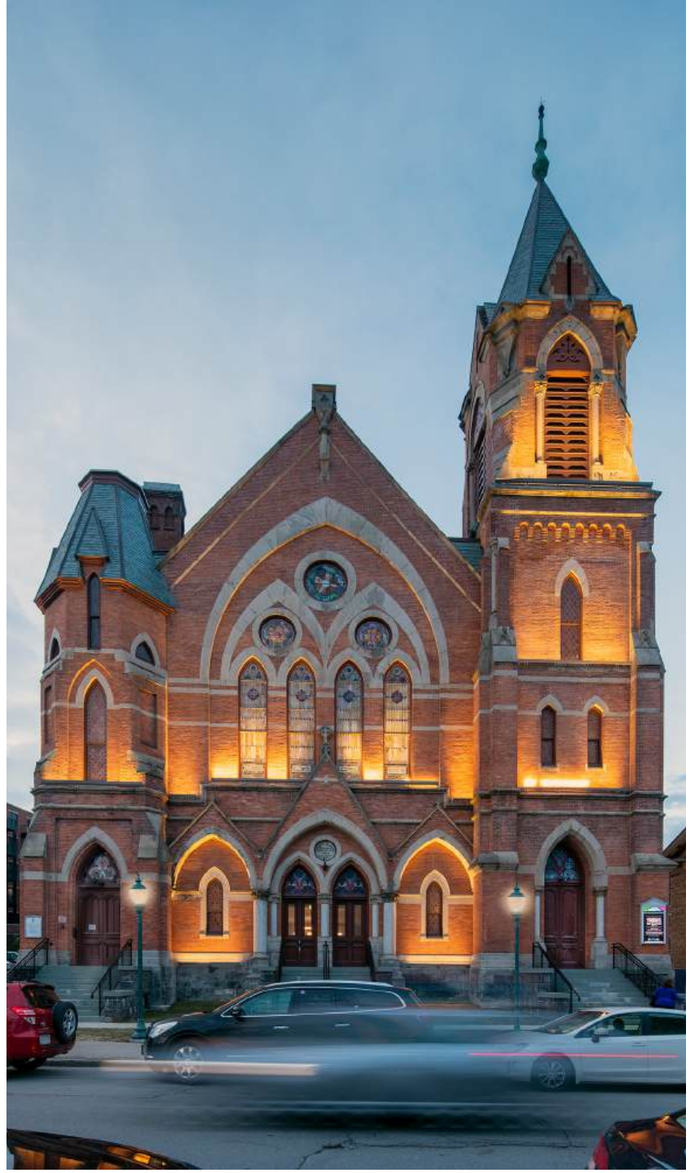


Thaler Reilly Wilson

Architecture & Preservation, LLP

Cultural Arts

Cultural and performing arts projects let architects shape how people gather, feel, and experience something larger than themselves. Working with historic buildings makes that even more rewarding, and adaptive reuse may be its richest expression. Transforming a shuttered warehouse, old factory, or former bank into a theater, gallery, or concert venue gives a structure a second life while preserving the memory and craft woven into its walls.

We love listening to an existing building, reading its original intent, and finding ways to introduce modern acoustics, accessibility, and technology without erasing its character. The raw volumes and honest materials of these spaces often inspire a more powerful performance or exhibition than new construction could.

These projects become civic anchors that revitalize neighborhoods and embody a sustainable ethic of reusing what already exists. Collaborating with artists, curators, and preservationists, we treat architecture as part of the creative act, designing not only for function, but for wonder.

UNIVERSAL PRESERVATION HALL

Restoration, Renovation | Adaptive Reuse
Saratoga Springs, NY

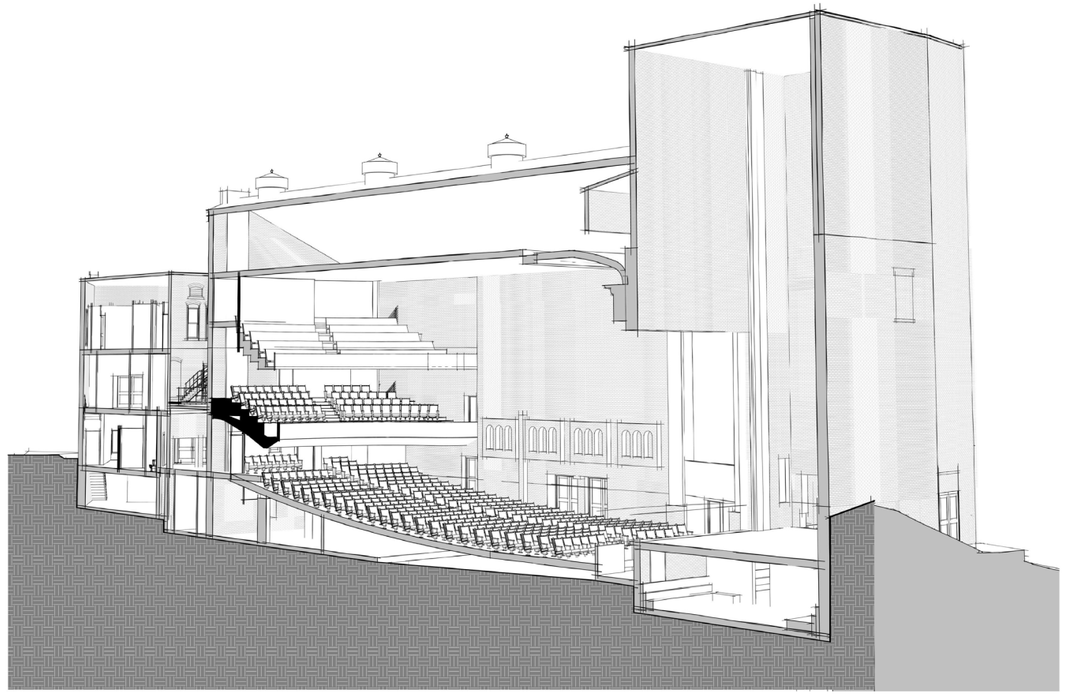
Elbridge Boyden designed the Hall in 1871 for the Methodist church to host their annual regional meeting. In 1976 the Methodists sold the building to the Universal Baptist Church, who occupied it until the building's deteriorating state made it unsafe. In 1999 citizens of Saratoga Springs joined with members of the Baptist Church to rescue the Universal Preservation Hall from collapse.

Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation recently completed the exterior restoration and interior renovation of the building and the design of an entry lobby addition. UPH was awarded grants from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation and the New York Landmarks Conservancy Sacred Sites Program. We also assisted in securing a Technical Assistance Grant from the Preservation League of New York State for preparation of an accessibility study which was completed in 2014 and a 2015 grant from the Empire State Development Corporation. In addition TRW provided assistance in securing over $3.6 Million in state and federal Historic Tax Credits to offset the construction costs.

Additional work has included assessment of the existing conditions, complete measured drawings of the building and site, a code analysis and programming study for the interior renovations, detailed exterior restoration of the masonry and roofs, construction documents, construction administration and a model of the entry addition.

Now complete, this former church now functions as a premiere professional performance venue for the region.

This project was awarded a 2021 Excellence in Preservation Award by the Preservation League of New York State and a 2022 AIA Eastern NY Design Award.



ONEONTA THEATRE

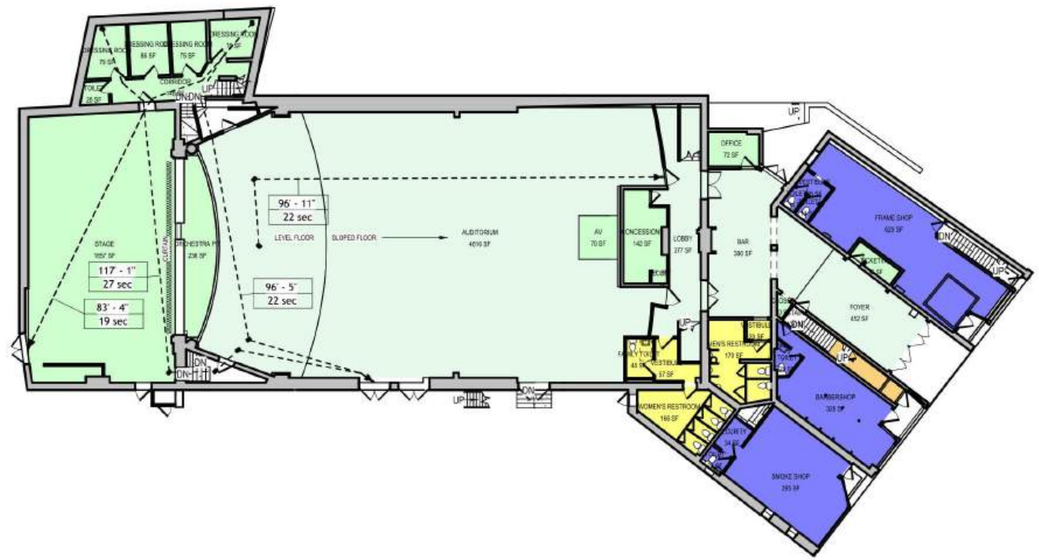
Masterplan
Oneonta, NY

Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation is currently working on a Masterplan to restore the historic Oneonta Theatre in Oneonta, NY.

Constructed in 1897 as a vaudeville house, the building originally had a capacity of 1,125 seats and included two balcony levels. In 1920, the building was enlarged with the construction of a new stage, fly, and dressing rooms and seating was increased to 1,500 seats. In 1922, the Schine Theatrical Corporation purchased the building and converted it for use as a movie house. Significant interior renovations were carried out and air-conditioning was added.

In the 1970s, a second floor was added at the rear of the auditorium enclosing the two balconies to create a second cinema. However, the building soon fell out of use. Many of the auditorium seats were removed and with lack of maintenance the building suffered significant water damage and deterioration of interior finishes.

New owners are intent on restoring the Oneonta Theatre to its former glory. We conducted a thorough Building Conditions Study which detailed all of the existing conditions and problems of repair and the Master Plan envisions restoration of the exterior envelope; restoration of the auditorium including the removal of the second floor cinema; restoration of interior finishes; new seating; all new building and theatrical systems; and an addition to provide new dressing rooms and rehearsal space.



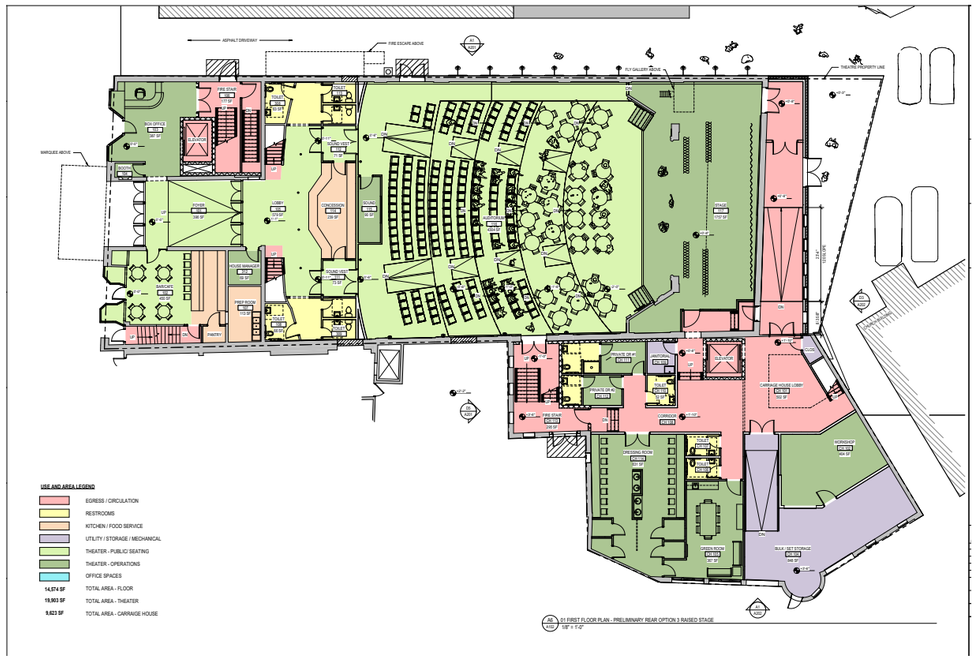
THE GLOVE THEATRE

Masterplan | Restoration | Rehabilitation
Gloversville, NY

Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation recently completed a Master Plan and early design work for the restoration of the historic Glove Theatre in downtown Gloversville, New York. Originally designed as a vaudeville and civic venue, the theater opened in 1914, and in 1920 it became the flagship location of a 5-state chain of theaters operated by the Schine Theatrical Corporation. An overhaul by renowned theater designer John Eberson established its striking Art-Deco style, prominent aspects of which are visible today.

Intervening years saw the Glove's fortune follow that of greater Gloversville, which struggled as the local leather industry declined. In 1995 it was saved from demolition by community members, and in 2022 it was awarded monies from a DRI grant, later supplemented with funds from the Restore New York Program.

TRW was selected to design the project and oversee its restoration, including future fundraising efforts to acquire the necessary budget for a complete restoration. This entailed a careful prioritization of different phases of assessment, planning, and design. We are currently engaged in phase 1 of the work.



CAROGA ARTS COLLECTIVE

Masterplan | New Construction | Renovation
Caroga Lake, NY

Thaler Reilly Wilson recently completed a master plan for the new Caroga Arts Collective Amphitheatre project which includes the adaptation of the former Sherman's Amusement Park site and nearby Shine property into a première outdoor multi-use performance space on the Caroga Lake waterfront.

Included in the scope is the design of a new outdoor performance hall approximately 47,000 gross cubic feet in size which will include a main stage area and an attached building wing with two green rooms, a sound control room, one utility room, and one storage room to store a grand piano. The masterplan includes the restoration and adaptive reuse of the existing Main Building to provide ancillary space to the performance area and event spaces to further the mission of the Caroga Arts Collective.

We worked with our sub-consultants to review the site as a whole to provide a flexible holistic approach to site utilization. How the amphitheatre and seating are best located on the site; location of amenities and support functions such as load-in, and emergency vehicle access; patron and performer restrooms; acoustics; and theatrical support were considered. Additional functions which were considered include rental pavilions, playgrounds, film viewings, a farmers' market, outdoor classroom space, and creating a nostalgic carnival atmosphere. The historic Ferris wheel will also be relocated on the site.

Additionally, we prepared a Feasibility Study for the 1921 Main Building located on the grounds. Begun as a public beach, restaurant, and dance hall, the building was enlarged over the years and became the centerpiece of Sherman's Amusement Park, a landmark destination in the southern Adirondacks which operated for over 50 years. Understanding how the Main Building can be utilized to meet the programmatic needs of the masterplan was a crucial first step. Various alternatives for building use including green rooms, dressing rooms, music practice space, public restrooms, dining and banquet space, meeting space, and other uses were determined after discussion with Caroga Arts Collective. Additionally, a Building Code analysis and an illustrated report was provided.

On the nearby MyHil site, once the home of the Schine family which operated numerous movie theaters across the region, TRW developed a masterplan for that site which includes visiting artist housing and rehearsal space, an education center, and artist cabins.

The stage house on the Sherman's property and the artist housing at MyHil are currently under construction.

COHOES MUSIC HALL

Building Condition Report | Exterior Restoration
Cohoes, NY

Thaler Reilly Wilson recently prepared a Building Conditions Report for the Cohoes Music Hall, a vintage performance hall four-story and the fourth oldest operating music hall. It was built in 1874. In 1971 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places and continues to house music and theatrical performances as well as a visitor center for the city.

The Building Condition Report provided:

- A thorough analysis of the current problems of repair, including:
- Examination of the roof, sheet metal mansard, brick masonry, windows, and doors
- Examination of the stone foundation and brick chimneys
- Examination of the building structure, including the heavy timber and iron trusses in the attic
- Examination of all interior finishes, including the decoratively painted ceiling within the theater space
- Assessment of the programmatic support spaces and functions within the building
- Assessment of existing HVAC, electrical, lighting, fire alarm, plumbing, and sprinkler systems
- Review of accessibility
- Preliminary Building Code Review
- Recommendations for Repairs, Restoration, and Alterations
- All recommendations will be prioritized and historically appropriate solutions identified for all Problems of Repair.
- Cost estimate for recommended work

Subsequently, TRW assisted the City of Cohoes is securing over $2Million in grant funding. We then prepared construction documents for the exterior restoration of the building including masonry repairs, reconstruction of a missing chimney, window restoration, and the restoration of the membrane roof and sheet metal mansard roof.

TROY SAVINGS BANK MUSIC HALL

Renovation | Adaptive Reuse
Troy, NY

Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation recently completed design work for the comprehensive renovation and adaptive reuse of the first floor and basement levels of the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. The Troy Savings Bank operated from smaller banking offices until 1870 when the Board of Trustees decided to move its offices to a new location. To give back to the people of Troy, architect George Browne Post included plans for a music hall on the upper floor.

The first floor has gone through several iterations as a banking level since the 1870s. However, this project would convert the former banking level into a second performance and rehearsal space that can accommodate a 100-person orchestra. The plan would restore original features of the building which have been lost and transform former banking areas into music classrooms, rehearsal areas, and needed support space for the world-renowned Music Hall.

To complete this project, extensive programming and schematic designs of the revised floors have been developed. Additional features of the design include renovations to the music hall annex and returning the Second Street facade to its original grand stair entrance. Design work was carefully coordinated with both mechanical and acoustical engineers as to not disturb the upper floor music hall which is world renowned for its acoustics.

KLINKHART HALL ARTS CENTER

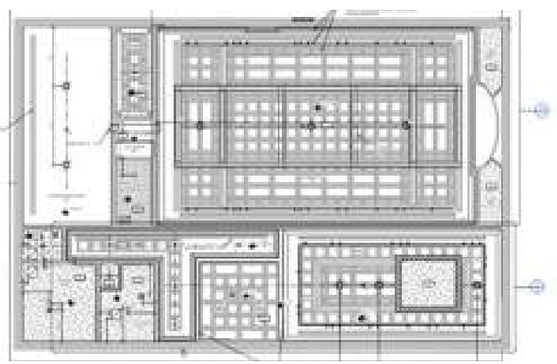
Adaptive Reuse
Sharon Springs, NY

Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation, LLP was retained by the Klinkhart Hall Arts Center, Inc. to evaluate Klinkhart Hall, an 1885 commercial building designed by a Cobleskill Architecture Firm Roberts & Sons. The building includes a second floor Masonic Lodge and a 1920's movie cinema on the first floor. The building will be adaptively reused to provide a performing arts theater, meeting spaces, gallery space and support functions.

As the client is a Not-for-Profit with limited funding, it was decided to break up the initial planning work as grant funding became available. The first task was the preparation of an Building Condition Report which documented all of the building's problems of repair and identified immediate work needed to stabilize the long vacant structure.

Subsequently, we prepared a Feasibility Study which developed a building program and concept plans of how the building could be transformed into an Arts Center. This was followed by a cost estimate which identified costs for 5 phases of work to get to project completion.

Provided with this information, Klinkhart Hall was successful in obtaining $720,000 in NYS grant funding toward the first phase of the project in order for the facility to once again serve a vital role in the communal life of Sharon Springs.



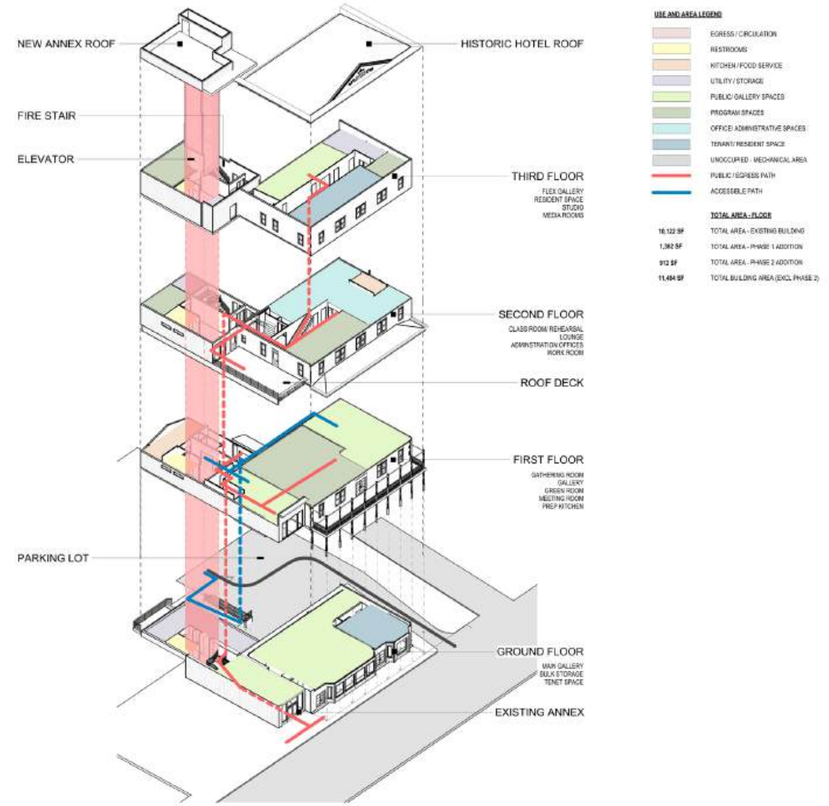
DELAWARE VALLEY ARTS ALLIANCE

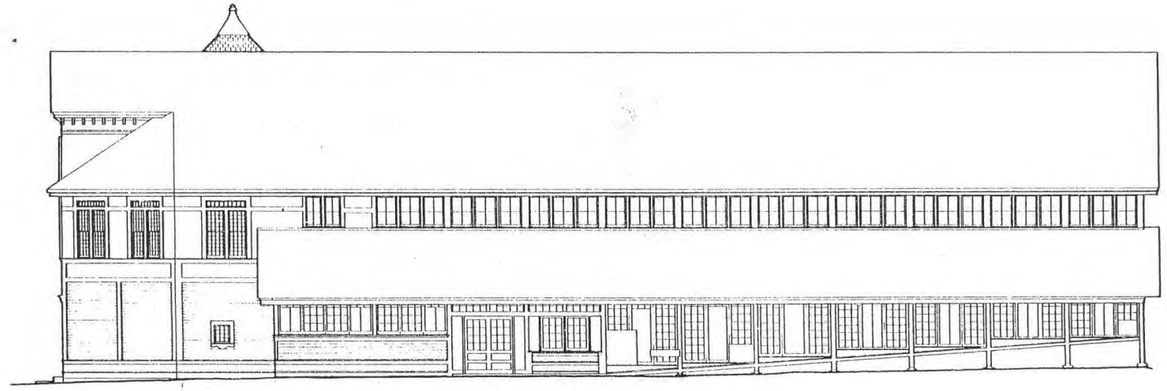
Historic Structure Report | Schematic Design
Narrowsburg, NY

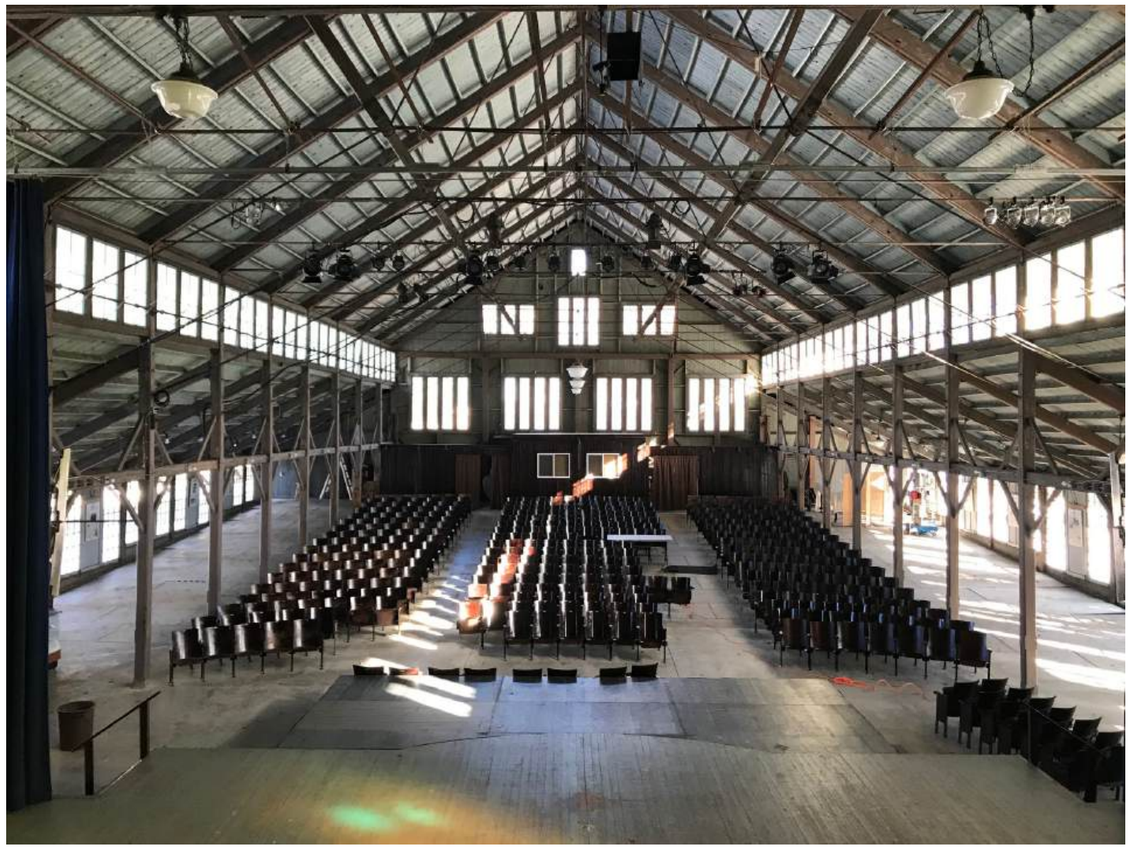
Thaler Reilly Wilson was recently contracted to provide a Historic Structure Report for the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance (DVAA) of the 1894 former Arlington Hotel that the alliance occupies in downtown Narrowsburg, NY. This is the first step in the planning process for rehabilitating the former Arlington Hotel.

The building is a four-story wooden structure that needs significant renovation, improvement and modernization. Currently DVAA occupies the two lower of four floors for program and administration. Floors 3 and 4 are vacant and will be built out for programming needs. The current two occupied floors will need to be brought up to current code requirements.

Following a Historic Structure Report, TRW will also provide schematic design drawings, a Scope of Work narrative, hazardous materials survey and an updated cost estimate to restore and rehabilitate this former hotel in Sullivan County, NY.





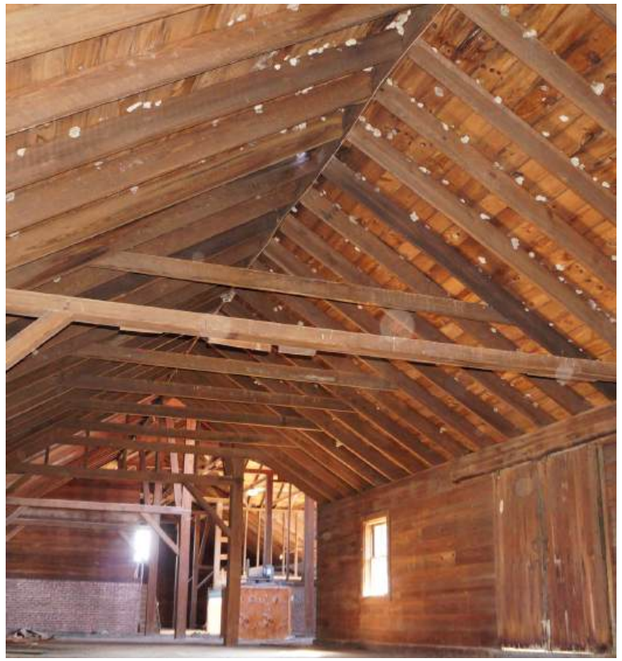


ROUND LAKE AUDITORIUM

Structural Analysis | Masterplan
Round Lake, NY

Thaler Reilly Wilson recently began the creation and development of a master plan for the historic preservation of the Round Lake Auditorium and the 170 year old Davis Ferris Tracker Organ, a National Historic Landmark housed within. The plan will include consideration of the historic nature and character of the Village and the auditorium's role at the center of the Village.

The Plan will set forth comprehensive, measurable and incremental goals to provide for the preservation, restoration, maintenance, and usage of the Auditorium as well as the historic organ.



KAATSBAAN MUSIC BARN

Feasibility Study | Concept Report
Tivoli, NY

Kaatsbaan International Dance Center is situated on 153 acres of land, formerly part of a vast farm property owned by the Livingston family in Tivoli, NY.

Two of the original structures on the site are the caretaker's residence and his original barn, referred to as the "Music Barn" by the family for the remarkable variety of sounds from the livestock residing within. Both structures were designed by Stanford White and were constructed in the 1890s.

TRW was engaged to assist Kaatsbaan in procuring a PreserveNY Grant from the Preservation League of New York State. We facilitated planning and programming discussions between Kaatsbaan, PLNYS and New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and completed a feasibility study and concept report for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the barn that meets the intent of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The next phase of the work will be to design a visitor reception area, shops, and 10,000 square feet of art, dance and exhibition galleries within the barn. In addition, there will be curatorial-level storage and handling spaces for protection and potential conservation of Kaatsbaan's art collection. The Music Barn will become the new hub of the center's site, which is a unique collaboration between dance, historic preservation and environmental conservation.

Kaatsbaan is developing only 18 of its 153 acres. Land conservation will protect the remaining 135 acres of hay fields, woodlands and scenic views the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains.

ALUMNAE CHAPEL - EMMA WILLARD SCHOOL

Adaptive Reuse
Troy, NY

Emma Hart Willard was a lifelong advocate and champion for women's education. While teaching at other finishing schools for young women, Emma Willard perceived the egregious disparity in what girls learned compared to boys, so in 1821, she ultimately established the Troy Female Seminary in the growing industrial and trade center of Troy, New York, where she remained head of the Seminary until 1838.

Along with Slocum and Sage, Alumnae Chapel is one of the original three buildings on campus, this Gothic Revival was initially built as a gymnasium. Reflecting the building's purpose, the gargoyles golf, bowl, and display other sporting activities.

In 2025 TRW worked with Annum Architects, focusing on preservation of the 108 original leaded glass windows and exterior stonework. This started with a survey of all leaded glass windows, associated operating hardware and the immediate sash/casing/trim from scaffolding at the exterior and from ladders at the interior. This provided the basis to build on an existing window schedule, with performance specification repair notes addressing the type, severity and quantity of deterioration. The restored windows actually played a small but calculable role in the acoustic background of the space.

The project was completed in mid-2026 and has won numerous awards for innovation in adaptive reuse of the building.