



April 2, 2021

James Finelli  
CLG Communities of Central and Western NY  
OPRHP  
PO Box 189  
Waterford, NY 12188  
[James.Finelli@parks.ny.gov](mailto:James.Finelli@parks.ny.gov)  
518-268-2215

Mr. Finelli:

Attached is the 2020 Certified Local Government Annual Report for the Village of Owego, NY . This annual report is required to maintain the village's status as a CLG. It is being submitted on time, by today's deadline of April 2, 2021.

As Chair of the Owego Historic Preservation Commission, I am responsible for this annual report and I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns about it.

Thank you for the opportunity to report on the status of our Certified Local Government. We highly value the benefits of this program in our village.

Sincerely,

*Nadine Bigsby*

Nadine Bigsby, Chair  
Owego Historic Preservation Commission  
20 Elm Street, Owego, NY 13827  
[www.villageofowego.com](http://www.villageofowego.com)  
PHONE : 607-687-1101, 607-687-2528  
FAX: 607-687-1062  
EMAIL: [villageofowegodpw@hotmail.com](mailto:villageofowegodpw@hotmail.com)  
EMAIL: [OHPC.Bigsby@gmail.com](mailto:OHPC.Bigsby@gmail.com)



# Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

## CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ANNUAL REPORT

Date Submitted: April 2, 2021

Municipality: Village of Owego, NY

Report filed by: Nadine Bigsby  
Chair, Owego Historic Preservation Commission

Phone/E-mail: 607-687-1101  
OHPC.Bigsby@gmail.com

### Instructions

All questions refer to FY2020 (October 1, 2019-September 30, 2020). Please provide data **only** for the period of FY2020.

Please attach a list of current commission/board membership including contact information and résumés of new members. *See end of report. No membership changes for this year.*

Please attach a copy of any revisions to the local historic preservation legislation. **NONE**

### 1. Historic Preservation Commission/Board

How many meetings has the commission/board held during the year? 15

Has there ever been an absence of a quorum and/or inability of the commission/board to conduct business due to issues with membership? Please explain: NO

### 2. Training

What historic preservation training/workshops or meetings did commission/board members attend during the year? On 10/25/2019 four OHPC Commissioners plus Village Board Trustee Liaison attended 8-hour NACP CAMP Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program in Corning, NY. Absent Commissioner was able to view recorded program. This was reported in last year's report, too. Local Preservation Ordinance requires 4 hours of annual CE for Commission members.

Please indicate what, if any, information or training the CLG needs from the SHPO: We find that the Preservation League of NY Trainings are excellent. Janna Rudler, local PLNY rep has been supportive. It is always helpful to have a coordinated effort and communications regarding the OHPC COA Review and the SHPO Tax Credit Application Review.

### 3. Survey/Inventory

Did your local government conduct a historic resources survey? How many historic properties were surveyed? NO

---

#### Division for Historic Preservation

P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 • (518) 237-8643 • www.nysparks.com

## **6. Overall CLG Program**

Briefly describe any CLG special achievements/successes for the period of review:

Of particular note is the near completion of a \$15 million rebuild of the Village's wastewater treatment plant. This upgrade changes the way that wastewater is processed, turning the end product from a biohazard into a non-biohazard. The Village also received two more grants to enable future compliance with new DEC standards for clean water which is pumped back into the Susquehanna River. This system rebuild and upgrade will also provide a source of income to the Village for processing more outside sewage from surrounding areas. The current Mayor Mike Baratta and Trustees worked hard to complete this project where others had failed. Infrastructure and Clean Water issues are key to healthy and sustainable Historic Districts and the municipalities in which they are designated. People and families need to be able to live in our historic buildings and neighborhoods so that what we treasure does not disappear.

The Village is deeply involved in managing the progress of the \$10 million DRI grant from NYS. Most of the work being planned and accomplished is in the Historic District. These projects include infrastructure, façade work, commercial/mixed use development, recreational and residential projects, marketing/branding strategy and community facilities. **The OHPC will review 19 of these projects for COAs.**

In December 2019, the Village was awarded \$250,000 for five "New York Main Street" projects plus Street Enhancements. Two "Restore New York" projects for \$875,000 were also awarded. The Preservation League of NY awarded historic Evergreen Cemetery an \$8,000 grant for a Cultural Landscape Report by Landscape Architect Martha Lyons, completed in May of 2020. A new virtual tour of Evergreen was launched in the Fall of 2020 sponsored by Tioga County Department of Economic Development & Planning. A Companion Book for the Tour has just been completed.

A housing complex, Owego Gardens/Owego Gardens II was awarded a grant of \$350,000 to help develop and construct 62 apartments and 31 townhomes as new affordable housing opportunities.

Coburn Library in the Historic District is just completing an OHPC COA approved and DRI partially funded 1200 square ft annex in the rear which includes an elevator.

One basic thing to mention is that the OHPC transitioned to virtual meetings during the Covid 19 pandemic and never stopped working. This reflects the dedication of the Commissioners and the support of the Village Mayor and Trustees and Team Tioga at Tioga County.

The importance of the partnership between the leadership at Tioga County and the Village of Owego government cannot be overestimated. Without the County's support in applying for grants and administering them, as needed, most of the accomplishments listed in this report would not have happened.

### 8. Local "Bricks and Mortar" Grant or Loan Program

Does your local government have a locally funded, historic preservation grant or loan program that is run through, administered, or reviewed by your office? How many properties have been assisted? **NO**

### 9. Local Property Acquisition Program

Does your local government by purchase, donation, condemnation, or other means help to acquire or acquire itself some degree of title (e.g., fee simple interest or an easement) in historic properties? How many have been assisted or carried out by your local government?

Currently, there are no Landbank projects in the Historic District. There has been some Landbank work outside of the District, but not in the time frame of this report. In an area adjacent to the Historic District, a potential new initiative would be an (Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services) INHS Affordable Housing Project for the creation of 38 apartments and 15 townhomes. The Land Bank grant from Enterprise Community Partnership also allowed for acquisition of 9 properties in the Village of Waverly New York.

We continue to be concerned about the spread of "blight" in our historic community and we engage in regular dialogue with government officials about creating effective and humane approaches to this complex issue. We are also mindful of environmental flooding threats to our historic structures and are learning how to advocate for pro-active measures in protecting our historic structures from ruin.