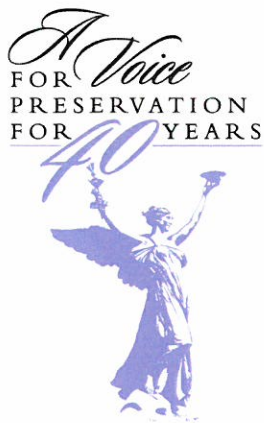


Saratoga Springs
Preservation Foundation

October 31, 2017



Mr. Steve Rowland, Chair
Design Review Commission
City Hall
474 Broadway
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

RE: 18 Cherry Street / 36 Marvin Alley – Construction residential condominium buildings.

Dear Mr. Rowland,

The Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation is pleased that the Planning Board requested an advisory opinion from the Design Review Commission for the application to construct three residential condominium buildings at 18 Cherry Street and 36 Marvin Street. The Foundation requested that an advisory opinion be sought in our letters dated April 10, 2017 to the Zoning Board of Appeals and July 20, 2017 to the Planning Board.

The Foundation is very pleased that the applicant has reduced the scale, mass, and height of their proposed structures, thus eliminating former concerns regarding the project's visibility from the adjacent Franklin Square Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Marvin Alley is one of the oldest named alleys in the City of Saratoga Springs and has been officially recognized by that name for over 165 years. It is named after the prominent Saratoga Springs' Marvin family.

The earliest alleys in the City date back to 1813, on property owned, platted, and sold by Henry Walton. Walton chose not to develop the property himself, but sold portions of his holdings to entrepreneurs such as Gideon Putnam and Dr. Samuel Freeman. While Gideon Putnam did not adopt Walton's alley pattern, Freeman did. He partnered with prominent resident James M. Marvin, the developer and resident of Franklin Square.¹ Marvin laid out an alley to the west of Franklin Street that he named for his family prior to 1850.

Thomas J. Marvin purchased the lot on Franklin Square and the United States Hotel in 1830. Two years later he constructed the prominent Greek Revival house at 4 Franklin Square that remains today. Thomas Marvin was a lawyer who served as justice of the peace in Saratoga Springs, county court judge, and as a member of the State Assembly. He was also appointed postmaster by President Tyler and President Polk.

James M. Marvin built his Greek Revival home at 3 Franklin Square in 1836. James and his brother were the proprietors of the United States Hotel and oversaw its management until it was destroyed by fire in 1865. James and Thomas together established the first bank in Saratoga, the Bank of Saratoga Springs, in 1841. James also was the director of the Saratoga and Schenectady Railroad, town supervisor of Saratoga Springs, assemblyman, and congressman. As congressman, he advocated for the abolition of slavery. Marvin Alley served as the rear access or service road not only for the Thomas J. Marvin House, but also for the United States Hotel accessory buildings.

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The Marvin brothers were prominent residents who contributed to the development of Franklin Square, the oldest residential neighborhood of Saratoga Springs. Marvin Alley is part of the Franklin Square Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Marvin Alley is immediately adjacent to the site of the proposed new development.

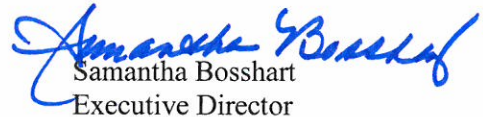
The Foundation is concerned about changing the character of this important historic alley. The applicant proposes that the primary façade face the alley and introduces sidewalks to the alley, which historically have not existed. According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, an alley is defined as a thoroughfare through the middle of a block giving access to the rear of lots or buildings. To remain in character with this significant historic alley, the rear of the building and the garage entrances should face the alley and sidewalks should not be introduced.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Matthew E. Veitch
President



Samantha Bosshart
Executive Director

Cc: Anthony Maney, Applicant
Bradley Birge, Administrator of Planning and Economic Development
Mark Torpey, Chair – Planning Board
Kate Maynard, Principal Planner
Bill Moore, Chair – Zoning Board of Appeals
Susan Barden, Senior Planner

ⁱTheodore Corbett, "The Making of American Resorts." copyright 2001 references Saratoga County Clerk Ballston Spa. S.R. Ostrander Map of property at Saratoga Springs NY, owned by S. Freeman, 1841, copied by Theodore C. Hails, 1923; and Plan of Part of the Village of Saratoga Springs Showing Property Owned by J.M. Marvin and Others, 1867.