



ENDANGERED PROPERTIES

PAWV of West Virginia
2013

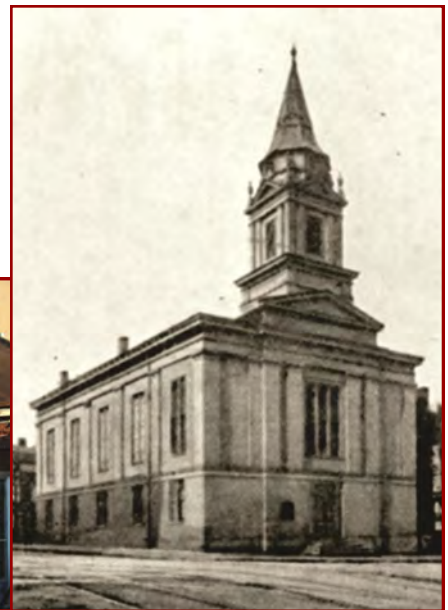
Second Presbyterian Church Wheeling, Ohio County

The **Second Presbyterian Church** was one of the first buildings to be constructed in the heart of Wheeling's Center Market Square Historic District, a 160-year-old neighborhood known for its distinctive market traditions and communities.

The Greek Revival church has stood at its current site since 1850, when it was built by the congregation. In the summer of 2011, a large portion of the roof collapsed due to truss failure; the roof's trusses were weakened decades ago after being cut and modified to hang a chandelier in the sanctuary. The church has since been threatened by weather and water infiltration.

The building's owner, Near Earth Object Foundation, has submitted engineering plans to the City of Wheeling, and once the plans are approved, the roof will be completed immediately to reestablish a weather-resistant enclosure.

The Near Earth Object Foundation has owned the building for three years and has been working to preserve the building and bring it up to code. It plans to reopen the building for presentations, plays, and educational events, as well as an "urban observatory" — a project to observe and monitor Near Earth Objects supported by the NASA West Virginia Space Grant Consortium.



Preservation Alliance of West Virginia

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PAWV ENDANGERED LIST 2013

Second Presbyterian Church

Background: The Second Presbyterian Church was one of the first buildings to be constructed in the heart of Wheeling's Center Market Square Historic District, a 160-year-old neighborhood known for its distinctive market traditions and communities. The Greek Revival church has stood at its current site since 1850. In the summer of 2011, a large portion of the roof collapsed due to truss failure; the roof's trusses were weakened decades ago after being cut and modified to hang a chandelier in the sanctuary. The church has since been threatened by weather and water infiltration. The building's owner, Near Earth Object Foundation, has submitted engineering plans to the City of Wheeling. Once the plans are approved, the roof will be completed immediately to reestablish a weather-resistant enclosure.

Description: The Second Presbyterian Church stands two stories tall and upon a native sandstone foundation. It is constructed of bricks hand-made by enslaved people. The building is structurally sound, although the steeple is missing, and the church houses many unique historical artifacts including original stenciling from 1850, square-head nails, and a George Coffin bell circa 1850. Fantastic features such as stained glass, a Moeller organ, and spiral staircase have been maintained for over 100 years.

Significance: The Second Presbyterian Church has stood at its current site since 1850 and is one of the most historic buildings in Wheeling. It is a main staple in Wheeling's Center Market Historic District. The church was the heart and soul of the Wheeling, Virginia's Abolitionist Movement and was the meeting place of the Freedman's Association in February 1865. Currently being researched are the very possible ties between the church and the Underground Railroad effort in Wheeling. Additionally, the church's Reverend Richard Dodge held a meeting in the church to organize the first Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Dodge and his wife were close friends with President Abraham Lincoln.

2013 Preservation Steps: The steps for 2013 are reconstruction of the trusses using as much salvageable material as possible and local timber. Then the roof will be sheathed and installed with historically-appropriate roofing material.

Ultimate Goal: The Near Earth Object Foundation has owned the building for three years and has been working to preserve it and bring it up to code. It plans for the adaptive reuse and reopening of the building for presentations, plays, and educational events, as well as an urban observatory, a project to observe and monitor Near Earth Objects that is supported by the NASA West Virginia Space Grant Consortium.

Resources: The Near Earth Object Foundation has time, expertise, and materials committed for the preservation effort. For example, the preservation plan includes that much of the original materials will be salvaged and utilized in the reconstruction. The wood for the trusses will be cut from trees on land formerly known as Garvin's Dairy. In addition to the trees, a building will be designated to house saw-mill equipment for the express purpose of constructing the trusses and other future preservation effort needs.

Nominated By: Near Earth Object Foundation



The Preservation Alliance of West Virginia is the statewide grassroots organization devoted to preserving West Virginia's history and culture. The PAWV provides assistance to help save endangered sites. For more information on the 2013 Endangered List, or if you would like to suggest a site for next year, see www.pawv.org/endangernom.htm



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