

Media Release

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Historic Saranac Lake awarded Smart Growth Grant

November 27, 2019 — Saranac Lake, NY Historic Saranac Lake has been awarded a Smart Growth grant from the State of New York Department of Environmental Conservation to support site plan design for their expanded museum campus in downtown Saranac Lake.

In 2019, Historic Saranac Lake acquired the Trudeau Building at 118 Main Street for expansion of their existing museum at the adjacent Saranac Laboratory building. The Smart Growth grant will support integrated site planning in order to create a museum campus that will promote Smart Growth principles and attract arts and culture tourism to the village of Saranac Lake.

Historic Saranac Lake Executive Director Amy Catania said, "Careful site plan design is important for this location because of its central location downtown, its historical importance, and the potential impact on the patterns of vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation. The site plan will create a seamless visitor experience by integrating the two buildings and the various exhibit spaces."

The grant of \$37,150 is one of numerous grants awarded to 27 communities and organizations throughout the Catskill and Adirondack Forest Preserves. The round of funding included a focus on projects to enhance age-friendly characteristics of Adirondack and Catskill communities by creating more livable communities for people of all ages.

"The magnificent natural resources of the Catskill and Adirondack Forest Preserves attract visitors and residents from around the world, and it is crucial that New York continues to invest in smart planning to ensure the environment and local economies are protected," Governor Andrew Cuomo said. "This round of smart growth grants will

help support a broad range of initiatives designed to build stronger, more livable communities throughout the Adirondack and Catskill Parks, and complement our ongoing efforts to make these regions world-class destinations.”

Recognizing the importance of Historic Saranac Lake’s museum expansion project, NY State has awarded the project two other major grants. A \$500,000 grant from the State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation is supporting the acquisition of the Trudeau building and rehabilitation of its exterior. The NY State Downtown Revitalization Initiative awarded the project a grant of \$325,000 to support the rehabilitation of the building’s interior. To-date, Historic Saranac Lake has secured approximately \$400,000 in additional grants and private support. Fundraising continues in order to meet the goal of \$3.5 million to support acquisition, rehabilitation, handicap accessibility, interactive museum exhibits, and the endowment fund.

This summer, Historic Saranac Lake contracted with Museum Planner Kate Cravens to create an overarching interpretive plan for both buildings. “We have made major progress in planning for the museum expansion,” said Board President Amy Jones. “The new space offers opportunities to not only tell the story of Trudeau and tuberculosis in Saranac Lake more in-depth, but also to present the rich broader history of the Saranac Lake region. For example, new exhibits will present stories from Paul Smiths, Bloomingdale, and Saranac Inn, for example, and will explore the history of such topics as logging, wilderness guides, winter sports, and more,” said Ms. Jones.

This winter, the architectural team for the project is creating the integrated site plan as well as the detailed schematic design to submit for approval by the State Office of Historic Preservation. Once plans are approved, building rehabilitation will begin in the summer of 2020.

“The community will be excited to see the building come back to its original grandeur,” said Catania. “We look forward to removing the vinyl siding and replacing it with wood clapboards in the original deep red color. The historic front portico entrance will be rebuilt. It’s going to be beautiful.”

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The home of Dr. E.L. Trudeau, c.1895. Courtesy of the Adirondack Room of the Saranac Lake Free Library