

From Eyesore to Opportunity:

a snapshot of adaptive reuse in Rochester, n.y.



Hoyt-Potter House

133 South Fitzhugh Street

David Hoyt, a prominent Rochester bookseller and stationer, had this Greek Revival style house built in 1840 for his wife and eight children. Hoyt became one of the organizers and largest stockholder of what would become Western Union Telegraph Company and sold his house to successful businessman Henry S. Potter. In 1969 Jack Lubelle became sole owner of the Hoyt-Potter House, then a boarding house. Already in bad shape by 1972, the owner began a twenty-year process of suing the city for permission to demolish the building. In 1989 a judge denied the final demolition request and the City of Rochester won an appeal to take title (the owner received fair market value payment). A request for proposals followed and was answered by Hoyt-Potter Associates with a plan to rehabilitate the house. Today it is the home of the Landmark Society and the Wenrich Memorial Library, one of the region's finest collections of materials on architecture, decorative arts, horticulture, local history and landmarks. The Corn Hill Neighbors Association is also located here.