

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

### **Regarding the National Endowment for the Humanities’ Section 106 Review of the Rochester Museum & Science Center’s project to renovate the interior space of the Museum Building to improve storage conditions and sustainability of its history and ethnology collections**

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has offered the Rochester Museum & Science Center (RMSC) a grant to preserve its humanities collections by renovating an existing interior space to install new HVAC, fire suppression, lighting, and mobile storage furniture. The renovations would improve collection storage conditions and sustainability of the Museum’s ethnology, painting, household textile, and industrial history collections.

NEH is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities. This public notice is issued as part of NEH’s responsibilities under 36 C.F.R. Part 800, the regulations which implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, 16 U.S.C. § 470. NEH, as a funding agency, is required by regulation to identify and assess the effects of any proposed actions on historic properties. If any proposed action will have an adverse effect on historic resources, NEH works with the appropriate parties to seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects. Additionally, the Section 106 regulations require NEH to consider the views of the public on preservation issues when making final decisions that affect historic properties.

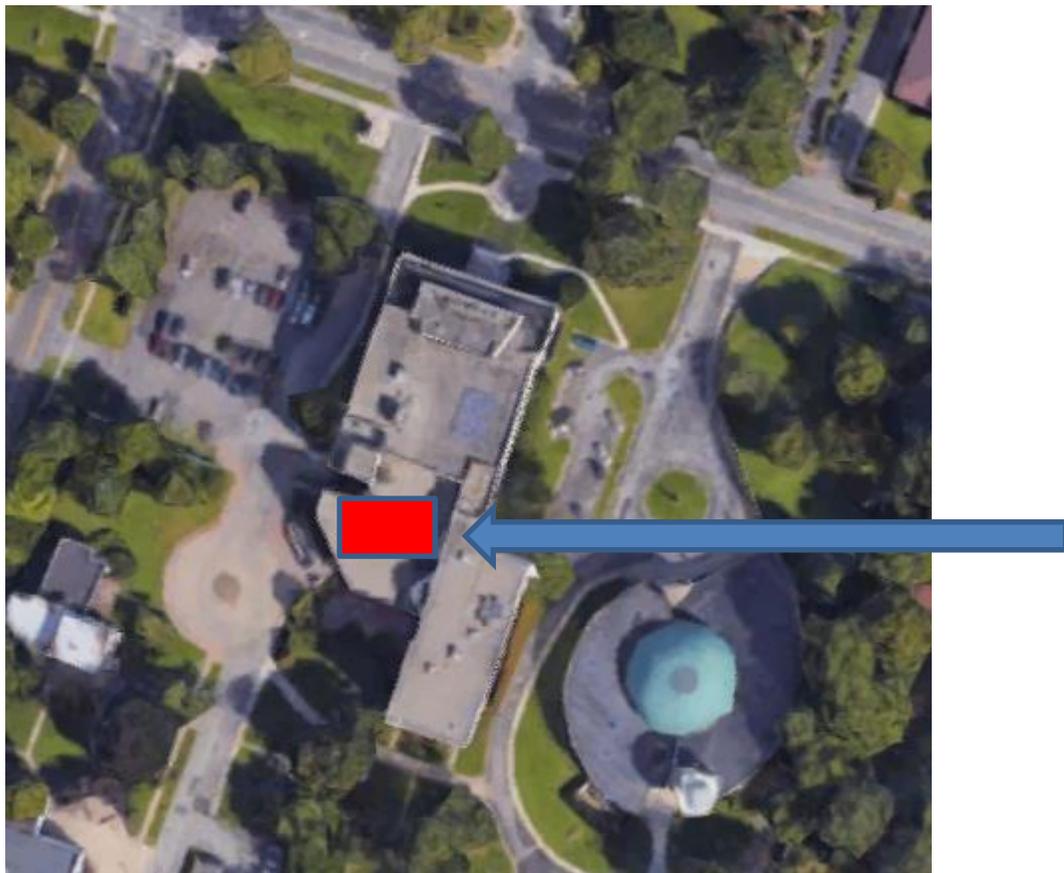
RMSC’s physical plant, located in Rochester, NY near the intersection of S Goodman Street and Franklin Street, consists of a 13-acre main campus that includes the Museum, the Strasenburgh Planetarium, the Eisenhart Auditorium, and the Gannett Building. The Museum opened in 1912 as the City of Rochester’s Municipal Museum and has held collections in trust for the people of Western New York since its inception.

RMSC proposes to improve storage conditions for 5925 sq. ft. of interior space housing several high-risk humanities collections in the basement of its main Museum Building. The implementation project would rehabilitate targeted space by installing a fire suppression system, high efficiency lighting systems, energy-efficient climate control systems set at parameters intentionally designed for sustainability, and high-density mobile storage equipment. This would be achieved by consolidating two separate storage areas in the basement into one larger area designated the “History Vault” and renovating a third “Ethnology Vault.”

The New York State Historic Preservation Office, through a letter dated April 20, 2016, made a finding of “No Adverse Effect upon historic resources” for the proposed renovations to the Museum Building.

In this initial public notice, NEH is providing information about RMSC's project to renovate the Museum Building's basement storage vaults by seeking public input on the project. Specifically, the agency would appreciate comments on any knowledge of, or concerns with, historic properties in the proposed project area (see image below), and issues relating to the project's potential effects on historic properties.

If you would like to submit comments regarding the RMSC's project, you must submit them to NEH no later than June 10, 2016 via e-mail at [preservation@neh.gov](mailto:preservation@neh.gov) or by regular mail to: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Preservation and Access, 400 7<sup>th</sup> St., SW, Washington, DC 20506.



The area of potential effect for the Museum Building basement renovation; all work would occur within the interior of the building.