

OWN A PIECE OF HISTORY: THE WARREN-SIPE HOUSE
301 S Main St, Harrisonburg, VA 22801



OFFERING SUMMARY

Sale Price:	\$390,000
Lot Size:	0.22 Acres
Building Size:	9,640
Zoning:	B-1
Price / SF:	\$40.46

PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Own a piece of History! Used as an overflow hospital during the Civil War, the 1856 era, Italianate Style, Warren-Sipe House, is located in Harrisonburg’s Central Business District (B1). The B1 zoning, 10’ ceilings, ornate fireplaces and hardwood flooring allow for a variety of uses such as restaurant, bed and breakfast, retail, professional office, apartments and more. The Warren-Sipe House is the heart of Downtown within one block of the Farmers Market, Massanutten Regional Library and the Children’s Museum. Take advantage of the tax benefits available with this property via State and Federal Historical Tax Credits; Qualified Federal Opportunity Zone and Harrisonburg’s Economic Revitalization Zone to create a showpiece.

For More Information:

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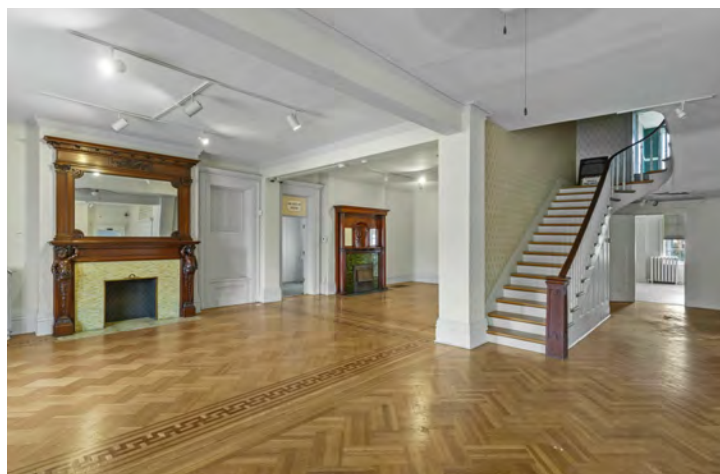
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Additional Photos

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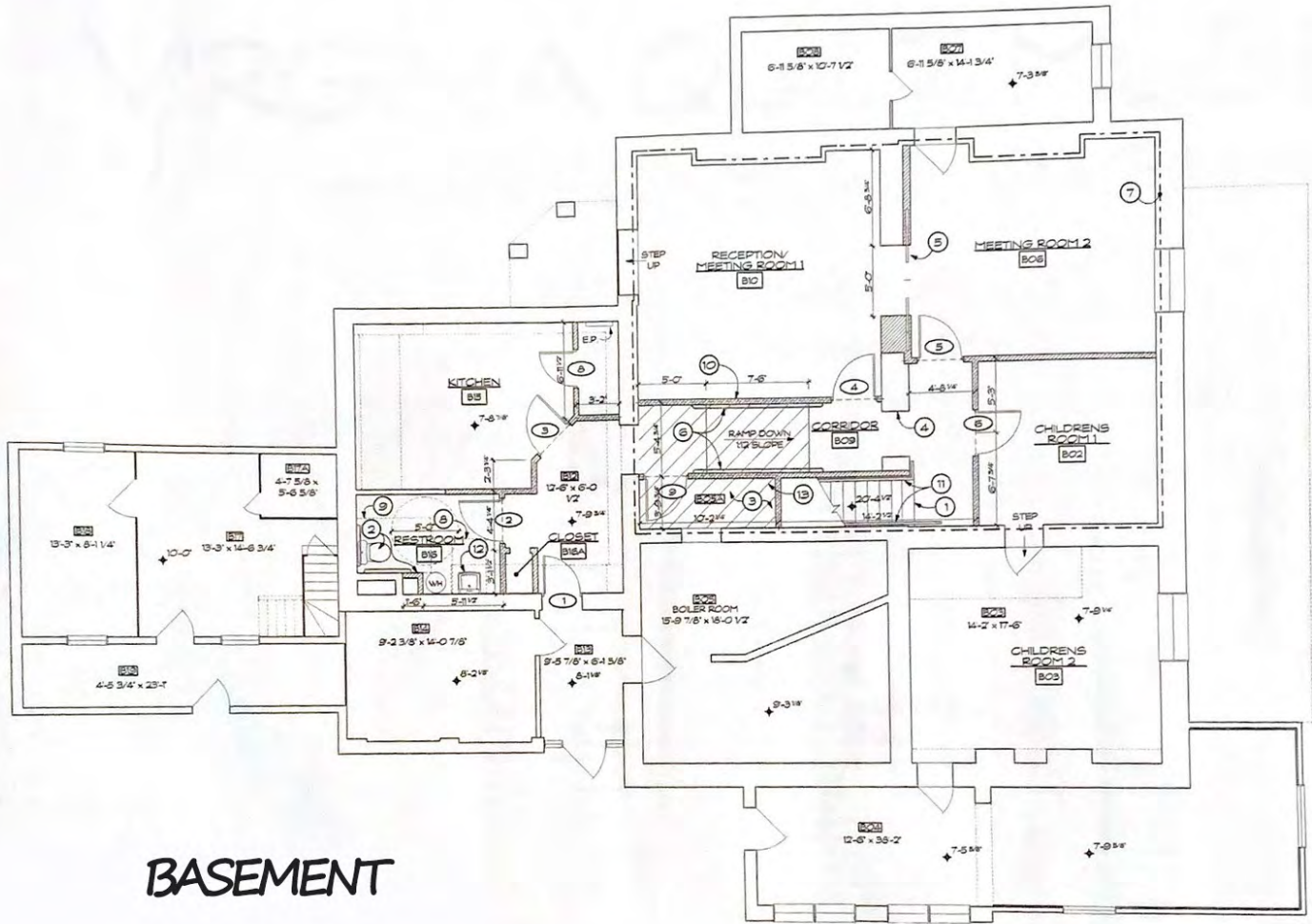
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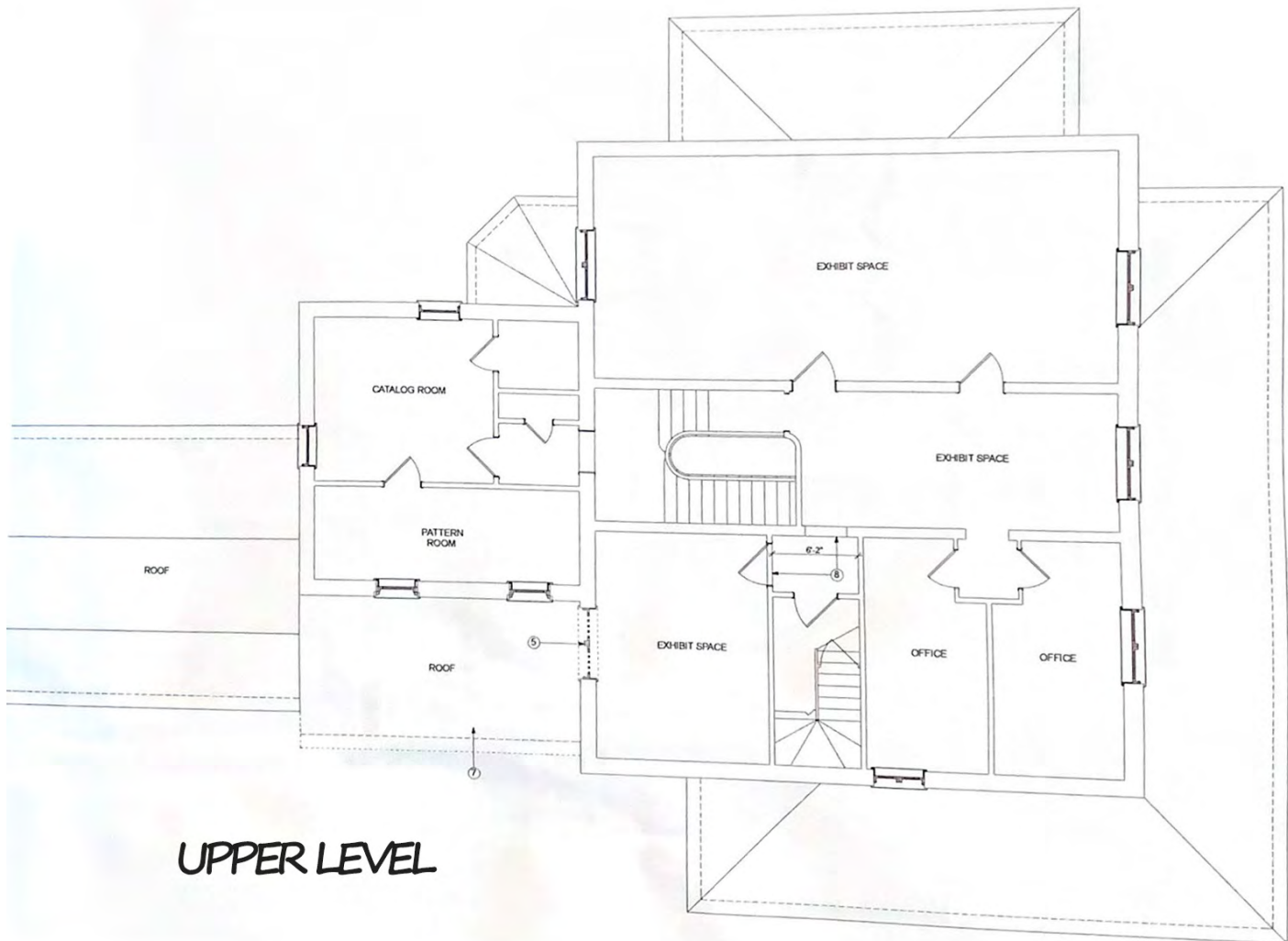
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ARTICLE P. B-1 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Sec. 10-3-82. General.

The regulations set forth in this article or set forth elsewhere in this chapter when referred to in this article are the "B-1" central business district regulations.

(Ord. of 4-23-96)

Sec. 10-3-83. Purpose of district.

This district is the urban and regional center for the conduct of commercial, financial, professional and governmental activities to which the public requires direct and frequent access. These regulations are intended to protect and improve activities, and to prevent uses not requiring a central location which would create friction in the efficient performance of the primary activities of an urban and regional center. In addition, both transient and nontransient housing facilities are permitted within limits that will assure a supporting role to the primary functions of the district.

(Ord. of 4-23-96)

Sec. 10-3-84. Uses permitted by right.

[The following uses are permitted by right:]

- (1) Retail stores, convenience shops, personal service establishments, restaurants, food and drug stores, and tobacco, smoke, or vape shops. Tobacco, smoke, or vape shops shall further comply with the location requirements as specified in section 10-3-87(c).
- (2) Governmental, business and professional offices and financial institutions.
- (3) Hotels, motels and buildings used for dwelling unit(s), CBD, as defined under section 10-3-24. Dwelling unit(s), CBD, may be occupied by a family or not more than four (4) persons, except that such occupancy may be superseded by building regulations.
- (4) Theaters, community rooms, museums and galleries and other places of assembly for the purpose of entertainment or education. In addition, customary recreational and leisure-time activities which are compatible with surrounding uses are permitted.
- (5) Religious, educational, charitable and benevolent institutional uses.
- (6) General service or repair shops, when not employing more than fifteen (15) persons on the premises in a single shift (not including persons whose principal duties are off the premises) and providing that all storage and activities are conducted within a building. Examples: Cleaning and laundry establishments, printing and tailoring shops, appliance repairs, upholstery and furniture repairs.
- (7) Accessory buildings and uses customarily incidental to any permitted uses.

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- (8) Small cell facilities, concealed wireless telecommunications facilities, industrial microcells, distributed antenna systems, and macrocells. Telecommunications towers are permitted only by special use permit. Wireless telecommunications facilities are further regulated by Article CC.
 - (9) Public libraries.
 - (10) Public uses.
 - (11) Research and development activities which do not cause any more smoke, dust, odor, noise, vibration or danger of explosion other than uses permitted in this district and which involve no more than 15 percent of the gross floor area in the assembling or processing of products. Any assembling or processing shall only involve products developed on the premises. All services and storage shall be conducted within the principal structure which is to be completely enclosed.
 - (12) Home occupations.
 - (13) Radio and television stations and studios or recording studios. All antennas and satellites and associated equipment shall be screened.
 - (14) Homestays, as further regulated by Article DD.
 - (15) Pet adoptions, limited only to cats.

(Ord. of 4-23-96; Ord. of 2-22-02; Ord. of 3-26-02; Ord. of 1-11-05; Ord. of 6-22-10(2); Ord. of 4-24-12(9); Ord. of 10-9-12(2); Ord. of 3-26-13(2); Ord. of 1-14-14(12); Ord. of 1-13-15; Ord. of 7-28-15(21); Ord. of 5-22-18(11); Ord. of 1-22-19(1); Ord. of 9-8-20(2); Ord. of 6-25-24(1); Ord. of 4-22-25)

Sec. 10-3-85. Uses permitted only by special use permit.

[The following uses are permitted by special use permit only:]

- (1) Manufacturing, processing and assembly operations when not employing more than fifteen (15) persons on the premises in a single shift and provided that all storage and activities are conducted within a building.
- (2) Wireless telecommunications facilities not permitted by section 10-3-84(8) or those not meeting the requirements of section 10-3-197(1). Wireless telecommunications facilities are further regulated by article CC.
- (3) Vehicle recreation equipment, or trailer sales served by a permanent building facility unless clearly incidental to an existing building. Vehicle excludes over the road tractors, their trailers, heavy equipment, manufactured homes, industrialized buildings, and agricultural equipment. No vehicle salvage, storage of inoperable vehicles, or sale of junk is allowed.
- (4) Repair of vehicles, recreation equipment, or trailers with all activities and storage of inoperable vehicles completely enclosed within a permitted structure. Vehicle excludes over the road tractors, their trailers, heavy equipment, manufactured homes, industrialized buildings, and agricultural equipment. No vehicle salvage, storage of inoperable vehicles, or sale of junk is allowed.
- (5) Structures, except wireless telecommunications facilities, in excess of seventy-five (75) feet in height.
- (6) Reserved.
- (7) Transportation service facilities, including but not limited to: taxicabs. No vehicle salvage, storage of inoperable vehicles, or sale of junk is allowed.
- (8) Parking lots and parking garages as principal uses.
- (9) Public uses which deviate from the requirements of title 10, chapter 3.

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- (10) Warehousing and other storage facilities; provided, that the size, volume, and contents shall be governed by applicable safety regulations.
 - (11) Short-term rentals, as further regulated by article DD.
 - (12) Vehicle fuel station as accessory use to a permitted use, subject to the following restrictions: (i) allowed only on corner lots; (ii) may have no more than six (6) fuel dispensers; and (iii) the footprint of the area encompassed by the canopy over the pumps may not exceed eighty-seven (87) percent the size of the footprint of the principal structure.
 - (13) Recovery residence of more than eight (8) adults and any number of minor dependents of those residents.

(Ord. of 4-23-96; Ord. of 10-28-97; Ord. of 8-12-03; Ord. of 1-13-04; Ord. of 4-27-04, § 1; Ord. of 7-26-05; Ord. of 1-23-08; Ord. of 4-24-12(10); Ord. of 10-9-12(3); Ord. of 3-26-13(3); Ord. of 9-23-14(13); Ord. of 7-28-15(22); Ord. of 9-22-15(1); Ord. of 3-26-19(1); Ord. of 1-11-22(1); Ord. of 2-13-24)

Sec. 10-3-86. Area and dimensional regulations.

Except as provided in article T, and as required in article CC for wireless telecommunications facilities, the following area and dimensional regulations shall apply:

Minimum Setback:

Front—None.

Side—None—Zero (0) setback conditions may be superseded by building code regulations.

Rear—None.

Maximum Building Height:

Seventy-five (75) feet unless superseded by special use permit subsection 10-3-85(5).

(Ord. of 4-23-96; Ord. of 4-27-04, § 1; Ord. of 11-25-08(2); Ord. of 7-28-15(23))

Sec. 10-3-87. Other regulations.

- (a) There are no minimum off-street parking requirements for uses in this district; provided, however, that when off-street parking is offered, such parking shall comply with the design standards under article G. In addition, loading and unloading facilities for all new buildings or additions shall comply with the design standards under article G.
- (b) Unless modified or superseded by other ordinances which directly apply to the general health, safety and welfare of the public, all accessory storage of products to be processed or being processed, and supplies and waste materials resulting from such work, shall be completely enclosed within structures of permanent and durable construction.
- (c) Tobacco, smoke, or vape shops shall not be located on or otherwise operate on any property within one thousand (1,000) feet of any property containing a public or private school or child day care center. Measurements made to verify compliance with this requirement shall be made in a straight line, without regard to intervening structures or objects, for one thousand (1,000) feet from the boundaries of the property on which a public or private school or child day care center operates.
- (d) Private refuse collection facilities shall be provided at a designated point and shall meet the requirements in section 10-3-110(h). (Ord. of 4-23-96; Ord. of 1-14-14(13); Ord. of 6-25-24(1); Ord. of 7-23-24)

- Ord. of 5-27-03)
- **Sec. 4-2-30. - Partial exemption for new construction in the economic revitalization zone.**

(a)

A partial exemption from taxation of commercial and residential real estate located within the city's economic revitalization zone, as defined below, for all new construction shall be allowed.

(b)

The city's economic revitalization zone is defined as being all parcels of real estate located within the city's B-1 business zone and the city's Virginia Main Street district as they exist on the effective date of this section.

(c)

The partial exemption from taxation shall only apply to new construction with a minimum investment of one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00), excluding the value of the real estate and at least forty (40) per cent of the first floor or street level square footage shall be used for retail sales and/or restaurant use. Exceptions to the square footage requirement set forth above can only be granted by the city council.

(d)

The partial exemption from taxation shall not exceed the difference between the assessed value of the real estate following the completion and issuance of an occupancy permit for the new construction and the assessed value of the real estate immediately prior to the issuance of the building permit for the new construction.

(e)

The partial exemption from taxation of real estate shall commence on July 1 of the year following the completion and issuance of an occupancy permit for the new construction and shall run with the real estate for the following periods and based on the amount invested in the new construction:

\$1,000,000.00 to \$9,999,999.99 (5 year exemption)
\$10,000,000.00 to \$19,999,999.99 (8 year exemption)

\$20,000,000.00 and above (10 year exemption)

(f)

The commissioner of the revenue shall assess a fee of one hundred (\$100.00) dollars for processing an application requesting the exemption provided by this section. No property shall be eligible for such exemption unless the appropriate building permits have been acquired and the commissioner of the revenue or assessing officer has verified that the new construction indicated on the application has been completed and the certificate of occupancy has been issued.

(g)

Nothing in this section shall be construed as to permit the commissioner of the revenue to list upon the land book any reduced value due to the exemption provided in subsection (d).

(h)

Where the new construction is achieved through demolition or replacement of an existing structure, the exemption provided by this section shall not apply when any structure demolished is a registered Virginia landmark or is determined by the department of historic resources to contribute to the significance of a registered historic landmark.

An Old House Gets a New Look

Virginia Quilt Museum Replaces Porch At Warren-Sipe House

- By RYAN CORNELL Daily News-Record
- Apr 18, 2017 Updated Mar 11, 2024





HARRISONBURG — For more than 160 years, the Warren-Sipe House at 301 S. Main St. has served a wide range of purposes.

The house, built in 1855, provided shelter to the two families — the Warrens and the Sipes — that called it home over the years. It weathered the storms known to barrel through the Valley during the spring and fall. And it kept them warm during the colder months.

The building was used as a hospital for wounded soldiers returning from the battlefield during the Civil War. Soldiers such as Joseph Latimer, who at 18 was the youngest artillery battalion commander in the Confederate Army, were treated for their injuries in its rooms. Some of them, including Latimer, died inside the house.

Starting in 1956, the structure housed the city's Parks and Recreation Department, which hosted dances, classes and after-school programs within its walls. It served as the headquarters for the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society in 1978.

The modest Greek Revival-style building was even converted into a courthouse while the original was being renovated between 1993 and 1995. A holding cell was installed on the first floor of the house and remains there today.

Through it all, the front porch attached to the historic Warren-Sipe House — the site of the Virginia Quilt Museum since 1995 — has faithfully led family members, soldiers, lawyers, quilters and other visitors through its front door.

But last summer, the porch began to show its age.

The brick pillars supporting the porch leaned away from the house, presenting a safety hazard. The floorboards were in dire need of replacing.

After consulting with experts, including a preservation architect, the museum's executive director, Kimberly McCray, said the group decided the entire porch needed to be replaced.

"The architect looked at it and said, 'We definitely need to act,'" McCray recalled. "And so, of course, we just started your basic process of talking to different construction firms."

Museum staff put out a call for bids on the project and accepted an offer from Broadway-based Lantz Construction Co., which McCray said worked with the museum to keep costs down.

"We'd definitely love to give them big props," she said.

The museum remained open while one end of the porch was closed to the public, and McCray and others quickly went to work raising funds for a complete reconstruction.

In August, the museum launched its Rocking Chair campaign with a goal to raise \$20,000 toward the project.

What it received by October was nearly \$10,000 more than the goal.

That total funded about three-quarters of the project. The rest, McCray said, was covered by “hundreds upon hundreds” of volunteer hours spent framing the porch’s decking and taking down the old porch.

“When Lantz saw the framing that our volunteers had done, they were just blown away,” she said. “They said it was better than what they would have expected from volunteers.”

Originally, McCray said, the plan was to replace the floorboard and decking and keep the original railings and columns intact.

“We did not expect the cost to be that much, which is why we only had our goal at \$20,000,” she said.

But under closer inspection, it was clear more work needed to be done. And that’s when Lantz and museum staffers realized their problem was a much bigger, and more expensive, one than they had thought.

The porch’s columns, banisters and railings, warped by the ravages of water and time, showed signs of deterioration.

“As soon as Lantz took down the columns — now these are from the 1850s — as soon as they came in ... and took the columns out, the older ones basically started to crumble in their hands because there was just so much water damage and rot,” McCray said. “At that point, the cost went way up.”

Adding to costs was the project’s mission of keeping the porch attractive and historically accurate, while complying to code set by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

McCray said work was done to keep the tongue-in-groove-style decking present in the original porch, and to match the old paint color.

“I’ve been told we’re [one of] the only antebellum residence[s] in downtown Harrisonburg,” McCray said, “so keeping that as historically accurate as we could was very important.”

Crews also raised the porch so that it would be level with the museum’s front door, and visitors would no longer need to step up to enter the building.

Work started on the porch in January, with crews adding their finishing touches to the project at the beginning of this week.

McCray credited Ken Reeves, chairman of the museum's facilities committee, and the many volunteers for the project's success. She said an official dedication for the new porch is planned for mid-May.

"I think our members know this house is a blessing to us," she said, "and people really enjoy coming to a historic structure."

Philip M. Herrington, an assistant professor of history at James Madison University, described the house as "one of the most historically and architecturally significant buildings in the city."

"To my knowledge there is not another high-style Greek Revival house in Harrisonburg," he wrote in an email. "Unfortunately a house very similar in size and style to the Warren-Sipe house, the John T. Harris house, which stood on an adjacent lot, was demolished in the 1960s, and such losses only heighten the necessity of preserving the Warren-Sipe house."

A House With History

According to the Virginia Quilt Museum, the Warren-Sipe House was first owned by Edward T. Harrison Warren, a direct descendant of Thomas Harrison, the founding father of Harrisonburg.

Warren's uncle, William Rice, built the house for Warren and his new wife, Virginia Magruder, a brochure about the house's history says.

The cost of building the house was about \$6,000, it says.

Warren, a prominent lawyer in the city before the Civil War, commanded the 10th Virginia Volunteer Infantry as a colonel in the Confederate Army. He died at the Battle of Wilderness in May 1864.

In 1873, the property was sold out of the family, and in 1894, George Sipe purchased the home.

Sipe, a well-known lawyer and civic leader in Harrisonburg, served as state delegate and general receiver for Rockingham County. After purchasing the house, he made several changes to it, including adding two fireplaces and an attic and extending its porch.

After Sipe's death in 1939, his heirs sold the property to the city of Harrisonburg, which kept it until 2000.

Contact Ryan Cornell at 574-6283 or rcornell@dnronline.com