

DRC Utilization Plan

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A. Restoration and Re-Use

The utilization of the former Dutch Reformed Church will be consistent with the following goals for restoration and re-use.

1. Grounds

- The grounds will be restored to suitable park-like setting, to the full extent of the building's property line.
- Trees on the east side will be trimmed to allow the building to be seen from the river.
- Floodlights will be installed around the property to light the building at night.

2. Exterior

- The columnar porch on the south façade and the west and east exterior walls and windows are to be restored as completely and as faithfully as possible to the original intentions of A. J. Davis.
- The addition of a service structure toward the back (north end) of property, if justified for re-use purposes, would be acceptable.

3. Main Interior

- The interior is to be restored as completely and as faithfully as possible to Davis' original designs, but with limited modifications necessitated by re-use plans.
- Walls and ceilings will be restored to their original color scheme.
- Windows will be restored to their original design, with uninterrupted, uncolored windowpanes.
- At the north end, the black paint will be removed.
- Electrical and lighting systems will be replaced and upgraded.
- Some form of theatrical lighting, with spots and dimmable control, will be installed.
- Some form of audio system will be installed.
- Balconies will be restored, including the present pew seating.
- Pew seating in the main interior is an open question.

4. Functional Interior Spaces

- The vestries at either side of the altar area will be rehabilitated to serve useful purposes. Whether these will be treated as public spaces remains an open question.
- The basement space will be rehabilitated to serve useful purposes.

5. Other Functional Requirements

- The restored building will comply with all applicable building codes for public safety, including handicapped access.
- Additional fire exits may be probably required.

B. Operation of the Restored Building

The restored building will become the responsibility of an organization set up to maintain it and operate the programs that assures financial viability and its role in the community.

1. Operating Organization

- The restored DRC will be given a long-term lease by the City of Newburgh to the Organization set up to maintain the building and operate its programs. (Alternatively, the City may wish to sell the building to the organization.)
- The operating Organization will be established as a nonprofit entity, governed by a board representing local and regional government, the architectural preservation community, and the arts community.
- The Organization will have a mission to:
 - Maintain the building in a manner suitable for a National Historic Monument.
 - Operate programs to ensure financial self-sufficiency.
 - Ensure the building and its programs have a positive role in the community.

2. Name

- The building – or more properly, the organization operating the building’s programs, will adopt a name other than “Dutch Reformed Church” to emphasis its new purpose.
- By current consensus, the name will include “Lyceum” as in “Newburgh Lyceum” or the “Davis Lyceum.” This evokes both “high” and popular culture by recalling a classical term as well as a traditional name for movie houses. It also alludes to the Newburgh cultural association that sometimes met in the building in the mid-19th century.
- If the project receives major support from a family, foundation, or corporate sponsor, it may be appropriate to add the name of the major supporter to the building’s name.

3. Operating Goals

- The primary goal is to operate the former DRC as a self-sufficient organization, in which the expenses of maintaining the structure are matched by income generated by its programs.
- To meet this requirement, at least 65% of the events held in the building will need to be income-generating events.
- To assure its place as a force for community good, a proportion of the programs will not generate income per se but may be supported by program grants from government and foundations.
- Operating expenses will include the salaries of a director, a program manager, and an administrative assistant; utilities; outreach expenses; and routine maintenance of the building and grounds.
- The programs and events presented in the former DRC will be those that are consistent with the nature of the space and will not contribute to any permanently damaging effects on the structure.

4. Physical Capacities

- The stage can hold up to 35 [?] people.
- The auditorium seats about 400 in its present configuration of pews. [confirm]
- The only “backstage” areas are the two vestries, and the basement.
- The acoustics of the building are apparently very “live” or “bright.”

C. Appropriate Uses

The following are potential uses would benefit from the nature of the building without the likelihood of damaging the monument.

1. Musical Performance

- Small ensemble groups – jazz, chamber music, solo performances
- Acoustic or amplified

Design Implications

- Sound system, lighting system, box office, ticket takers, seat numbering

2. Theatrical Performance

- Small productions with minimal stage sets
- One-person shows

Design Implications

- Sound system, lighting system, box office, ticket takers, seat numbering

3. Meetings

- Lectures, including illustrated lectures (requires projector & screen)
- Community meetings (city council, planning board, proposal reviews, etc.)
- Corporate meetings (stockholders, sales)
- Academic conferences

Design Implications

- Audio & video recording facilities
- Slide & computer presentation support

4. Social Events

- Weddings
- Receptions
- Fundraising events

Design Implications

- Facilities for catering, food service
- Kitchen facilities
- Piano, organ, or electronic keyboard/synthesizer
- Ability to remove seating from main floor area

5. Movie Projection

- "Art House" program for less commercial movies
- Saturday morning kids program
- Spanish-language program

Design Implications

- Projection booth
- Projection screen
- More advanced sound system?