

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – November 19, 2024, UREC Board Meeting**

### **Rezoning of Properties – Approved by full Albany Common Council – from RT to MUNE**

**Conditional Use Permit** – is pending completion of SEQR which is dependent upon the NYS Preservation Officer's review of the archeology investigation that is now required per the NYS Preservation Officer

**Alleyway purchase** – Brett Williams, Corporation Council for Albany, reported that Albany Common Council will vote on 11.18.24 whether or not to send the alleyway purchase on to the Common Council Finance Committee.

**Area Variance** needed - The IC has a greater setback from the property line than is allowed in the zoning regulations. The greater setback is needed to allow for the rain gardens to handle stormwater control, to keep the height of the building within visual scale of the surrounding buildings, and to allow for educational activities at the front of the building in the brick paver areas. This requires a \$250 permit fee and a planning board meeting resolution that will likely be **scheduled at the November 6 meeting at 200 Henry Johnson Blvd. - Fl.2 meeting room.** – **Variance was passed.**

**Gardens – Elkins, Abraham Johnson, Shade** – including raised beds on Livingston and 3<sup>rd</sup> street – **are dismantled**

**FreedomCon 2024** – concluded for 2024. Brought in \$3500. Service of presenters was a donation to UREC.

Three supporters have included UREC in their **estate plans**

### **Upcoming Events (Please see UREC Events Calendar for details):**

- **Please check the UREC Events calendar at <https://undergroundrailroadhistory.org/events/>** for detailed information on the numerous events going on this and every month
- **December Dash** will be on beginning December 1
- **12/02** – conversation with Palace and Capital Rep / Proctors staff re: collaborating on parking lot usage at 833 Broadway
- **12/05** – roundtable conversation with folks from NYS, Underground Railroad Consortium of NYS, and North Country Slavery Collective re: Freedom 2027: New York State's Emancipation Bicentennial
- **12/11** – Collections Committee
- **12/18** – Job fair for IC construction
- **12/04, 12/11, 12/18** = UGRR presentations by Paul Stewart

### **Interpretive Center funding –**

- **Pomeroy Foundation** – Awaiting response RE: Special Interest application submitted December 15 – interested in Naming Rights – requested \$150,000 – **Asked to request again in June 2024** – awaiting response
- **EPA Community Challenge Grant** – collaborative effort with 9 other non-profits. Requesting \$4mil – application submitted, awaiting response
- **Overit Media** – attempting to connect – no progress to date
- **ESD – Requested \$2mil** – withdrew submission, will resubmit with revised budget and request or **\$4mil** before Nov. 29
- **CIF** – will consider submitting in 2025
- **NYSICA 2025 Capital Grants** – FY25 guidelines are out – will apply for \$3.3 million
- **DEC** – Community Environmental ed Ctr capital money – will apply for \$3 million
- **\$150,000** – sadly, this new funding is coming from Pat Fahy via NYSED

### **Two other construction project –**

- (1) **Front Entryway** - - we are closing in on the front entryway being restored with sandstone steps, wrought iron scroll railings, vestibule floorboards refinished, proper drainage installed, brick side walls for stairway, and restored entryway to basement

**(2) Interior restoration** – we are working with Thayer, Reilly, Wilson, Albany based architects, on predevelopment aspects of the interior restoration of The Myers Residence. During the week of November 18 The Myers Residence will need to be closed so as to allow architects to open up spaces in the house that are currently hidden by rugs and plastic and such things.

#### Operations –

- **NYSED \$150,000** – STILL pursuing release of 2023 funds from NYSED to UREC
- **NYSICA** – requested \$49,500 for a community art project – application pending
- **IMLS grant** – requested permission from Charles Touhey to use \$33,000 of Carl E. Touhey annual funding to apply as match to IMLS award – Permission given
- **New PR staff person** is Carol Durance, an incredibly great fit for UREC
- **Office of Cannabis Mgmt** - \$100,000 grants awarded “In the 2024-2025 grant cycle, OCM and the CAB aim to support organizations serving youth, defined as individuals ages 0-24 years old, in designated priority geographies and within communities that faced harms associated with prior drug policies, disproportionate enforcement, and incarceration. In supporting youth, OCM and the CAB are accepting applications that address three specific program areas: Mental Health, Housing, and Workforce Development.”

#### Program –

- **YALI Afterschool** – had to reach out to an Albany School District Board member, who in turn reached out to the District Superintendent and the AHS principal re: getting the MOU in place so that YALI can be conducted at AHS – matter is pending
- **Girls Scouts** don't have the capacity to support a troop at The Residence at this time
- **ASO** – collaborating on Water Music programs 2024 and again in 2025
- **Museum Studies Teen Program** planning and recruitment now through August with launch in September 2024
- **Over the Edge urban rappelling event – April 23-24, 2025** – intention is to net \$120,000 (gross \$150,000) through rappeler pledges and sponsorships – all board members will be asked to take a role in this event. It is already generating excitement. More details will be coming as soon as a building in downtown Albany is confirmed.
- **Collaborating with 518 Elevated** on teen programming
- **Collaborating with MiSci** on a Star Show
- **Intern – Tazmira Sultana** – researching comparison between social events in US and social events in India in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century – will be producing a blog on her results
- **Trauma-Informed Training** – offered by Youth FX – Marcus, Lacey and Amelia will participate
- **Working through the city's YEP process** so that we can have two teens from YALI 2025 work with us on Fridays
- **Founders Tour** being designed
- **Branding** – designing a brand so as to have consistency across all platforms and formats, especially in relationship to literature, fliers, social media

#### By the Numbers (from September 18-October 14, 2024)

- **Members** – 467 (Up from 450 in September); 5 international
- **Social Media** followers – 7800
- **Volunteers** – 5 fund development; 2 administration; 1 grant writer
- **Speaking Engagements + Number of Attendees** – 3 events + 145 attendees
- **Constant Contact** – 3228 contacts (up from 3222 in Sept.) with a 38% open rate (up from 36% in Sept.)
- **Tourists / Event visitors** – 300, up from 173 in September