

Under Landmarks' development plan for the Park the building will be used to house an exhibit devoted mainly to Roscoe Conkling. The central element will be a multimedia production recounting Conkling's life and remarkable achievements.

Accompanying exhibits will be devoted to the other individuals, families and organizations that called Rutger Park home (listed alphabetically):

- Egbert Bagg, William Bailey, Gilbert Butler
- John C. Devereux, the Dowling Family, the Finch Family
- Reverend Philemon H. Fowler, Walter Jerome Green, John Howarth
- Wyman Jones, the Kernan Family, Tomas Kinny
- New York State Teamsters, Morris Smith Miller
- Rutger Bleecker Miller, John Munn, Samuel Remington
- Edward A. Tallman, Thomas R. Walker, Walter Welch

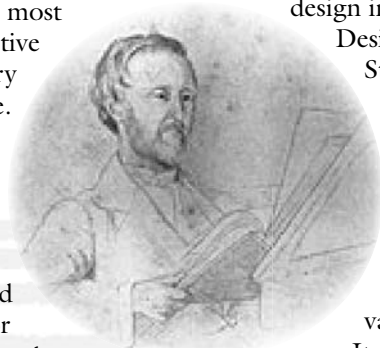
In addition to the exhibits, space would be created for professional office space and grand spaces will be made available to host special events on a fee basis.

1 Rutger Park — 1854

The home was designed by architect A.J. Davis, one of the most influential and innovative figures in 19th-century American architecture.

Davis was born in New York City, but around 1813 — and for about four years — lived in Utica where, he would later say, his “mind for architecture” was formed.

Designed in the Italian Villa style, 1 Rutger Park was originally built for banker John Munn. The house was occupied during the Civil War by Samuel Remington when Remington Arms had a factory in Utica.



A.J. Davis

This building will be used to house exhibits devoted mainly to the development of Utica and its architecture. The centerpiece will be a multimedia production tracing the development of Utica and envisioning its future. The exhibits will include:

- A 19th-Century Architecture Museum, highlighting Utica's connections to renowned architects A.J. Davis, Philip Hooker, Richard Upjohn, and landscape architects A.J. Downing and Fredrick Law Olmstead, Jr.
- Other aspects of Utica's notable architectural past and present
- 100 years of architectural progression in Rutger Park and the surrounding area
- Utica's Olmstead-designed park system
- A Dover Architectural Publication library and bookstore

Here again, in addition to the exhibits, space would be created for professional office space and grand spaces will be made available to host special events on a fee basis.

2 Rutger Park — 1852

Like 1 Rutger Park, 2 was built in the Italian Villa style. It was the second home built in the Park, with its design inspired by A.J. Downing's Design VI, Villa in the Italian Style, Bracketed.

The home was characterized by its picturesque style features including board and batten siding, square tower, large porches, balconies, verandas and varying roof lines.

It was torn down in 1994 after many years of owner neglect and the subject of the legal case of Dowling v. the City of Utica, which led to the strengthening of portions of the City's zoning ordinance to encourage the preservation of the community's historic resources.

Landmarks' plan calls for the reconstruction of the lost main structure, with the reconstructed #2 house to be used as the administration building for the overall site, as well as the Landmarks Society's main office. It will also contain:

- Utica Walking Tour Ticket headquarters
- Office space for other community-based nonprofit organizations
- A *Preservation in Utica* exhibit devoted to the preservation movement in the city

This building will also house site utilities and mechanicals needed for site modernization.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS

Properties on the south side of Rutger Park (South Street) will be acquired and demolished. A stone wall resembling the one fronting the Park on Rutger Street will be constructed, enclosing a parking area to be developed to the rear of the existing buildings.

The front greenspace of Rutger Park will be restored and recreated to match its original magnificence.

Utilities are to be buried from Park Avenue and South Street to Steuben Park, across Rutger Street to Taylor Avenue. A new sidewalk streetscape and lighting will be installed.

The plan also calls for improvements in the John Street streetscape from Bleecker Street to Rutger Street.

The Landmarks Society of Greater Utica was chartered by the State of New York on October 25, 1974, as a nonprofit educational corporation to preserve historic buildings and districts in the Utica area.

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A CONCEPT FOR DEVELOPMENT
BY THE LANDMARKS SOCIETY OF GREATER UTICA
SEPTEMBER 2005

Rutger Park

Where 19th-Century Politics and Architecture Live



RECOGNITION AS A NATIONAL TRUST HISTORIC SITE

The Landmarks Society's concept focuses on turning Rutger Park into a National Trust Site devoted to 19th-Century Politics and Architecture.

These buildings, the collections they house and the landscapes that surround them are both our legacy from the past and our gift to the future. Hearing the stories of the people — patriots and artists, presidents and slaves, millionaires and immigrants — who lived and worked in them is like turning the pages of America's family album.

This will be Utica's family album and the properties described here will house exhibits chronicling the development and extraordinary people who built this great city.

Rutger Park – WHERE 19TH-CENTURY POLITICS AND ARCHITECTURE LIVE

THE POLITICS

One of the most interesting political periods in our country occurred in the years leading up to, during and following the Civil War (the Reconstruction Period). In this northern city of Utica, where the abundance of textile mills made cotton king, lived three of the most influential political figures of the times: U.S. Senator Francis Kernan, the revered Democratic elder statesman; Horatio Seymour, governor of New York, then the largest state in the Union; and Roscoe Conkling, arguably the most powerful Republican of the period, staunch Lincoln supporter — and who happened to be Seymour's brother-in-law. Remarkably, all three of these national political powerhouses were Utica-based — and all had strong ties to Rutger Park.

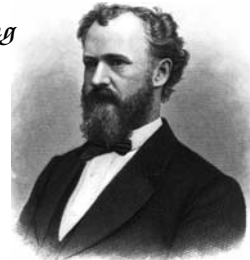
THE PEOPLE — POWERBROKERS OF THEIR DAY

Roscoe Conkling 1829-1888

One of the most prominent Republican leaders of the day, Conkling served as the national Republican political boss during the Grant, Hayes and Garfield administrations. He was born in Albany, New York in 1829 and married to Julia Seymour — sister of fellow Utican, former New York governor and Democratic Presidential candidate Horatio Seymour.

Conkling served two terms as Utica's mayor in the 1850s and then two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. He returned to his newly purchased Rutger Park residence after losing a third bid for the House in 1863. Not finished with politics, Conkling again won election to Congress in 1864 — and, in 1867, to the U.S. Senate from which he resigned in 1881. In 1882 he was nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court, but declined the nomination.

He died in 1888 from



overexertion in the famous blizzard of that year.

Horatio Seymour 1810-1886

Horatio Seymour was as prominent a Democrat as Conkling was a Republican. Coincidentally, he was also Conkling's brother-in-law!

Born in Pompey Hill, New York in 1810, he served as military secretary to New York Governor William L. Marcy, was a member of the New York Assembly and was elected mayor of Utica. He later served two, non-consecutive terms as governor of New York. He was the Democratic candidate against Ulysses S. Grant in the 1868 presidential election, losing by a margin of only 300,000 votes.

He then retired to private life and was known as the "Sage of Deerfield," welcoming throngs of visitors to his home in the town outside of Utica. Yet he remained active in New York State politics.

Seymour died in 1886, passing away in 3 Rutger Park.



Francis Kernan 1816-1892

The third member of the "Utica trio" was Francis Kernan.

Born in Wayne, New York in 1816, Kernan moved to Utica in 1839 to pursue a law career after graduating from Georgetown University. He served as school commissioner of Utica, manager of the New York State Hospital, official reporter of the Court of



Appeals, member of the New York Assembly and regent of the State University of New York.

In 1862 he was elected to Congress, defeating Roscoe Conkling, but lost a second bid to Conkling in 1864. He was the Democratic candidate for New York governor in 1872, but was defeated. He also served as a U.S. Senator from New York from 1875 to 1881. Kernan died in Utica in 1892.

THE ARCHITECTURE

Beyond the people it housed, Rutger Park is significant for the architectural styles it embodies. Properties in the Park and the surrounding area, known as the Rutger-Steuben Historic Park District, represent prime examples of several of the most prominent styles — including Greek Revival, Italian Villa, High Victorian Italianate, Richardsonian Romanesque, Second Empire, Stick Style, Queen Ann, Shingle Style and Modern.

Greek Revival — The first popular Romantic style, the Greek Revival, dominated the newly independent United States through much of the first half of the 19th century. Architectural models evocative of Greek democracy were thought to be especially appropriate in the new republic, as traditional ties to England were rejected in the decades following the War of 1812.

By the 1840s, a new trend toward competition among several acceptable architectural fashions was taking shape. The harbinger of this movement was the publication in 1842 of the first popular pattern book of house styles — Andrew Jackson Downing's *Cottage Residences*. Downing showed full-facade drawings (drawn by

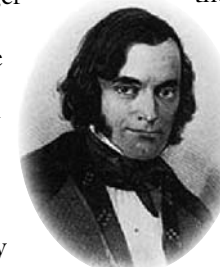
A.J. Davis) of several new fashions that he considered to be suitable alternatives to the prevailing Greek classicism. Medieval precedents were recommended in models that were to lead to the Gothic Revival style. Likewise, Italian Renaissance traditions were freely adapted in Downing's Italianate cottages. For the first time, builders and homebuyers had a choice.

Italian Villa — This style came to America in 1837 when an Italian Villa was built in Burlington, New Jersey. In 1842 the house was featured in A.J. Downing's books *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America* and *Cottage Residences*. Downing thought the style appealing because the "irregularity in the masses of the edifice and the shape of the roof" made "the sky outline of a building in the style extremely picturesque." Artist Thomas Cole felt the style was particularly suited to the American landscape and architect A.J. Davis crowned the Italian-derived design "The American Style."

THE PROJECT — LANDMARKS' CONCEPT FOR DEVELOPMENT

The development project for Rutger Park as proposed by the Landmarks Society involves the acquisition of the existing structures at 1 and 3 Rutger Park, the vacant lot where 2 Rutger Park once stood and all other properties that border South Street, which forms the southern border of the Park. This project represents a public-private partnership between the Landmarks Society and the City of Utica. The advantages of this relationship are that it will:

- Provide a centerpiece for neighborhood revitalization;
- Provide for public education



A.J. Downing

and recreational opportunities;

- Provide economic benefits through an increase in historic tourism activities.

THE PROPERTIES — RUTGER-STEUBEN PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT AND VICINITY

Rutger Park is the centerpiece of the area in Utica known as the Rutger-Steuben Park Historic District, which includes the Park and properties around Steuben Park, Rutger Street from Steuben Park east to Taylor Avenue and Second Street. The elegant mansions of Rutger Park, which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, reflect not only the stature of their owners, but also the general prosperity of Utica between 1830 and 1890. During that period the establishment of the textile mills, together with the opening of the Erie and Chenango canals, brought major economic growth.

3 Rutger Park — ca. 1830

A prime example of the aforementioned Greek Revival style, 3 Rutger Park was designed by Phillip Hooker. Often referred to as the Miller or Roscoe Conkling house, it is one of the most significant structures in Oneida County. The foundation as well as the masonry wall surrounding Rutger Park's north edge were laid by Judge Morris Miller. His son, Rutger B. Miller, completed construction following the judge's death in 1824.

From 1863 to 1888 this hip-roofed Greek Revival residence was the home of Roscoe Conkling. In 1894 Nicholas E. Kernan, son of Francis Kernan, purchased the house from Conkling's daughter. The prominence of its owners has made this house a National Historic Landmark.

3 Rutger Park



2 Rutger Park



1 Rutger Park