

# Architectural gem

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To the Editor:

As the regional advocate for historic preservation on Long Island, Preservation Long Island (PLI) is writing in support of the preservation and adaptive reuse of St. Paul's School. PLI included St. Paul's on our 2010 Endangered Historic Places list and will continue to work with community groups to advocate for this significant building.

St. Paul's architectural importance extends beyond Long Island. According to architectural critic, Paul Goldberger, St. Paul's is "one of the great works of the Gothic Revival in the United States." Designed by Edward H. Harris and built in 1879 as a memorial to Garden City's founder, Alexander Turney Stewart, by his wife Cornelia, the Gothic Revival St. Paul's School reflects Long Island's deep ties to the globally influential "Garden Cities" movement in community planning. The destruction of St. Paul's would be a tremendous loss.

We strongly encourage the adaptive reuse of the existing building. A rehabilitated St. Paul's would become a center of community life in Garden City. Its construction as a school makes it a suitable space for the much-needed community public services. The original building had multiple spaces— including laboratories, classrooms, dining rooms and a large parlor— which could be transformed into new community spaces of different sizes and use. The adaptive reuse of the existing building preserves the historic integrity of the structure, meets community needs, and is the most environmentally sustainable solution.

Given the property's historic and architectural significance, we urge the Village of Garden City to work with community and regional partners to find a solution that will preserve this architectural gem and allow it to continue to serve as a community asset.

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