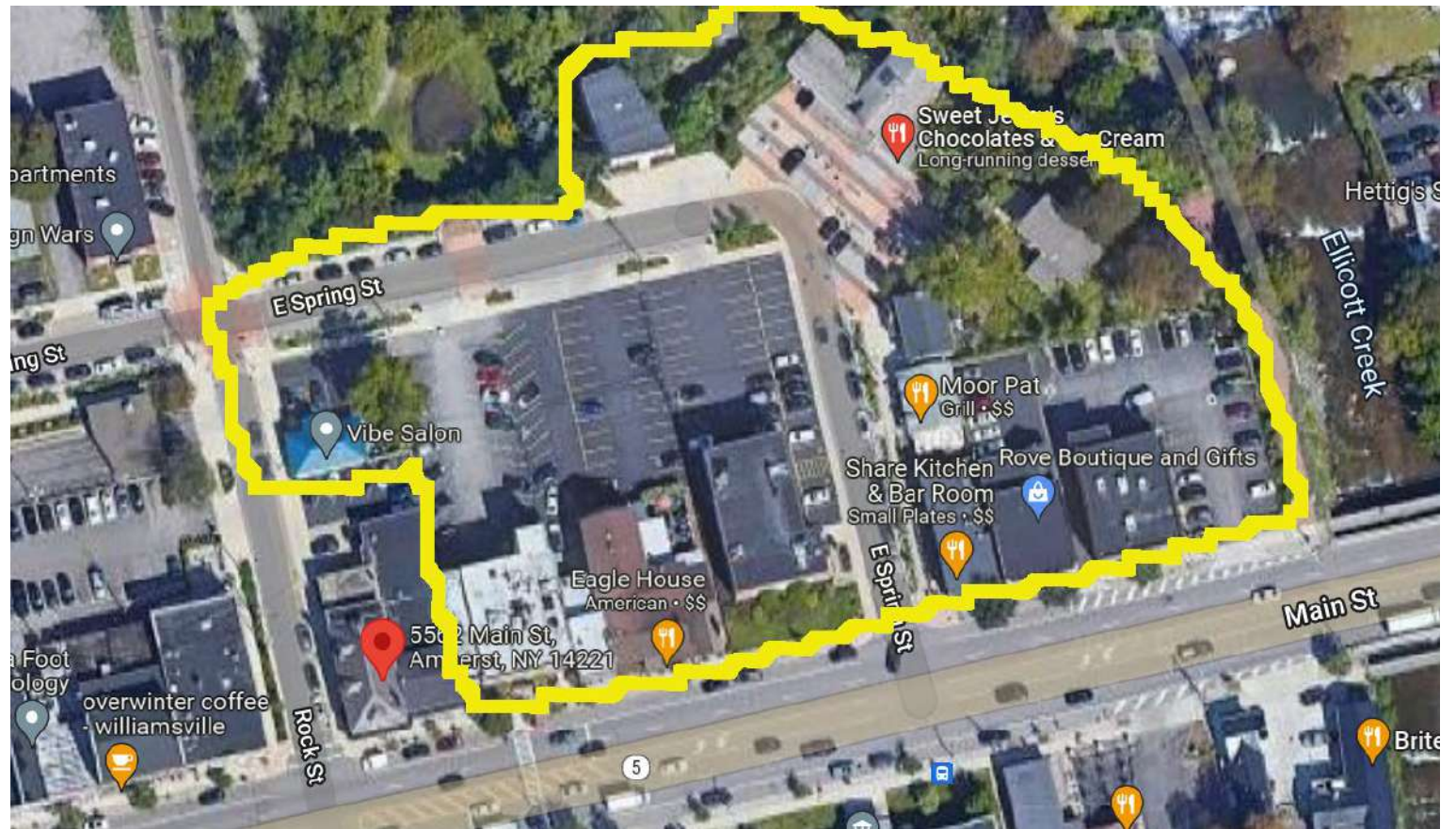
**What would the boundaries be?**

North – Glen Park

South – Main St

East – Glen Park

West – Reist St



# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## **Why were these properties chosen to be included?**

These 13 properties are all within the viewshed of the Mill property, are contiguous to each other, and surround the Williamsville Water Mill Complex.

# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## **Why focus on the Mill Complex?**

Eight of the thirteen properties are already Local Landmarks. This area is identified in the professional surveys the Village Board has commissioned by experts in the historic preservation field and deemed worthy of designation. The restored Williamsville Water Mill Complex is the most significant property that still stands in the Village of Williamsville today. An icon, the Williamsville Water Mill is the nucleus of the development of the Village, providing jobs and a source for building materials to the pioneers who settled adjacent to Ellicott Creek. This stately silhouette, visible from Main Street, Glen Park, and East Spring Street, the Mill represents the hopes and struggles of the community's earliest settlers.

# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## **Why are they significant?**

The majority of the properties that surround the 1811 Williamsville Water Mill Complex were built before anyone can remember differently. Properties have evolved, but the viewshed to the Water Mill has remained protected. Visible from Main Street for over 100 years, Main Street was the first manicured built path that crossed Ellicott Creek through what would become the Village of Williamsville. During the architectural colonialization of the village at the mid-point of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of the earliest culturally and architecturally significant buildings were demolished or modified to the Colonial style. The majority of the properties in this proposed district have been spared. This area of the village is a very good example of the oldest commercial building stock that remains today.

# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## **What time period were the majority of these building built?**

The majority of them were built between 1811 and 1949; the beginning of the Colonialization of Williamsville/ Amherst.

## **Why are dates important?**

To identify the Period of Significance. This is the length of time when a property or groups of properties were associated with important events, activates, or persons, or attained the characteristics that qualify them for historical designation.

**The proposed Period of Significance for the Williamsville Water Mill Historic District is be 1811 - 1949.**

# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District

## What Criteria is used to determine significance?

### From Village Code

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

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

**YES (1)** Contain properties which meet one or more of the criteria for designation as a landmark (see below) and which may have within its boundaries other properties or structures that, while not of such historic and/or architectural significance to be designated as landmarks, nevertheless contribute to the overall visual characteristics of the landmark or landmarks located within the historic district; and

**YES (2)** [\(2\)](#) Constitute a unique section of the Village by reason of possessing those qualities that would satisfy such criteria.



# Williamsville Water Mill Historic District



The Williamsville Water Mill is the icon of our historic village!