

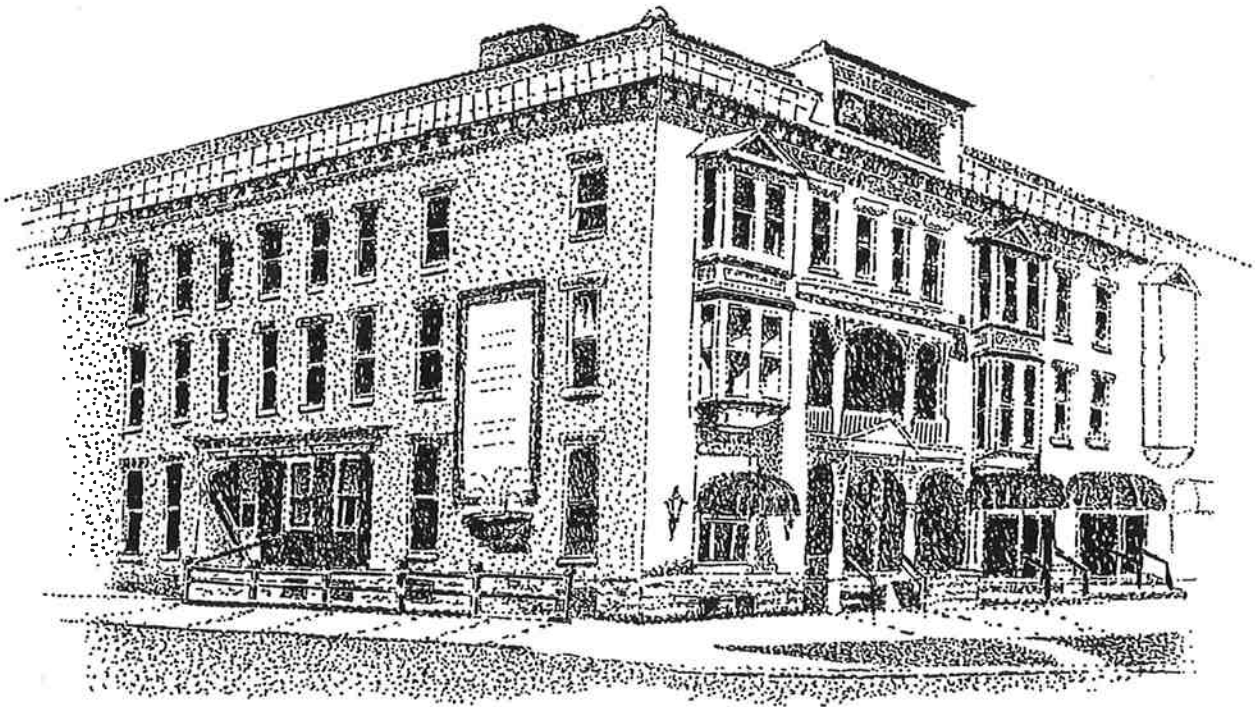


THE  
**FOUNTAIN**

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*Arts Center*

*A Place Where Creativity Flows*



# PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

NOTE: This sheet and a selected image will be sent to the Committee in advance.

Project Name Apartments at the Belmont Location Belmont, Allegany County, NY

Owner Belmont Apartments Associates LLC

Project Use(s) Mixed use residential and commercial; 19 apartments, cafe, banquet facility, art gallery, studio, retail rental

Project Size 39,000 sq. ft. Total Development Cost \$5,800,000.00

Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) \$89,500

Date Initiated November 1999 Percent Completed by December 1, 2010 \_\_\_\_\_

Project Completion Date (if appropriate) November 2009

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates \_\_\_\_\_

**Application submitted by:**

Name Wendy J. Skinner Title President

Organization The Fountain Arts Center, Inc.

Address 48 Schuyler St. City/State/Zip Belmont, NY 14813

Telephone ( 585 ) 268-5951 Fax ( 585 ) 268-5951

E-mail wjskinner@thefountainartscenter.org Weekend Contact Number (for notification): 585-808-5379

**Perspective Sheets:**

Organization	Name	Telephone/e-mail
Public Agencies <u>New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, &amp; Historic Preservation</u>	<u>Lynn LeFeber</u>	<u>716-354-2255 lynn.lefeber@oprhp.state.ny.us</u>
Architect/Designer <u>Glasow Simmons Architecture</u>	<u>Jason T. Simmons</u>	<u>585-246-4149 jason@glasowsimmons.com</u>
Developer <u>Edgemere Developers, Inc.</u>	<u>Stephanie Benson</u>	<u>585-325-1450 stephanie@edgemere.com</u>
Professional Consultant <u>Saralinda Hooker, Planning &amp; Development Consultant</u>	<u>Saralinda Hooker</u>	<u>585-394-5052 sh73sh73@yahoo.com</u>
Community Group <u>Village of Belmont Board of Trustees, Deputy Mayor</u>	<u>Raymond C. DeTine</u>	<u>585-268-5522 ax319@verizon.net</u>
Other <u>The Fountain Arts Center</u>	<u>Wendy Skinner</u>	<u>585-268-5951 wjskinner@thefountainartscente</u>

Please indicate how you learned of the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*. (Check all that apply).

Direct Mailing   
  Magazine Announcement   
  Previous Selection Committee member   
  Other (please specify)

Professional   
  Previous RBA entrant   
  Online Notice

Organization \_\_\_\_\_  Bruner/Loeb Forum   
 development company \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature *Wendy J. Skinner* Date 12.9.10

# PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

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NOTE: This sheet and a selected image will be sent to the Committee in advance.

Project Name	Apartments at the Belmont		
Address	5 Wells Lane/40-48 Schuyler St.	City/State/ZIP	Belmont, NY 14813

1. Give a brief overview of the project.

The renovation of the National Register Historic Landmark Belmont Hotel is a textbook example of a public-private-non-profit partnership. The property was created in 1890 as a private-sector response to economic opportunity inherent in a small county seat. It was a countywide landmark and social center for the next 70 years, and its physical deterioration between 1960 and 2000 mirrored the gradual loss of economic vitality in the rural upstate New York region and especially its small towns. The purchase in 2000 by the non-profit Fountain Arts Center and their staunch volunteer efforts over 6 years to save the building and make it a catalyst for the revival of downtown Belmont laid the foundation for the project. Their partnership in 2006 with Steuben Churchpeople Against Poverty, another non-profit, brought to the project a high level of expertise in affordable housing and social services with several decades of experience in several Southern Tier counties. With 2005 and 2006 Main Street and Environmental Protection funds, the tide began to turn for the project. The addition of Department of Housing and Community Renewal funding for residential renovations, and Rural Area Revitalization Program funding for the commercial renovations allowed the project to proceed, resulting in the creation of 19 affordable apartments in an area of severe need; creation of 3 handicapped-accessible apartments; adaptable units in a multi-family residential building; full use of a local landmark that was partially vacant for decades; significant increase in tax revenues for the Village, Town, and School District; new cultural facilities serving the population of Allegany County; and a demonstration project in the county seat showing that with proper collaboration and planning, the cultural arts, historic preservation, and residential development can revitalize a community.

2. Why does the project merit the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.)

The Apartments at The Belmont is an exemplary project merging a multitude of funding sources and meeting the highest standards of affordable housing, historic preservation, support for the arts, and community revitalization. The Belmont Hotel has both architectural and historic significance to Belmont and Allegany County, as is noted in its National Register nomination. Its condition in 2000 was a detriment to the future economic stability of the community. The two upper floors were vacant and deteriorating, portions of the building were covered with temporary enclosures, a rear wing was on the verge of collapse, and two-thirds of the first floor space was condemned. Although it was the physical centerpiece of Belmont, it was ear-marked by county legislation for demolition to create a parking lot. The successful revival of The Belmont has been an unmistakable shot in the arm for the community of just under 1000 residents. In the same way, Belmont, as the county seat plays a central leadership role among the towns of Allegany County, and this demonstration project to strengthen Belmont boosted the fortunes of this entire corner of the Southern Tier. Leveraged funds were used to create nineteen attractive and spacious affordable apartments for individuals and families, while renovating the first floor commercial spaces. This unique collaboration in a unique building in a unique community created workforce housing and cultural/commercial facilities to attract local artists to live and work. The Fountain Arts Center has completed the necessary renovations to expand its cultural offerings and fulfill its role as the Cultural Anchor of Belmont. The project has eliminated vacant storefronts and the blighting influence of the decaying rear wing of the structure and the boarded up windows. It has met the affordable housing needs for small families and persons with disabilities, providing some of the only wheelchair-accessible and elevator-equipped units in the area. The commercial/civic/cultural space created through the project is the best in downtown Belmont, enhancing the desirability of Belmont as a business and residential location. The project has been a sterling example of rural revitalization using the highest historic preservation standards required through Environmental Protection Fund administration. The highly visible location has brought long awaited new life to downtown Belmont.



*Corrado  
Room  
at the  
Fountain Arts  
Center*

*Apartments  
at the  
Belmont*



# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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1. Describe the underlying values and goals of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

The goal of The Fountain Arts Center in completing the Apartments at the Belmont project was to save a deteriorating building in the center of its village, which serves as the seat of Allegany County, and revive the sagging morale of a declining community. It hoped to do this by using cultural arts as the catalyst to spark imagination and raise awareness of the possibilities of using art as an economic development tool in a rural area. As a tiny newly-formed non-profit organization with a 100% volunteer operation, it purchased the building in 2000, and waged a valiant battle to introduce art programs, classes, exhibits, and arts opportunities in the village, while making strategic plans for rehabilitation of the structure. Six years into the project, with minimal funds available for renovations, the Fountain Arts Center partnered with Steuben Churchpeople Against Poverty (now Arbor Development) to bring a higher level of expertise to the project. In the significant trade-off of forming the partnership, The Fountain Arts Center relinquished its ownership of the building to the partnership, and signed a master lease with the managing partner. The Fountain Arts Center traded-off its concepts of artist studio/lofts throughout the building for affordable housing models, ultimately creating residential space on the upper floors, and commercial arts spaces in the street level first floor spaces. Although relinquishing control of the site was difficult at first for the arts center, the rewards in the funding sources it opened up for the project, the level of professionalism with which the reconstruction was planned and completed, and the award-winning results of the rehabilitation, made it an extremely worthwhile compromise. The Fountain Arts Center was included in all phases of development, decision-making, and trade-off discussions, especially when it involved melding the requirements of various funding sources into a cohesive package both structurally and programmatically. For example, Housing and Community Renewal funds carried their own construction requirements for cost, materials, and energy efficiency, which did not always line up with Historic Preservation funding sources to preserve and reuse as much as the original fabric of the building as possible. The spirit of cooperation and collaboration, though frustrated and challenged at times, prevailed to successfully create a project that would eventually receive local, county, state, and national awards and recognition.

2. Briefly describe the project's urban context. How has the project impacted the local community? Who does the project serve? How many people are served by the project?

The Apartments at the Belmont structure is the physical centerpiece of Belmont. It also occupies a place of prominence in front of the county offices situated in Belmont. Its successful revival has created nineteen spacious, attractive apartments to meet the severe affordable housing need in the area; it has provided 3 handicapped-accessible apartments, and 15 adaptable units to the multi-family residential building; it is one of the few structures with an elevator. As an eyesore that was rapidly deteriorating and collapsing, the project transformed it from a critical safety hazard in the center of the village to a fully-occupied and operational building. The residential units have brought to Belmont 19 new families who live, work, shop, do business, and play. The newly-opened arts-oriented cafe, banquet facility, and gallery have become the popular elegant place to hold parties, events, and seminars, and to enjoy great dining fare. It is not unusual to see several meetings/special events take place in the course of a day in the commercial area. Because 85% of the workforce at the county buildings adjacent to the project come from outside of Belmont, these visitors relate their experiences at the cafe to friends and families in their home towns, and invite them to Belmont. The building is becoming a destination spot, and the business district is reaping the rewards of increased traffic on its "Main St." At the same time, The Fountain Arts Center, which manages the commercial areas on the first floor, has begun expanding its arts programs, lectures, and services, while creating new ties with several nearby colleges--Houghton College, Alfred University, Alfred State College, St. Bonaventure, and Jamestown Community Colleges. It is establishing itself as a hub for regional artists who find Belmont to be a central location within the county. The Apartments at The Belmont has become a demonstration project, strengthening not only Belmont, but boosting the economics of this entire corner of the Southern Tier. The village, town, school district, and county have enjoyed significant increases in tax revenues from the successful completion of the project.

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

The key elements in the development process included forming a not-for-profit organization, the Fountain Arts Center, to spearhead the rehabilitation of the structure. Though the first five years were spent mostly on repairing and patching the structure on a prioritized basis, the administrative work, feasibility and market studies, environmental studies and gaining listing on the state and national registers of historic places were also key blocks put in place that would unlock avenues of funding for the project. In the beginning of its sixth year, the arts group consulted with Edgemere Developers about the future of the project; this led to the formation of a fairly complicated public-private sector-non-profit partnership that was able to amass financing from a multitude of sources to underwrite the design, approval, engineering, de/reconstruction, and marketing phases of the project. While this underwriting process of planning, approvals, and finance-packaging felt like an unbearably long eleven months, especially when the structure started collapsing, it too created a situation where applications for historic preservation grants for critical stabilization that had not been awarded in two years, were released to the project. This allowed the unsafe areas of the building to be removed, while stabilizing the remainder of the structure for future reconstruction. Though the Village Board of Trustees and Zoning and Planning Boards felt pressured at times by the condition of the structure, they held on to hope and confidence in the developers to see the project through. When safe to do so, community service groups from Houghton College and the Genesee Valley School District would come to the site to clean, paint, move furniture, and help with fundraising.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

The Apartments at the Belmont project was completed using the following funding sources, totalling approximately \$5.8 million:

- Allegany County Area Foundation (2 awards),
- Moogan Family Foundation (2 awards),
- NYS Member Initiative Funds,
- NYS Council for the Arts Technical Assistance Grant,
- NYS Environmental Protection Fund Historic Preservation Grants (3 awards),
- NYS Main Street Grant (3 awards),
- Rural Area Revitalization Program (2 awards),
- LIHC tax credits,
- historic preservation tax credits, state and federal,
- NeighborWorks (2 awards),
- Federal Home Loan Bank (2 awards),
- Key Bank Investor Equity funds,
- Key Bank Construction loans,
- private donations and loans

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

The project had its unique issues in its unique rural setting, but at the same time faced the significant challenges that any blighted neighborhood presents---loss of morale, downturn in economy, loss of population, loss of jobs, deteriorating structures, increased safety and health risks, vandalism, and increase in criminal behavior. Because of the project site's important historical value to the area, and this rural area's elevated interest in its history, it attracted support (more in morale than in finances) to attempt to revitalize the decaying eyesore. It is uncommon and laborious in this part of upstate New York to identify and pry loose financial sources willing to commit to such rural revitalization. Once the sources are identified, it becomes a very competitive process to acquire the limited resources; and as this project witnessed, funding awards can sometimes be very political, based on the election cycles, or who has the most clout in Albany. Additionally, in rural areas with a lower income ratio, significant structures have often suffered severe damage by the time someone wants to rescue them, and although they can acquire the property fairly inexpensively, if they have not accurately calculated the rehabilitation costs, the discoveries during de/reconstruction may be more than owners can bear. Projects of this nature need a wide variety of public-private investors so that no one entity bears the onus of development. The importance of using a professional development company that brings together the legal, financial, design, and construction teams required to complete a project of this magnitude cannot be understated. The amount of time, patience, and perseverance required to make the vision a reality cannot be measured. However, when done properly, it is extremely rewarding.

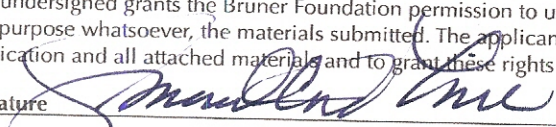
# COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or who represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name RAYMOND C. DETINE Title DEPUTY MAYOR  
Organization VILLAGE OF BELMONT Telephone (585) 268-5522  
Address 1 SCHUYLER ST. City/State/ZIP BELMONT, NY 14813  
Fax (585) 268-7605 E-mail AX319@VERIZON.NET

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Signature  Date 12-4-2010

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

The Village of Belmont is responsible for building + zoning codes - as such we became acquainted w/ Wendy Skinner + this project many years ago. Wendy approached the village board 10-12 years ago to get property tax relief to ease the burden of ~~the~~ renovation. Since that time we have offered many letters of support for grant applications. The village board also tried to work w/ Wendy in regards to zoning + building permit guidelines, offering flexibility to insure the project didn't stall.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

First and foremost we were worried about the structure. We wanted to make sure it was still "sound" enough to work with. We were concerned with the amount of time the project would take and how it would affect neighboring businesses. Our contention is that the building was the cornerstone of our business district. It was imperative to the economic health of our downtown area for this building to be viable. The Village Board felt that if we lost this building we would have a dramatic hole in our main street, a hole too big to fill.

## COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

The project has absolutely made our village a better place to live and work. Other businesses on our main street have tried to keep pace w/ this building by investing in their own infrastructure. This renovated building is a source of pride for all our residents and has become a destination within our business district. This makes our entire business district stronger.

4. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

From the village perspective it was easy. We lent support where & when needed. Wendy had the hard part. The only thing I would change would be the timeframe. It is a shame it took so long for this project to get off the ground. As to the finished product I believe it has exceeded everyone's expectations!

# PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a staff representative of a public agency directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

Name Lynn LeFeber Title Regional Grant Administrator  
Organization Office of Parks Recreation & Hist. Pres. Telephone (716) 354-9101 ext. 235  
Address 2373 ASP Route #1 City/State/ZIP Salamanca, NY 14779  
Fax (716) 354-2255 E-mail lynn.lefeber@oprhp.state.ny.us

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Signature Lynn LeFeber Date 12/6/10

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

*see attached*

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them?

Lynn LeFeber  
Grants Representative



NEW YORK STATE  
OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
Western District - Allegany Region  
Allegany State Park  
2373 ASP Route #1, Suite 3  
Salamanca, NY 14779

716.354.9101 ext. 235  
Fax: 716.354.2255  
lynn.lefeber@oprhp.state.ny.us

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g. zoning, public participation, public benefit, impact statements).

The NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation assisted the applicant in applying for and receiving the National Register of Historic Places status. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a bureau of our agency, provided technical advice and preservation oversight during the construction phase. Our agency also awarded three grants totaling \$678,710 to the project. SHPO required all plans and specs, and final work be approved by the Field Service's technicians to ensure strict adherence to the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation. The regional grant administrator provided guidance and oversight for compliance with all NYS laws and procedures which included, competitive bidding, Minority and Women Owned Business procurement, fund accounting and grant reporting, etc. Our agency also required a Preservation Covenant be executed on the deed which will ensure SHPO oversight of future alterations for the next 20 years.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them?

Our agency recognized that the public benefit of this project went well beyond providing needed housing, upgraded commercial space and a community meeting room and gallery. The loss of the prominence of the building within the downtown business area and the rich architectural importance it provided would have been devastating to this small rural county seat. Because of the multiple funding sources, each with their own agency requirements, and the tight timeframe for tax credit submission, some concessions and compromises were made to advance the project. For example, one agency required enclosed stairways yet the stairways were a contributing feature to the historic importance so a compromise of glass enclosures was reached. This allowed the original fabric of the building to remain in place and visible to the public while meeting the housing requirements. Also in the apartments some original doors were allowed to remain in place but secured so they couldn't be opened rather than being removed. Concessions were also made to standard procedures that strict adherence would have delayed or stopped the project. Field Service techs put a priority on their reviews so approvals could be processed quickly, the regional grant administrator conferred with the other agencies to work out procurement and bidding requirements which met state laws but allowed some flexibility for the development team to address unforeseen discoveries during construction. The agency made a grant advance and processed the reimbursement requests as a "hardship case" to meet the tax credit deadlines. This project is an excellent example of what can be accomplished by multiple agencies, funders, and the owner and development team with constant communication and willingness to make adjustments for the common goal.

3. Describe the project's impact on your city. Please be as specific as possible.

The provision of safe, affordable housing in that area of the NY southern tier has been greatly needed for a long time. The addition of these apartments will go a long way in alleviating that problem in the village. In an area that has seen little or no business growth for the last two decades; a coffee shop business has now opened in the lobby and space for another enterprise brought up to code. The visual impact of the project to the whole downtown area is enormous, giving the downtown a vibrant, prosperous atmosphere instead of the derelict eyesore it had been. All these contribute to a renewed sense of pride in the community and have spurred additional efforts to enhance the community.

4. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects of this project that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

Although our agency was not directly involved in putting the whole funding package together, the project demonstrates that partnerships between public agencies, commercial financial institutions, foundations, developers and not-for-profits can also work in small rural areas where resources are very limited. Complicated funding arrangements have been primarily centered in large urban areas where capacity and resources are available. This project demonstrates that small rural communities can and should look at a combination of grants, tax credits and loans, no matter how large or complicated it may seem. Agencies can and need to develop ways to be flexible in their processes and required procedures to accommodate and integrate into other funding source processes.

5. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most successful aspects would most certainly have to be the fact that a very small not-for-profit in a very rural area succeeded in saving a grand historic building and turning that building into a viable asset for the whole community for years to come. The project retains not only its village history but also the look and feel of the community while adapting and reusing a past liability for much needed housing, community and business space. In a broader sense, the project proved that large, complicated projects can be accomplished by small groups and it has become an example to other communities in the southern tier that are now looking at similar projects.

It is hard to find a least successful part of the project. Although this project was wrought with unexpected problems and set backs; the developers and not-for-profit found solutions to each one. By maintaining open communication with all funders and agencies reviewers, ideas and solutions could be explored and problems resolved.

## DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.


This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

Name	Stephanie Benson	Title	COO and Partner
Organization	Edgemere Development, Inc.	Telephone ( 585 )	325-1450
Address	400 Andrews Street, Suite 400	City/State/ZIP	Rochester, NY 14604
Fax ( 585 )	325-1477	E-mail	Stephanie@edgemere.com

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Signature		Date	12-9-10
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1. What role did you or your company play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

Edgemere Development, Inc was the development consultant for the Apartments at the Belmont. Edgemere implemented its two-fold mission to develop residential projects utilizing the full range of available public & private resources, and to provide services necessary to enable them to develop residential projects. FAC teamed up with Edgemere after several years of fund-raising, bridging relationships with many people & organizations and under advisement to seek assistance with accessing resources for the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation. Edgemere's role was multifaceted and included: assembling the development team; structured a series of partnerships to bring the project to fruition; identifying a non-profit with affordable housing management experience and service provision; negotiating the joint venture between FAC, Edgemere and Arbor Development; securing local approvals; determining work scope; identifying and coordinating the work scope, funding and regulations of multiple funding sources and awards including National Park Service, NYS Environmental Protection Funds, NYS Main Street, NYS Housing Trust Fund, and LIHTC funds. Edgemere's role was to secure financing and then facilitate construction closing and conversion to permanent financing. We completed multiple funding applications with several during construction when new discovery escalated costs. Edgemere spearheaded preconstructing tasks; third party coordination; construction team coordination; construction closing; transition to rent up; compliance and management; conversion to permanent financing; and structured a series of partnerships to bring the project to fruition. Assembling the development team consisted of bringing on an architect; structural and civil engineers; a historical consultant; legal and accounting expertise; and eventually an equity investor. Funding applications were completed including: State and Federal Historic Tax Credits; Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits; NYS Main Street funds, Environmental Protection Funds; NYS DHCR HOME funds; and Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, as well as the private contributions secured by FAC. 

2. What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

The project ultimately required 19 funding sources for successful completion. All of the different agencies involved in funding the project had varying objectives and requirements. Balance and compromise were required to satisfy all the parties involved. Although discovery and structural analysis was conducted prior to the commencement of construction, several additional discovery items and deterioration of historic elements were found during rehabilitation. Because funds were refocused on immediate issues. Abatement costs escalated as the scope increased.

Original plans called for residents to be able to access units through the main entrance and grand staircase. NYS HCR objected to intermingling to residents with commercial space and required separation between residential and commercial space. A wall was planned to separate the two building uses however this covered up one of the most significant historical features of the building. A compromise was reached to install a glass partition to separate the commercial and residential uses which maintained visibility of a key historic element to visitors.

Steel pipe railing on the exterior required replacement. The National Parks Service desired replacement with a new rail of similar height and material to preserve this historic feature. The original rail design did not meet current safety and structural codes because of the large openings below and between the horizontal members, and because of the wide spacing of the posts. A solution was reached whereby the new rail system incorporated steel rods between the main pipe rail system to meet safety and structural codes. This represented a significant compromise between preserving historical features and meeting current building requirements.

### 3. How was the project financed? What, if any, innovative means of financing were used?

This project utilized a multitude of public and private financial and community resources for historic rehabilitation of the severely deteriorated mixed-use building. The west wing collapsed and a portion of the adjoining wing needed stabilization a month prior to construction financing closing. Throughout the \$5.8 million project, new funding sources were secured, while value engineering and integrating Secretary of the Interior Standards. Prior to Edgemere's involvement, FAC was creative in securing private donations and fund-raising to purchase the building, make some repairs and update systems so commercial spaces could be used until the whole project could be completed. The original owner held the mortgage on the building for several years while funds were secured. Personal mortgages were taken out to gain site control. This building is the anchor and the tallest building on the main street of Belmont. There were discussions about tearing it down and building a parking lot.

Nineteen public and private funding sources were necessary to acquire and rehab this project. For the 36,686 square foot building – 19 residential units and first floor commercial space, the Belmont Hotel ended up with a complex and innovative funding structure including: low income housing tax credits and state and federal historic tax credit; investor equity from Key Community Development Corporation Bank; NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal's Rural Area Revitalization, Main Street, and HOME Programs; two Federal Home Loan Bank of New York awards; an emergency stabilization award from Environmental Protection Funds (NYSOPRHP); two additional EPF grants; NeighborWorks America® assistance; and direct investment by Fountain Arts and Arbor Development. In kind and cash contributions were solicited far and wide, including an eleventh hour contribution from the Western New York Foundation which allowed Fountain Arts to retire the mortgage and close on its first EPF grant. The Village of Belmont provided a PILOT. The Belmont Betterment Association provided streetscape improvements. Historic elements were found in devastating condition during rehabilitation which led to increased construction costs; additional funds were secured during construction which offset any costs. NHRA awarded this project the 2010 Most Advanced Financing Structure award.

### 4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of the project?

Given the extent of deterioration, one of the most successful aspect of the project was the detail and historic elements preserved in the rehab of the historic building. Despite the severe deterioration, the project retained almost all of the original 1890 building shell including brick and stone masonry, roof structure, original doors and windows, wood trim, galvanized metal cornices, cast iron storefronts, 2nd floor porch, and multi-color paint scheme. The reconstructed north wing carefully replicated the footprint and details of the original. The building's character-defining interior features were preserved, including the impressive three-story grand staircase (which collapsed), the arched doorways and expansive hallways, wainscoting, door and window trim, the hotel bar and banquet room, the upper floor corridors with curved walls, and even the bank vault.

This project is a model for successful rehabilitation of a mixed use building, blending workforce housing with a restaurant, art gallery, and commercial storefronts. The Belmont demonstrates that this model can work in a small town and create the economic stimulus needed to transform the main street. Today, there are more visitors to the building and area, and there is more investment in the community. The vision to provide a place to live and work for young artists graduating from local colleges is laudable. Art classes and art showings are held regularly. The second and third floors provide affordable work force housing for 19 individuals and families. Another significant aspect demonstrated by the Belmont project is that one person, Wendy Skinner, with perseverance, vision, and common sense, can make a difference in a community, even when the odds are against her. The NYS Preservation League awarded Apartments at the Belmont one of the 2010 Excellence in Historic Rehabilitation Awards.

Although the development team has experience with historic rehabilitation and FAC had history of building ownership for several years prior to construction, the amount of additional costs and work was one of the least successful aspects of the project. While significant discovery uncovered many structural issues, continued deterioration of the building lead to increases in project cost and delays. In 2006 and immediately prior to closing financing, the roof structure and North Wing collapsed; the West Wing foundation crumbled leading to partial collapse. EPF emergency stabilization funds were accessed to address these critical structural issues. Even the scoping of sewer lines seemed to indicate the condition was fine until the building went into use. Final build out items included repair/replacement of the sewerline. The project was successful at obtaining additional funding sources to cover the increased scope of work.

# PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project providing services other than physical design or planning (e.g., legal services).

Name	Saralinda Hooker	Title	Owner
Organization	Saralinda Hooker, Planning & Development Consultant	Telephone	(585 ) 394-5052
Address	3414 West Lake Boulevard	City/State/ZIP	Canandaigua, NY 14424
Fax	(585 ) 394-5052	E-mail	sh73sh73@yahoo.com

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Signature *Saralinda Hooker* Date *12/6/10*

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

Saralinda Hooker, Planning and Development Consultant, is a sole proprietorship with two areas of expertise – Affordable Housing Market Analysis and Historic Preservation/Grantsmanship. I had the good fortune to participate in the Belmont Hotel project using both of my specialties. I prepared the housing market study which demonstrated a need and demand for affordable housing targeted to lower income individuals and families in the Belmont market area, which covered the whole central part of Allegany County. In addition I served as the project team's liaison to the historic preservation funding sources, prepared the historic tax credit submissions and advised on the administration of several New York State historic preservation funding grants.

2. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible.

The renovation of the Belmont Hotel has been a shot in the arm to the entire Belmont community. The building's prominence at a key downtown intersection, near the county seat with its concentration of public employees, has made it a very visible project. Belmont is the central hub of the county's bus system, and the bus stop which serves as the transfer point between routes is right across the street from the building, so area residents couldn't miss the fact that a major investment in their community was underway. The decades long slide in the condition of this building, which culminated in the condemnation and demolition of the building's rear wing in 2007, was symptomatic of the neglect and low esteem which have become common to many small village downtowns in upstate New York. The investment of \$5 million of outside funds into this project has inspired other building owners to step up to the plate with their own commitments to the welfare of the downtown and the community.

The addition of 19 new downtown residents and has also helped the other downtown businesses to hold on through the recent economic downturn. The community's sole grocery store, a half block from the project site, decided not to close in part due to the expected new business, and the downtown bank, hardware store and pharmacy have renewed their commitment to Belmont. The cafe is the site of meetings and events that attract workers from the nearby county offices and visitors from around the region. Political office seekers in the recent election made a point of stopping at The Belmont to see what was happening and to highlight it as a successful example of public-private cooperation.

## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

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### 3. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?

It is unfortunately rare that a high profile project such as the Belmont Hotel renovation takes place in a the context of a small town or village with a population under 1,000. The local residents rarely have the expertise or capital to pull off a project like this, and the outside developers and professionals with the expertise often conclude that the difficulties are insurmountable and the return insufficient to justify the necessary time, soft costs and travel. Even with resolute residents and public officials behind the project, affordable housing can be a controversial use and local support can waver. The key lessons of this successful project were:

- It takes patience, persistence and a long time to effect a turn-around like this to a building and its surrounding context, and the parties who devote this long-term effort need to have motivations beyond a financial one.
- Finding a development team with the right experience and resources is critical.
- Small towns and villages have many of the same community development needs as larger urban areas – poverty, substandard housing, and declines in population and economic base.
- Historic preservation is a contagious tool – a way to use the local community's pride in its history to help it adapt to and accept necessary changes.
- Public funds are difficult to pry loose, but once you get a foothold they can facilitate other funding sources

### 4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The project did a particularly good job of preserving the building's exterior and the important interior historic features such as the grand stairway, the upper floor corridors, the bank vault, and the hotel bar and banquet room. The apartments are generous and well designed, and are well above the prevailing quality standards of rental housing in the area. The functional separation between the residential use and the commercial and arts components works well.

The original hope of Fountain Arts Center was to devote the entire building to arts-related uses; it took several years of planning, soul searching and feasibility work to persuade them that they needed to broaden their concept to include affordable housing not just for artists but for the public at large because that would open up the necessary funding sources to make the necessary large scale renovation project possible. With this shift in the project definition, the focus on the site as a regional arts venue became somewhat compromised; its promise is now only partially fulfilled, and the arts organization is faced with the continuing challenge of operating a four-storefront facility, along with the financial responsibility for supporting it. As a tenant is found for the final commercial space and Fountain Arts continues to build its programming, hopefully this aspect of the project will come into its own.

# ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services.

Name JASON SIMMONS Title ARCHITECT  
Organization GLASOW SIMMONS ARCHITECTURE Telephone (585) 246-4149  
Address 100 CLINTON SQUARE City/State/ZIP ROCHESTER, NY 14604  
Fax (585) 263-1880 E-mail jason@glasowsimmons.com

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Signature  Date 12/7/10

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

*see attached*

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

# ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services.

Name	Title
Organization	Telephone (      )
Address	City/State/ZIP
Fax (      )	E-mail

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<b>Signature</b>	Date
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1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

Since this project involved the renovation of an existing historic building, the design approach was to minimize changes in the building exterior, accommodating the mixed use program as efficiently as possible while retaining important historic features of the interior, especially in the original hotel lobby, bar, and dining room. From the outset it was clear that the building had severe structural deficiencies, and when the rear wing of the building collapsed after the preliminary design phase, we had an opportunity to introduce new construction into the lost space. The new wing reflects the overall massing, materials and fenestration patterns of the main building and of the wing that was lost, while providing a new entrance exclusively for the building residents and two handicapped-accessible grade level units.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

The project has the following program components:

- \* 19 affordable apartments, with 15 of them on the second and third floors of the original hotel, and 4 on the first and second floors of the new rear wing
- \* a home for the not-for-profit Fountain Arts Center, a regional arts organization offering gallery and recital space and arts programming
- \* a coffee bar, gathering space and restaurant/banquet facility shared by the Fountain Arts Center and a private restaurant and catering business
- \* rental space for downtown businesses

## ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

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3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

The project had a multitude of funding sources, and one principal design challenge was to negotiate compromises where the guidelines and priorities of the funders came into conflict. Much of the construction cost was funded by investor equity generated from two federal tax credit programs--the historic tax credit and the low income housing tax credit. Additional funds came directly from the New York State Department of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) and from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP). The missions of these two agencies overlap in their mutual desire to encourage revitalization of New York' downtowns using historic preservation as a community development tool. In other respects their means and methods differ, with DHCR focused on affordability, accessibility, energy efficiency, and leveraging their housing funds for maximum benefit to lower income households. OPRHP focuses on stewardship of New York's historic architectural resources, requiring the highest standards of historic preservation practice where their grant funds are in use. The blended priorities required resolution between the two agencies--for example DHCR preferred new double glazed wood windows versus repairing the historic windows; DHCR preferred leveling of floors versus maintaining historic nature of existing floors; and DHCR required separation of public and private areas which resulted in the grand historic staircase being completely closed off by a storefront system and only able to be viewed through the glazing. Though challenges presented themselves along the way, all parties worked together to create a building worthy of a New York Preservation League Excellence in Historic Preservation Award, and a national Timothy J. Anderson Award.

4. Describe the ways in which the design relates to its urban context.

The Belmont Hotel dominates its immediate surroundings because it is the largest and tallest building in Belmont's mall commercial center. It is the only three story building in an otherwise two story neighborhood. Its location at the corner of Schuyler Street (Belmont's Main Street) and Wells Lane, which is on axis with the classical revival Allegany County Courthouse a half block away, reinforces its prominence. Its well-preserved Queen Anne and Commercial Romanesque details, together with its multi-colored paint scheme, combine with its size and location to make it the unmistakable "village center" commercial building of Belmont. Its state of disrepair in the late 20th century gave the whole village an air of decay, and its revival and renovation has boosted the self-esteem of downtown Belmont and the surrounding community.

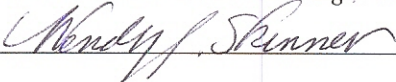
## OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Name	Wendy Skinner	Title	President
Organization	The Fountain Arts Center, Inc.	Telephone ( 585 )	268-5951
Address	48 Schuyler St.	City/State/ZIP	Belmont, NY 14813
Fax ( 585 )	268-5951	E-mail	wjskinner@thefountainartscenter.org

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Signature



Date

12.9.10

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

The vision for the rehabilitation of our historic building began in my heart. For several years I rented studio space in a storefront there, where I worked as an artist and sign maker. Each day as I walked to my studio, and rounded the corner onto Schuyler St., the building, with its imposing presence, would be the first thing to catch my eye, and I would say to myself "Someone has to do something with this building." With an absentee landlord, it was falling into disrepair; and as it became blighted and unsafe, the morale of the community declined along with it. After much soul searching and research, I founded a not-for-profit arts corporation with a mission to introduce art to a rural area, to provide opportunities for rural artists, and to revive the sagging morale of the community by restoring this wonderful building. After purchasing the building, I spent the first five years finding contractors to hold it together, patching it, creating a gallery for exhibits and classes, navigating the process of being named to the National and State Registers of Historic Places, and going on the incessant quest to find funding to rehabilitate the building, albeit one storefront at a time, and one small grant at a time. I helped to spearhead the village of Belmont's application for a New York Main Street Grant, which used the building as the cultural anchor component. With that grant in place, I was able to match it and attract funds from historic preservation avenues and private donors. When the structure suffered partial collapse, and threatened the stability of an adjoining 3-story wing, I carried the enormous weight of the serious safety issues it presented in the heart of the village. Miraculously, funds were granted to us to stabilize the building from further collapse, and prepare it for its complete overhaul. Although I was often considered to be the crazy lady with a dollar and a dream, who would not acquiesce to pressure to raze the building and create a parking lot, when the multi-million dollar renovation began, I became the liason between contractors and developers and the documentary photographer of the project.



2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible.

The successful completion of the projection has changed naysayers into believers; it has convinced the community and the county (because the building is situated in the heart of the county seat) that the "impossible" can be done with the right combination of perseverance, faith, fortitude and financing. With its 19 families, its cafe, and banquet facility, it has added to the population on "Main St." and brought increased commerce to the business district. It has become a destination for fine dining, organizations, and arts events. The local newspaper has referred to the transformed building as the "Queen of Schuyler St.," and editorialized it, using it as an impetus for revitalization in other communities. Tours of the site and talks on its development have become a favorite subject for local historical societies, architecture students, economic development specialists, and county leaders. The successful completion of the project has spurred neighboring businesses to make improvements to their Main St. properties, resulting in a cohesive upturn to the village aesthetic and morale. Community pride has replaced hopelessness and despair.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

The development of the project required The Fountain Arts Center to modify its vision of artist-based living quarters and art commerce areas to accommodate affordable housing and commercial spaces. In order to secure the necessary tax credit packages and funding, it required forming partnerships with a housing development agency, and giving up ownership of the building and selling it to the partnership; The Fountain Arts Center moved from the position of a property owner with its mortgage paid off, to a tenant with a long-term lease under the partnership. During the construction phase, when there were discoveries that kicked the project budget out of the stadium, compromises had to be made on materials and scope of work, without sacrificing the overall integrity of the project. When the rear wing of the building collapsed, it had to be redesigned as new construction, as opposed to salvaging a historic structure. With so many financing sources in the mix, and each one bringing its own set of requirements, design and use of the building had to be modified to satisfy them all. The project was almost lost when it came to the size of the parking lot---the state code required one spot per tenant; the village required two spots per tenant, if it was a multi-family dwelling. The perimeter of the parking lot could not be added to or subtracted from due to boundaries of adjoining properties, and the footprint of the original building. It required a public hearing to request a variance from the village zoning board to be allowed to have only 19 parking spots. The Fountain Arts Center played an integral role in each trade-off and compromise.

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project?

One of the most successful aspects of the project was melding nineteen streams of funding into one cohesive package. Dovetailing the requirements of each source of revenue, whether it was design, construction elements, or materials, was challenging, yet rewarding when the spirit of cooperation prevailed. The amazing "save" and transformation of a structure that was literally on its last breath, and could not have lasted another year, was truly an extreme makeover. The two intense years of de/reconstruction at the site amazed all who witnessed the transformation on a daily basis. The resulting product, with its multi-colored paint scheme on a renewed exterior, spacious apartments, and beautiful dining facility and store fronts demonstrate that art can be used as inspiration , transformation, decoration, celebration and collaboration. A small but particularly interesting joyous success was the reinstallation of a stained glass window in the commercial restaurant area. Missing from the building for over 60 years, the stained glass window was prominently displayed 20 miles away in an antique store, whose owner had dozens of opportunities to sell it. When we asked him about returning the window back to its "home," he balked until he visited the site one day and realized the project that had just been a "pipe dream" was actually coming to fruition, and the spot where the stained glass window belonged had remained intact during its absence. Putting the window in its place was like placing a dazzling jewel in a perfect setting. Perhaps the least successful aspect of the project was the failure of the sewer line, which although scoped during construction and appearing to be serviceable, proved to be not adequate after the building went into use, and required a completely new install, creating disruption for the tenants, and disturbance of the landscaping and parking areas.



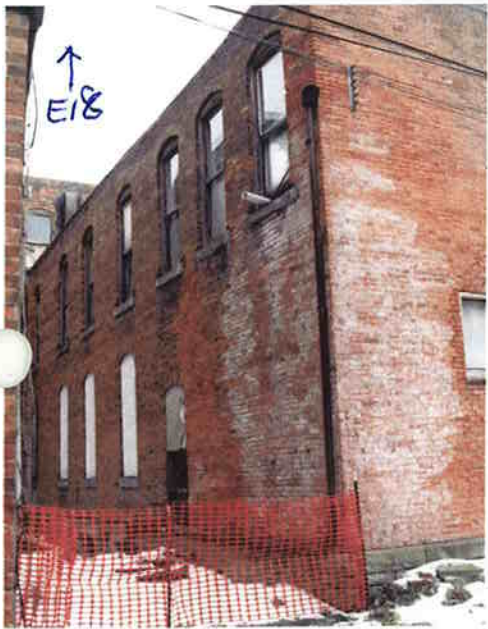
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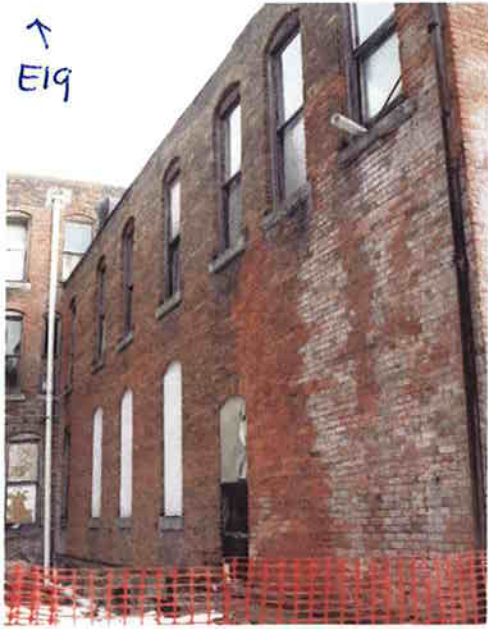
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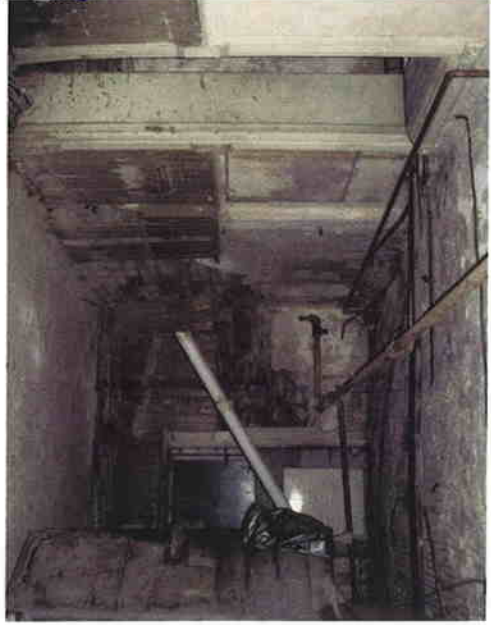
↑ 111



↑ 112



↑ B1



↑ B2



The Fountain Arts Center  
48 Schuyler Street  
Newmont, NY 14813

↑ 309



↑ image - 01



*The Fountain Arts Center  
48 Schuyler Street  
Belmont, NY 14813*

↑ image - 26



↑ 308



↑ 311



↑ 307



↑ 310



↑ image - 08



↑ 211



↑ 212

↑ 210



↑ 301



↑ 302



*The Fountain Arts Center  
Scuyler Street  
Belmont, NY 14813*

↑ 303

↑ 304



↓ 305



↑ 306









← BEFORE



← AFTER

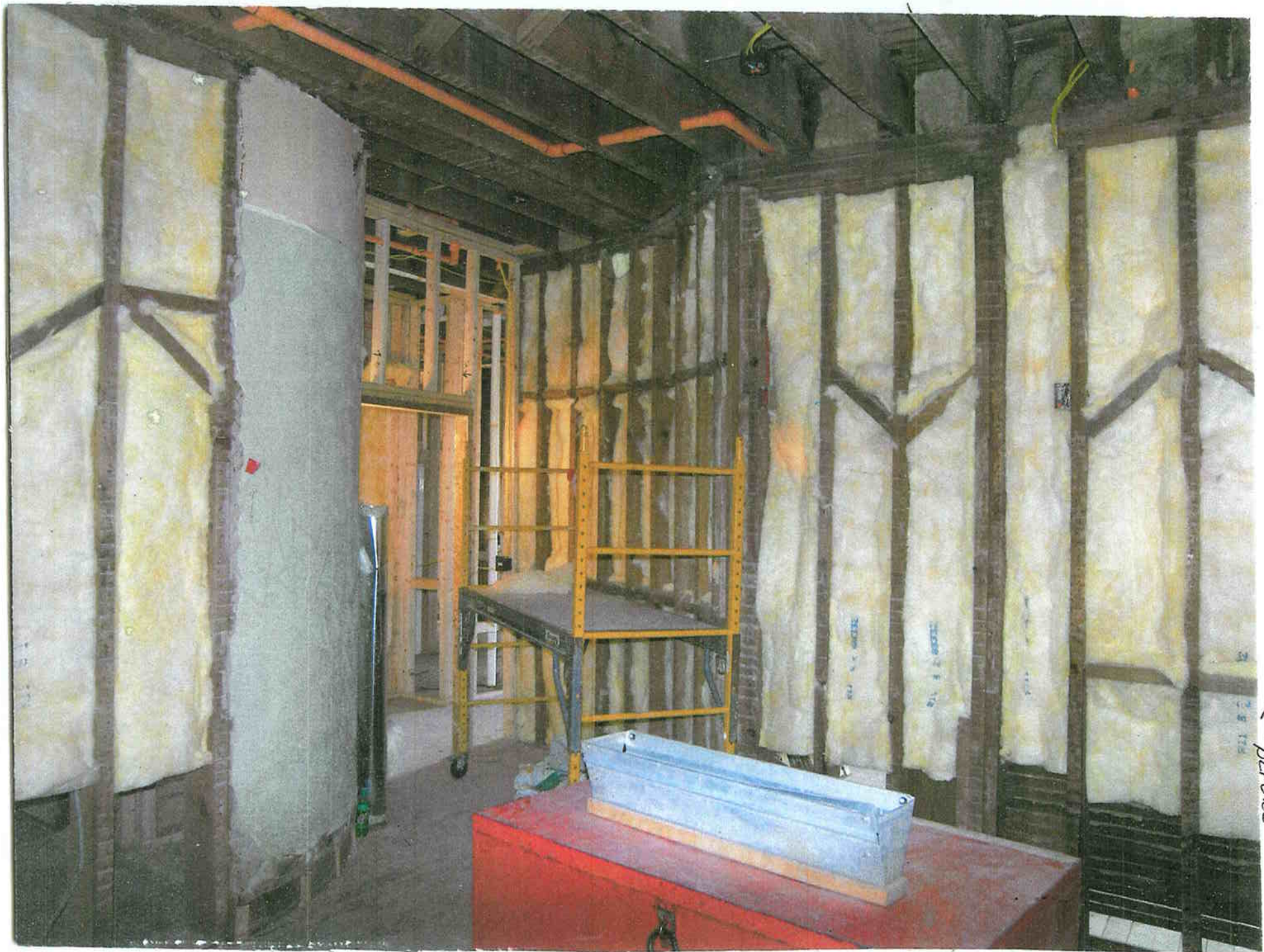


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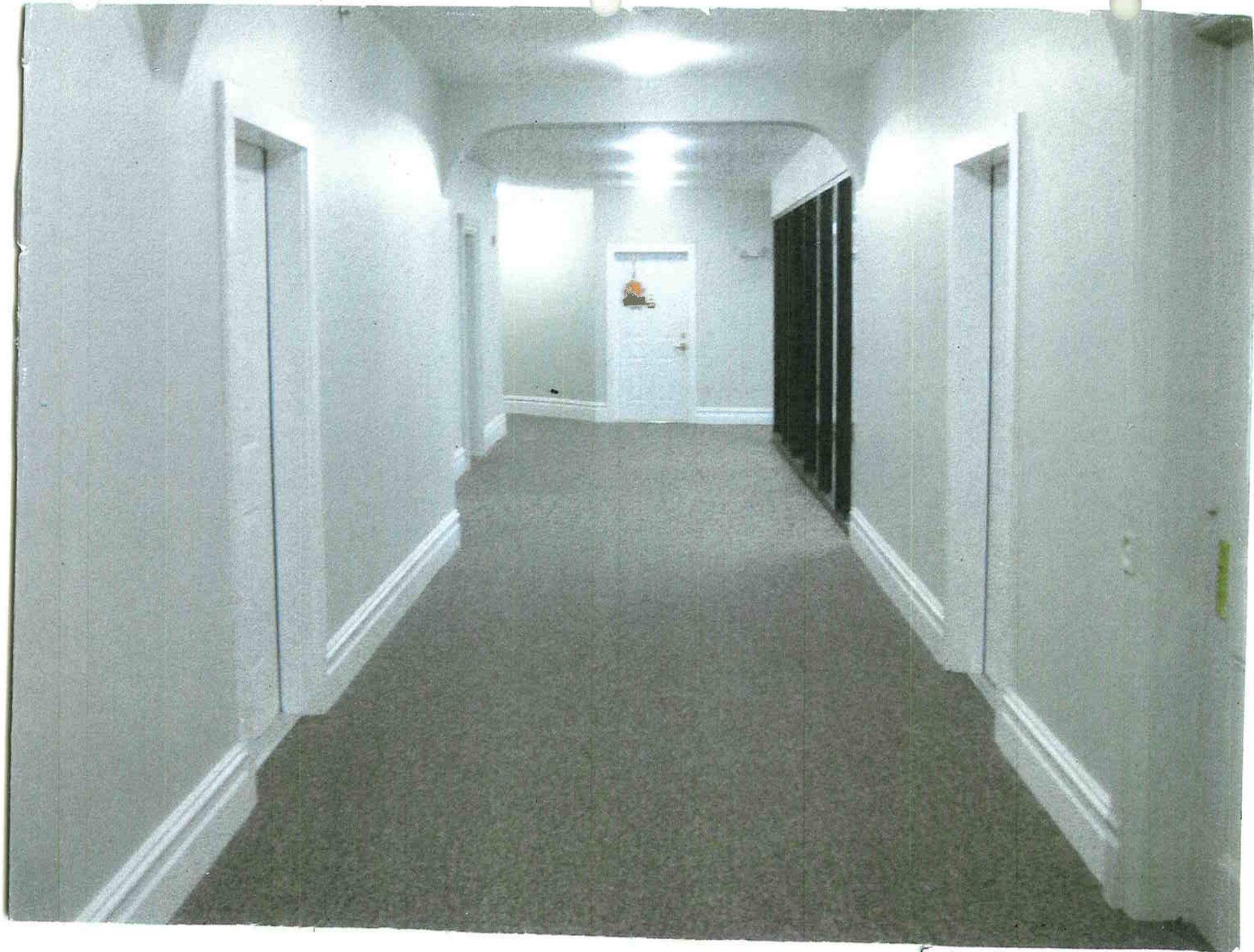
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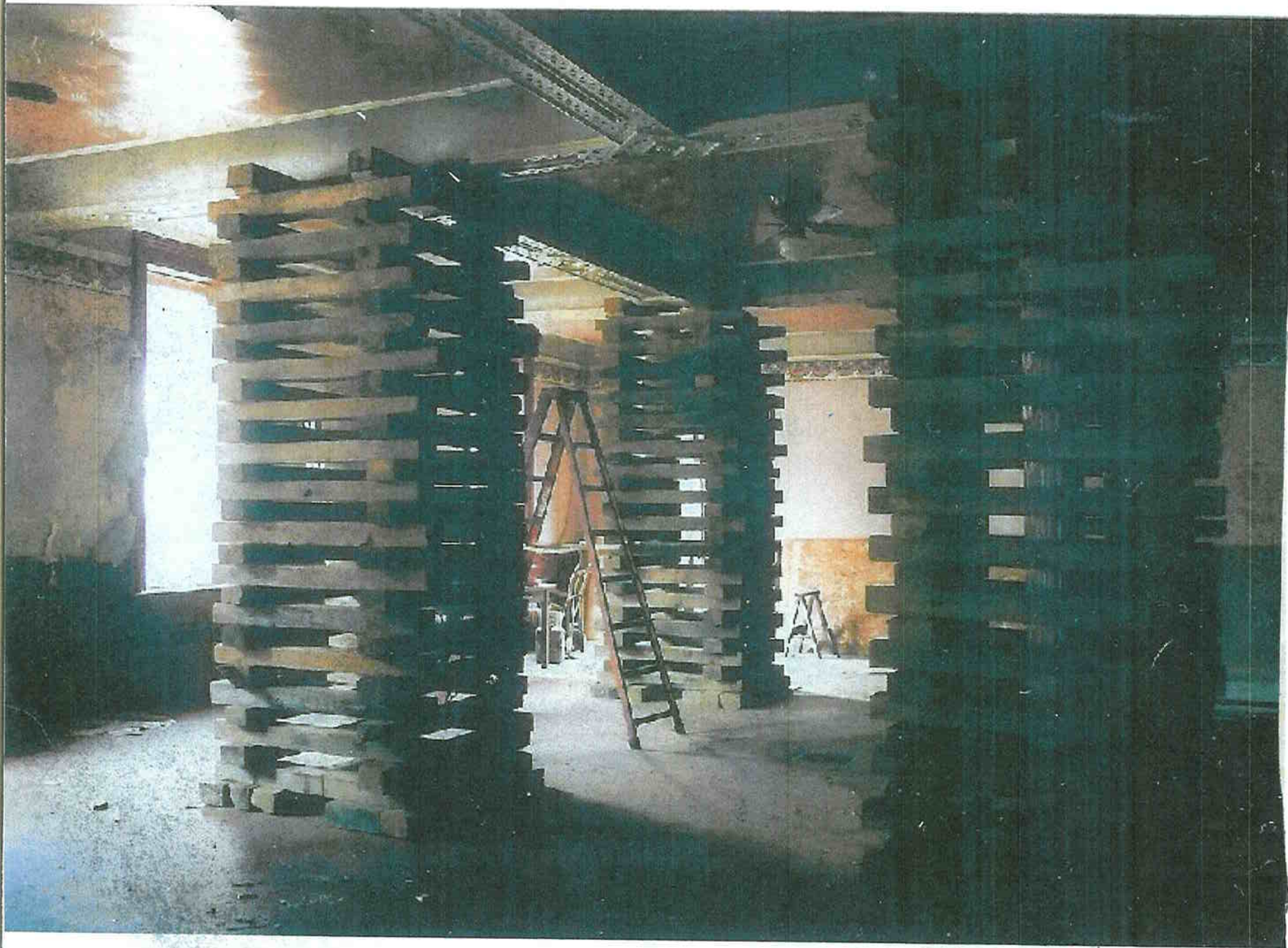
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09/08/2008



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2009/11/21



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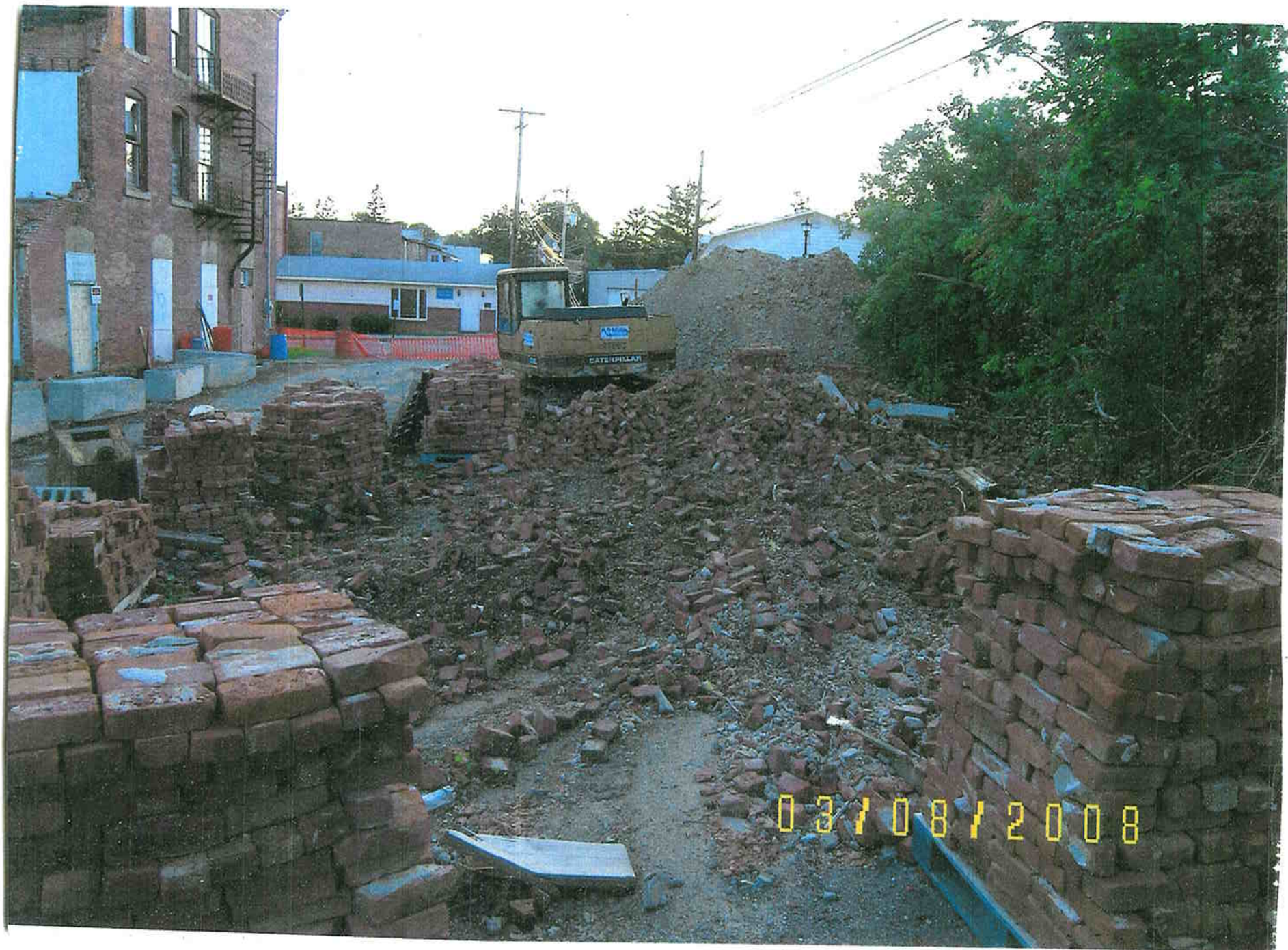
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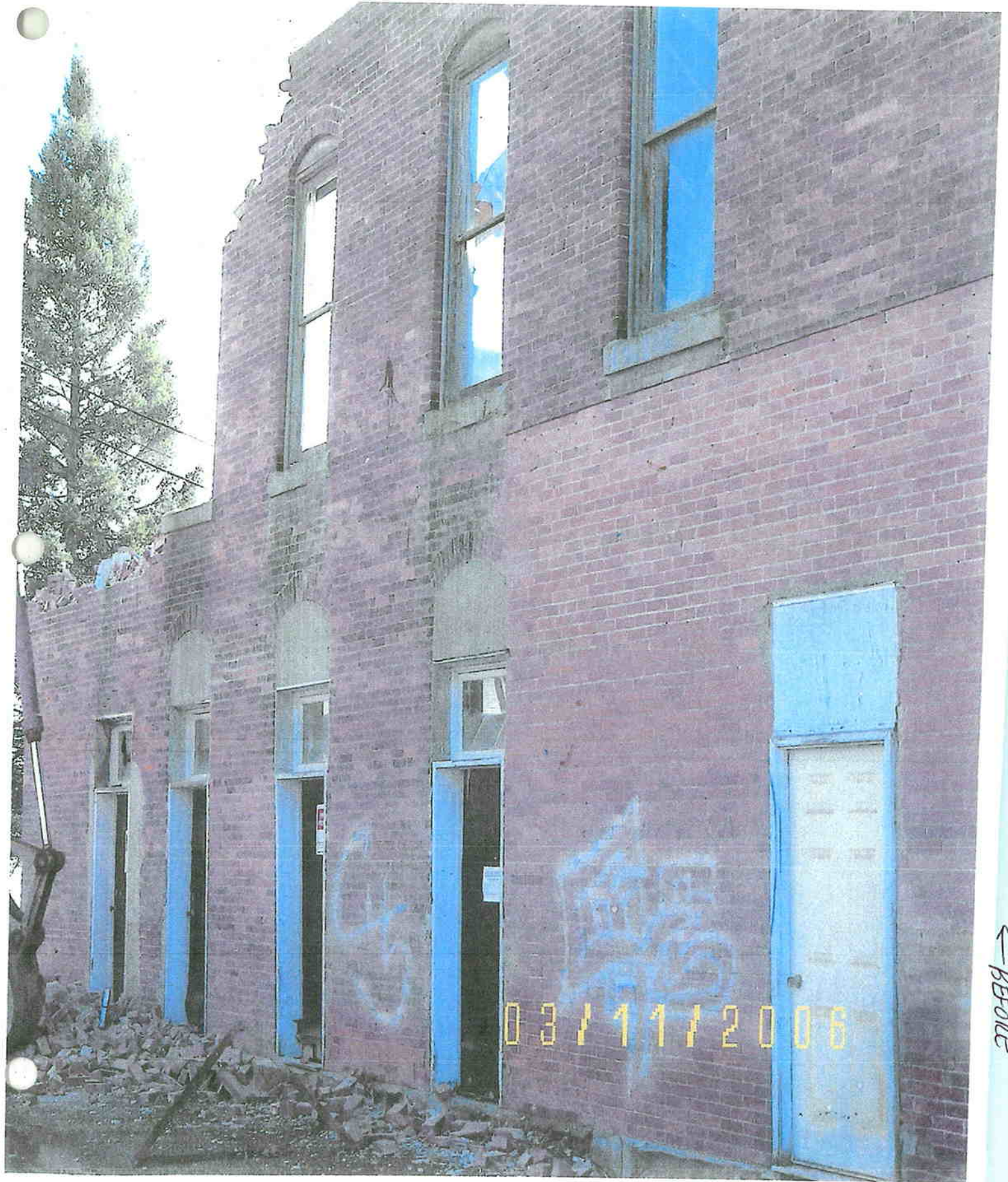


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8002/80/2008



← AFTER



03/11/2006

← BEHOLD

← AFTER





# The Fountain Arts Center Inc.

48 Schuyler Street  
Belmont, NY 11813  
(585) 268-5951



[www.thefountainartscenter.org](http://www.thefountainartscenter.org)

WENDY J. SKINNER, PRESIDENT    DONALD J. SKINNER, VICE PRESIDENT    CHRISTEN L. BAKER, SECRETARY/TREASURER  
FLEURETTE PELLIER, DIRECTOR    LOUIS KRAY, DIRECTOR

## YOUTH CLASSES



## FIELD TRIPS



**FRONT ELEVATION**  
1/8"=1'-0"



**SIDE ELEVATION**  
1/8"=1'-0"

A ARCHITECT  
**A D DANIEL**  
ARCHITECTS  
P.C.  
**ADG**

**APARTMENTS AT  
THE BELMONT**  
BELMONT, NEW YORK

**THE FOUNTAIN ARTS  
CENTER, INC.**  
100 W. 42ND ST.  
NEW YORK, NY 10018  
**SCAP/DHCO**  
400 W. 11TH ST.  
NEW YORK, NY 10014  
P.O. BOX 1  
NEW YORK, NY 10011  
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JOB NO. DIRECTORY BELMONT  
FILE FD  
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DRAWN DPW/TA  
CHECKED DND  
DATE 2/3/08  
PLOT 2/3/08  
ISSUED 2/3/08  
REVISIONS

*The Fountain Arts Center  
48 Schuyler Street  
Belmont, NY 14813*



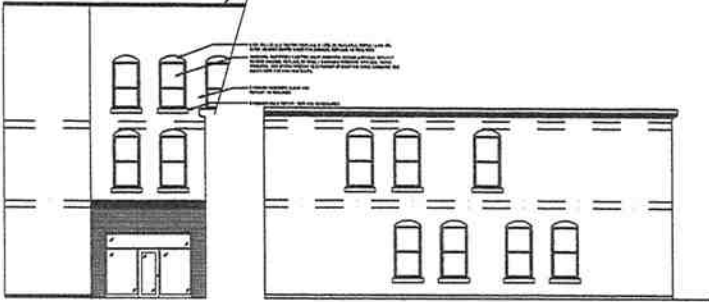
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**SIDE ELEVATION**  
1/8" = 1'-0"



**COURTYARD ELEVATIONS**  
1/8" = 1'-0"



**A ARCHITECT**  
**A D DANIEL P. GLASOW**  
**ADG**

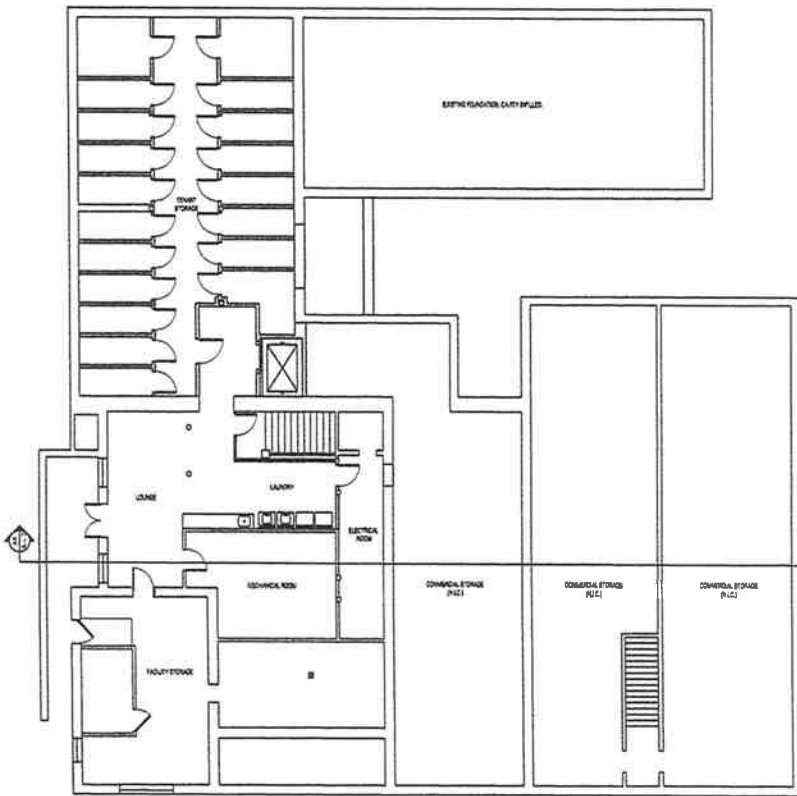
**APARTMENTS AT  
THE BELMONT**  
100 SOUTH 4TH STREET  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

**THE FOUNTAIN ARTS  
CENTER, INC.**  
100 SOUTH 4TH STREET  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402  
**SCAP/DHCO**  
P.O. Box 100  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
Tel: 612/338-1000

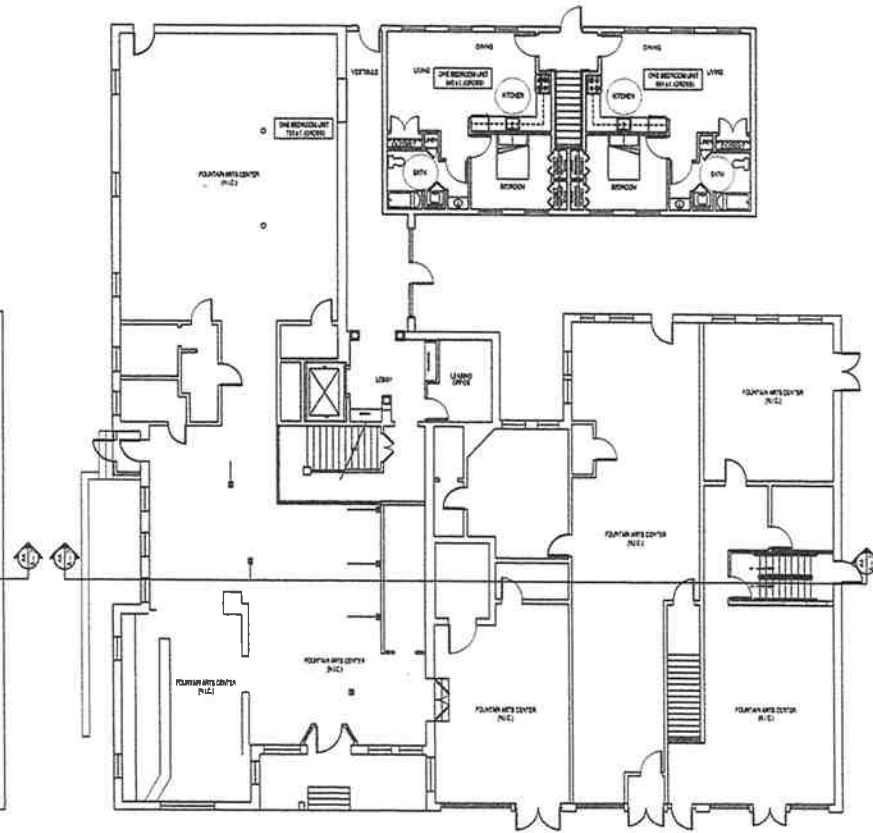
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JOB NO. BELMONT  
DATE 1/14/10  
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DRAWN DPH/1/10  
CHECKED DPH  
DATE 02/02/10  
PL. BY SCG  
ISSUED 02/02/10  
REVISIONS

**A-6**



**EXISTING BASEMENT PLAN**  
1/8"=1'-0" 1/8"=1'-0" (0/2004)



**PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN**  
1/8"=1'-0" 1/8"=1'-0" (0/2008)

**A D ARCHITECT**  
**DANIEL F. GLASOW**  
**AG**

**APARTMENTS AT  
THE BELMONT**

**THE FOUNTAIN ARTS  
CENTER, INC.**

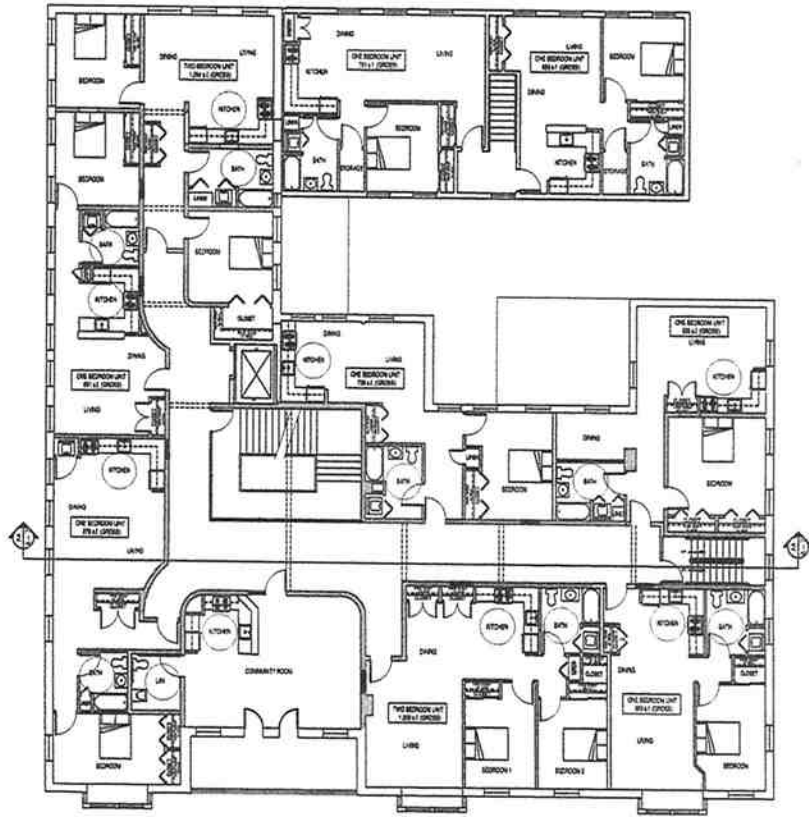
**SCAPIDRO**

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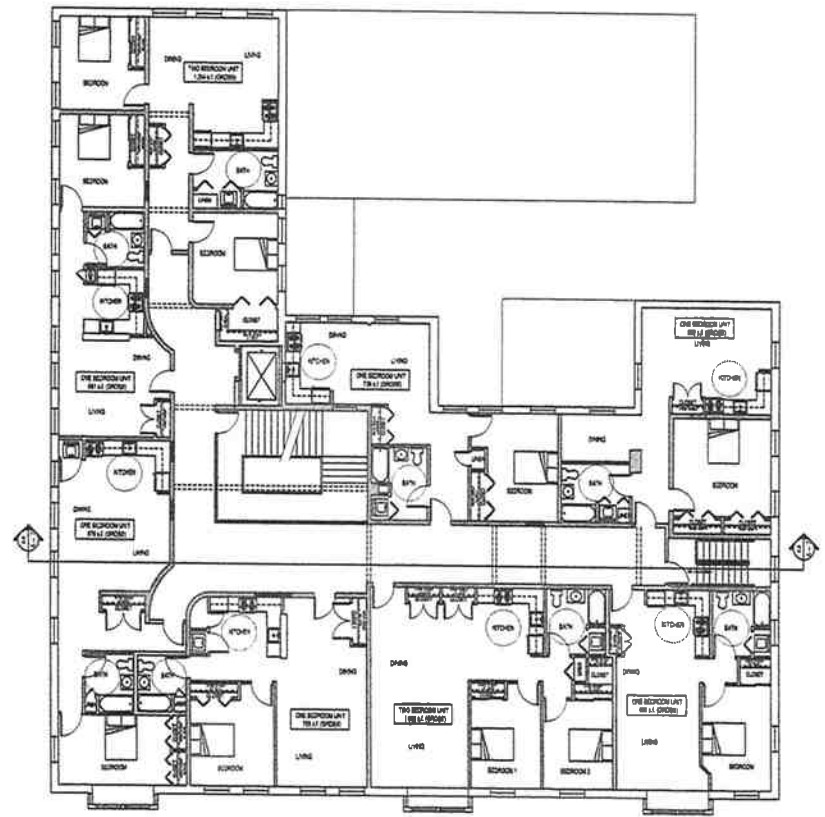
JOB NO. BELMONT  
FILE # 1471-P  
OWNER THE FOUNTAIN ARTS CENTER, INC.  
DESIGNED BY DANIEL F. GLASOW, ARCHITECT  
DATE 12/2008  
PLUT 12/2008  
ISSUED 12/2008  
REVISIONS

**A-3**

*The Fountain Arts Center*  
48 Schuyler Street  
Belmont, N.Y. 12508



**PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN**  
1/8" = 1'-0"  
LMB 811, 820081



**PROPOSED THIRD FLOOR PLAN**  
1/8" = 1'-0"  
LMB 811, 820081

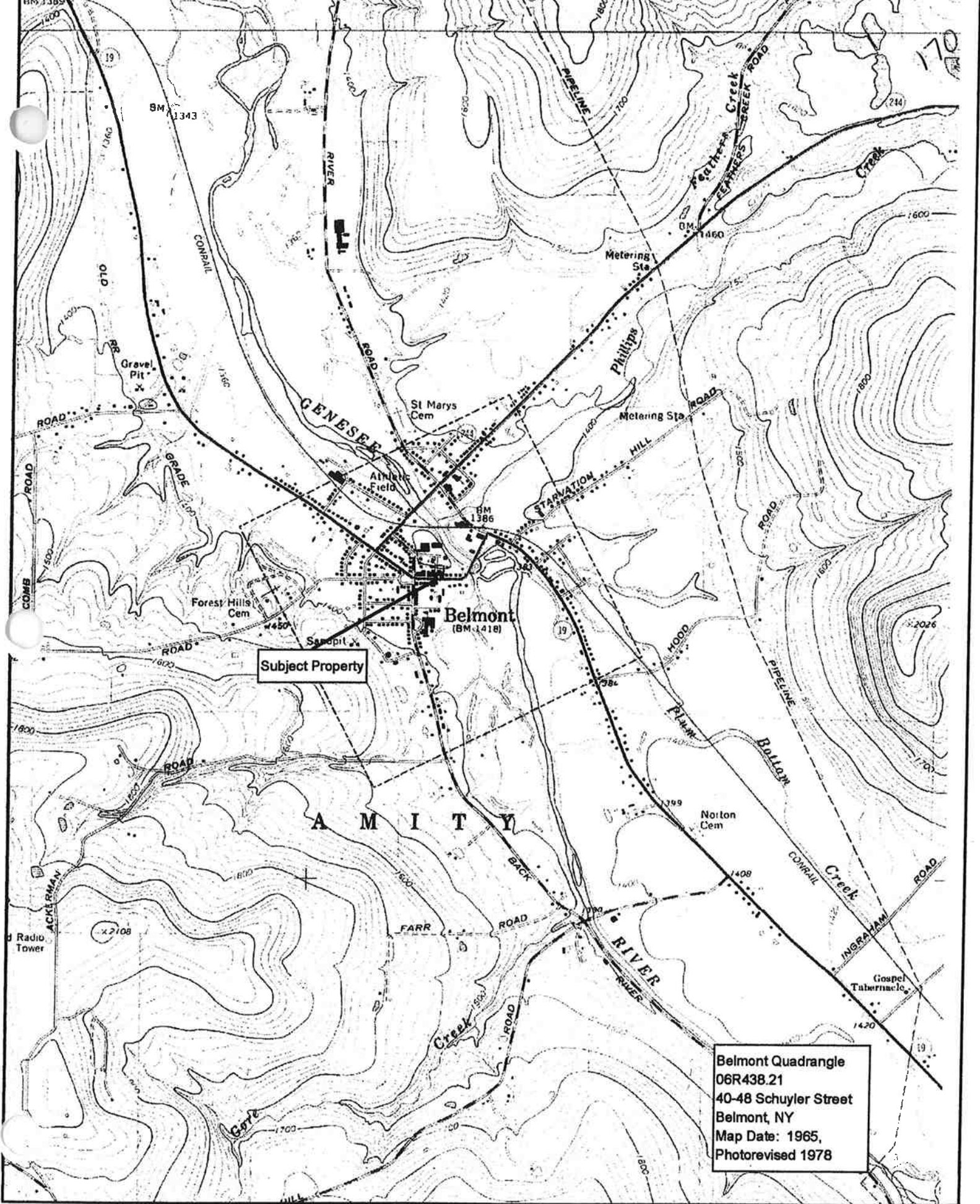
**A ARCHITECT**  
**A D DANIEL P. GLASOW**  
**ADG**

**APARTMENTS AT THE BELMONT**

**THE FOUNTAIN ARTS CENTER, INC.**  
48 SCHUYLER STREET  
SCAF/DHCO  
100 BELMONT STREET  
BELMONT, NEW YORK

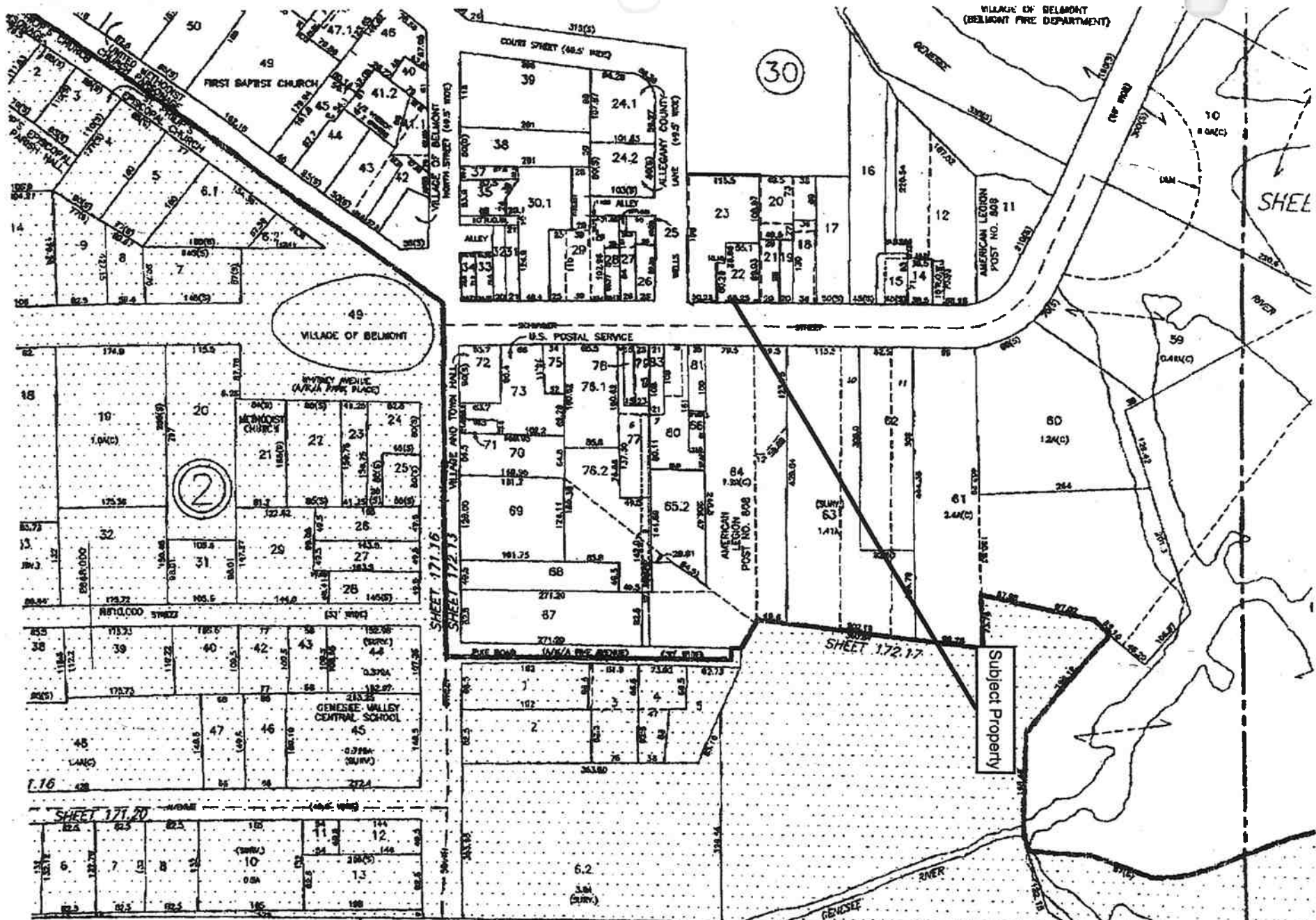
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JOB NO. 0807001 BELMONT  
FILE NO. 0807001  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"  
DRAWN: DP/PT/S  
CHECKED: DPG  
DATE: 11/20/08  
PLT: USB/08  
REVISION: 11/20/08  
REVISION:



**Subject Property**

Belmont Quadrangle  
 06R438.21  
 40-48 Schuyler Street  
 Belmont, NY  
 Map Date: 1965,  
 Photorevised 1978



PREPARED BY  
**TOSH & MCINTOSH LAND SURVEYORS**  
 1000 W. 10TH ST.  
 PITTSBURGH, PA. 15222  
 PREPARED FOR  
**WYOMING COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS**  
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12/14/90	NSR	FIELD	171.17-3-22	BY 10 BY GSR
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SPECIAL DISTRICTS	
SCHOOL	GENESEE VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL
FIRE	
WATER	

174



# Renovated, restored, and open for business

By **KATHRYN ROSS**  
THE SPECTATOR

**B**ELMONT — A 10-year-old vision became a reality Friday when The Belmont hotel was reopened after a massive renovation.

"Whenever you look at the old photos of Main Street (Schuyler Street), all the parades and events, you always see pictures of The Belmont standing here on the corner. It has always been a center activity and now it will be again. I think it is really going to help the village," said Mayor Terrance Schmelzer of the 119-year-old hotel.

The project was the vision of Wendy Skinner, who came to this area several years ago. The hotel was reopened as The Apartments at The Belmont by Arbor Development of Bath and Skinner's Fountain Arts Center.

"I can't believe I'm standing here," said Skinner. "You could get an ulcer or a heart condition taking on a project like this ... but it wasn't just me it was a community effort that stretched all across the state. I really believe this was my calling in life, to come to Belmont and to this building."

Constructed as a hotel in the 1890s, the brick building served visitors to Belmont with hotel accommodations on its three floors. It served as a community meeting place with a large meeting room, bar and restaurant area. There was once a yarn shop in the basement and during the Roaring '20s there is evidence it housed a speakeasy. After Belmont became the county seat and the courthouse and county offices were constructed, it became a meeting place during trials, for judges, attorneys, legislators, business people and county employees.

Today the once-dark bar area and deteriorating banquet room have been revamped into open spaces decorated in Art Deco with a banquet area and hardwood floors. The antique stairway to the second and third floors is preserved along with the original bar which will now serve as a coffee bar and luncheon area.

As the ribbon was cut.



KATHRYN ROSS

Flanked by those contributors and officials who helped make it a reality, Donald and Wendy Skinner cut the ribbon reopening the Belmont at a ceremony attended by more than 50 invited guests Friday, including Jeffrey Eaton, CEO of Arbor Development who conducted the ceremony. From left are, Lynn LeFeber of the state office of Historic Preservation, the Skinners, Belmont Mayor Terrance Schmelzer and Thomas Van Nortwick, regional director of the NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal.

before it came to Skinner's attention. After obtaining it, she established the Fountain Arts Gallery in part of the building while trying to obtain grant funding to help stabilize and renovate the rest of the building.

Throughout the years she obtained funding grants from the late state Sen. Patricia McGee, R-Franklinville, as well as funding from the New York State Council for the Arts, the state Main Street Grant Program, and local agencies — the Allegany County Area Foundation, the Moogan Family Foundation and ACCORD. She also got funding from individual donors including Ann Yannie Corrado, a former Belmont resident, whose artwork is featured throughout the building.

With the help of funding from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund and the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation, the building was preserved. It was placed on both the



KATHRYN ROSS

The Belmont, constructed in 1890 on Schuyler Street in Belmont has undergone massive renovation. It reopened Friday.

state and national historic registers

"About five years ago, Arbor Development of Bath and the Fountain Arts Center, with development consultant Edgemere Development Inc. of Rochester, collaborated on the project to renovate the hotel for mixed residential and retail use. As co-owner of the building, the

Fountain Arts Center will sublet most of the ground-floor space to retain tenants while using the remainder for its studio and gallery. Arbor Development will manage the property, including 19 new apartments located on the second and third floors of the building.

"The project received funding from several part-

ners with Key Bank as the lead financing source, contributing \$3.2 million in equity funds and \$3 million in construction financing," said Arbor Development CEO Jeffrey Eaton.

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## The Belmont Hotel, Allegany County



League staff was involved in the earliest local efforts to reuse this imposing three-story structure built in 1890 in the heart of this rural village, and advised on some of the project's first grants. Now, this fully rehabilitated mixed-use property includes cultural, commercial and residential units and is a cornerstone of downtown revitalization efforts – all the while respecting the remaining historical

elements of “The Queen of Schuyler Street.”

Contributing to the success of this project were Arbor Development of Bath; The Fountain Arts Center in Belmont; Edgemere Development in Rochester; Saralinda Hooker, Preservation Consultant, of Canandaigua; ADG Architects of Rochester; and DGA Builders of East Rochester.

The Belmont Hotel was built in 1890, just down the street from the Allegany County Courthouse in the Village of Belmont. According to Dan Gallagher, Director of Real Estate Development for Arbor Development, “The former Belmont Hotel has been transformed from a decaying eyesore and community safety hazard into an outstanding example of the rehabilitation of a historic building through preservation. This transformation has inspired other business owners to make improvements to their properties, and has fostered additional streetscape developments throughout Belmont’s downtown business district. We are truly honored to receive statewide recognition for our project.”