

January 10, 2022

The Niagara River Greenway Commission
PO Box 1132,
Niagara Falls NY 14303



Dear Members of the Greenway Commission,

The Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation (THPF) is requesting consideration for funding by the Greenway Commission, via the Niagara Host Community, for restoration efforts to the historic Porter Mansion, which is home to The Tatler (est. 1925.)

In accordance with the guidelines of the Niagara Greenway Commission the THPF project is appropriate regarding:

- Principles of Restoration and Authenticity
- Goals that Celebrate History and Heritage
- Criteria that is Consistent with Greenway Principles, Focus Area, and the Ability to Raise Funds

The THPF, a 501 (c) (3) b non-profit organization, was formed with the purpose of maintaining and restoring the Peter A. Porter Mansion at 6 Fourth Street in Niagara Falls for The Tatler. This property, which at one time extended to the upper Niagara River, borders property now owned by the New York State Parks. The house constructed in 1876 has a long history tied to the Porter Family, early influencers in the City of Niagara Falls. In fact, the Porter Family actually “owned” the falls itself and much of the property adjacent to the Niagara River from below the falls all the way to Porter Avenue in Buffalo. We remain committed to the stewardship of this environmentally sensitive property on the Niagara River Corridor.

This unique historic mansion has been home to The Tatler twice, once in the 1930s and again in 1956 when The Tatler finally purchased the house. The Tatler began as an organization tied to the National Women’s Club Movement of the 1920’s and was founded by Gertrude Porter in 1925. The Women’s Club Movement was instrumental in reshaping the face of America. This National Movement not only focused on child labor laws and the juvenile court systems, it also focused on parks and environmental protection. The Tatler is part of that rich tradition. (Supplemental information on both the mansion and The Tatler is attached to this application.) More recently, the focus includes improving and expanding access to the public especially tourists, school, historical, and preservation groups.

Three projects to assist in the restoration of The Tatler Porter Mansion are being proposed by the THPF for Greenway funding:

- Chimney restoration and dormer repair
- Removal of aluminum siding / Restoration of original siding
- Expanding accessibility for persons with disabilities

Thank you for the consideration of assistance in restoring this house with significant ties to the history of the City of Niagara Falls.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Caso". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lori Caso, President Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation

PROJECT SPONSORS WHO ARE NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS: Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation 501(c) (3) Status Attached.

PROJECT NAME: The Tatler - Porter Mansion Restoration Project

PROJECT LOCATION: 6 Fourth Street Niagara Falls, NY 14303 Recognized and given local landmark designation in 2004 by The Niagara Falls Historic Preservation Commission.

MINOR CIVIL DIVISION: City of Niagara Falls, New York

OWNERSHIP INFORMATION: House and Property are owned by The Tatler, Inc.

AUTHORIZED OFFICIALS:

Lori Caso, President, Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation

Gay Molnar, Treasurer, Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation

POINT OF CONTACT:

Lori Caso, President, Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation 716-696-2646 lcaso@m.com

BUDGET SUMMARY:

- Chimney restoration for six chimneys and dormer repair = \$41,000
- Removal of aluminum siding/Restoration of original siding= \$194,000
- Expanded accessibility to public= (\$49,000 lift) (Renovation access from the garage \$55,000) = \$104,000

Total = \$339,000

PROJECT NARRATIVE: Our project seeks to provide restoration and accessibility to this important historic mansion with direct ties to the Porter Family who introduced the power of the Niagara River to the world. A member of the N.Y.S. Legislature, Peter A. Porter (President of the Niagara Power Company) introduced and brought about the passage of the bill that sanctioned the state to utilize and develop electric power at Niagara Falls. This hydroelectric power from the Niagara River was unharnessed by the man who built the Porter Mansion. This application seeks to celebrate our important, unique and interesting part of Niagara Falls history and heritage. The Porter mansion has also been home to The Tatler, a women's social organization started by Gertrude Porter in 1925 and it remains a crown jewel on the upper Niagara River Corridor.

PROJECT SCHEDULE: 2022 - 2024

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: Attached.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS: The project involves an existing building restored to its original condition; a State Environmental Review is not necessary.

Meeting the Greenway Goals and Principals Through the Proposed Projects

The purpose of the Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation (THPF) is to study, preserve and protect the historically significant architecture of the original Peter A. Porter Mansion. The THPF was established to provide restoration, renovation, and preservation of this local historic treasure. Additional foundation goals include efforts to promote public appreciation of the unique character, design, and architecture of the building. Partnerships with government agencies, historic preservation organizations and societies, other foundations and educational institutions assist in achievement of these goals. We intend to preserve, protect, and put to good use the Porter mansion and serve as a resource for historians, students, and architects in perpetuity.

THPF acknowledges the significance of the property being adjacent to the Frederick Law Olmsted designed Niagara Reservation as well as the proximity of the property to the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area and to the Greenway focus area.

Aligning with the Greenway Commission's Principles of Restoration and Authenticity, two of the three proposed projects involve restoring the house to its original condition. The chimneys from the six marble fireplaces have fallen into a state of disrepair and need immediate attention to further stop the condition from full deterioration.

The placing of the aluminum siding on the house in the early 1960's detracts from its historic nature and impedes the process of gaining State and National Historic Landmark status. The Local Landmark designation references removing the siding as soon as feasible. Removing the siding and restoring and repairing the original wood front will allow for an appropriate and authentic look to the home.

The goal of celebrating history and heritage of this 1876 home will be best met by expanding access to persons with disabilities. Creating a wheelchair accessible entrance in the garage and kitchen area would not affect the historic nature of the original structure and would allow for greater accessibility to the first floor of the home.

Consistent with Greenway principles, the home is within the focus area. The THPF created fund-raising opportunities through our "Partners in Preservation Program." Initiated in 2021, significant partnerships have already been established with The Collins Foundation, Key Bank, The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area as well as many individual contributors. Ongoing fundraising efforts will enable us to provide matching funds when applying for future grants. Community outreach and education would be enhanced.

Many of the historic homes built during the early days of the City of Niagara Falls have been destroyed or are in deplorable condition. The Tatler Mansion, a well-maintained house has remained a significant landmark in Niagara Falls. As a result of our diligence in maintaining the Porter Mansion, The Tatler was honored by Preservation Buffalo Niagara in the category of stewardship. Also, in 2011, the Porter Mansion was selected for a site visit during the National Preservation Conference, call "Alternating Currents" which was held in Buffalo, N.Y. People from around the world visited the Tatler's Porter Mansion and marveled at the history of the Porter Family and the Niagara River. We expect our preservation efforts will spark neighboring property owners to consider their own improvement and preservation efforts. We respectfully request Greenway funding to assist the THPF in our goal of preserving this important and historically relevant structure.

The Original Peter A. Porter Mansion

In the 1800's the Porter Family owned all the land along Buffalo Avenue, including Goat Island. Peter A. Porter (1853-1925) purchased the property now 6 Fourth Street, in 1874 from his maiden aunt Elisabeth Porter. The house was built in 1876 by Peter A. Porter as a wedding gift for his wife, Alice. Understanding his lineage: Peter A. Porter was the grandson of General Peter B. Porter (1773-1844) and the son of Colonel Peter A. Porter (1827-1864) a Medal of Honor Awardee who fought for the Union in the Civil War.

A graduate of Yale University, Peter A. Porter was a lawyer, civic leader, and politician. He was the owner/publisher of Niagara Gazette, owned The Cataract House, and was the President of the Cataract Bank. He was elected to the New York State Assembly and later to the U.S. Congress where he represented this area of Western New York. A great history buff, he founded the Niagara Frontier Historical Society, and was a renowned writer on Western New York history. Porter wrote eight books on the Niagara Region. While all of them make a convincing argument for the importance of the Niagara River, the book, Niagara an Aboriginal Center of Trade traces the Niagara River as a center of civilization and economy back to early aboriginal trade. As a local businessman, Peter played an instrumental role in establishing the Shredded Wheat Company and The Niagara Power Project, serving on the Board of Directors of both projects.

The house itself is an elaborate Italianate design with 14 rooms. There are parquetry floors of oak trimmed with mahogany and walnut. Rooms were heated by six marble fireplaces until 1900, when the Shredded Wheat plant was built and a steam line from the plant was run underground to heat the house. Of historical significance, the home boasts of a porte-cochere on a side entrance that was built to the perfect height for loading and unloading horse carriages. One of the most notable features of the house is the circular porch that faces the river. The property continued to the bank of the Niagara River, until it was claimed by the New York State Parks and the construction of the Niagara Scenic Parkway (the former Robert Moses Parkway.)

History of Ownership of the Mansion

1876 The Honorable Peter A. Porter took possession of the house. He and his wife Alice lived here for 24 years.

1900 Sold to 1-Jerry D. and Susanna Perky. Part owner of the Natural Food Company.

1901 Ownership was transferred to the Natural Food Company (in 1908 the company would change its name to The Shredded Wheat Company.)

1921 Alexander Porter purchased the home. (In 1931 the home would be rented to The Tatler Club. A tea held that year by The Tatler would boast 400 guests.)

1936 The Tatler would move to another location.

1947 Frederick and Vera Koethen purchased 6 Fourth Street.

1956 The Tatler Inc. Purchased the mansion. (1964 the aluminum siding was installed).

2004 Approved as a Landmark Residence by the Niagara Preservation Commission.

The Tatler Club

The Tatler began in 1925 when 45 women met at the home of Mrs. Augustus Porter (Gertrude) who lived at a different Porter Mansion on Buffalo Avenue (that house has since been demolished to make way for the Parkway Apartments.) During the first few years of The Tatler, the club met at a rented house on Buffalo Avenue, but once the club outgrew that house in 1931, the club moved to the current Fourth Street location and rented from Alex Porter (The Porter family member who owned the house at the time.)

The Tatler was forced to move from Fourth Street to a little yellow house on Jefferson Avenue when it was sold to a private owner, but in 1956 The Tatler moved "back home" to Fourth Street and the house was purchased by the club.

This Tatler was part of the Women's Social Movement of the 1920s. Organized in the fashion of Buffalo's Twentieth Century Club, where women met weekly to take part in programs that were focused on educational and Social Reform. The club was also renowned for its High Teas, Fashion Shows and Holiday Parties. This prestigious Tatler had a waiting list in the 1950s and one needed to have a sponsor for consideration.

Currently, the Tatler holds informative lunches for members and guests on a bi-weekly basis on educational topics including historic themes and historic preservation. The Tatler celebrates diversity and inclusion and is proud of its open membership and community outreach. Guests and speakers from all backgrounds are welcomed. The main focus of the Tatler remains to study, preserve and protect the historically significant architecture of the original Peter A. Porter Mansion, situated on the Niagara River serving as a link and connection between the Niagara River Area's rich past and unlimited future.

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

OF

TATLER HISTORIC PRESERVATION FOUNDATION, INC.

Under the Delaware General Corporation Law

FIRST: The name of the corporation is Tatler Historic Preservation Foundation, Inc.

SECOND: The corporation is a non-profit corporation and shall not have any capital stock. The conditions of membership shall be stated in the by-laws of the corporation.

THIRD: The corporation is formed exclusively for charitable purposes and in furtherance of those purposes: to study, preserve, and protect the historically significant architecture of original Peter A. Porter Mansion, also known as the Tatler Building, located at 6 Fourth Street, Niagara Falls, New York; to promote public appreciation of the building's architecture; to provide support to maintain the integrity of the building's architectural design and its material construction, to acknowledge and promote the building's relationship to other architecturally significant buildings in Niagara Falls and Western New York; and to that end to consult and work with appropriate government agencies, historic preservation organizations, other foundations, educational institutions, and historical societies. Without limiting the powers of the corporation under applicable law, the corporation's powers in furtherance of its purposes shall include the powers to solicit, receive and administer real and personal property and to make contributions, gifts, disbursements, and grants of such property.

FOURTH: (A) Notwithstanding any other provision of this certificate, the corporation is organized exclusively for charitable purposes as specified in Section 501(c)(3), or any successor section, of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any successor statute (the "Code"), and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3), or any successor section, of the Code, or by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2), or any successor section, of the Code.

(B) No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any member, director or officer of the corporation, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the corporation), and no member, director or officer of the corporation or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the corporation.

(C) No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided by Section 501(h), or any successor section, of the Code), and the corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

FIFTH: Upon dissolution of the corporation, whether voluntary or involuntary, after payment of all debts and liabilities of the corporation of whatsoever kind or nature, its remaining funds and other property and rights shall be distributed, granted, conveyed and assigned for one

or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), or any successor section, of the Code.

SIXTH: The name and address of the incorporator of the corporation is:

Michael A. de Freitas, Esq.
6500 Main Street, Suite Five
Williamsville, New York 14221

SEVENTH: The address of its registered office in the State of Delaware is 1201 Orange Street, Suite 600, Wilmington, County of New Castle, Delaware 19801. The name of its registered agent at such address is Agents and Corporations, Inc.

EIGHTH: No director shall be liable to the corporation for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director, except for liability (i) for any breach of the director's duty of loyalty to the corporation, (ii) for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or knowing violation of the law, (iii) under Section 174 of the General Corporation Law, or (iv) for any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit.

Dated: September 14, 2015



Michael A. de Freitas, Esq., Incorporator

Delaware

The First State

Page 1

I, JEFFREY W. BULLOCK, SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE, DO HEREBY CERTIFY "TATLER HISTORIC PRESERVATION FOUNDATION, INC." IS DULY INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE AND IS IN GOOD STANDING AND HAS A LEGAL CORPORATE EXISTENCE SO FAR AS THE RECORDS OF THIS OFFICE SHOW, AS OF THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF SEPTEMBER, A.D. 2015.

AND I DO HEREBY FURTHER CERTIFY THAT THE AFORESAID CORPORATION IS AN EXEMPT AND NON-STOCK CORPORATION.



5827599 8300C

SR# 20150181759

You may verify this certificate online at corp.delaware.gov/authver.shtml.

Handwritten signature of Jeffrey W. Bullock, Secretary of State of Delaware, written in black ink over a horizontal line.

Jeffrey W. Bullock, Secretary of State

Authentication: 10111294

Date: 09-22-15

Chimneys and Dormers In need of Repair and Restoration



**Photos of The Tatler Porter Mansion
Original View and with Aluminum Siding**



Map and Aerial View of The Tatler/Porter Mansion

