

Media Release

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HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE PLANS MAIN STREET EXPANSION

Saranac Lake, NY, April 25, 2018 — The Board of Directors of Historic Saranac Lake (HSL) has announced a plan to pursue acquisition and redevelopment of the former Trudeau home and medical offices at 118 Main Street. The initial conceptual design is to restore the historic integrity of the building's exterior. The entry level will host museum exhibits, collections storage, and a museum store that will expand upon HSL's existing exhibits at the Saranac Laboratory Museum. Additional possibilities for the first floor include public space for arts and cultural events, and office space. The second floor will host unique apartments to complement the historic location.

As this is a transformative project that will bring new economic and cultural activity to Main Street, Historic Saranac Lake will apply for state funding through the Village's Downtown Revitalization Initiative. "This is an exciting opportunity for us to contribute to the revitalization of downtown and preserve an important historic building," said Executive Director Amy Catania. "We are grateful for the willingness of the owners to work with us to make this happen."

HSL is negotiating a purchase agreement with the owners of the building and is contracting with an architect to refine plans. In order to leverage state funding, HSL is seeking pledges of support for the project. "We have had great early success in the campaign" said Catania. "In just the first few days of the campaign, several donors have already come forward with very generous pledges."

HSL Board President Brandon Campbell expressed the Board's excitement about the project. "The more we look at the building, the more we feel it aligns with its new planned usage. For example, the entire first floor museum space is already handicap accessible and adding residential and office rental spaces will help sustain building operations." Campbell, who is a financial planner and architect, said, "It's an impressive building in great condition and we are confident that this is the right thing for us to do."

Built in 1894 after a fire consumed Dr. E. L. Trudeau's first home, the over 5,000 square-foot building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Trudeau's cousin, J. Lawrence Aspinwall, designed the Colonial Revival residence. The Saranac Laboratory, also designed by

Aspinwall, was built the same year next door to the residence. Two more generations of Trudeau doctors and their associates continued to use the house for medical offices. Medical Associates closed their practice in the building in December of 2017. Until then, the building was the oldest medical facility in continuous use within the blue line.

Since acquiring the neighboring Saranac Laboratory as a donation from the Dorothy and Jay Federman in 1998, Historic Saranac Lake has successfully raised and invested approximately \$500,000 for the lab's restoration and reuse. HSL opened the laboratory as a museum in 2007. Visitorship has steadily increased, and HSL recently extended museum hours to be open year-round, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 to 5:00.

HSL plans to operate the Trudeau house and neighboring lab as an interactive museum campus interpreting Saranac Lake's rich history. "This project will serve as a catalyst for Saranac Lake's growing arts and culture economy. It will support the ongoing success of the newly reopened Hotel Saranac, next door," said Catania. "There are so many exciting things we will be able to do with more space, such as providing hands-on activities for children, presenting more aspects of our rich local history, and developing programs in partnership with Saranac Lake's arts community."

Dorothy Fobare, one of the founders of HSL who currently serves as a Board Member, is ready to get the word out. "Historic Saranac Lake has come a long way thanks to amazing community support," she said. "We are excited to share this plan with our members and donors, and we look forward to tackling this important project together."

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The E. L. Trudeau home and office, 118 Main Street, c. 1900.
Courtesy of the Adirondack Room of the Saranac Lake Free Library

