



257 North Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101 tel 717.234.2310 fax 717.234.2522 info@preservationpa.org www.preservationpa.org

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Contact: Julia Chain, Program Director
Preservation Pennsylvania
717-234-2310 x3 jchain@preservationpa.org

KAHN-DESIGNED WEISS HOUSE LISTED ON THE 2019 PENNSYLVANIA AT RISK LIST

Home Designed by World-Famous Architect Could Be Lost

Eagleville, Montgomery County, PA – The **Morton and Lenore Weiss House**, designed by noted architect Louis Kahn with Anne Tyng, has been named to the *Pennsylvania At Risk* list. Since 1992, this list has been compiled and published by Preservation Pennsylvania, the statewide nonprofit historic preservation advocacy organization.

While Louis Kahn is acclaimed for large-scale masterworks such as the Salk Institute, the Kimbell Art Museum, and the Yale University Art Gallery, his residential work allowed him to experiment with light and form in ways that would shape those monumental designs. Only nine of Kahn's residential designs were constructed, between 1940 and 1973. The Weiss House, an early example of Kahn's domestic design work, took shape from 1947-1950. Located near Norristown, the house includes a rare Kahn mural of Pennsylvania farmland painted after the house was completed (and including an abstracted representation of the Weisses beloved black and white dalmation dog).

When the house sold after the Weisses passed away, instead of gaining new owners who appreciated Kahn's vision or the Weisses' belief in the value of open space, a developer envisioned a subdivision on the large lot surrounding the house. In 2016, East Norriton Township and local concerned citizens rallied to save the Weiss House from a plan to construct high-rise senior housing on the property. The plan was rejected by the township, and the house was placed on the local landmark list by the East Norriton Historical Advisory Committee. As a local landmark, the Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission must review and approve demolition permits before they are granted.

"The local ordinance provides some protection," said Julia Chain, Program Director at Preservation Pennsylvania, "yet it cannot save the house from neglect. The developer has leased the property and lack of heating and deferred maintenance is taking a toll."

In 2016, Philadelphia's Preservation Alliance named the property to its *Places to Save*, observing "A preservation easement could help ensure that future development proposals protect and respect this important modern home."

Preservation Pennsylvania has listed the following places to the 2019 *Pennsylvania At Risk* and will offer free preservation assistance through the year.

2019 Pennsylvania At Risk

Farmhouse at the Carlisle Indian School (Cumberland County)

A coalition of Tribal representatives and local organizations seek to preserve a farmhouse that was part of the Carlisle Indian School. They hope to transform it into a place of healing and education.

Woodburne Mansion (Delaware County)

This empty mansion designed by architect Horace Trumbauer for a noted family offers vast potential. It's surrounded by a historic natural landscape that's poised to become a valuable recreational resource that would benefit the residents of several nearby townships.

Colebrook Grist Mill (Lebanon County)

Local advocates hope to save, restore and find a new use for the long-vacant landmark.

Morton and Lenore Weiss House (Montgomery County)

A mid-century residence designed by one of the world's greatest 20th century architects is threatened with demolition by neglect and development.

Camp Archbald (Susquehanna County)

Local Girl Scout councils across the country, with approval from national leadership, have put up for sale more than 200 camps in 30 states. Camp Archbald, one of the oldest camps in the country, under review for potential sale.

About Pennsylvania At Risk

Since 1992, Preservation Pennsylvania has published the *Pennsylvania At Risk* list to draw statewide attention to the plight of Pennsylvania's historic resources; promote and support local action to protect historic properties; and encourage funding and legislation that supports preservation activities.

Helping people to protect and preserve Pennsylvania's endangered historic properties is a top priority for Preservation Pennsylvania. The organization is committed to engaging with people interested in working to preserve and rehabilitate these significant historic places.

This year's list was chosen from nominations submitted by groups and individuals. Submissions are evaluated by several criteria, including historic significance, the extent of the threat and the community's commitment to preserving the resource.

Founded in 1982, Preservation Pennsylvania is the commonwealth's only statewide, private, nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection of historically and architecturally significant resources. For more information, visit the website at www.preservationpa.org or contact Preservation Pennsylvania at 717-234-2310.