

Pittsford Neighbors – April 2017 issue
Submitted by Pittsford Town Supervisor Bill Smith

One hundred years ago, Pittsford looked similar to many other towns and villages of similar size in the region. Rolling farm fields, bustling villages, and homesteads dotting the roadways typified much of what you'd find around western New York. Today, Pittsford generally is regarded as distinctive, for the extent to which it has retained so much of its historic architecture and character.

This hasn't happened by accident. Pittsford has been fortunate, going back many years, to have had citizens involved in practices and concepts of historic preservation in our community.

Across the country, such designation has proven to be a significant factor in providing for the long-term preservation of historic property and community heritage. In Pittsford this is the province of our volunteer Design Review and Historic Preservation Board. It works step-by-step with eligible property owners in moving through the process to historic designation. This status is intended to protect the cultural and aesthetic integrity of a property for years to come.

From a bungalow to the most stately home or unique commercial building, all help tell the story of our community's heritage – how people lived, worked and socialized. All are eligible to be considered for historic status. All help maintain a unique sense of character and place in the community. Preserved historic properties have a positive impact on property values throughout the Town.

Pittsford's commitment to historic preservation is long-held. It's evident all around us. Embracing nationally designated historic areas like our Village center and the Erie Canal, and local treasures like Hopkins Farm, the Phoenix Building, and Pittsford Farms Dairy, our community has worked diligently to preserve and highlight those structures and places that embody our heritage. Currently, the Town has over 80 individually designated historic properties and nearly 20 more within the Milepost/Stonetown Town Historic District. These unique places are complimented by over 500 properties encompassed by the Pittsford Village Historic District.

More than just a place rich in history, Pittsford is a place whose residents work together to support our historic resources. The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board consists of volunteers with experience in architecture, preservation and design. It's responsible for keeping an inventory of historically significant structures, considering landmark designations, and promoting historic preservation.

The board often works and shares information with Historic Pittsford, a local non-profit that works to preserve Pittsford's history and historic resources through community education and advocacy. Historic Pittsford's Little House Museum at 18 Monroe Avenue offers a glimpse into Pittsford's past. So do their educational programs. Historic Pittsford sponsors educational programs throughout the year.

The richness of Pittsford's history contributes to the quality of our community life and to the value of our homes. You can learn more about Pittsford's heritage at www.historicpittsford.com and at the history pages of the Town and Village websites, www.townofpittsford.org/home-history and www.villageofpittsford.org/history/. As ever, if you have comments or questions about this or any other topic, please stop by my office in Town Hall, call me at 248-6220 or send a message to bsmith@townofpittsford.org.