

## Elizabeth Maxwell AICP

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**From:** nancy hall [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 29, 2024 5:17 PM  
**To:** Elizabeth Maxwell AICP  
**Subject:** St Mary's Episcopal Church

Stop - Look - Think - Decide: This email originated from outside of the City. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am Nancy Gates Hall and I spent my early formative years living in the Mathis/Gates house and went to school from kindergarten through high school. I could ask you, please save my ancestral home, but that is selfish.

The real reason is of its historical nature. As you know it was founded by my ancestor Simon Gates to provide an education for the local young people and served its purpose well, until free education was enacted.

It is historically important by architecture, architect and builder. I believe history matters and the removal of historical buildings diminish our knowledge and appreciation of our past.

Please save St Mary's Church.

Respectively,  
Nancy Hall

## Elizabeth Maxwell AICP

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**From:** Sandra Price <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 2, 2024 7:16 AM  
**To:** Elizabeth Maxwell AICP  
**Subject:** The demolition of the Tarpley House

**Stop - Look - Think - Decide:** This email originated from outside of the City. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

RE: Proposed demolition of Tarpley House

Hi, Elizabeth,

I am Sandy Price, former member of CLHPC, retired Colonel Palmer House facilitator and CLHS board member. I just wanted to add some thoughts to the efforts to save the Tarpley House and preserve its rich history for the future. I refer to the history compiled by Diana Kenney detailing the many notable early Crystal Lake residents and their extensive contributions to our community's history, making this structure one of the most important examples of our early beginnings.

St. Mary's stewardship has been a three-quarter century enterprise. The past membership has valued and respected the importance of the structure, which is not the case at present. My concern is what appears to be a refusal by the current church members to partner with the historic community to even consider options to preserve the building. A critical question to consider, what is the memberships long-range plan for this important property in the heart of our historic downtown.

I wish to join other interested citizens in their efforts to preserve this building. I will attend the CLHPC hearing and support the Landmark process that is under consideration. See you on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you,  
Sandy Price

November 2, 2024

Elizabeth Maxwell  
City of Crystal Lake  
100 W. Woodstock Street  
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Dear Elizabeth,

This letter is in support of the landmark application submitted on Monday, September 16, 2024, to halt demolition of the c.1853 Crystal Lake Academy "Tarpley House" owned by St. Mary's Episcopal Church 210 McHenry Avenue.

The Crystal Lake Academy is a rare example of cobblestone and brick construction and is one of the few remaining structures built by Andrew Jackson Simons. The Crystal Lake Academy building is an example of Simons' skill in building a brick structure with a cobblestone foundation, like the Colonel Palmer House, which is landmarked by the City of Crystal Lake and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Along with the structures unique construction, the history of the building also has significance to the growth of the Crystal Lake community. As a school (original use of property) the Crystal Lake Academy educated students from early settlers and prominent Crystal Lake families. The second owner of the property was Simon S. Gates. Gates owned a substantial amount of land in and around Crystal Lake. His son, William Day Gates, who grew up in the house, started the American Terra Cotta & Ceramic Co., producing world renowned architectural terra cotta and Teco pottery.

As the past president of the McHenry County Historical Society and Museum, life member of the Crystal Lake Historical Society and former manager of Colonel Palmer House (2013-2017), I implore the Crystal Lake City Council to approve the landmark application for the Crystal Lake Academy "Tarpley House." The approved landmark application will halt demolition of the structure and allow all parties to come to the table with the goal of finding a solution towards preservation. The City of Crystal Lake is uniquely positioned lead this development, collaborate with the community and preserve a 170-year-old Andrew Jackson Simons structure within close proximity to downtown.

I am happy to speak with you directly and look forward to supporting the preservation of the Crystal Lake Academy for the benefit of the community, past and present.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary K. Ott

Dear Ms. Maxwell,

I will be attending the public hearing before the Historic Preservation Commission on Thursday, November 7. I am grateful that Diana Kenney and Jim Heisler applied for landmark status for the CL Academy Building. Without this move the building may have been demolished without the average Crystal Lake citizen (like me) knowing about it.

I hope a solution can be found to preserve the CL Academy Building. I believe communities are increasingly valuing the historic feature and buildings in their communities. I have been in Crystal Lake since 1978 and was involved with the Polly Crandall Questers in its herculean efforts to protect the Dole Mansion for its future. Our 25-member organization stripped woodwork, held cookie sales, staged tours, and raised funds for major improvements. We kept the lights on until CL Legacy came in as a White Knight. The building, property, and history are now proudly touted by the city.

The Colonel Palmer House has a similar rough history. It was women with a zeal for historic preservation who worked on the building and also the application for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. At a certain point the Crystal Lake Park District took over the property and Colonel Palmer House is playing an important role in the cultural life of Crystal Lake.

Do you know which house walks are most popular? Not McMansions but older "historic" homes!

I was a a long-time member of Polly Crandall Questers. This organization plaqued a dozen houses from the 19980's until 1995 when the Crystal Lake Historic Preservation Commission was formed. I was on the committee that wrote the HP Commission Ordinance and served as its first chair for 5 years.

The Questers' plaqueing was honorary, without teeth, which is why the HPC is a valuable asset in actually protecting historic properties. The Historic Register has prestige; the local ordinance has power.

About the CL Academy Building—

It was plaqued in 1993 by the Polly Crandall Questers for the reasons that Diana Kenney explained most adequately in her research on the history of the building. Andrew Jackson Simons' story is certainly worth preserving though the physical presence of his buildings. The means of acquiring the cobblestones is part of the interesting saga of early home construction in our community.

(The house Simons built for himself after serving for four years in the Civil War has been demolished. I learned this just this morning when I drove to its former sight on Rte 14. The story we had gleaned was that he had accumulated bricks for his future home but they had been pilfered during his absence. Still, he built his simple home with his signature cobblestone foundation. The last time I paid attention to the building it had been purchased and restored by an architect. I thought it was safe! I was living in Chicago for 20 years and missed this demolition.)

I urge all parties to take the time to try to find a workable solution to re-purpose this building which has such a rich part in the development of the Crystal Lake community.

Sincerely,

Mary Thennes, 