SG-1768

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **ALLEGANY COUNCIL HOUSE**

other names/site number Jimersontown (Jimtown) Courthouse, Seneca Council House

name of related multiple property listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 8156 Old Route 17 [ ] not for publication

city or town Jimersontown, Allegany Indian Territories (AIR) [ ] vicinity

state New York code NY county Cattaraugus code 009 zip code 14779

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [X] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date: 09-12-2017

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date: 9/11/2017

Deputy SHPO

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[ ] entered in the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper — date of action: 10/27/17

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

[X] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

[X] building(s)
[ ] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	**0**	**TOTAL**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/courthouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls wood
roof asphalt
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[**X**] **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[ ] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

[ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] **B** removed from its original location

[ ] **C** a birthplace or grave

[ ] **D** a cemetery

[ ] **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] **F** a commemorative property

[ ] **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance:
(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage (Native American)

Politics/Government

Period of Significance:

1935-1966

Significant Dates:

1935, 1964, Women's suffrage votes

1958-1966, Kinzua Dam Meetings

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
[ ] previously listed in the National Register
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
[ ] recorded by historic American Building Survey
_____
[ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
_____

Primary location of additional data:

[ ] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal Agency
[ ] Local Government
[ ] University
[ ] Other repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .29 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	683934	4668951	3	17		
2	17			4	17		

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Annie Schentag and Kerry Traynor/ kta Preservation Specialists; Nathan Montague and Jay Toth/Tribal Archaeologist, Seneca Nation of Indians [Edited by Jennifer Walkowski, Kathleen LaFrank, Nancy Herter NYSHPO]

organization kta Preservation Specialists and Archaeological Survey, Department of Anthropology
date May 2017

street & number 380 MFAC telephone (716) 352-6666

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14261-0026

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Narrative Description of Property

Constructed around 1925, the Allegany Council House is a one-story chestnut wood frame front-gable building, located on a 0.3-acre parcel on the west side of Old Route 17/Red House Road in the Jimersontown area of the Allegany Indian Reservation, in Cattaraugus County, New York. Located southeast of a bend of the Allegheny River, the area called Jimersontown is located approximately three miles from downtown Salamanca. The Council House is located less than a mile from the Seneca Nation of Indians governmental offices. Old Route 17/Red House Road is a two-lane road that is lightly traveled and has many residential properties dating from the late nineteenth into the mid and late twentieth centuries.

The immediate surrounding neighborhood consists of scattered, primarily rural, residential properties, most dating to the twentieth century. The building is set approximately 15 feet from the street, with a narrow asphalt parking area located at the east between the building and the street. The Council House property has a slight slope in the terrain from the street (east) to the rear of the building (west), which allows for a retaining wall and direct access to the basement level at the northwest of the building. Further west of the property are large cultivated agricultural fields.

The building is a modest one-story front-gable building with a concrete foundation, wood clapboard walls with narrow corner boards and watertable, and an asphalt shingle roof. The front (east) elevation of the building has a telescoping, low, one-story full-width front gable addition, added after the period of significance, which itself has an open front-gable entry porch with stairs and a modern ramp. Fenestration is along the north and south elevations of the building and consists of two-over-two double-hung wood sash windows. A simple brick chimney protrudes from the roof at the middle of the southern elevation.

Exterior:

The primary façade of the building faces east and contains the main entrance to the building. Entrance into the building is through a small central entry porch with a simple wood stair on the north side and a wood ramp on the south side. The front gable entry porch reads “Calvary Baptist Church” in applied letters and shelters solid wood paired doors. This entry porch is centered on a full-width front-gable low-pitched one-story enclosure. This portion of the building has a concrete block foundation and wood clapboard sheathing. The center portion shows evidence of the smaller, central, front-gabled entry vestibule, visible in a historic image of the building, as the roof molding is visible just above the roof of the entry porch and is marked with simple wood pilasters on the wall surface. Above this full-width enclosure, the gable end of the main building is visible, with a small rectangular vent located in the gable peak. The building has a simple wood frieze board under the eaves.

The north and south elevations of the modest building are similarly designed with three bays and reveal a parged concrete block foundation, narrow wood watertable, wood clapboard walls, and the asphalt shingle roof. The south elevation has three regularly spaced window openings set in the foundation, two of which have a wood panel sealing them off, while the one at the east retains its original two-light wood window. At the north, the foundation similarly has two window openings, the eastern bay containing a wood two-light window, the central being concealed by a wood panel, and an access door located at the westernmost bay. This door is a simple wood door set in a modest wood enframement, and it is accessible due to concrete retaining walls set into the slope of the land. Each elevation has three regularly spaced two-over-two wood double hung windows, set in simple wood enframements and aligned to the openings in the foundation, and several have contemporary aluminum storm windows. At the eastern end, on the wall of the low-slung enclosure, the north and south elevations contain a single two-over-two wood-frame double-hung window that matches the others on the main body of the Council House. Since this enclosure is not original to the 1920s design of the building, but windows of this configuration are shown on the walls of the smaller entry vestibule in the historic image, it seems likely that these windows were relocated to the same plane when the enclosure was built out after the period of significance. Simple wood pilasters mark the division on the wall surface between the main body of the Council House and the wall of the addition; however, the wall surface of this addition is the same type and width wood clapboard, again suggesting that the material was reused when this area was expanded. The southern elevation also has a simple brick chimney with a metal tie connected to the roof.

The rear, west, elevation of the building contains the same materials as the other elevations of the building and contains no windows or openings on the gable end.

Interior:

The interior of the building consists of two levels; a ground level containing the primary meeting room and a small office, and a basement containing rooms used for janitorial space and storage.

Upon entering the building through the front door on the east elevation, on the first and main level there is a small entry vestibule, an original area of the building as shown in the historic image. The vestibule has a beadboard wainscot with a simple chair rail. The floor is a four-inch by four-inch ceramic tile with a dark grout, and the walls above the wainscot are plaster with paper. At the west wall of the vestibule, paired wood doors, each with four horizontal panels, open into the main meeting space. At the north of the vestibule, in the non-original enclosure, is a stair located in the northeast corner of the building that leads to the basement. The

addition consists of a single room, contained as a fully enclosed porch. Historic maps from the mid-1960s show that the addition was added after the period of significance.[1]

The main meeting room is a rectangular space, measuring roughly 35' x 25,' and oriented on the west-east axis aligned to the entry. The room has a carpeted floor, laid over a narrow-width tongue-and-groove white oak hardwood floor. The walls have the same beadboard wainscot and wood chair rail molding as is seen in the entry vestibule and have plaster finished walls above. The ceiling of the space is plaster; the sides of the ceiling are angled at an approximately 20 degree angle, while the central portion is flat. At the front of the space, at the western end, is a raised dais which is not original and probably dates to the use by the church. The dais spans the entire width of the front. Historic photos indicate that there was a platform at the front of the space, which was smaller and centrally located, with tongue-and-groove planking. Despite the alteration, the space still conveys the sense that important functions occurred toward this end of the space. At the southern wall is a built-out pier, clad in the same beadboard wainscot and plaster as the rest of the wall, indicating where the chimney flue is located. On the west wall above the dais, two wall mounted light fixtures are located, with a brass mounting and a fluted milk-glass shade. These appear to be historic and are visible in the historic images. The main meeting room contains non-historic light fixtures that include round glass pendant fixtures suspended from the ceiling; these appear to be mid-century in design but are not visible in the historic images so they may be a later alteration made during the period of significance. The bulk of the space is filled with pews, which are arranged in two rows with a prominent central aisle; while these may be historic, they appear to have been added to the building during its use as a church. At the eastern end of the space, toward the north, a non-original door has been cut, which opens into a small pastor's office located within the enclosed addition. A small pastor's office is located off the north end of the east wall and contained within the enclosed porch addition. This small room has a carpeted floor, wood paneled walls, and a ceiling of suspended acoustic tiles. The ghost of a window is located at the south end of the east wall.

The basement, which is accessed internally via the stair at the northeast corner of the building, is currently a largely utilitarian space. The space is entered through a twelve-light wood entry door. The basement space has a concrete floor, parged concrete block walls, and an applied acoustic tile ceiling. The acoustic tiles appear to be applied to a wood plank ceiling. Several simple steel columns are located in the room. At the southeast is an opening that leads into a small room with concrete block walls and partial stud walls that appears to have served

[1] Army Corps of Engineers, "Allegheny Reservoir Allegany Indian Reservation Property Map," plate 35, *Plans for the Allegany Reservoir, Allegheny River, Cemetery Relocations, Riverview, Corydon, and Cornplanter*, (Pittsburgh: U.S. Army Engineer District, Pittsburgh Corps of Engineers, 1964); United States, *Kinzua Dam (Seneca Indian Relocation) hearings before the United States House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, Eighty-Eighth Congress, first session, on May 18, July 15, 16, Aug. 8, 9, 12, 19, 20, Oct. 31, Nov. 1, Dec. 9, 10, 1963.* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 60.

as a utility or janitorial space. At the southwest end of the space is a non-historic enclosure of wood paneling that conceals a storage and supply area.

Overall, while some alterations have been made to the building, primarily to accommodate its use as a church, the building is largely intact. Perhaps the most notable alteration to the building is the enclosed area at the east elevation of the building; however, the building exterior retains its original mass, configuration, scale and materials. Given that the building is significant because it was the scene of important social and governmental actions, the interior meeting room where these actions took place is its most important character-defining feature. The space itself and its sense of volume remains intact, as do the simple, modest materials on the floor, walls, and ceiling. The sense of focus on the west end of the space also remains intact. Overall, the building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its connection to the events for which it is significant.

Statement of Significance

The Allegany Council House, located on the Seneca Nation of Indians Allegany Reservation in Cattaraugus County, New York, is significant at both the local and state levels for its associations with two major twentieth-century events in the cultural and governmental history of the Seneca Nation. The Seneca Nation of Indians (SNI) is one of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee (or Iroquois) Confederacy. Located at 8156 Old Route 17, the Allegany Council House served as the primary gathering place for regular meetings of the Seneca Council beginning in 1926. Over the next forty years, the Allegany Council House served as the governmental center of the Seneca Nation. During this time, the building served as the socio-political epicenter for two major, nearly simultaneous Seneca Nation battles: to halt the Kinzua Dam Project and to obtain the right to vote for Seneca women.

Between 1936 and 1966, the Allegany Council House served as the primary location where the Seneca Nation discussed, debated and formulated strategies to prevent the United States government from taking 10,000 acres of treaty-protected Seneca lands along the Allegany River. After a lengthy and ultimately unsuccessful legal battle to protect their lands in the mid-twentieth century, one-third of the Allegany Reservation land was flooded by the Kinzua Dam beginning in 1966. As a result, the Seneca people suffered the taking, loss, and destruction of ancestral hunting, fishing and gathering areas, farms, homes, churches, schools, the ceremonial longhouse and burial grounds, and the forced relocation of over 600 people. While creating deep emotional and psychological wounds that last to this day, the resistance to the Kinzua Dam that occurred at the Allegany Council House ultimately strengthened Seneca determination to protect their sovereignty, helped to create a new generation of activists who have been instrumental in creating numerous education and economic opportunities for the Nation, and advanced the suffrage movement of Seneca women.

The first record of Seneca women seeking the right to vote in Nation elections occurred at the Council House in 1935. Although the first attempt was unsuccessful, during the Kinzua Dam controversy, Seneca women staffed committees, testified before the United States Congress, and helped organize the removal. It was the women's participation and strong leadership role in the fight against the dam that finally influenced the male-dominated leadership to grant women the right to vote and hold office in the Seneca Nation, and, in 1964, in this building, Seneca woman were given the right to vote. The Allegany Council House is one of the few surviving public buildings from this era remaining on the Seneca Reservation, and it was the political and social nucleus of activity for these historic events, both of which continue to impact the Seneca Nation today.

For its role as a central meeting place for the Seneca Nation during this pivotal era in their governmental and cultural history, the Allegany Council House meets the requirements for Criterion A in the areas of Politics/Government and Ethnic Heritage (Native American). While the building was initially constructed

around 1925/26 to serve as the new primary administrative center for the Nation, the period of significance begins in 1935, with the earliest recorded vote taken to give Seneca women the right to vote, and ends in 1966, when the Kinzua Dam was completed and the governmental functions were transferred out of the building to the new Haley Building nearby. The era from 1935-1966 encompasses the Seneca Nation's struggle against the Kinzua Dam construction and the time during which the building is most strongly associated with Seneca women's suffrage, which was finally granted in 1964.

History of the Allegany Reservation, 1687-1960

Historically, the ancestral homeland of the Seneca people was located in the area between the Genesee River and Canandaigua Lake in New York State. The Seneca are one of the six tribes united under the Six Nations (Seneca, Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, and Tuscarora) of the Haudenosaunee, also known as the Iroquois, a historically powerful northeast Native American confederacy.[2] Formed around 1450, the Six Nations of the Iroquois each maintained their own cultural practices and traditions while living in separate areas of the state. Originally the confederacy only consisted of five nations- the Seneca, Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida and Cayuga, but it was expanded to include the Tuscarora after they relocated in the area from the southern United States in the early eighteenth century. The league was originally established prior to European contact, and scholars place the formation date somewhere between 1142 and 1450.[3] While each nation maintained their own land distinct from one another throughout the state, the banding together of these nations promoted peace among these communities and provided allies in times of war. As an integral part of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Seneca were traditionally known as the 'Keeper of the Western Door,' as they were originally the westernmost of the Haudenosaunee. While the Seneca historically occupied a much larger area of upstate and western New York State, today the Seneca Nation resides primarily in three reservations spread across the western portion of the state, including the Cattaraugus Reservation, the Oil Springs Reservation, and the Allegany Reservation.

While the Seneca Nation lived in this region for several centuries, interest in the area grew among European missionaries, traders and soldiers beginning in the 1700s. As early as 1687, however, the introduction of new cultural imperatives and outsider claims on the land began to impact the Seneca Nation in multiple ways. At that time, a punitive expedition led by the French Marquis de Denonville against the Seneca resulted in their geographical and social division into several groups: the eastern Seneca resettled in two villages near

[2] The terms 'Iroquois' and 'Haudenosaunee' refer to the same group of Native Americans, the Six Nations. While this group is often referred to as the Iroquois, members of that group tend to refer to themselves as 'Haudenosaunee' rather than Iroquois. The term Haudenosaunee is used by those who consider the term Iroquois to be derogatory in origin and imposed upon the Native Americans by white settlers who did not properly speak the language nor understand the intricacies of many Native American cultures.

[3] For more on this see Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 14-15; Timothy Shannon, *Iroquois Diplomacy on the Early American Frontier* (New York: Viking, 2008), 25.

Canandaigua Lake and the western Seneca resettled in villages along the Genesee River. Some historians have also suggested that Denonville's expedition led to the first permanent settlement of Seneca along the Allegheny River as well.[4]

By the early 1700s, the Seneca were already moving through the Central New York region into the Ohio Valley by way of the Allegheny River.[5] During the American Revolution in 1776, the Seneca had already established settlements along the Allegheny River. Various Euro-American campaigns against the Seneca created upheaval and dispersion from their villages during the 1770s and 1780s, when they began to move toward the Salamanca area during and after the war.[6] The outcome of the American Revolution and the negotiations that followed resulted in Seneca loss of much territory in and around Central and Western New York at this time.

Rising tensions between the Seneca and the encroaching white settlers, newly independent from their European predecessors, occurred during the late 1780s and early 1790s. At this time, the State of New York sought the land that tribes of the Six Nations, including the Seneca, had owned and occupied for generations. In an attempt to claim this land for New York State, these white settlers began to pursue deceptive and illegal land transactions with Haudenosaunee tribes, including the Seneca. Some scholars have acknowledged that both the making of treaties and the outright purchases of land by the individual states were illegal under Article 9 of the Articles of Confederation and also under the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution.[7] Despite this, New York State secured 26 leases, many for 999 years, claiming almost all the native territory. As tensions mounted, the federal government sent a delegation to Canandaigua in the Seneca Territory in the hopes of establishing a peace treaty.

Also known as the Treaty of Canandaigua, the Pickering Treaty of 1794 was the result of this attempt to find peace between the Six Nations and the United States Government. Signed on November 11, 1794, the Pickering Treaty contains the signatures of 50 sachems and chiefs representing the Grand Council of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy and of several U.S. government officials, including Thomas Pickering, acting as the official agent of President George Washington. The conditions of the treaty reflect an attempt to establish peace between the United States and the Six Nations. Affirming Haudenosaunee land rights in the State of New York, the treaty delineated and respected the boundaries of the nearly million acres of Seneca Nation land that had been previously established by the Phelps and Gorham Purchase of 1788. Additionally,

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[4] Joy A. Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam: Forced Relocation through Two Generations* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 5.
[5] Ibid., 5-23.
[6] Charles C. Congdon, *A history of Allegany State Park and the Allegany Reserve of the Seneca Nation (*Salamanca, New York: Salamanca Area Museum Association, 1967), 18.
[7] Bilharz, 74; Congdon, 56.

the document outlined terms for the future rights to maintain and purchase property henceforth. As the treaty stated,

> The United States will never claim the same land, nor disturb the Seneca nation, nor any of the Six Nations, or of their Indian friends residing thereon and united with them, in the free use and enjoyment thereof: but it shall remain theirs, until they choose to sell the same to the people of the United States, who have the right to purchase.[8]

Because of this affirmation of land rights, the Pickering Treaty played a large role in the Seneca resistance to the construction of the Kinzua Dam in the mid-twentieth century, when they argued that the dam was in direct violation of this treaty. The Pickering Treaty is still actively recognized by the United States government and by the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy today.

Despite the conditions of the Pickering Treaty, land issues continued to arise between the United States government and the Six Nations throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1797, for instance, the Treaty of Big Tree was signed, creating the Allegany Reservation and several other reservations in New York State.[9] By the provisions of this treaty, the Seneca relinquished their rights to nearly all their traditional homeland in New York State, except for twelve small tracts of land, for $100,000, to New York State. The Seneca motivations for signing this treaty are complex and were subject to substantial manipulation and bribes by European settlers at the time. With white settlers infiltrating land all around them, the Seneca Nation was increasingly aware that these settlers would eventually succeed in outnumbering them and would take their land by force. In an attempt to leverage some sort of compensation, and peace, before these tensions erupted beyond control, the Seneca agreed to sell the majority of their land to the settlers. As historian Norman Wilkinson has asserted, "Their consent to sell their lands was, indirectly, a forced one- it was futile to resist for what the whites could not purchase, they would ultimately take. To be bought out was preferable to being pushed out."[10] Although the Seneca may have had "little to no conception of the worth of $100,000 at the time," they eventually consented to selling their land, with the exception of a few distinct reservations where they would then reside, at the Treaty of Big Tree in 1797.

In the early nineteenth century, several U.S. transportation networks and resource extracting companies began to utilize Seneca land. In 1807, the State of New York declared the Allegheny River a "public highway" and therefore legally accessible by the U.S. government, because it was deemed navigable for purposes of

[8] "Treaty With the Six Nations, 1794," *The Avalon Project (*Yale Law School*)*. Retrieved October 26, 2015.
[9] B. Delores Thompson, *Jamestown & Chautauqua County: An Illustrated History*, (Woodland Hills, CA: Windsor Publications, 1984), 1-15.
[10] Norman B. Wilkinson, "Robert Morris and the Treaty of Big Tree," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 40.2 (September 1953), 277.

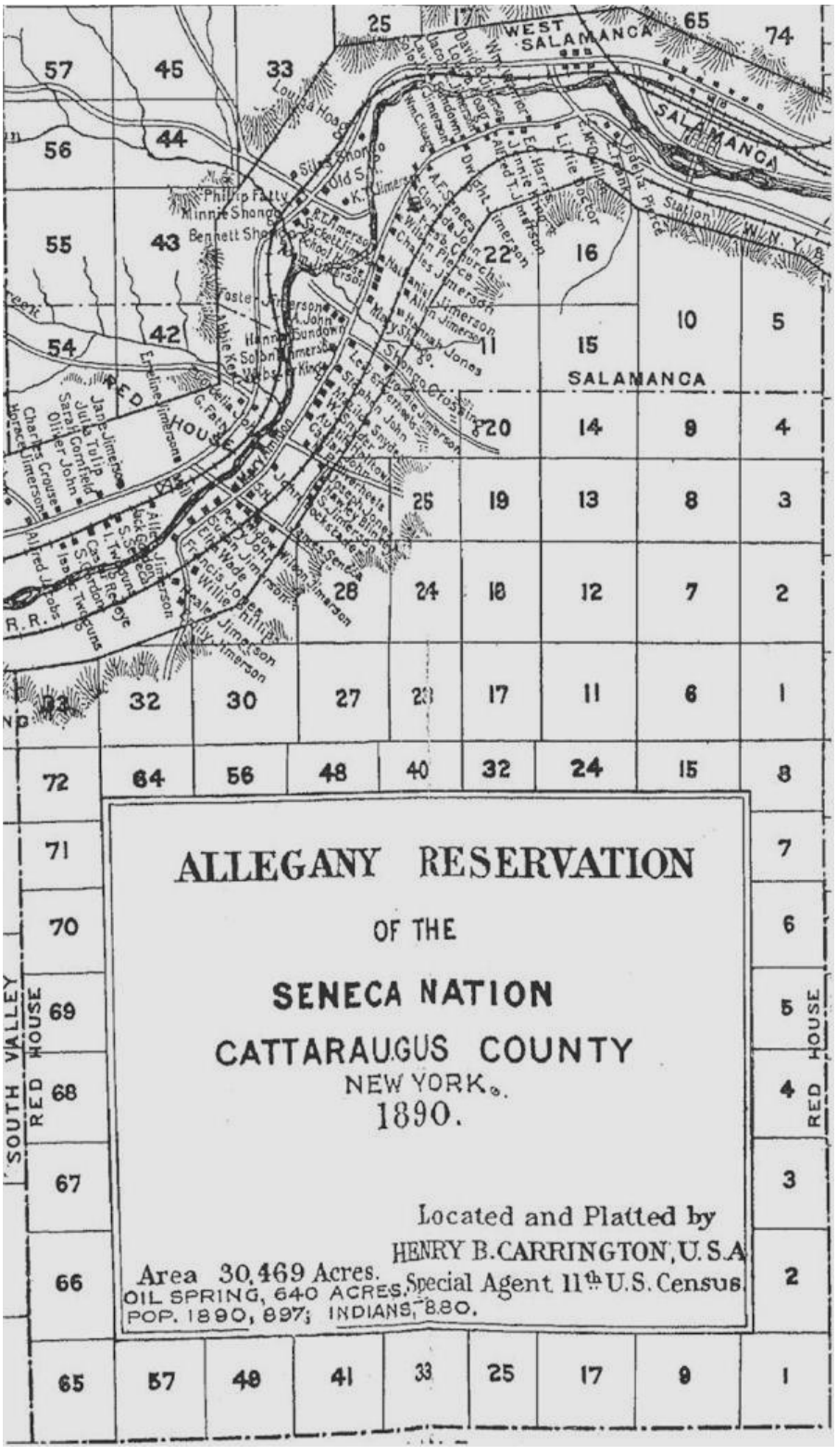
transportation and commerce.[11] Logging was a major industry in the forested Southern Tier of New York State during the nineteenth century, as settlers began clearing land for farms, and rafts of bundled logs were steered by crews downstream to Pittsburgh. The transportation of lumber was the principal business on the river in the nineteenth century, and sawmills were erected on many of the numerous streams in the region and on several streams located on Seneca land.[12] While many Seneca began to work seasonally in the logging industry, the declaration that the Allegheny River was a public highway was controversial.[13] This type of resource-driven tension between the federal government and the Seneca continued into the 1830s, when the Seneca began leasing land on the reservation to Euro-American settlers and to oil, gas, and mineral companies. Simultaneously, railroad companies began leasing land from the Seneca in order to build rail lines that passed directly through the Allegany Reservation. Transportation-oriented development continued in the region in 1845, when New York State constructed Route 17 through the Allegany Reservation. The Erie Railroad also constructed more rail lines through the area in 1852, and an Atlantic and Great Western railroad station was constructed at Red House around this time as well.

By 1848, the Seneca of Cattaraugus and Allegany Reservations created the Seneca Nation of Indians (SNI), a new organization of their government systems. At this time, the traditional system of government, administered by chiefs and clan mothers, was replaced by a constitution and an elected council and executive branch, consisting of a president, clerk, and treasurer. The judicial office of Peacemaker under the old system was retained.[14] This new system was intended, at least in part, to enable the SNI to better address, counter and respond to organizational issues within the reservation as well as deal more succinctly with the federal government during times when their land was under negotiation. Legal amendments on the part of the federal government continued to affect the Seneca Nation during the late nineteenth century. In an attempt to limit and control the Seneca leasing of land, the U.S. government passed an act authorizing five-year leases only. The legal length of these leases gradually expanded over the next two decades, stretching to twelve years in 1880, and then again allowing leases of up to 99 years beginning in 1892. This last amendment angered members of the Seneca Nation, but the tribal council agreed to new contracts after a series of meetings with congressional representatives.[15]

[11] Congdon, 30.
[12] William Adams, *Historical Gazetteer and Biographical Memorial of Cattaraugus County* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Lyman, Horton, and Company, 1893), 491, 1035.
[13] Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam*, 22; Adams, 58.
[14] Joy A. Bilharz, "Ghosts of Broken Hearts and Laws: The Allegany Seneca and Kinzua Dam" (PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1987), 33.
[15] Adams, 39.

Life on the Allegany Reservation, 1800-1964

Historically, the land composing the Allegany Reservation was essential to the physical, cultural and social well-being of the Seneca. In many ways, life on the Allegany Reservation was intricately tied to the land. Families settled along the river, where they planted their crops, hunted animals, fished on the river and collected fruits and herbs. Access to the river and its fertile soil was essential for the Seneca, who depended on these natural resources for physical subsistence. This land served as far more than simply a source of food and supplies, however, and also played an important role in the spiritual traditions of the Seneca. The Allegheny River and its surrounding valley provided the primary source of medicinal plants for the Seneca, who relied on the area's natural resources for continuity within their spiritual system. Culturally, this strong, multifaceted relationship to the land and the river also created settlement patterns that impacted social relations. In the nineteenth century, families tended to settle along the river rather than in clustered towns, each using the land surrounding their home for their own agricultural subsistence. This created social relationships that afforded families a degree of independence from one another, all bonded by their mutual use of and respect for the land on which they resided.



Detail in vicinity of Council House

Map of Allegany Reservation, 1890. Note presence of settlements labeled by family name, located predominantly on the east side of the Allegany River.

As land changed hands between the Six Nations and the United States government several times during the eighteenth century, the Seneca established new homes and lifestyles, based largely on former traditions, on the Allegany Reservation during the nineteenth century. The reservation, situated on both sides of the Allegheny River, is 42 miles long and at least half a mile wide on both sides of the river. Much of this land was officially set aside for the Seneca nation in 1791, as a gift in recognition of Cornplanter's aid during the American Revolution.[16] Cornplanter, chief of the Seneca, was an important in figure in Seneca history, and his actions helped to establish the land that became the Allegany Reservation as well as several plots of Seneca land just over the border in northern Pennsylvania during the late eighteenth century. Born in the town of Conewagus (now Caledonia) on the Genesee River, Cornplanter was born to a Seneca mother and Caucasian father and shared a home with his half-brother, Handsome Lake. Cornplanter became an important figure during the mid-eighteenth century, when he fought with the British during the French and Indian War and then during the Revolutionary War as Chief of the Seneca Nation. As an individual, Cornplanter had originally voted for Seneca neutrality in 1777, but once the Seneca community voted to side with the British, he led the troops with dignity.[17] A contemporary of George Washington, Cornplanter befriended the future president of the United States during wartime. Although he first fought with the British on behalf of the Seneca, once the British allies deserted his people, he took part in treaties with the American government instead. After the war, Cornplanter used his influence to aid in peacekeeping with the new Americans, which he viewed as the best way to protect the Seneca. In 1791, Cornplanter was given a grant of 1500 acres of land in western Pennsylvania and southern New York State, in recognition for his aid during wartime. This land, which included the land of the future Allegany Reservation, was not a reservation, but rather a gift to Cornplanter himself.[18] As chief of the Seneca, Cornplanter utilized this land on behalf of his people, providing a place of asylum from the complications and pressures of the new and expanding American nation. Nestled between the Allegheny River and the surrounding hills, the Seneca could plant, hunt, fish and live on this land by maintaining their traditional lifestyle.

While Cornplanter served as an important political figure for the Seneca, his half-brother Handsome Lake was an important spiritual figure in the community. After experiencing prophetic visions, he created the Code of Handsome Lake in 1799.[19] Established as a mix of traditional Seneca and Christian ideas, the Code of Handsome Lake was designed to guide the Seneca through the transition from subsistence and longhouse life to Euro-American agricultural practices and living in single-family homes.[20] He wrote the code partly in response to his observations that Seneca traditions and spirituality were threatened by encroaching settlers and the

[16] Thomas Struthers Alber, *Cornplanter: Chief Warrior of the Seneca* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 88.
[17] Ibid., 162.
[18] Ibid., 187.
[19] Anthony Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing, 2010), 358.
[20] Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam*, 14-15.

introduction of alcohol into Seneca life. Merging traditional Seneca beliefs with Quaker influences and Christian ideas, Handsome Lake promoted an adaptation of new ideas with older traditions. While some believed this diluted the older spiritual practices of the Seneca, the Code of Handsome Lake was overall very successful. Endorsed by Thomas Jefferson in 1803, the Code of Handsome Lake was widely distributed amongst the Seneca and the entire Six Nations and was generally praised for its ability to merge traditional ideas with new ones in a dramatically evolving cultural environment.[21] Handsome Lake moved to the reservation hamlet of Cold Spring in 1808, and the Cold Spring Longhouse that was associated with the Handsome Lake religion remained there until the 1960s, when construction of the Kinzua Dam forced its removal to Steamburg.[22] Today the Code of Handsome Lake remains practiced among the Seneca Nation of Indians, indicating the long-term impact this religious leader had on the spiritual community for subsequent generations.

Another two hamlets, Jimersontown and Shongo, were also settled in the early nineteenth century, around 1800. Before they moved to the reservation, the Seneca lived in compact matrilineal villages, but, on the reservation, settlement families spread out along the river bottoms where they planted their crops, hunted animals, and collected fruits and herbs. From early settlement into the middle of the twentieth century, a typical area property could be described as a relatively self-sufficient farm. Area residents raised their own vegetables and livestock, and many depended on hunting wild animals like deer and gathering wild herbs and plants for medicines. Many managed to survive comfortably through the Great Depression of the 1930s because of their self-sufficiency and because members of the community helped each other.

As technology, government, and business concerns shifted in the world outside the reservation, the Seneca way of life continued to transition into a new era in the mid-twentieth century. Most homes by this time were established along Old Route 17 with concentrations of homes at Red House and Cold Spring.[23] By 1950, scholar Anthony Wallace described the rural area outside of Salamanca as consisting of "a good macadam highway with a scattering of old farmhouses, log cabins, and brightly-painted prefabricated ranch-style bungalows."[24] The hamlet of Red House contained country stores, filling stations, and small clusters of houses. Another scholar, Joy Bilharz describes the "old places" at this time as varying from "small one-room, tar paper shacks to substantial two-story houses with porches and out buildings."[25] The vast majority of the homes had electricity and other modern amenities but many still used out houses and were heated with firewood. According to Wallace, farming had waned as an occupation and the railroad had become a more consistent

[21] Wallace, 270.
[22] Congdon, 87.
[23] Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam*, 71, 75, 76.
[24] Anthony F.C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), 12.
[25] Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam*, 77.

source of income by this time.[26] Over time, many Seneca, like their white neighbors, took up wage labor and began to abandon large-scale farming, with over half of the population around the area dependent on wage labor by 1960.[27]

The Kinzua Dam Controversy and the Allegany Council House, 1926-1966

The Allegany Council House in Jimersontown was preceded by at least two other council houses that served similar functions in the previous century of Seneca residence in the area. From 1848 to 1905, the council gathered at the Cold Spring Council House, located in the hamlet of the same name. In 1905, the Shongo Council House was built, and the council gathered there for its official meetings from 1905 to 1925. In 1925, the Shongo Council House burned down, and it was at this time that the Allegany Council House was constructed to replace it. The Allegany Council House was completed in 1926 and occupied for a council meeting for the first time on June 12, 1926.[28] Some informal sources have suggested that the building was originally constructed approximately one-quarter mile west of its current site and was moved before 1925. [29]

The Allegany Council House served as the primary location for the official council for nearly four decades, hosting several important political meetings and petitions. Shortly after the building was completed, the council made a motion to purchase equipment for the building in order to improve its condition. On December 10, 1926, the council approved an expenditure in the amount of $698.24 to purchase bookcases, a wardrobe and a cuspidor. In 1929, two motions were passed regarding the Council House, wherein the council approved repainting and leveling off the ground around the building. Aside from these references to the Allegany Council House in the meeting minutes, the building itself rarely appears directly in the official records of council. Instead, the building served as an important center for political gatherings, debates and community meetings throughout the mid twentieth century. During the Kinzua Dam controversy in the 1960s, for instance, the Council House served as the epicenter for political activity and resistance by the Seneca.

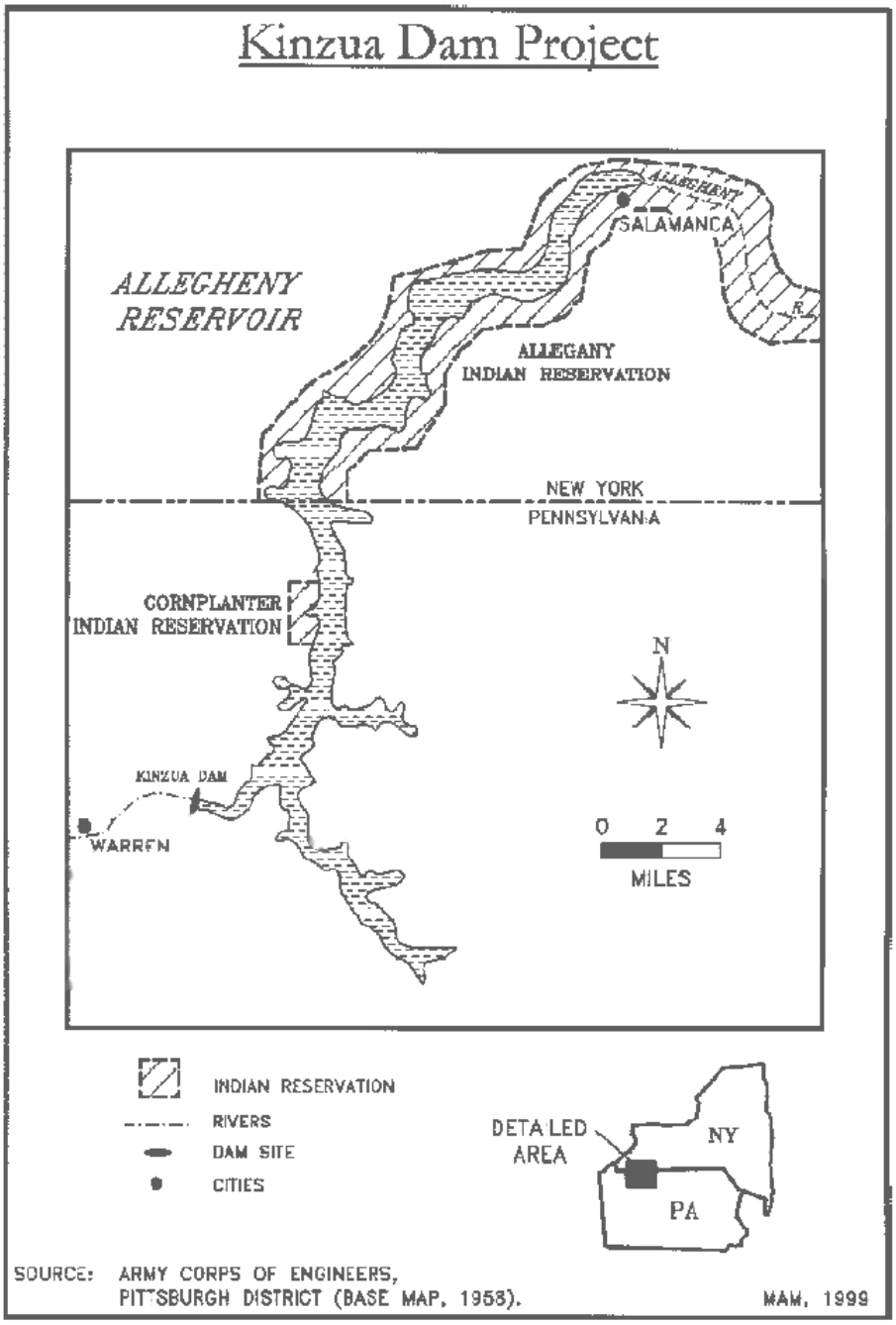
[26] Wallace, 5.
[27] Katherine Weist, "For the Public Good: Native Americans, Hydroelectricity and the Iron Triangle" *Trusteeship in Change: Toward Tribal Autonomy in Resource Management* (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2001), 63
[28] The only reference as to when the new Council House was possibly completed, and utilized is in the headings for each set of minutes. According to the minutes of June 11, 1926, Council was held at the Shongo Court House on Allegany. According to the minutes of June 12, 1926, the council met at the Jimersontown Court House (Allegany Council House).
[29] Jay Toth, Tribal Archaeologist for the Seneca Nation of Indians, has suggested this move may have occurred. While not documentation has been uncovered to corroborate this, if it was moved to the current site, this was an insignificance distance and it occurred before the period of significance. It is at this current site that the building housed the events for which it is being nominated.

Flood Control on the Allegany River

The United States Federal and State Governments expressed interest in constructing the Kinzua Dam several decades prior to the controversy that arose in the late 1950s. The project, led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was first considered as a method of flood control on the Allegheny River in 1928. Flood control was a major concern during the 1920s and 1930s, when several storms in western Pennsylvania caused record flooding and significant damage to the Pittsburgh metropolitan area. In March 1936, for instance, a major flood struck Pittsburgh, which is still recorded as the worst flood in the city's history. Flood levels peaked at 46 feet, destroying over 100,000 buildings. With damage to the city's architecture and infrastructure estimated at about $250 million, flood control became central to political discussions in the region and across the nation during the 1930s. Furthermore, these flood control discussions drew attention to the region north of the city, stretching all the way up to Warren County at the border of New York State. As politicians and southern Pennsylvania residents became aware that storms in the northern region of the state could greatly impact the Pittsburgh metropolitan region downriver, many lobbied to build a damn upstream, near the New York State border. Situated at a major bend in the Allegany River, the Allegany Reservation was located directly within the area of interest for building a dam in order to control floods downriver in Pittsburgh. While the dam would be located upstream near New York State, the resulting flood control would most greatly benefit areas south of the dam, in the urban region of Pittsburgh rather than the smaller communities and farms located upstream.

In 1936, the Kinzua Dam was proposed as part of the Flood Control Acts, which was authorized by Congress in 1938. While the plans for the dam were still in the early stages, they required seizing several thousand acres of Seneca territory along the river in order to construct and operate the dam to regulate flooding. The dam was to be located near the town of Warren, Pennsylvania, but it would affect the Allegany River upstream to a great degree, particularly the area of the Allegany Reservation (see map below). Considerable opposition from the Seneca Nation arose at this time. Shortly after the project was proposed, however, it was tabled, as the government focused its attention on foreign policy during World War II. In 1956, the project re-emerged as a vitally important construction agenda, when record floods on the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers greatly revived public interest in building Kinzua Dam. Much of the desire for the dam came from downstream residents in southern New York State and northern Pennsylvania, who sought flood control in the Ohio River Valley. Many businessmen, entrepreneurs and industrialists around Pittsburgh also advocated for the construction of the Kinzua Dam, as a constant and consistent water flow would prove financially beneficial to their factories.[30]

[30] Weist, 63.



Map shows the location of the Kinzua Dam in Pennsylvania, in relation to the Allegheny River and the Allegany Reservation to the north.

Kinzua Dam

Once interest in constructing the Kinzua Dam was revived after World War II, a series of swift legislative actions on behalf of the U.S. Government systematically suppressed the Seneca Nation opposition to the project on multiple occasions. According to Laurence Hauptman, an expert on the subject, the actions of the U.S. Government and the Army Corps of Engineers revealed "a near-total lack of concern for the Seneca, which emerged at every stage of the project."[31] For each action that the Seneca Nation took to protest, reverse or compromise the Kinzua Dam project, the U. S. Government dealt another blow to the community at both the state and federal levels. On January 11, 1957, the U.S. District Court of the Western District of NY upheld the government's right to condemn land of the Seneca Nation for the proposed project. Ten days later, the U.S. Court of Appeals denied a petition from the Seneca for a stay of the order of condemnation and possession of their land.

Under pressure from the Seneca Nation and its legal representatives, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers agreed to have an independent engineering firm develop an alternative plan for providing flood control on the Allegheny River without disrupting Seneca land. With assistance from the Quakers, the Seneca managed to hire Arthur E. Morgan to lead the study to find an alternative site for the dam. Morgan, the planner and chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), had worked on the Norris Dam and several others as part of the TVA system in the 1930s. Upon completing his study of the Kinzua Dam proposal, Morgan presented his findings to the Army Corps of Engineers and the Seneca Nation later that year. Known as the Morgan Plan, the study provided a viable alternative that was both more affordable and more efficient than the proposed Kinzua Dam. Identifying a location that would hold more water and protect Seneca land, the Morgan Plan proposed to "divert the flow of the Allegheny River through a six mile channel into a large glacial depression which has about three times the capacity of Kinzua, where it would be stored for flood control and for increasing the low water flow."[32] Diverting the water to this new location, however, would require the relocation of some American citizens to new areas. The plan also reported that the Kinzua dam was, "a needlessly expensive device for dealing with the dangers of flooding, and that its purpose could be achieved, even more effectively, without inundating the Seneca Reservation."[33] Estimated to cost just under 80 million dollars, as opposed to the estimated cost of 100 million dollars for the Kinzua Dam, the Morgan Plan strongly advised the Army Corps of Engineers to reconsider its plan.[34] The Army Corps of Engineers rejected the Morgan Plan with little explanation. While this alternative plan appears to have been more financially and

[31] Laurence M. Hauptman, *The Iroquois Struggle for Survival: World War II to Red Power* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 91.
[32] Qtd in Edmund Wilson, *Apologies to the Iroquois* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1959), 193.
[33] Wilson, 193.
[34] Ibid.

ecologically efficient, some scholars have suggested that the plan was rejected because, in essence, it was "too disruptive to too many non-Indians."[35]

During this time, the Allegany Council House became the hub of political activity for the Seneca Nation, where they met regularly in order to "enact diverse strategies to fight the construction of the Kinzua Dam."[36] With the assistance of the Quakers, the Indian Rights Association, and a team of lawyers, the Seneca continued to take legal action against the Kinzua Dam, seeking recourse in courts at the state and federal level. In April 1958, the US District Court for the District of Columbia denied the Seneca Nation's request for an injunction to prevent construction of the dam. The earliest record of a Kinzua Dam-related meeting that took place at the Allegany Council House was listed in meeting minutes as October 17, 1959, although it is likely that conversations about the project began there prior to that date and were not officially listed as such.[37] As the primary meeting location for the Seneca Council, it is probable that Seneca officials and citizens discussed the increasingly pressing matter there for many years prior to that date.

At the October 1959 meeting at the Council House, a special session of the council voted to retain Arthur K. Lazarus Jr. as their general counsel and attorney, "for the Kinzua Dam litigation, negotiations, or settlements."[38] With Lazarus's aid, they "sought recourse through the courts based on their rights to the land as integral to their treaty rights."[39] The Pickering Treaty of 1794 was vital to their case, wherein they argued that the seizure of Seneca lands to construct the Kinzua Dam was in direct violation of the conditions of the treaty. Signed by George Washington himself, the Pickering Treaty served as the crux of the legal battle between the Seneca Nation and the U.S. Government. Advocating on behalf of the Seneca, Lazarus and the legal team attempted to uphold the conditions of the document, which stated in 1794, "The United States will never claim the same land, nor disturb the Seneca nation, nor any of the Six Nations, in the free use and enjoyment thereof: but it shall remain theirs, until they choose to sell the same to the people of the United States, who have the right to purchase."[40] The legal team referenced the Pickering Treaty at the crux of the case, arguing that the U.S. Government had broken the conditions of this historic peace treaty. By forcibly taking large portions of Seneca land, the U.S. Government had violated the Pickering Treaty, which had explicitly stated that the land belonged to the Seneca.

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[35] Weist, 64.
[36] Weist, 63.
[37] Seneca National of Indians, *Seneca Nation of Indians Council Minutes Book* (Salamanca, New York: Seneca Nation of Indians Clerk's Office, 1959).
[38] United States, *Kinzua Dam (Seneca Indian Relocation) hearings before the United States House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, Eighty-Eighth Congress, first session, on May 18, July 15, 16, Aug. 8, 9, 12, 19, 20, Oct. 31, Nov. 1, Dec. 9, 10, 1963 (*Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 478.
[39] Weist, 63.
[40] "Treaty With the Six Nations, 1794," *The Avalon Project (Yale Law School)*. Retrieved October 26, 2015.

In response to this prolonged battle, however, "every court from the Federal District Court to the U.S. Supreme Court denied their petitions."[41] In 1959, opposition from the Seneca Nation caused the U.S. Congress to freeze appropriated money to be used for the Kinzua Dam in order to await pending court action. This victory was only temporary, however, as the Supreme Court refused the Seneca Nation motion for a writ of certiorari later that same year. This Supreme Court action removed the last legal obstacle for the U.S. Government to construct the dam.

Despite efforts to stop it, construction of the Kinzua Dam officially began on October 22, 1960. State and federal officials were present at a groundbreaking ceremony, which took place on the western embankment of the Allegheny River in Pennsylvania, on the site of the Brownell farm. Newspapers reported that "thousands of people" attended the groundbreaking ceremony on a site that is now regularly flooded.[42] The event soon attracted media attention in newspapers and magazines around the state and nation. Articles in the *New York Times, New Yorker* and *Evening Post* covered the legal battle in detail, while opinion pieces advocating for the Seneca began to appear in a variety of general circulation magazines as well as popular culture. The literary critic Edmund Wilson penned a particularly poignant lament for the situation in *Apologies to the Iroquois,* published in part in *The New Yorker*. The battle, pitting the U.S. Government against the Seneca Nation, began to make its way into popular culture as well. Music icon Johnny Cash, for instance, included a song devoted to the subject on his album *Bitter Tears*. In this song, "As Long as the Grass Shall Grow," Cash described the situation with regret, stating:

> On the Seneca reservation there is much sadness now
> Washington's treaty has been broken and there is no hope, no how
> Across the Allegheny River they're throwing up a dam
> It will flood the Indian country, a proud day for Uncle Sam
> It has broke the ancient treaty with a politician's grin
> It will drown the Indians graveyards, Cornplanter can you swim?
> The earth is mother to the Senecas they're trampling sacred ground
> Change the mint green earth to black mud flats as honor hobbles down....[43]

Cash's lyrics indicated the swell of popular support for the Seneca that came from outside the community and the Allegheny River region advocating for the Seneca cause, rather than that of the U.S. Government. While this support was essentially too little and too late, it demonstrated the significant attention that the Kinzua Dam controversy attracted nationwide.

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[41] Weist, 63.
[42] "Treaty with the Six Nations, 1794."
[43] Johnny Cash, "As Long as the Grass Shall Grow," *Bitter Tears,* 1964.

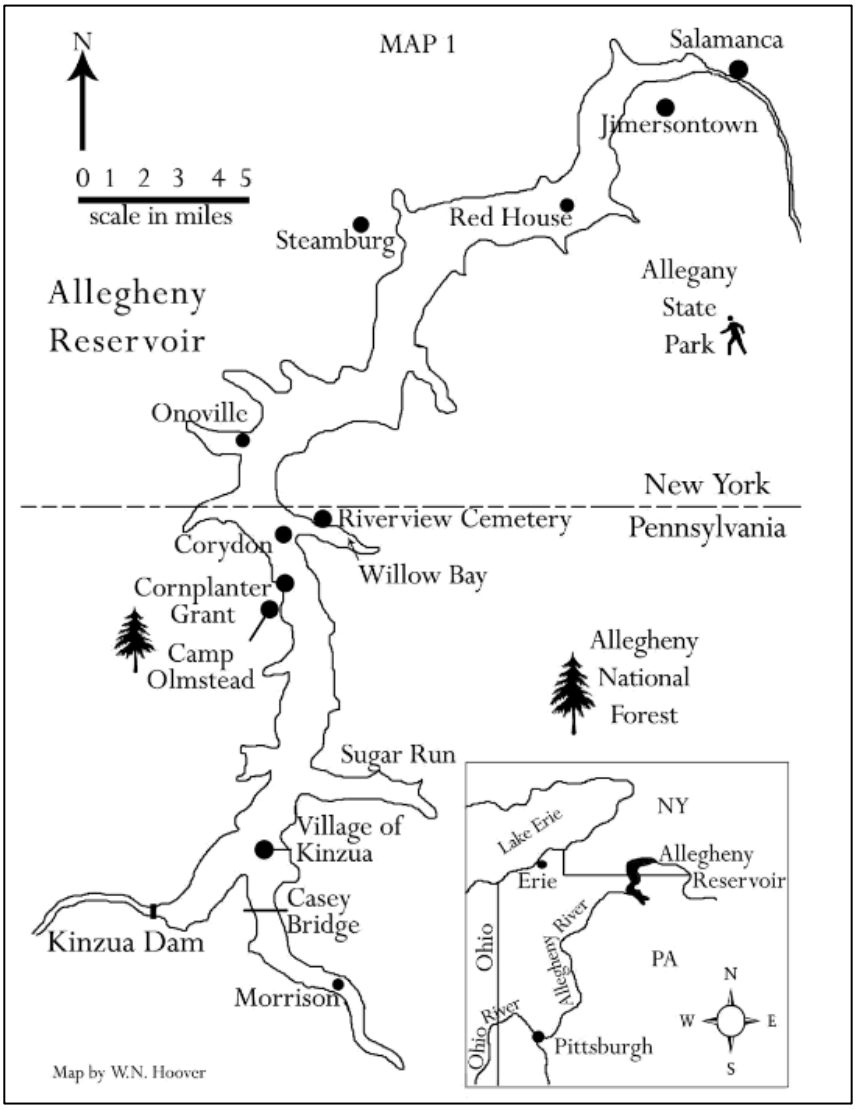
Even as construction on the Kinzua Dam was underway, the Seneca Nation continued to gather at the Allegany Council House to further mobilize in an attempt to terminate the project. In 1961 they sent a request to the White House to halt construction on the Kinzua Dam, which President John F. Kennedy personally denied while citing the immediate need for flood control. In 1962, the Seneca government increased its meeting schedule from twice a year to once a month, indicating the sense of urgency and determination they identified in response to the Kinzua Dam. In the Allegheny River basin, official council meetings were almost always held at the Allegany Council House, which was increasingly occupied by activists, officials and concerned citizens in the days leading up to and during the construction of the Kinzua Dam. Acknowledging that the project may not be halted and that relocation may be inevitable, a full time administrator, former Seneca Council President George Heron, was hired to form a relocation committee. This committee, known as the Kinzua Planning Committee, consisted of the executive branch, at least six councilors, and volunteers.[44] They, too, regularly met at the Allegany Council House in order to organize for the potential relocation of their entire community upon completion of the Kinzua Dam.

In 1964, recognizing that the U.S. Government was not going to halt the project despite a multitude of legal actions, the Seneca shifted their activist efforts to securing compensation for the loss of their land in some form. While no monetary value could possibly compare with the emotional, social and historical impact of the seizure of this land, the Seneca sought compensation in order to ease the physical relocation of the community to a new area, new buildings and new land. During this time, the Seneca also lost an appeal over the related relocation of a four-lane highway through the remaining portion of their reservation. This highway, related to the new topography of the dam, caused the Seneca to lose even more land to the interstate, which also divided the reservation territory into separate pieces. In a supposed act of compensation for this additional loss, the U.S. Government enabled the Seneca to reclaim land around the old highway which the interstate had replaced. Almost simultaneously, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law financial compensation for the Seneca in the amount of $12,128,917 in August 1964.[45] This money was intended to compensate for the taking of Seneca land and assist the relocation of the Seneca who were required to abandon their homes and move to new land. The construction of the Kinzua Dam resulted in the loss of 10,000 acres of land by the Seneca, and the federal government set aside only 305 acres of land, split between the two towns of Steamburg and Jimersontown, for their relocation. These towns were located on the fringe of what was previously Seneca land and had been only sparsely populated until they were chosen as the primary sites for resettlement due to the Kinzua Dam construction in the 1960s.

Although resistance from the Seneca Nation continued throughout the project, the Kinzua Dam was officially completed in 1966. At its completion, the dam controlled drainage on a watershed of 2,180 square miles - an

[44] Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam*, 61.
[45] Weist, 64.

area twice the size of Rhode Island. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed the Kinzua Dam at a total cost of $125 million, touting the benefits of flood control for the Allegheny Valley and the City of Pittsburgh, utilizing the dam for hydroelectric power generation, as well as providing recreational opportunities on the resulting beaches and lakes that were created through the redirection of water. The U.S. Government did not make a statement, of course, acknowledging the severe impact that the Kinzua Dam had on the Seneca Nation, their history and their way of life.



Map showing Allegheny Reservoir and Surrounding Settlements

Note the communities indicated on the map that were entirely inundated by the flood waters from the Kinzua Dam.

Source: William N. Hoover, *Kinzua : From Cornplanter to the Corps* (2006), 16.

Native American Policy in the United States, 1945-1970

The forcible taking of Seneca land by the U.S. Government marked an important legal battle in American history, but it was not the only one of its kind. In the decades following World War II, several seizures of Native American land occurred around New York State and the country, each with similar results and ramifications. Particularly during the 1950s, assimilationist and racist attitudes pervaded national politics regarding Native Americans. Reflected in government actions as well as publications and policies, this era was marked by the view that Native Americans would somehow be "better off" if they conceded to living in the white, "American" way. This attitude served as a primary justification for taking their land in order to build hydroelectric dams, as if, somehow, according to scholar Katherine Weist, "the loss of native resources could be proffered as beneficial for their future well-being."[46] A memorandum to President Dwight D. Eisenhower from his executive assistant, John Hamlin, epitomized this flawed logic. In 1956, he advised the president how to approach what he called "the Indian Problem," stating:

> It seems to be probable that the two kinds of culture cannot co-exist intimately indefinitely. The less competitive culture would have to adapt or die out...probably a manifestation of that harsh law of nature, the survival of the fittest...Subsidizing of the backward group by the productive one is a possible temporary palliative and it is temporarily acceptable if the surplus of the productive group is considerable. But it is costly; it seems unfair to the productive people; and it aggravates the problem and postpones the solution. The backward population becomes constantly larger and poorer as it relies on primitive means of production, and hence more reliant, more costly, and more frustrated.[47]

Unfortunately the troubling language and prevailing attitude embedded in this official document only reinforced many of the actions taken by the U.S. Government during this time in regards to Native American relocation policies. Additionally, justification for the Kinzua Dam went beyond simply flood control and economic development and instead viewed these projects as components of a broader national defense program. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, politicians often linked the need for Americans to have an intricate network of power utilities to Cold War fears of attack.[48] In response to this fear, politicians justified projects like the Kinzua Dam by arguing that they were integral to "safeguarding our economy and way of life."[49] Development projects such as dams were thereby seen as upholding national security interests to protect Americans from attacks by outsiders.

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[46] Weist, 68.
[47] Qtd in Weist, 67.
[48] Weist, 68.
[49] Laurence M. Hauptman, "General John S. Bragdon, the Office of Public Works Planning, and the Decision to Build Pennsylvania's Kinzua Dam," *Pennsylvania History* 53:3 (1986), 96.

Several instances of land takings, similar to the events that transpired at Kinzua Dam, happened across the nation during this time. While the history of the United States is inextricably related to the concept of seizing Native American land, this theme reemerged in new ways after World War II. Constructing dams, power generating stations and other environmental interventions with renewed vigor after the war, the U.S. Government frequently engaged in legal battles with Native Americans, forcibly purchasing, taking or compensating them for their land. In the West, a number of landmark cases occurred in Oregon, Washington and Montana during the late 1950s and early 1960s. On the Columbia River, for instance, the construction of a series of hydroelectric dams in the area resulted in several 'take areas' seized from the Native Americans by the federal government, disrupting the fishing patterns, subsistence patterns and human rights of the community that lived there. Similarly, the construction of the Yellowtail Dam on the Bighorn River in the southern section of the Crow Reservation in Montana caused a significant controversy in the press during the same time the Seneca were fighting against the Kinzua Dam. In financial terms, however, the Seneca were more successful at a pure numerical level than the Crow, as the former received over $12 million in New York and the latter received only $5 million in compensation in Montana. While these communities, locations and situations were remarkably different, these two simultaneous events reveal the resilient and persistent efforts of the Seneca at the Allegany Council House.

Statewide, another major taking of Native land occurred in New York almost simultaneously to the Kinzua Dam event. In 1958, the New York State Power Authority began the legal process to seize more than half of the Tuscarora Reservation in order to construct a new hydroelectric power generation facility. Located near the village of Lewistown in Niagara County, the reservation encompassed land that the power authority and Robert Moses wanted to use to construct a new power station and reservoir along the Niagara River for the Niagara Power Project. In response, the Tuscarora physically blocked access by construction workers to the site in protest, and several were arrested, although the charges were later dropped. The appellate court subsequently ruled that the Congressional issuance of a license through the Federal Power Commission constituted sufficient grounds for the state to exercise eminent domain over native property.[50] The Supreme Court refused to hear the resulting Haudenosaunee appeal on behalf of the Tuscarora. A 'compromise' was reached wherein the state flooded 560 acres of the reservation, which was about one-eighth of the remaining Tuscarora land.[51] Much like the Seneca, the Tuscarora sought financial compensation for the loss of their land, and the government agreed to pay $1,500 an acre in this instance. As at the Kinzua Dam, this relocation due to U.S. Government flood control and hydroelectric power generation led to the displacement of 29 families and a serious disruption in their economy for many generations.[52]

[50] Ward Churchill, *Struggle for the Land* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2002), 101.
[51] Ibid., 102.
[52] Bryan Printup and Neil Patterson Jr., *Images of American Tuscarora Nation* (2007), 115.

Occurring simultaneously, the taking of land at the Tuscarora and Seneca Reservations reflects this era of history in both New York State and federal government policies regarding Native populations. The seizure of Native American land occurred nationwide, statewide and regionally during the postwar era, when state and federal governments prioritized the construction of dams, reservoirs, and hydroelectric power stations. As was the case at both the Tuscarora and Seneca Reservations, many of these takings followed a somewhat similar pattern. Typically, the state or federal government would announce a new dam project that was designed to occur on native-owned land. The native population would then resist the project through a number of legal venues, ranging from local, state to national courts, including the Supreme Court. Most of the time, this resistance would garner enough media attention to require some form of a compromise, which nearly always favored the United States Government. Monetary compensation often followed the seizure of land, which also typically required the relocation of native residents, buildings and sacred sites. This put a price on something that was culturally priceless, and there could be no sufficient compensation for something as intangible and essential as a cultural and spiritual connection to the land. The history of the Kinzua Dam, in tandem with the history of its resistance by the Seneca Nation at the Allegany Council House, exemplifies federal and state policies towards Native Americans in the period between 1945 and 1970.

While this pattern was clearly disruptive to native land, lifestyles and resources, a common justification for U.S. Government actions was that these dams ultimately were constructed "for the public good."[53] A statement made by Maurice Goddard, the Pennsylvania Secretary for Forests and Waters, illustrates a typical justification method for displacing Native populations in order to better serve an American one. In relation to the Kinzua Dam, he stated, "To date this will mean that some of our people may have to give up homes and land, in accordance with law, for the common good of the majority. . . in the march of civilization and progress, there must be sacrifice of a few for the protection and well-being of the many."[54] Pitting the 'sacrifice of a few' against the 'well-being of the many,' Goddard fails to acknowledge that the line drawn between the few and the many was also extremely racially and culturally motivated. Despite Goddard's reference to the relocated population as "some of our people," the government viewed the Seneca as a separate population, which likely influenced the ability to justify their relocation for construction of the Kinzua Dam.

Some scholars have identified additional motivations behind the construction of the Kinzua Dam that stretch far outside the sphere of improving public welfare. In her study of the Kinzua Dam events, Weist identified an "iron triangle of vote-seeking politicians, federal agencies, and business, farming, and water interests" that all converged in order to construct the dam for their own financial benefits. Scholar Edmund Wilson similarly addressed these alternative motivations, stating that "genuine flood control has never been the object of the Kinzua Dam, but has merely served as a pretext for putting through at the public expense a particularly costly

[53] Weist, 64.
[54] Qtd in Hauptman, "General Bragdon," 104.

contrivance intended to serve the interests of a group of industrialists in Pittsburgh."[55] While the motivations behind constructing the Kinzua Dam likely reflected a combination of factors and parties, the result was that it was completed at the cultural and physical expense of the Seneca Nation. Examples such as these suggest that the definition of 'public' in the 'public good' that was so frequently cited by politicians was somewhat limited, in that it tended to exclude what was good for Native populations.

Aftermath of the Kinzua Dam, 1964-2017

The Kinzua Dam project brought with it a number of consequences that made an immediate and long lasting impact on the cultural, social, spiritual, economic and environmental aspects of the Seneca Nation. As Weist has observed, "Seneca of all ages underwent massive trauma with removal," and this trauma resulted in the reorganization of an entire community in several different ways, with multiple generations of Seneca subject to these changes.[56] The process of relocation began before the Kinzua Dam was fully completed, in 1964. The federal government took nearly 10,000 acres of Seneca land, approximately one-third of the entire reservation, forcing the relocation of approximately 650 residents. In an attempt to assist the Seneca with relocation, the government set aside 305 acres of land for their relocation, split between two towns along the Allegheny River, Steamburg and Jimersontown. Located several miles away from their original homes, the Seneca did not have the same immediate ties this land.

While they received some financial compensation from the government to assist with relocation, the move was sudden, difficult and somewhat disorganized. As Weist revealed, "Many Senecas had only two months from the time they received the money to the time they had to move." With little notice, many Seneca used their funds to build, "new houses constructed by the Seneca Nation Housing Enterprises, which bought building materials in bulk and by December had either built or was in the process of building 102 houses for the relocatees."[57] Furthermore, the method of choosing a specific site for their new home was antithetical to the Seneca tradition of passing property down through matrilineal lines. In preparation for relocation, "The removed families chose the lots for their new homes through a lottery on the reservation."[58] Disrupting their former residential arrangements and property histories, the speed and methods of this relocation process catalyzed a major transformation in many aspects of Seneca life henceforth.

Relocation caused the Seneca to adapt to new settlement patterns that in turn impacted traditional relationships both within and between families. People removed from the "take area" were resettled in new suburban-style

[55] Wilson, 195.
[56] Weist, 65.
[57] Ibid., 64.
[58] Vicky Williams, "The Kinzua Dam Controversy" (Master's Thesis, State University of New York at Buffalo, 2007), 28.

developments at Jimersontown and Steamburg.[59] Located twelve miles apart, this effectively divided the community in two, making communication and social connectivity between the two towns difficult. Elders struggled with this distance in particular, as it became difficult to maintain relationships between towns without a reliable form of transportation to cover this distance. As the Seneca settled into these new communities, Jimersontown became the central gathering point for the Seneca, where they spent government compensation money to build new schools, a museum, a library and the central tribal offices.[60]

While the distance between towns seemed greater, however, the amount of space available for settlement within each town was smaller than had previously been available in the original reservation. Condensing a community that previously coexisted on 10,000 acres into 305 acres proved difficult. As a result, "the Senecas moved into closer proximity with each other. Old neighbors and some kin were separated, and nonkin moved closer together."[61] This new arrangement had both immediate and long-term effects on traditional relationship patterns. One Seneca elder, Sally Crow, discussed the impact of the move with an interviewer over twenty years later in 1988:

> When it became true and they were going to move us, I told them I wasn't going to move-that I was going to stay right there. They said that my property would be flooded. I said, I'm staying right here! Well, after we moved here [to the relocation site], it didn't feel like home. Even now, it feels like I'm just visiting. They burned our old house down and I think that land has been under water only once. When my husband used to get home from work, we'd go back to the old place and sit there until late at night. We used to have about ten acres, now we have three acres-more or less. It's been sixteen years since we were moved here. We had no choice but to move. They said it was progress.[62]

Crow's sentiment that the new location "didn't feel like home" indicates the long-term effects of this relocation on Seneca residents. In addition to the immediate psychological effects of this relocation, it also impacted subsequent generations of Seneca, who struggled to find land available within the community as they matured. Weist observed the impact of this density over time, stating, "As the Seneca population expanded, young people left the reservation because of the lack of available house plots."[63] With little space to establish their own homes, younger generations of Seneca began moving away from the reservation.

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[59] Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam, 57.*
[60] Weist, 65.
[61] Ibid., 66.
[62] Alberta Austin, *Ne'Ho Niyo'Dë:Nö' That's What It Was Like* (Hamburg: Seneca Nation Curriculum Development Project, 1988), 22.
[63] Weist, 66.

This new density essentially reshuffled the community into new arrangements that disrupted the traditional Seneca methods of utilizing larger tracts of land for subsistence. Previously, Seneca in the "take area" lived on large plots that functioned as farms in rural surroundings. While often cash-poor, the Seneca made extensive use of natural resources in the area by hunting and fishing, gathering wild foods and medicines, and gathering firewood. Placed in much closer proximity to one another on substantially less land, residents struggled to live on their new land to the same degree of self-sufficiency they had experienced for many prior generations. Furthermore, they were less familiar with the land itself, making hunting, fishing and gathering resources much more difficult than it had been on the land they occupied in previous decades. While some attempted to compensate for these new challenges by hunting and fishing out of season, many soon realized that this practice would be unsustainable for the community in the long term. As a result, "they abandoned their agricultural subsistence economy along the river and moved their scattered settlements to compact villages and towns."[64] This in turn forced many residents to find new ways to subside, transitioning into a cash-earning economy from a previously resource rich system of subsistence. Wage earning employment opportunities became crucial on the reservation, and by the 1980s, most of the Seneca had converted to that system of employment.

Shortly after the relocation, the majority of the buildings and structures in the old reservation were destroyed. Bulldozers demolished all of the homes that residents had lived in before the Kinzua Dam, in order to facilitate flooding. Most of the demolitions occurred in 1966, and no development has occurred in the area since that time. Much of the acreage in the 'take area' was the most important land to the Seneca, including a number of ancestral homes, farms, and communities at Red House and Cold Spring.[65]

Several sacred sites were also destroyed on the former reservation, causing great disruption to the spiritual community as well. The demolition of the Cold Spring Longhouse, once the ceremonial center of Seneca traditional life, was particularly traumatic to the spiritual life of the Seneca. Additionally, over 3,000 graves, including that of the Seneca religious prophet Handsome Lake, were removed from their original locations during and after the construction of the Kinzua Dam. Blanche Maybee, a Seneca elder who formerly lived on the Allegany Reservation, described the emotional impact of this grave removal. She stated,

> I went there when they were digging up the graves, and I saw my brother's bones. His bones were in perfect condition. My other brother's bones weren't so good. My sister's bones were the same way. Just her skull was left and the rest had disintegrated…I never had such an awful feeling as I did when I saw everything gone from the reservation. The buildings were all down; the trees were all blown up-just the road was left! It was all

[64] Ibid., 65.
[65] Bilharz, "Broken Promises Come High," *Treaty of Canandaigua 1794: 200 Years of Treaty Relations between the Iroquois Confederacy and the United States*, ed. G. Peter Jemison and Anna M. Schein, (Santa Fe, N.M.: Clear Light Publishers, 2000), 164.

> leveled off by a bulldozer. It was all the color of mud. Oh! It was awful! I couldn't even see where our house had been. I'll never forget that feeling as long as I live![66]

The destruction of these graves, both personal and historic, caused anguish among the Seneca. After relocation, Steamburg became the new location of the Longhouse religion and thus the village of many elderly Seneca, although it lacked the historical rootedness that had previously enriched the community at the Kinzua Dam site.[67]

Commemorative Events and Strategies

In order to create a sense of connectivity between the old site and the relocation site, the Seneca found ways to foster a sense of continuity both during and after the Kinzua Dam was completed. In 1961, the Seneca Nation began publishing the Kinzua Planning Newsletter at their own expense, printing eighteen hundred copies to be mailed out on a monthly basis.[68] The newsletter circulated for several years, providing a major focus for voicing community concerns, detailing the actions of the Kinzua Planning Committee, keeping residents abreast of deadlines and, once the relocation occurred, serving as an outlet to connect the community across Jimersontown and Steamburg. Historian Vicky Williams acknowledged the vital role the newsletter played during and after the relocation, stating "The Kinzua Planning Newsletter brought the nation together and organized the community during this tumultuous time."[69]

Two decades after the Kinzua Dam was completed, the Seneca Nation initiated a ceremonial event intended to commemorate the immense impact of the relocation that occurred in the 1960s. Starting in 1984, the event, known as Remember the Removal (RTR) day, was organized by the Kinzua Dam Issues Committee (KDIC) and the Remember the Removal subcommittee of the council. The RTR subcommittee has sponsored and planned the RTR day each year since this time, typically held on the last Saturday of September. Intended to commemorate the anniversary of the removal, or relocation, of the Seneca community after the Kinzua Dam was completed, RTR day was organized in order to remember those who lost their homes, to promote community healing, and to "promote the message 'never again,' through informative displays, speakers and events."[70] Different themes emerge from year to year, such as in 2006, when the RTR day specifically focused the event on honoring each of the families that were removed. While the theme changes somewhat each year, the purpose of the event remains, "to tell the story of the Kinzua Dam from a Seneca perspective and to inform our future generations about the wrongs of the past. It is a story of native struggles to live in a colonial world

[66] Austin, 123.
[67] Weist, 64.
[68] Bilharz, 63.
[69] Williams, 48.
[70] Ibid., 49.

and it is also a time to reflect on the direction the Seneca Nation has taken since the Removal."[71]

The Council House still plays a role in the act of remembrance for these events today and is included as part of the ceremonial route for RTR day each year. Typically, the event begins at Red House Bridge, a structure that spans the Allegheny River at the hamlet of Red House. A flatbed truck carrying a replica of the "Treaty of 1794" is followed by participants who walk along Old NY Route 17 from the bridge past the old reservation site, where the Council House still stands.[72] As perhaps the most important building remaining from the time before the removal, the Council House is included as part of RTR day as a touchstone for remembrance. Particularly when so many other homes, longhouses and other buildings were demolished during the removal, the Council House stands today as a physical reminder of the lessons learned both during and after the Seneca Nation resistance to the Kinzua Dam.

Seneca Women's Suffrage at the Allegany Council House, 1935-1964

In addition to its pivotal role in the Seneca resistance to the Kinzua Dam, the Allegany Council House also played an important part in the Seneca Nation women's suffrage movement. While Seneca women did not gain the right to vote until the mid-twentieth century, the history of the Seneca women's pursuit of suffrage traces back to the nineteenth century. Throughout the early 1800s, the Seneca Nation was mostly a matrilineal society. This system afforded women significant power in decision-making at both the family and community level. At this time, "Even marriage followed the matrilocal pattern, in that the newly married couple took up residence with the female partner's family."[73]

This pattern was substantially changed in 1848, when the creation of the Seneca Nation of Indians at the Allegany and Cattaraugus Reservation had the effect of disenfranchising women in the community for the next century. When the Seneca Nation's government was officially reorganized, women lost their powers in many venues. Prior to that point, the Seneca had been ruled by chiefs whose titles were passed through the matrilineal lines Although women could not be chiefs at that time, they did play a critical role in their selection. Also before 1848, Seneca women held power in village and tribal decision-making, and influence in war policy and over the fate of war captives. They were denied the right to vote or run for office in the new elective form of government that was established in 1848. Underlying this action was a belief by some opponents that women

[71] Ibid.
[72] Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam*; William N. Fenton, "From Longhouse to Ranch-type House: Second Housing Revolution of the Seneca Nation" *Proceedings of the 1965 Conference on Iroquois Research*, ed. Elizabeth Tooker, (Albany, N.Y.: New York State Museum Publications, 1967); Amanda Grabowski. "Honored Seneca Historian, Linguist, and WWII vet, George Heron, turns 89," *Salamanca Press*, February 27, 2008, accessed September 16, 2009, www.salamancapress.com/articles/2008/02/27.
[73] Rebecca Bowen, "Women of the Seneca Nation" SNI Tribal Archives Department (SNI Women's Conference, August 5, 2011), 5.

"had appointed the chiefs who sold their lands and lost their homes to the Euro-Americans."[74] Placing blame on both the previous chiefs and the women who elected them, the 1848 organization of the SNI effectively removed this political power from women and placed it instead in the hands of male council members in the new governmental system.

In the 1870s and 1880s, women continued to operate as active citizens in their community, albeit through unofficial venues. Seneca Historian Rebecca Bowen has observed, "there is no record of any debate as to the rights of Seneca women during these years...but it is likely that the women felt they still maintained a certain level of authority. Men and women still followed the line of the mothers. Women could still own land."[75] Experiencing land ownership rights that many American women did not have at that time, Seneca women found other ways to gain an influence in the political workings of their community. In 1880, for instance, a Female Benevolent Society was formed at the Allegany Reservation. This organization, which Bowen argued was "better known as a sewing society," consisted entirely of female officers. The group, which often conducted fundraising for community projects as well as hosting themed discussions, met regularly at different homes in the community. By 1887, the meeting minutes recorded several men in attendance at several meetings, and these men even worked to raise money for the society to buy calico and quilting material that they used to create items for sale. While these meetings did not occur in the official Council House of the time, instances such as this one provide evidence of early mobilization efforts instigated by Seneca women prior to obtaining suffrage.

Evidence of women's interest in suffrage emerged again in 1935. According to Bowen, the first record of Seneca women seeking the right to vote in Nation elections occurred at the Regular Session of Council on December 4, 1935, at the Allegany Council House in Jimersontown. According to council minutes, Bowen noted, "George Patterson made a motion to consider the suffrage petition that one local newspaper, the *Syracuse Herald*, claimed two-thirds of the women of the Nation had signed. The motion passed and Council appointed three [male] members to a committee to amend the Constitution."[76] Although the committee made a motion to pass this amendment, a week later, it was defeated. No further efforts towards women's suffrage were mentioned in council minutes for the next twenty years.

The issue officially resurfaced in 1955, when a motion was made to entertain the petition made by women of the Seneca Nation who sought to vote and hold office. The council formed a subcommittee to address the matter in more depth, which subsequently "sent out a letter with a response card to poll the female members of the Nation as to their desire to secure the right to vote."[77] Minutes indicate that only half of Seneca women

[74] Ibid., 7.
[75] Ibid., 4.
[76] Ibid., 5.
[77] Ibid.

returned the card, but they do not indicate the percentage that expressed interest in suffrage. The petition for suffrage was again introduced in June 1956, when the minutes indicate that the council called on the chairperson of the Women's Suffrage Organization that had formed. In response to this call, the Allegany Council House was reportedly "filled with women there to speak and to give moral support, with each woman speaking for five minutes."[78] Despite the fervor that this demonstration created, the motion was defeated 7 to 3. Motions attempted to obtain women's suffrage were defeated multiple times in the next few years. The motion was defeated by 30 votes on May 11, 1959, then again for a third time in 1962, losing by just two votes in Cattaraugus and 10 votes at the Allegany Council House.

In March 1964, Seneca female activist Martha Falammang presented a petition containing 162 signatures requesting the right to vote to council. In doing so, she pledged "to wage an all-out campaign" to win the vote, telling council, "I have been turned down before, but turning me down is like picking me up."[79] On May 23, 1964, the men of council finally granted Seneca women the right to vote, approving the amendment by 169 to 99 at the Allegany Council House. About six months later in November 1964, Seneca women voted in their first general election at the Council House. Enabled to vote but not yet to hold political office, Seneca women continued to petition for this right until 1966, when they won by a narrow margin. Just one month later, Martha Bucktooth became the first Seneca woman to hold office when she was elected as assessor. It was not until 1974 that two Seneca women, Ms. Kettle and Maxine Smith, became the first to serve on the council. Since then, Seneca women have served in every elective capacity except president and chief marshal of council.

Even before they obtained the rights to vote and hold office, Seneca women played an important role in the Kinzua Dam controversy. In 1956, two petitions were presented in opposition to the Kinzua Dam: one by the official council, and a separate one by the Mothers of the Nation, consisting solely of Seneca women. The controversy surrounding the dam brought Seneca women into a prominent role in government affairs. When they could not lend their support in an official council capacity, many Seneca women took extra steps to represent the female population's opposition to the Kinzua Dam throughout the process. They staffed committees, testified independently before the United States Congress, and helped organize the removal once relocation became inevitable.[80] Several scholars have suggested that their role in the fight against the dam influenced enough men in 1964 to finally give them the right to vote and hold office.[81] Both of these landmark moments, in both the Kinzua Dam events and the fight for women's suffrage, took place at the Council House during the late 1950s and early 1960s.

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[78] Ibid., 6.
[79] Qtd in Bowen, 8.
[80] Joy A. Bilharz, "First Among Equals? The Changing Status of Seneca Women", in *Women and Power in Native North America*, edited by Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 101-110.
[81] Bilharz, Ghosts of Broken Hearts and Laws," 112.

After the Period of Significance

When the Seneca community was forced to relocate to Jimersontown and Steamburg, they moved their government operations to a new building in Jimersontown. As ties to their old land were severed, the Seneca Nation made use of new building for their council meetings in this new town. After 1966, when the original Council House building ceased serving as a governmental center, the building housed several functions. For approximately the next four decades, it functioned as the Cavalry Baptist Church, at which time the one-story full-width front gable addition and entry porch were added to the building. Historic maps from the mid-1960s confirm that both of these additions were added after the period of significance.[82] While the building was somewhat altered after 1966, this does not impede our understanding of the building as it was during the period of significance. The interior is the more significant part of the building, given that it served as a place for meeting and discussion. Historic photos taken during the Kinzua Dam meetings show an interior that remains remarkably intact and can clearly illustrate its historical significance.

Summary

From 1935-1966, the Allegany Council House served as the primary gathering place for government officials and the broader Seneca Nation community during two fundamental events in tribal history. At the Council House, the Seneca Nation organized resistance to the construction of the Kinzua Dam in several ways from 1936-1966, ranging from legal actions to social activism. Although the nation was ultimately unable to prevent the United States government from building the Kinzua Dam, the controversial event mobilized the Senecas in their efforts to resist the taking of their land. Furthermore, Seneca women played an important leadership role at the Allegany Council House beginning in 1935, when they first petitioned the council for the right to vote. Women's efforts during the fight to prevent the Kinzua Dam were particularly influential, and ultimately convincing enough to finally grant them the right to vote in the Seneca Nation. Both the construction of the Kinzua Dam and the attainment of Seneca Women's suffrage greatly impacted the future governmental, social, and cultural patterns of daily life in the Seneca Nation henceforth. As the primary location where both of these historic events and governmental meetings occurred, the Allegany Council House is a rare surviving touchstone to this important era of Seneca Nation history.

[82] Army Corps of Engineers, "Allegheny Reservoir Allegany Indian Reservation Property Map", plate 35, *Plans for the Allegany Reservoir, Allegheny River, Cemetery Relocations, Riverview, Corydon, and Cornplanter*, (Pittsburgh: U.S. Army Engineer District, Pittsburgh Corps of Engineers, 1964); United States, *Kinzua Dam (Seneca Indian Relocation) hearings before the United States House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, Eighty-Eighth Congress, first session, on May 18, July 15, 16, Aug. 8, 9, 12, 19, 20, Oct. 31, Nov. 1, Dec. 9, 10, 1963.* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 60.

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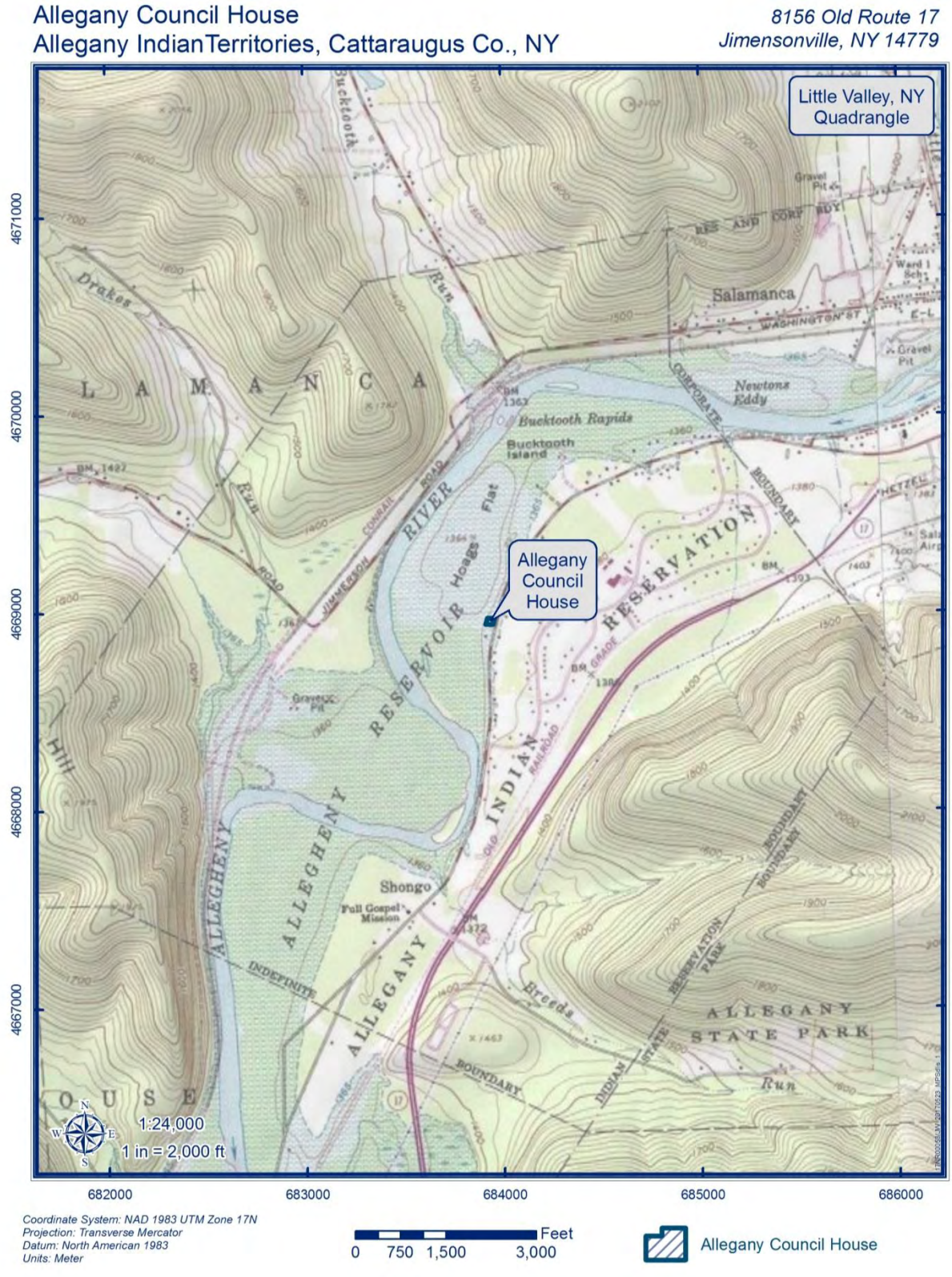
Verbal Boundary Description

The nomination boundary is indicated with a heavy line on the attached maps with scale.

Boundary Justification

The property boundary encompasses both the historical and current boundaries associated with the Allegany Council House.


Allegany Council House
Allegany IndianTerritories, Cattaraugus Co., NY
8156 Old Route 17
Jimensonville, NY 14779
Little Valley, NY Quadrangle
Allegany Council House
Salamanca
Bucktooth Rapids
Bucktooth Island
Newtons Eddy
Shongo
Full Gospel Mission
ALLEGANY STATE PARK
RESERVATION
ALLEGHENY RIVER
RESERVOIR
INDIAN RAILROAD
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4671000
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Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
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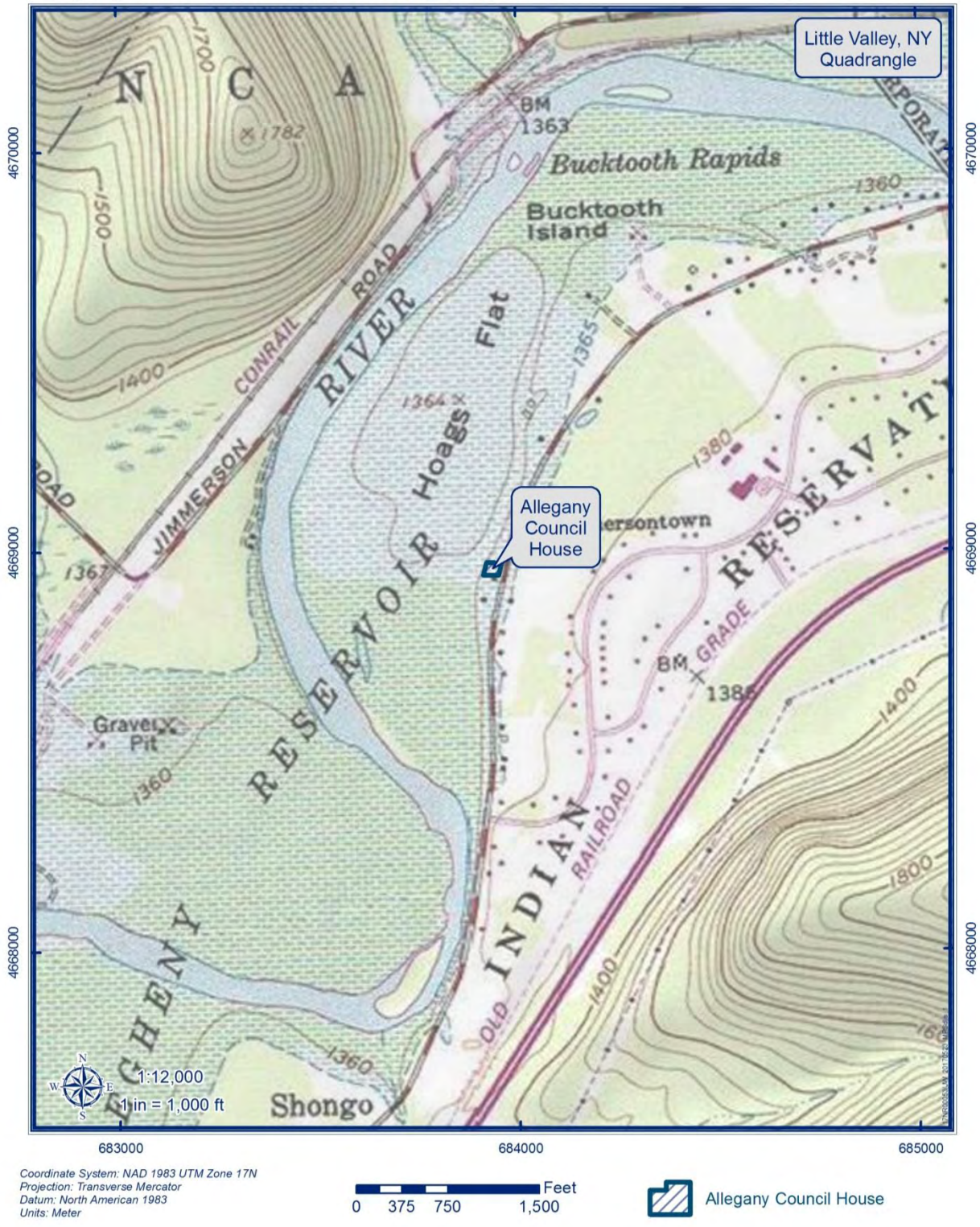
Allegany Council House

Allegany Council House
Allegany IndianTerritories, Cattaraugus Co., NY

8156 Old Route 17
Jimensonville, NY 14779



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 375 750 1,500 Feet

Allegany Council House


Allegany Council House
Allegany IndianTerritories, Cattaraugus Co., NY
8156 Old Route 17
Jimensonville, NY 14779
∑ = .29 Acres
E 683934 N 4668951
Jimmersontown
Center Road
West Loop Road
Old Rte 17
Four Wheel Rd
Seneca Allegany Community Center
Jimmersontown Church
4669600
4669300
4669000
4668700
4668400
683400
683700
684000
684300
1:6,000
1 in = 500 ft
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter
Feet
0 187.5 375 750
Allegany Council House


Allegany Council House
Allegany IndianTerritories, Cattaraugus Co., NY
8156 Old Route 17
Jimensonville, NY 14779
∑ = .29 Acres
E 683934 N 4668951
4669300
4669000
4668700
Jimmerstown Rd
Central Rd
1:3,000
1 in = 250 ft
683700
684000
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter
Feet
0 90 180 360
Allegany Council House

Additional Information

Photo Log:

Name of Property:	Allegany Council House
City or Vicinity:	Allegany Reservation
County:	Cattaraugus County
State:	NY
Name of Photographer:	Nathan Montague
Date of Photographs:	October 2017
Location of Original Digital Files:	Archeological Survey
Number of Photographs:	18

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0001
Looking northwest at southeast elevation.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0002
Looking southwest at northeast elevation.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0003
Looking northwest at south elevation.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0004
Looking north at south elevation.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0005
Looking northeast at south and west elevations.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0006
Looking southeast at west and north elevations.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0007
Looking southwest at north elevation.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0008
Looking west inside building from east entrance, towards main meeting room.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0009
Looking west inside meeting room from east entrance to room.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00010
Looking east inside meeting room from west.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00011
Looking south inside meeting room from north.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00012
Looking north inside meeting room from south.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00013
Looking southeast inside meeting room from northwest. Doorway to the east provides access to the main public entrance on east elevation, doorway to the west provides access to office space.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00014
Looking south inside office space, from north.

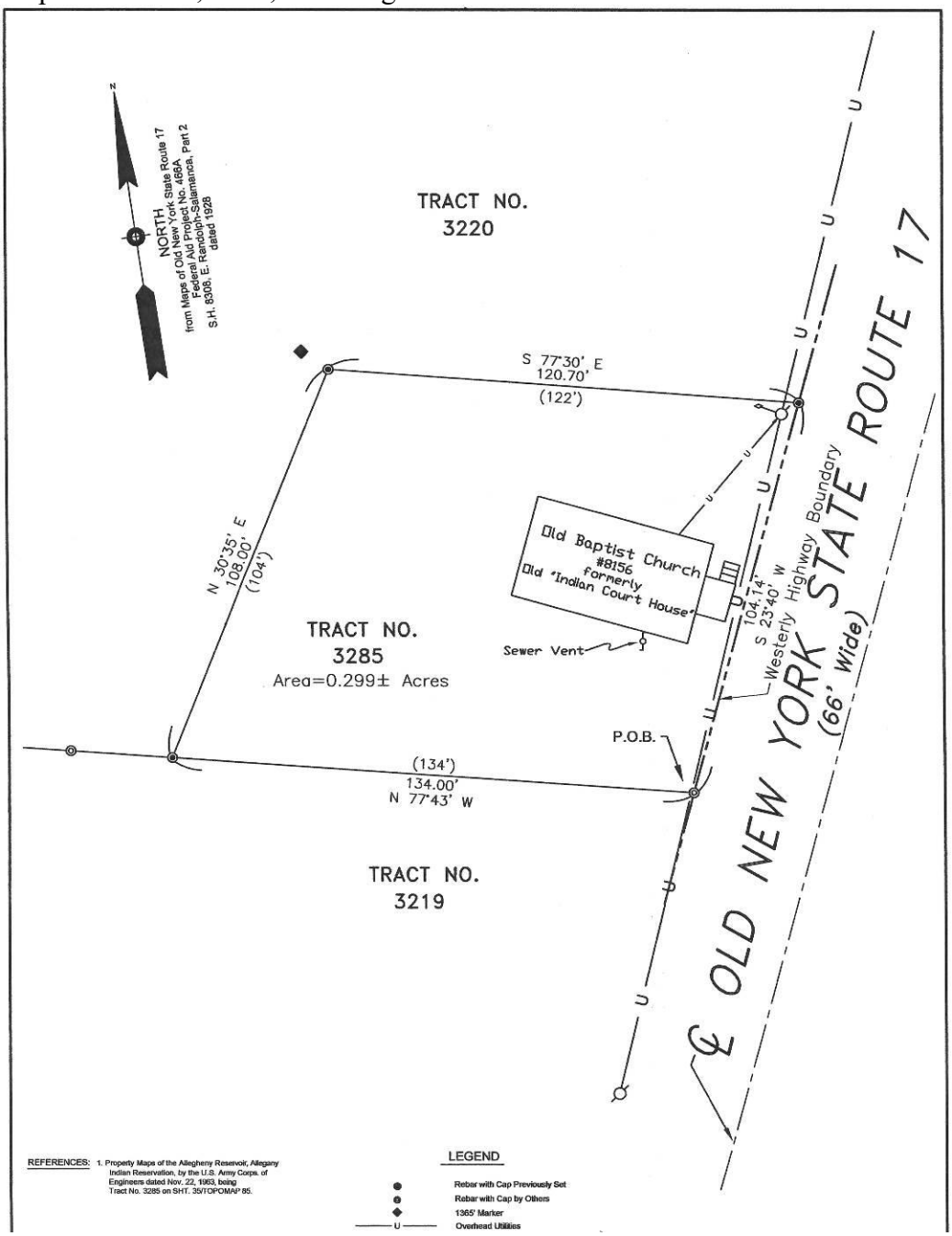
NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00015
Looking down into stairwell towards basement from northeast corner of first floor.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00016
Looking west inside basement from east.

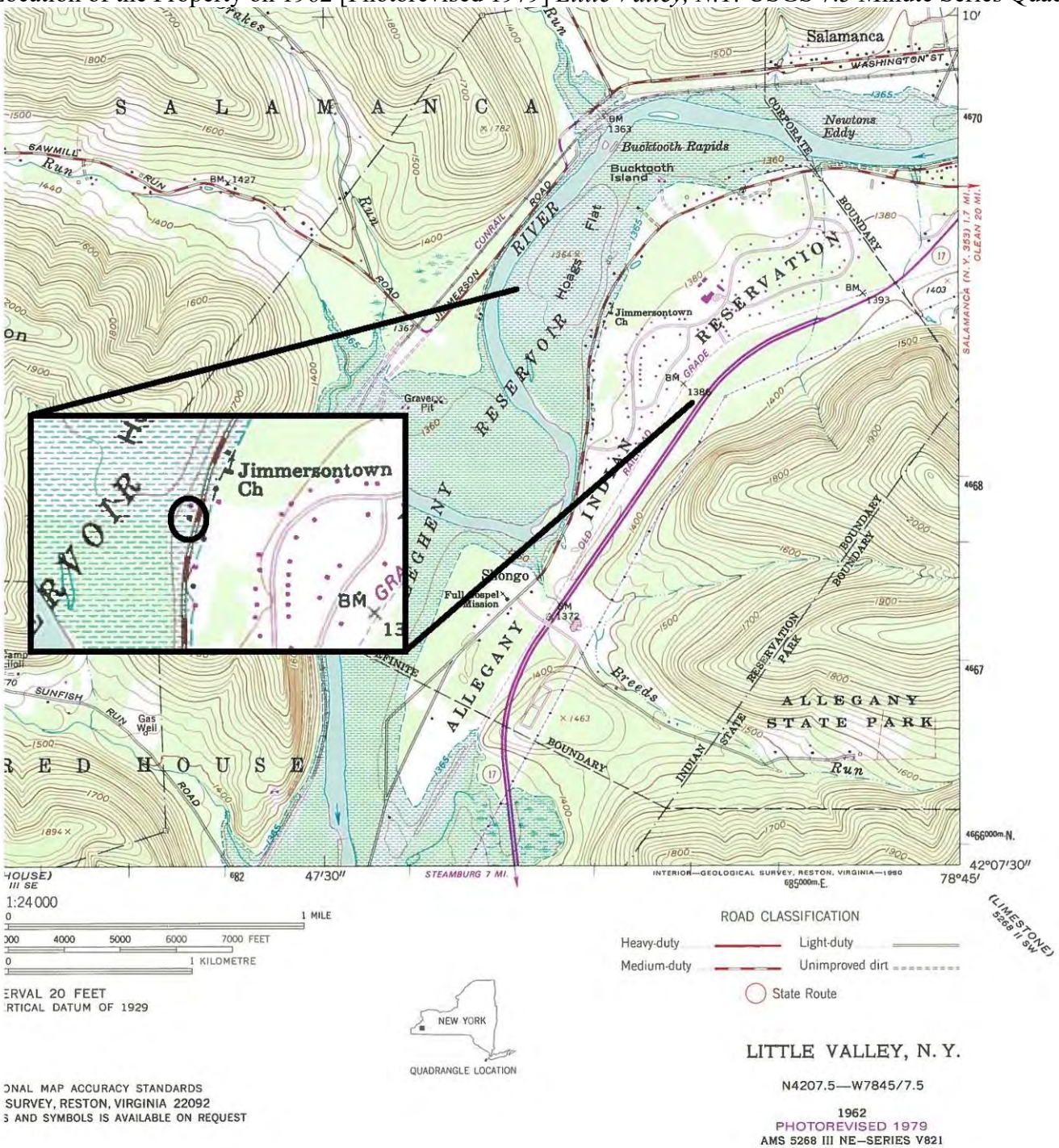
NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00017
Looking east inside basement from west, towards stairwell leading to first floor.

NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00018
Looking east from meeting room towards doorway to main entrance, accessible on the east elevation.

Survey of the Property by Seneca Nation of Indians Maps and Boundaries Department.
Map dated Oct.3, 2016, and designated as JOB732.



Location of the Property on 1962 [Photorevised 1979] *Little Valley, N.Y.* USGS 7.5 Minute Series Quadrangle.



Map showing multiple Seneca Reservations throughout central and western New York State and Pennsylvania.

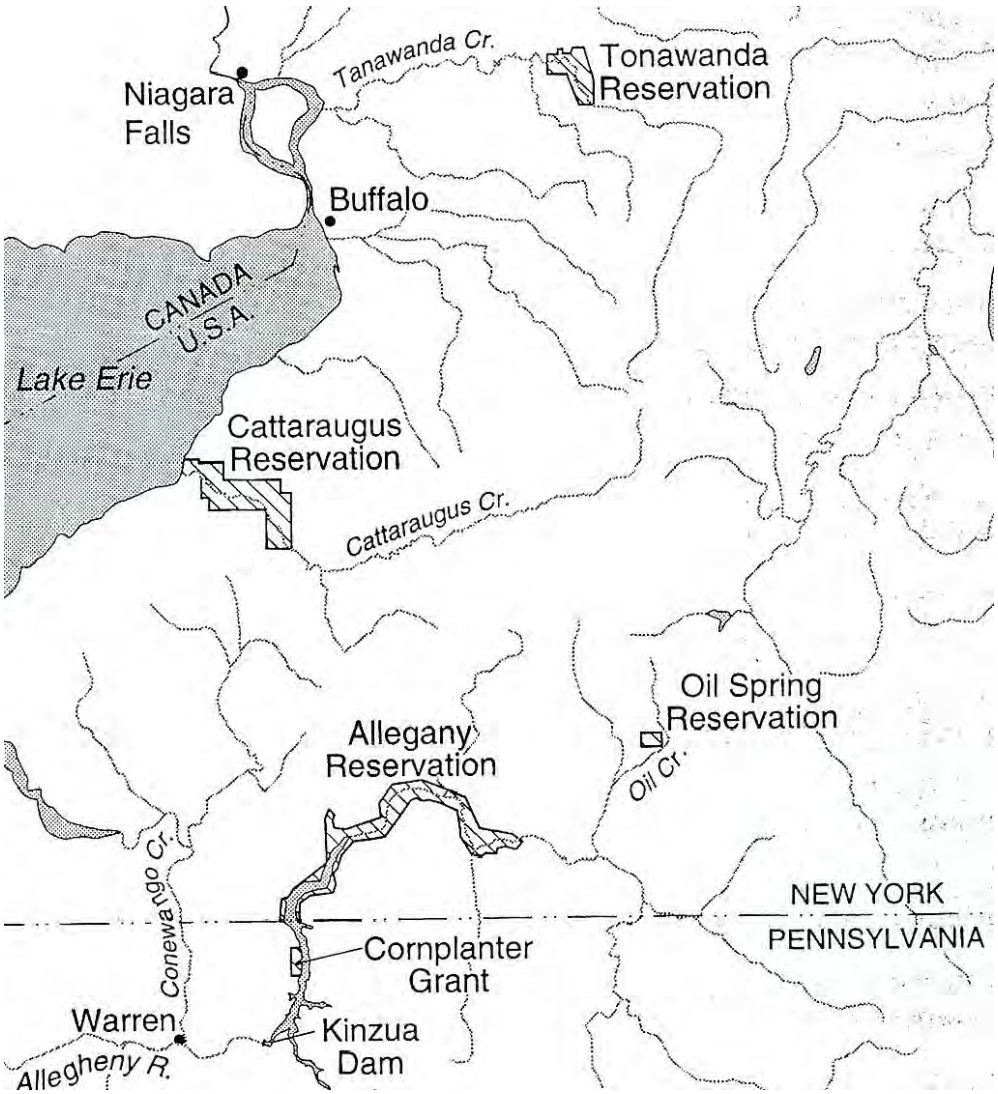


Photo 1. Historic exterior view of Council House, c.1930.

Photo 2. Undated View (ca. 1965/66) of 8156 Old New York State Route 17, Facing Northwest. Showing general use of the building during a meeting.

Photo 3. Undated View (ca. 1965/66) of Interior of 8156 Old New York State Route 17, Facing North.

Photo 4. Kinzua Dam Protest, ca. 1964. Reinforces the cultural significance of the Seneca Nation struggle to maintain their land.

Photo 5. "Seneca Removal at the Kinzua Dam." *Buffalo News*, 1964.

Photo 6. Corresponds to Photo Log: NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0005
Looking northeast at south and west elevations. 2016.

Photo 7. Corresponds to Photo Log: NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0006. Looking southeast at west and north elevations. 2016.

Photo 8. Corresponds to Photo Log: NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0001
Looking northwest at southeast elevation. 2016.

Photo 9. Corresponds to Photo Log: NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0002
Looking southwest at northeast elevation. 2016.

Photo 10. Corresponds to Photo Log: NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_0009
Looking west inside meeting room from east entrance to room. 2016.

Photo 11. Corresponds to Photo Log: NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00010
Looking east inside meeting room from west. 2016.

Photo 12. Corresponds to Photo Log: NY_Cattaraugus County_ Allegany Council House_00011
Looking south inside meeting room from north. 2016.


CALVARY
BAPTIST CHURCH


8156


8156

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination
Property Name:	Allegany Council House
Multiple Name:	
State & County:	NEW YORK, Cattaraugus

Date Received:	Date of Pending List:	Date of 16th Day:	Date of 45th Day:	Date of Weekly List:
9/14/2017	10/11/2017	10/26/2017	10/30/2017	11/3/2017

Reference number:	SG100001768
Nominator:	State

Reason For Review:

X Accept _____ Return _____ Reject **10/27/2017** Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:	State and Local Significance of an important Seneca Nation Building
Recommendation/ Criteria	

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

September 11, 2017

Morris Abrams, Acting THPO
Seneca Nation of Indians
NAGPRA/Tribal Historic Preservation Office
90 O:hi'yo Way
Salamanca, NY 14779

RE: Allegany Council House
Cattaraugus County, New York

Dear Mr. Abrams:

Enclosed is the final nomination for the Allegany Council House, which I have signed to express my concurrence as New York's Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. This nomination is now ready for you to sign in the space indicated as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. To submit the final package to the National Park Service, you must submit the signed cover page, the disc, and another disc containing the tiff photos (I understand Kerry Trainer has provided this to you). It should be sent to:

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Although I began my tenure here after this nomination was completed, I have heard extremely positive comments about it from staff and review board members, and I hope to read it when time permits.

Congratulations on such an important preservation achievement!

I look forward to meeting and supporting future work.

Sincerely,

R. Daniel Mackay

Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation and
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643
www.nysparks.com

11 September 2017

Morris Abrams, ActingTHPO
Seneca Nation of Indians
NAGPRA/Tribal Historic Preservation Office
90 O:hi'yo Way
Salamanca, NY 14779

RE: Allegany Council House
Cattaraugus County, New York

Dear Mr. Abrams:

I am writing on behalf of the New York State Board for Historic Preservation to express the board's strong support for the nomination of the Allegany Council House to the National Register of Historic Places. Although the board's review is not required, New York State Historic Preservation Office staff provided board members with a copy of the draft nomination and made a brief presentation to the board at its last meeting. Board members were highly complimentary of the draft and wished to express their support for the property's significance. The board commends the Seneca Nation for this very significant preservation achievement. Please feel free to forward this letter with the final nomination to the National Park Service.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank

Kathleen LaFrank
Executive Secretary
New York State Board for Historic Preservation

SENECA NATION OF INDIANS
TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
90 OHI:YO' WAY
SALAMANCA, NY 14779
PHONE: (716) 945-1790 FAX: (716) 945-8133

To: Alexis Abernathy

Fr: dr. JAY Toth, tribal archeologist

Re: Old Council House Nomination

Date: 09/12/17

Enclosed is the nomination packet for the Seneca Nation Council House to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

E-mail: jay.toth@sni.org

Thank you