

Maine Preservation

Our Heritage, Our Legacy

233 West Main Street
Yarmouth, Maine 04096
(207) 847-3577
info@mainepreservation.org
www.mainepreservation.org

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May 24, 2016

Contributors, Foundations, Funding Institutions; Granting Agencies

RE: Surry (ME) School Rehabilitation Project

To Whom It May Concern:

Maine Preservation (1972) is the state's nonprofit, 501(c)(3), member-based organization whose mission is to promote and preserve historic places, buildings, downtowns and neighborhoods, strengthening the cultural and economic vitality of Maine communities.

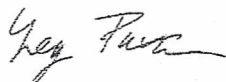
Maine Preservation strongly supports the Surry School Rehabilitation Project and its sponsor, the Surry Village School Preservation Group [501(c)(3) status pending], in its efforts to create a public community center, re-purposing the historic and unique, two-story, 1872 Old Village School, a local landmark in this coastal village in the Acadia Region.

In August, 2015 at the request of local citizens, Maine Preservation included the Old Village School on its statewide, Most Endangered Historic Places list in order to focus public attention on this potential community resource. Demolition was under consideration. Under local leadership, the Surry Village School Preservation Group (SVSPG) emerged, formulating in just seven months a plan for rehabilitation of the town-owned property for social, educational and community uses, while also seeking eligibility for listing the building in the National Register of Historic Places. Cost estimates for necessary repairs along with fire and life safety code improvements were solicited and prepared, and a public relations campaign initiated, demonstrating the feasibility of rehabilitating the building for future community use. This proposal was adopted at Town Meeting by about a 3 to 1 margin!

The Surry School Rehabilitation Project is an important model for other rural Maine communities where financial resources are scarce and the need for formation of social capital remains compelling. Maine Preservation is pleased to stand with Surry's citizens in this effort to help reinforce the local sense of place, and the local economy, while extending the practical utility of the Town's architectural heritage.

We hope you will also extend full consideration to SVSPG's request for financial assistance.

Sincerely,



Greg Paxton, Executive Director

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