The West Side Story

This area of Saratoga Springs was the City's first prime residential location. Among the West Side's residents were people from all walks of life, from bankers to hotel owners to harners makers. Over time, when hotels and Greek institutes became more firmly established in the community, churches and boarding houses sprang up, offering support to the tourist industry.

During that same period, railroads were built and trains brought people to the back door of Saratoga's popular hotels, which lined Broadway. The railroads provided work for the influx of Irish and Italian immigrants who, in turn, brought ethnic flavor to their neighborhoods located slightly to the south end of the West Side. Street festivals, ethnic clubs and restaurants sprang up, particularly in and around Beekman Street, an area that became generally referred to as "Dublin."

Adjacent to "Dublin," African-Americans settled on Congress Street, adding to the labor force of the hotels and other tourist related industries, including nightly entertainment at local restaurants.

It was on Congress Street that Hattie Mosley first opened the famous "Chicken Shack" restaurant. During the 1960's, Urban Renewal forced the demolition of much of Congress Street, paving the way for its current commercial use.

In the late 1990s, a grassroots effort began on the West Side to revive the well loved "Dublin" area and the Beekman Street Art District was born. The Renaissance of Beekman Street has brought art galleries, workshops, restaurants and community events back to the West Side, restoring its original diversity and vitality.

Stop by the Saratoga Springs Heritage Area Visitor Center – 797 Broadway (at the corner of Congress Street) offering tour services, maps and brochures. Ask to view the 15 minute video: Discover Saratoga!

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The City's first prime residential location
Where many of the people who owned, supported and worked in the bustling resort industry lived.
Washington Street

1. 28 Washington St.
   Bethesda Episcopal Church

Built in 1842, and designed by famous New York City architect Richard Upjohn, this was one of the first Gothic Revival churches built in America. The tower houses a peal set of Meneely bells. Above the front door are three stained-glass panels designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany and bestowed to the church by Spencer and Katina Trask of Yaddo who were active members of the congregation.

2. 25 Washington Street
   Universal Preservation Hall

Built in 1871, designed by Elbridge Boyden, is one of the earliest and finest examples of High Victorian Gothic churches in America. Originally constructed for the United Methodist Church to host their annual regional meeting, the 1200 seat hall has hosted such luminaries as William Jennings Bryan, Henry Ward Beecher, Frederick Douglass, and President William Howard Taft. The bell tower was once the tallest structure in the City and houses the 3,000 lb. Meneely bell originally made for Town Hall. As an official project of the Federal Government’s “Save America’s Treasures,” this site is being transformed into a community performing arts venue.

3. 45 Washington Street
   First Baptist Church

Built in 1855, this Greek Revival church was built on land set aside by Gideon Putnam where the town’s first “old house of worship” had been in 1822. The original bell remains in its prominent bell tower.

Franklin Square

4. 1 Franklin Square
   Augustus Bockes House

Built in 1834, this yellow limestone Greek Revival has a columned façade and is balanced by wings on each side. Home of Augustus Bockes, a State Supreme Court Justice.

5. 2 Franklin Square
   George Harvey House

1870 French Renaissance. The gallery and veranda like porches are brought together by horizontal belt courses and moldings which are classic of a southern plantation. A large scale addition was added to the south between 1900 - 1901 for a medical institute. From 1894-1918, Sarah McEwen operated a boarding house called the Adirondack Lodge.

6. 3 Franklin Square
   James Marvin House

1836 Greek Revival noted for its square pillars, asymmetrical doorway and full story windows. House of James Marvin, founder of the Bank of Saratoga Springs with his brother, Thomas who resided at 4 Franklin Square. James Marvin also served as the Director of the Saratoga and Schenectady Railroad.

7. 5 Franklin Square
   Clement/Olmstead House

Built in the 1840s by Joel Clement, Gideon Putnam’s son-in-law. Upon Mr. Clement’s death, his daughter Caroline Olmstead moved in. When a fire destroyed the second floor, the home was refurbished as a one level.

8. 6 Franklin Square
   Hotel Caribbad

Built in 1840, and renovated in 1870 and 1880 to its current Colonial Revival style. Opened as the Hotel Caribbad and in 1919, as the Hotel Russell.

9. 4 Franklin Square
   Thomas Marvin House

Built c. 1832, reminiscent of the White House with its stately pillars in the Greek Revival Style, a popular standard design of the period. Built by Thomas Jefferson Marvin, attorney, judge and owner of the United States Hotel. Later owned by Congressman William Sackett, a member of Congress from 1843-1853, where he was a leader in the fight against slavery.

Franklin Street

10. 63 Franklin Street
    Bennett House

1830 Greek Revival home of William Bennett, owner of the American Hotel.

11. 59 Franklin Street
    Stover House

1832 Greek Revival owned by Rev. Ensign Stover, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The design is emblematic of the early period of wealth and prosperity prior to the Civil War.

12. 52 Franklin Street
    Waring House

Built in the 1890s and a good example of late Victorian design, the house features a cupboard exterior, slate roof and stone foundation.

13. 47 Franklin Street
    Hartwell House

This 1820 Federal style farmhouse is one of the oldest homes in the city. In 1893 it was the home of harness maker Seymour Hartwell.

14. 36 Franklin Street
    Built c. 1915, this Federal style house is believed to be the oldest surviving house in the City. The front gable and Gothic details were added in 1845 and the front porch was added in the 1870’s.

Grand Avenue & Beyond

15. 117 Grand Avenue
    Adirondack Railway Depot

Built in 1894 and designed by architect Thomas C. Durant, this Victorian has Gothic details in the steeply pitched roof. Built for the Saratoga and Schenectady Railroad, the intention was to build a railroad line from Saratoga Springs to Sack- ers Harbor but construction was only completed as far as North Creek. The tracks ran along the right side of the building. Named to the National Historic Register in 1973, the building was home to the Saratoga Preservation Foundation for three decades.

16. Putnam Burial Ground
One of the oldest in the city. Gideon Putnam was the first person buried at this site in 1812 shortly after having built it. Thirty-four members of the Putnam family are buried in its walled enclosure. From 1820 to the mid 1840’s, this site served as the town’s main burial site.

17. The Beekman Street Art District
Once part of the close-knit working class "Dublin" neighborhood, this three block stretch of period homes and buildings has been revitalized into a hub of cultural activity featuring art galleries, artist studios, restaurants and specialty shops.