

*V*illage of Ossining
DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

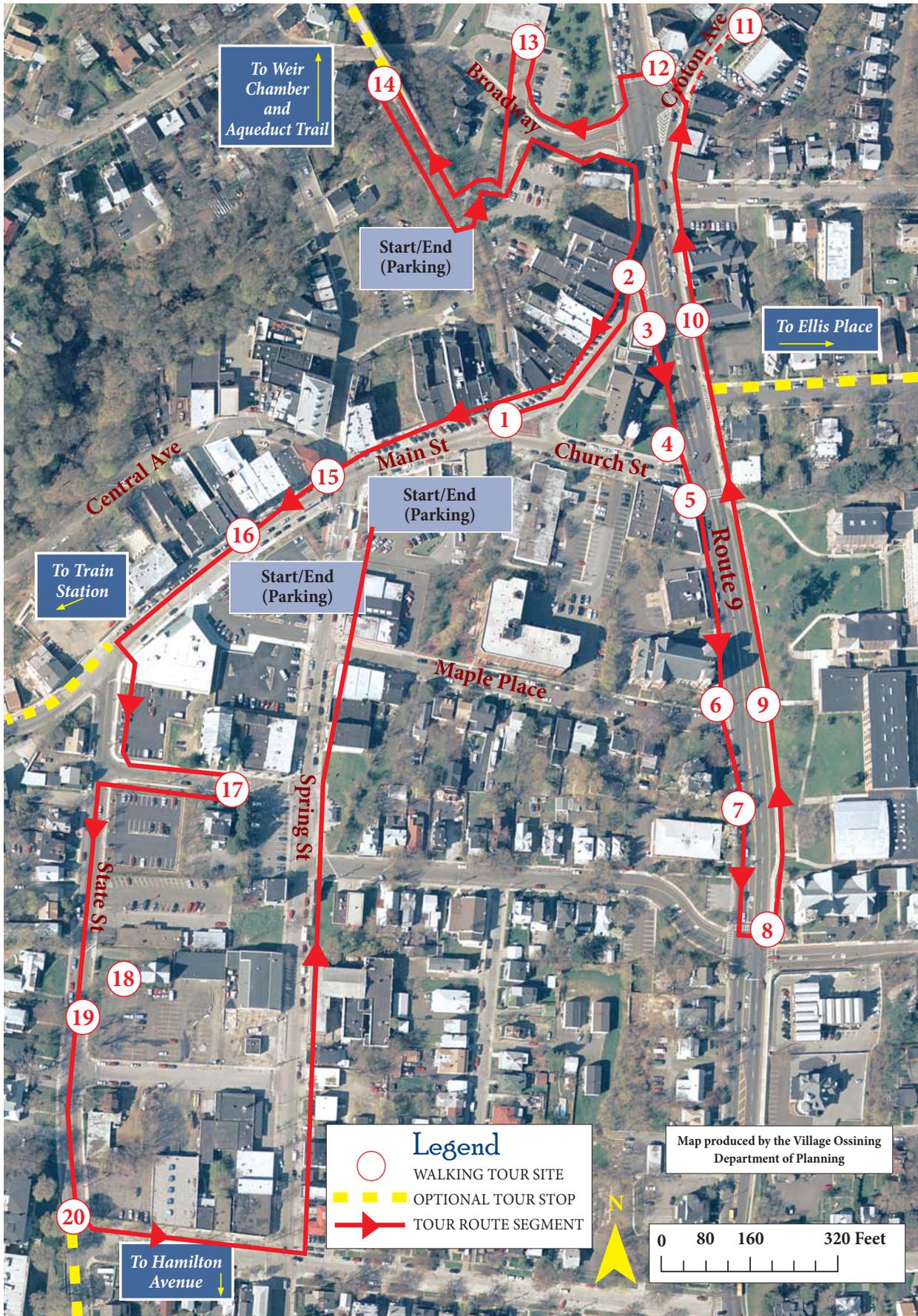
Walking Tour Sites

- 1 *Old Croton Aqueduct Promenade*
- 2 *The Crescent*
- 3 *Ossining Bank for Savings*--- 200 Main Street
- 4 *First Baptist Church*--- Church Street
- 5 *Cynthard Building*--- 26 S. Highland Avenue
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Additional Tour Sites

- A.....Ellis Place
- B.....Ossining Weir Chamber and Old Croton Aqueduct Trail
- C.....Ossining Railroad Station - 1 Main Street
- D.....Hamilton Avenue

Village of Ossining Downtown Walking Tour



1 Old Croton Aqueduct Promenade



The Old Croton Aqueduct Promenade is the Downtown Ossining portion of the trail that is located directly above the water tunnel of the same name. The Aqueduct was constructed from 1837-1842 to provide growing New York City with access to new fresh water supplies. The Aqueduct tunnel connected the 660 million gallon Croton Reservoir in Cortlandt with a 180 million gallon receiving reservoir located on the site of what is now the Great Lawn in Manhattan's Central Park, allowing 85 million

gallons of water to be transported each day. The Aqueduct runs the entire length of both the Village of Ossining and of Westchester County with twenty-six miles of the total forty-one mile length located north of the New York City line. An interpretive sign located at the start of the promenade contains further information on the Aqueduct's route and history. See Page 17 for more information on the Aqueduct Trail.

The Crescent 2



The Crescent comprises the buildings located along Ossining's Main Street. The name was bestowed upon the area due to the curved profile of the buildings fronting on Main Street as the thoroughfare winds its way down hill from its intersection with Highland Avenue. The Crescent includes a number of three-story brick commercial buildings constructed between 1871 and 1914, including the Italianate-style Keenan Building at 199 Main Street, the Neo-Grec detailed A.H. Staver Building and Palmer Hall at 193 and 191 Main Street, and the Renaissance Revival-styled 189 Main Street.

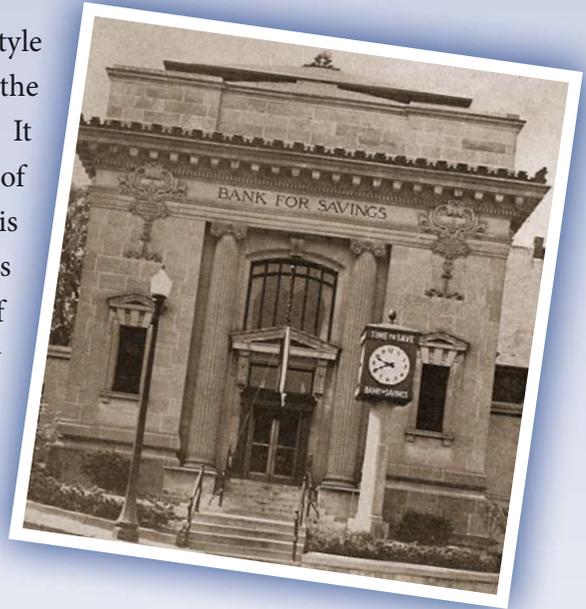


Ossining Bank for Savings

200 Main Street



The Ossining Bank for Savings is a Beaux-Arts style structure that was built in 1908 to serve as the headquarters for the bank of the same name. It was designed by architect Lansing C. Holden, FAIA of New York City and was in use until 1983. The building is a distinct Ossining landmark due to its domed Beaux Arts style and its prominent location at the intersections of Highland Avenue, Croton Avenue, and Main Street. Many vacant buildings like the Ossining Bank for Savings have been successfully adapted for new uses, and the Village anticipates its rehabilitation in the future.



First Baptist Church

1 Church Street



The First Baptist Church is a High Victorian Gothic-style structure completed in 1874. The Church is actually the second structure to occupy the site at 1 Church St; the first was constructed in the early 19th Century to house the Sing Sing Baptist Congregation, founded by Revolutionary War spy Elijah Hunter. Hunter chose a triangular-shaped site at the center of the Village near the convergence of the Albany Post Road (known today as Highland Avenue or Route 9), Croton Avenue, and Main Street in order to maximize its visibility and emphasize its central importance to Ossining's religious life. The original church building was demolished once the size of the congregation grew too large, and the present structure was built on the same site. The church was designed by J. Walsh, a Brooklyn-based architect, and was built for a cost of \$75,000 in 1874 dollars.

5 Cynthard Building

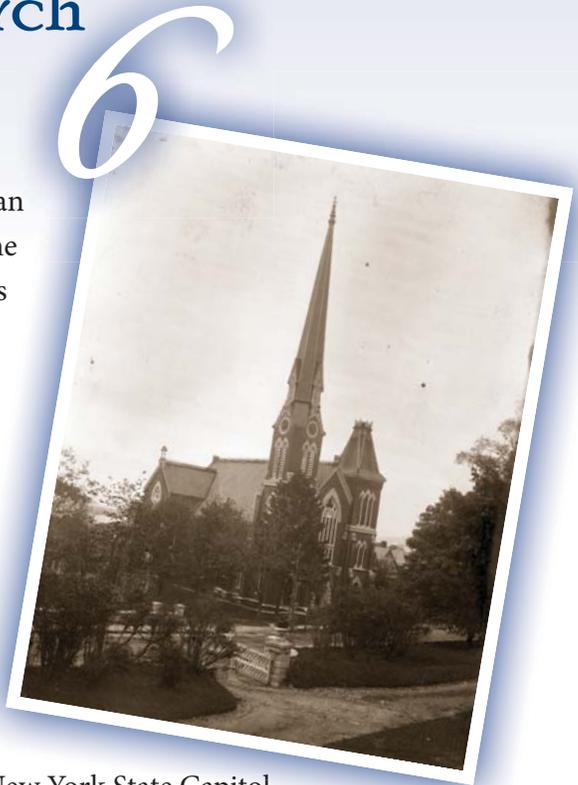
26 S. Highland Avenue



The Cynthard Building, constructed in 1929, is a commercial structure consisting of retail storefronts for small businesses. The building's façade featured Renaissance Revival-style detailing with its ornate cornice and 'swan's neck' pediment. The site on which the building sits was originally the home of the Union Hotel, a popular stopover on the Old Albany Post Road during the 19th century. On March 14th, 2003, a fire damaged the Cynthard Building, causing its closure for repair and restoration until 2006.

6 First Presbyterian Church

34 S. Highland Avenue



The First Presbyterian Church is a High Victorian Gothic style structure built in 1870 to house the congregation of the same name. The congregation's previous church, located in the Sparta neighborhood, was damaged during the Revolutionary War. This prompted the congregation to build a new structure on the site of the current Trinity Episcopal Church at 7 South Highland Avenue in 1803. As the congregation grew, this church was expanded several times until it was no longer adequate to house all those who wished to worship there. The present church was constructed from 1868 to 1870 for a cost of approximately \$95,000 by contractor Peter H. Terhune of Binghamton, NY and designed by Isaac Gale Perry, one of the designers of the New York State Capitol building.

Highland Cottage

36 S. Highland Avenue



Highland Cottage, also known as the Squire House, is a High Victorian Gothic style house constructed in 1872. The house was built almost entirely from concrete, leading to the disparaging nickname “Mud House.” Workers experienced in the use of concrete in house construction were brought from England to build the house.

Residents of the house included Dr. Amos Osborne Squire (1875-1949), who served as chief physician of Sing Sing Prison, along with his daughter Evelyn Squire Culp (1907-2002), a prominent citizen who played a key role in the community’s civic life during the mid and late 20th century.



United Methodist Church

1 Emwilton Place



The United Methodist Church, located at 1 Emwilton Place and constructed from 1877 to 1885, was built to house the Sing Sing Methodist Congregation and was originally known

as the Sing Sing Union Chapel. It is one of a number of

High Victorian Gothic churches in Ossining. A chief sponsor of the new church’s construction was Henry J. Baker, who built the nearby Highland Cottage. Baker helped raise \$30,000 toward the church but died in 1878, a year after the start of construction. Baker’s passing, the lack of funds and higher than expected construction costs delayed completion of the building, which sat unfinished for eight years until finally completed in 1885. The structure features windows created by the Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company of New York City.



Ossining High School

29 S. Highland Avenue



Ossining High School, built in 1929, was constructed when it became clear that the existing high school known as the Washington School could not adequately serve the needs of the Village's growing student body. The site chosen for the new high school was formerly that of a property known as Careswell, a sprawling Greek Revival estate owned by local

financier Henry J. Baker (1818-1878). Baker was the builder of

nearby Highland Cottage and a benefactor of the nearby United Methodist Church. Today, Ossining High School has a student body of 1,300. James Gamble Rogers (1867-1947) of New York City designed the school. Rogers specialized in campus architecture and designed a number of other Neo-Gothic structures at Yale University, New York University, Columbia University, and Northwestern University, among others.

10 Trinity Episcopal Church

7 S. Highland Avenue

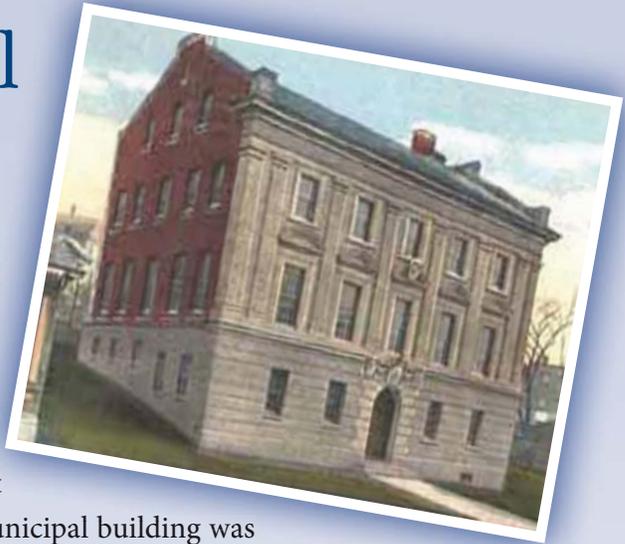


Trinity Episcopal Church, built in 1891, is a Gothic Revival building designed by Robert W. Gibson, a well-known architect of the 19th century. The congregation that founded the church was formed in 1868 by returning Civil War veterans. The building, which has the traditional cruciform footprint laid out on an east-west axis, contains several stained glass windows originally designed by the Louis Comfort Tiffany Studios and John Gorham and Company. The Westminster Chimes within the church's bell tower strike every quarter hour and can be heard throughout downtown Ossining. Just to the south of the Church lies the street and neighborhood known as Ellis Place. See page 16 for additional information.



1 Ossining Municipal Building

16 Croton Avenue



The Ossining Municipal Building, located at 16 Croton Avenue and constructed from 1913 to 1915, was built to provide government offices for the Village. The decision to build a new municipal building was the result of a renewed sense of civic pride following the renaming of the Village of Sing Sing to Ossining. Originally, the structure contained the Village's courts, police, and government administration offices, and the McKinley Elementary School occupied the top floor until 1930. In 1935, government offices for the Town of Ossining moved into the building. Today, the building continues to serve as the municipal administration building for the Town and Village of Ossining. The building was designed by architect Donn Barber (1871-1925) of New York City, a member of the Architectural League of New York who was trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris.



2 First National Bank and Trust Company

13 Croton Avenue



The First National Bank and Trust Company building was constructed in 1930 by the bank of the same name. The company's previous building at the site, constructed circa 1850, was demolished to construct a new bank in the popular Art Deco style. The architectural firm Hoggson Brothers of New York City designed the structure in the popular Art Deco style. The building hosted a

branch of Barclays Bank of New York for a time following the acquisition of the First National Bank and Trust Company. Today, it is owned and occupied by Emigrant Savings Bank.



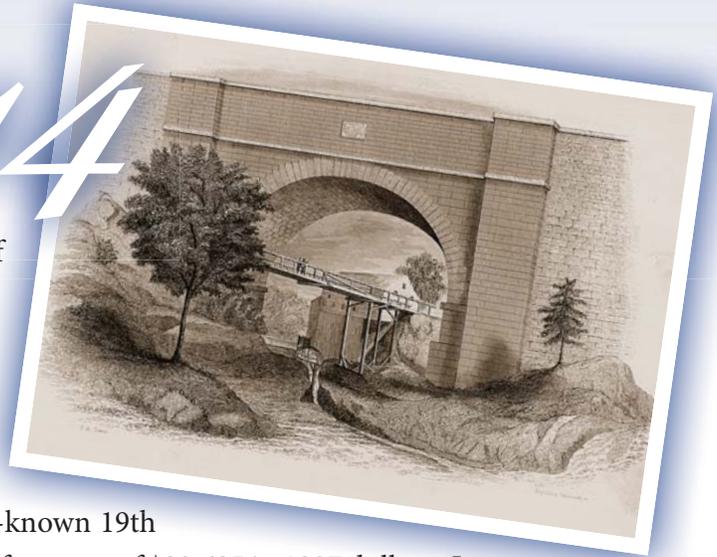
Ossining Visitors Center

95 Broadway



The Village of Ossining is designated as one of 18 New York State Heritage Areas. These areas were formerly known as Urban Cultural Parks. Ossining's State Heritage Area exhibit is based on the theme of 19th Century Reform Movements, using both Sing Sing Prison and the Old Croton Aqueduct as examples. At the Ossining Visitors Center, visitors can tour the "Up the River" and "Down the River" exhibits, both of which are filled with interesting facts and life-size illustrations focusing on the roles that the Aqueduct and the Prison played in the growth and development of the community and the region. The Visitors Center is located inside the Joseph G. Caputo Community Center, offers free admission, and is open from 9:00am to 9:00pm, Monday through Saturday.

Double Arches



The Double Arches site consists of two bridges spanning the Sing Sing Kill: the 1842 Old Croton Aqueduct bridge and the 1862 Broadway Bridge. The 88-foot Old Croton Aqueduct Bridge traverses the gorge at a level 100 feet above the stream. The bridge was designed by well-known 19th century civil engineer John B. Jervis and built for a cost of \$90,685 in 1837 dollars. In the early 1860s, the Broadway Bridge was built to replace a smaller wooden span that was inaccessible to horse-drawn vehicles. The new structure was also built of stone masonry and extends east-west over the Kill Brook. In the early 20th century, the bridges' similar design and stone construction prompted the community to bestow the site with the name 'Double Arches'. The image of the Double Arches was later adopted as the seal for the Town of Ossining.

Ossining National Bank

139 Main Street



The Ossining National Bank building was originally constructed as part of the Barlow Block, a row of buildings which also includes 129 and 131-133 Main Street. Eminent local entrepreneurs William and George Barlow founded the Barlow and Co. Hardware Store on Main Street in 1844. In 1872, a fire destroyed a large number of buildings on Main Street. The Barlow Block was built on the site the following year in the High Victorian Italianate style that was popular during the late 19th century. The Ossining Post Office occupied the portion of the block that now contains the bank building until 1906. The new owner, Ossining National Bank, extensively remodeled the façade in the Renaissance Revival style to set it apart from the rest of the Barlow Block and provide a more contemporary appearance. The site was vacated in the mid 1970's and had a number of owners for the following thirty years until its purchase in 2006 for conversion into the Ossining Trust Bank Condominiums, a mixed use residential and commercial space.

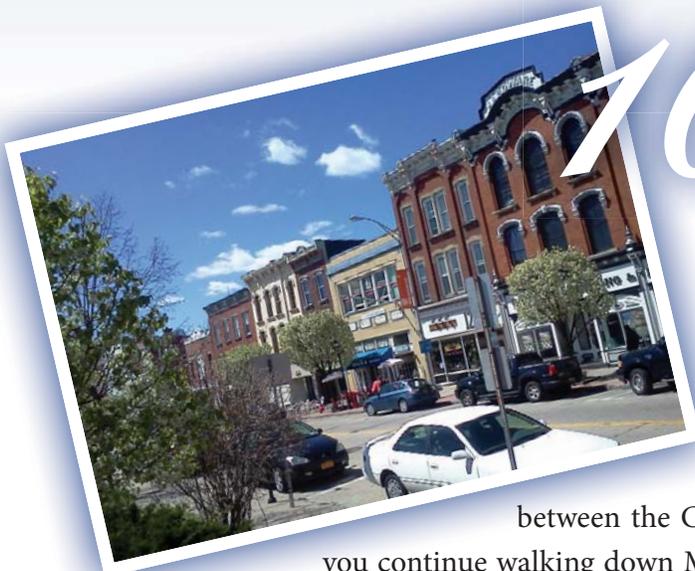


Lower Main Street



The southwestern portion of Downtown Ossining's Main Street is home to several well-preserved late 19th century historic buildings located between 107-113 and 127 Main Street. This area of downtown Ossining serves as a link

between the Crescent area and the downtown waterfront. If you continue walking down Main Street and onto Secor Road, you can visit the Ossining Train Station. Please see page 18 for further information.



Calvary Baptist Church and Annex

7 and 4 St. Paul's Place



The Calvary Baptist Church, constructed in 1834 as St. Paul's Episcopal Church, is believed to be the oldest surviving ecclesiastical structure in the Village. The Gothic Revival-style Church was built when Ossining was at its peak as a waterfront industrial center in Westchester County and was built to house the growing Episcopal congregation in Ossining, which occupied the site for over 100 years before moving to a larger site on Ganung Drive in the Town of Ossining in the mid 1950s. In 1958, the building was purchased by the Baptist congregation that occupies the site today. Architect Calvin Pollard (1797-1850) is also known for his work in designing the Brandreth Pill Factory complex, located on the Village waterfront.



The Calvary Baptist Church Annex, originally built as the rectory for St. Paul's Episcopal Church, was constructed in 1864 to house the congregation's minister. When the Episcopal congregation moved to its current site in the Town of Ossining in 1958, the Annex was purchased by the publishers of the Citizen Register newspaper, who used the building for their offices. In 1973, the newspaper donated the Annex to the Baptist congregation that owns and operates the Calvary Baptist Church today.

Mount Pleasant Military Academy Library

23 State Street

18



The Mount Pleasant Military Academy Library, built to serve as the campus repository for the Academy's 12,000 books, is the last remaining structure of the original school campus. Known as the Mount Pleasant Academy at the time of its founding in 1814, the institution was created to serve as a private college preparatory school for young men of high school age living in the Westchester and lower Hudson Valley region. The Academy began operation as a normal day high school in 1820. Principal C.F. Maurice, who admired nearby West Point and other military schools, sought to transform the Academy into a military-style boarding school for young men and in 1846, the school's student body was reorganized into a corps of cadets. The academy was in operation until the 1920s.



19 James Robinson House

30 State Street

The James Robinson House, built in 1860 and named after its first owner, is a Greek Revival house located at 30 State Street. Robinson was a wealthy landowner who also was an owner of the Smith-Robinson House. Nearby streets William, James, and

Edward are named after Robinson's children. The house was later owned and occupied by Dr. George Hill, an African American physician who practiced in Ossining. Today, the structure serves as offices for small businesses.



Smith Robinson House

34 State Street



The Smith Robinson House, located at 34 State Street and built in the 1840s, was constructed by local businessman James Smith as his residence. The original estate on which the house was built once extended east all the way to Highland Avenue and contained several acres worth of orchards. The property was later purchased by James Robinson, another wealthy local landowner, who built the adjacent structure in 1860. The house was used as a wallpaper factory for a time in the 1940s, in 1948 the house served as offices for the Printex Corporation, a now-defunct textile manufacturer. To the south of the house lies Hamilton Avenue. Please see page 18 for additional information on this site.

Additional Sites

A ~ Ellis Place

Ellis Place, a residential street and neighborhood located in close proximity to downtown, was originally a large estate known as The Ellis Place and was owned by Village residents John and Isabella Ellis until 1851. Many of the houses were originally single-family dwellings owned by members of Sing Sing Village's business and merchant classes who chose to make their homes here due to its close proximity to downtown and a pleasant, picturesque environment. Prominent local residents such as the McCord, Barlow, and Brandreth families owned homes here. When originally created, the street was carefully landscaped with tree species that included maple, horse-chestnut, oak, fir, dogwood, magnolia, copper beech, and walnut. While you're here be sure to see the Three Sisters (pictured at left) at 41-45 Ellis Place - a trio of well preserved Carpenter Gothic-style homes painted in vibrant color schemes.



Additional Sites



B ~ Ossining Weir Chamber and Old Croton Aqueduct Trail



The Ossining Weir Chamber, located on the Ann Street side of the Double Arch Bridge promenade, is one of six such structures located along the Old Croton Aqueduct. The purpose of the weir chambers was to regulate the flow of water along the aqueduct tunnel, allowing water to be emptied into local waterways in the event of flooding or when needed for maintenance and repair of the tunnel. The weir chambers also served as ventilators for the aqueduct system. Inside the weir chamber is a large iron sluice gate, the opening of which allowed water to drain out of the tunnel into the Sing Sing Kill below. When all of the weir chambers were opened, the entire aqueduct could be drained in just two hours. Today, the Ossining Weir Chamber is a component of the Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park. The organization “Friends of the Croton Aqueduct” conducts periodic tours of the Weir Chambers for the public, granting interested parties access to the inside of the weir chamber and aqueduct tunnel.

The Old Croton Aqueduct Trail is an off-road footpath located directly above the water tunnel of the same name. The trail becomes the Promenade at its intersection with the Double Arch Bridge near downtown Ossining. North of downtown, the trail continues north through a wooded landscape, passing by the Gothic Revival-style Kane House before intersecting with Highland Avenue and continuing into Croton-on-Hudson. Please see the Village of Ossining Significant Sites and Structures Guide for further information on the Kane House.

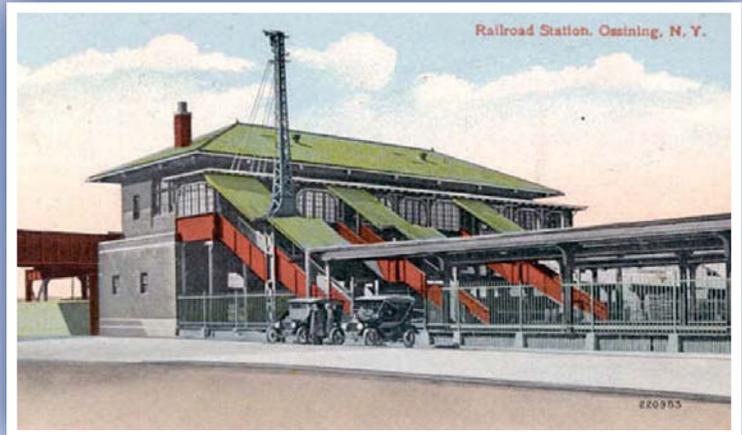
Additional Sites

C ~ Ossining Railroad Station

1 Main Street

The Ossining Railroad Station, constructed in 1914, replaced the original Hudson Line station that was built when the railroad was extended

to the Village in 1851. Unlike the original station, which was located at-grade, the new Renaissance Revival-style station was built on metal stilts to allow Main Street to pass over the tracks and eliminate the need for a grade crossing. The station is sited above the tracks, spanning east to west, and is similar to stations that were built in Yonkers, Ludlow, Glenwood, and Hastings in the same time period.



D ~ Hamilton Avenue



Hamilton Avenue, located in the southwestern area of Ossining, was once the site of a public open space known as the Commons. The site was subdivided in 1889 for the construction of homes, many of which were large houses built in Victorian-era architectural styles by prominent citizens within the community. Between 1890 and 1900, eight houses were built on the western side of Hamilton Avenue in the Shingle and Queen Anne styles. While several of the structures have

been divided into apartments into the years since, the architectural character remains largely intact. The houses are architecturally significant as some of the best preserved examples of late 19th century Victorian era architecture in the Village of Ossining.

Acknowledgements

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Please visit the Village of Ossining's website at www.villageofossining.org for links to further information on the locations featured within this document and to download the Significant Sites and Structures Guide, a full-color compendium highlighting over sixty areas of historic and architectural significance within Ossining. The Guide also contains photos and histories for historic houses in the Village's Sparta Historic District. You can find additional information on this neighborhood at the Jug Tavern Association's webpage, www.jugtavern.org.

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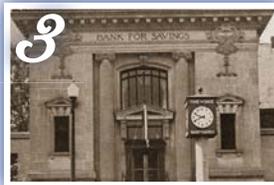
Village of Ossining Downtown Walking Tour



1
Old Croton Aqueduct Promenade
c.1842



2
The Crescent
Late 19th Century



3
Ossining Bank for Savings
1980s



4
First Baptist Church
1874



5
Cynthard Building
1929



6
First Presbyterian Church
1885



7
Highland Cottage
1872



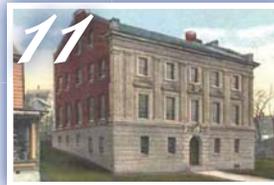
8
United Methodist Church
1885



9
Ossining High School
1929



10
Trinity Episcopal Church
1892



11
Ossining Municipal Building
1915



12
First National Bank
and Trust Company
1930



13
Ossining Community Center
and Museum Exhibit



14
Double Arches
1842



15
Ossining National Bank
1842



16
Lower Main Street
Late 19th Century



17
Calvary Baptist
Church and Annex
1834 and 1864



18
Mount Pleasant Military
Academy Library
c.1870



19
James Robinson House
1860



20
Smith Robinson House
c.1834

Additional Sites



Ellis Place
c.1850



Ossining Weir Chamber
1842



Old Croton Aqueduct Trail
c.1968



Ossining
Railroad
Station
1914



Hamilton
Avenue
c.1890s

Acknowledgements

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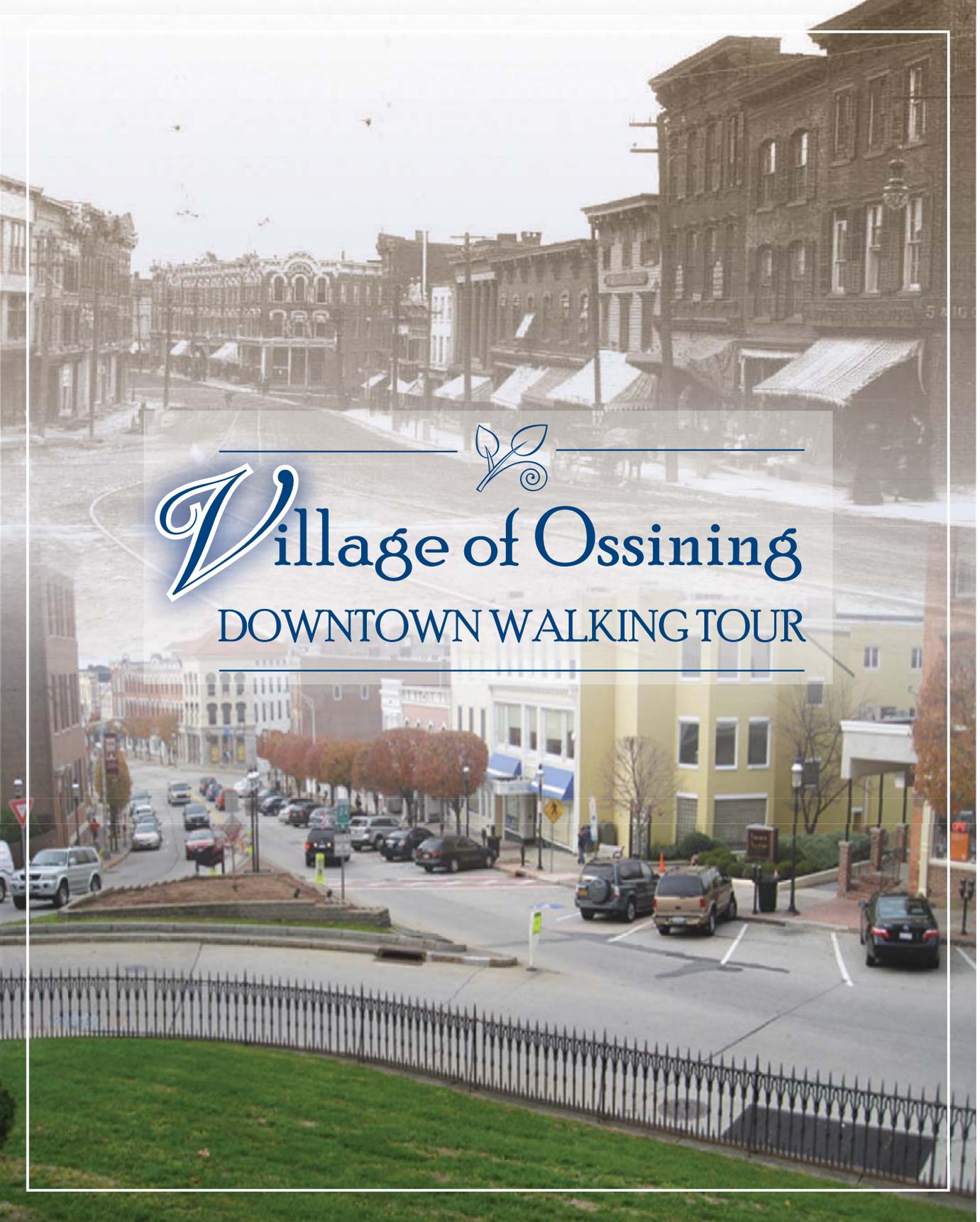
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