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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HELP IS AVAILABLE FOR OWNERS OF OLDER BUILDINGS
Groups Present Workshop on Historic Properties Tax Credits

ALBANY, January 29, 2010 – People in New York’s Southern Tier may soon find it more affordable to make repairs on their older homes and businesses.

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Preservation League of New York State will present two free workshops in Elmira to help homeowners and businesses take advantage of a tax credit for repairs to older buildings. Historic Elmira is co-sponsoring the workshops, which is expected to draw participants from a five-county area.

The workshops will be held on **Thursday, February 18** at Park Church, 208 W. Gray Street in Elmira. An afternoon workshop, from **2:00 – 4:00 p.m.**, will focus on commercial properties. An evening presentation, from **5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**, will address the needs of homeowners. During both workshops, staff from the State Historic Preservation Office will review the basic guidelines of the program and answer questions about the application process.

The workshop is free and open to the public, and light refreshments will be served. **To RSVP online, visit www.historicelmira.org.**

Additional support for the workshops is being provided by AIASNY; the City of Elmira; Empire State Development Corporation; Historic Ithaca; Johnson-Schmidt & Associates, Architects; Market Street Restoration Agency; Near Westside Neighborhood Association; Nixon Peabody; Preservation Association of the Southern Tier; and the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development.

The **New York State Historic Residential Properties Tax Credit Program** will cover **20%** of qualified rehabilitation costs of **owner-occupied** historic houses, up to a **credit value of**

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\$50,000. The **NYS Historic Commercial Properties Tax Credit** will cover up to 20% of qualified rehabilitation costs up to a **credit value of \$5 million.**

“The Historic Preservation Tax Credit can be an effective tool in revitalizing the historic neighborhoods and commercial districts of upstate’s cities and villages,” said Carol Ash, Commissioner of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. “And it’s a great tool for homeowners and businesses to save significant money on improvements to their properties.”

“This is a great time to finally fix that leaking roof, or repair drafty windows,” said Jay DiLorenzo, president of the Preservation League of New York State. “This tax credit can help homeowners provide safer and healthier homes for their families, and protect the investments of business owners for years to come.”

This program requires that the building be individually listed in the State or National Register of Historic Places, or in a listed historic district. Additionally, the building must be located in a qualifying census tract, and at least \$5,000 must be spent on the project.

In Elmira, the Near West Side neighborhood has a high concentration of eligible homes. The not-for-profit group Historic Elmira recently received a Preserve New York grant from the Preservation League of New York State to undertake a survey of the Maple Avenue area that may lead to the creation of a historic district. “The League has repeatedly seen that when historic districts are identified, efforts that help owners protect and maximize their investments in their properties soon follow,” said Tania Werbizky, the Preservation League’s Regional Director of Technical and Grant Programs in central and western New York. “In addition to Elmira, Binghamton, Corning, Ithaca, Montour Falls and Owego already have large historic districts while opportunities for districts and landmarks exist throughout the region. We urge anyone interested in neighborhood and downtown reinvestment to attend”.

“So many of our communities have remarkable 19th century commercial and residential buildings, said Kaye Newbury, President of Historic Elmira. “We are pleased to be able to help bring attention to ways in which owners can use tax credits to maintain and improve their properties as part of our mission to facilitate, educate and advocate for historic preservation.”

To find out if a home is eligible, please go to <http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/tax-credit-programs> or contact Sloane Bullough at the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation at 518-237-8643, ext. 3252. Eligibility information will also be available at the workshops.