



1555 Village Lane  
Orient, NY 11957

November 11, 2018

James Garretson, Chairperson  
Southold Town Historic Preservation Commission  
Southold NY 11957

To the members of the Southold Town Historic Preservation Commission:

We are writing as the Board of Directors of the Oysterponds Historical Society as regarding 675 Skippers Lane.

As stated on the Southold Town website, the vision of the Historic Preservation Commission is “to ensure that the town’s essential character and historical significance are maintained through the preservation of its 17th, 18th, 19th and early 20th century architectural, historic and cultural treasures.” The Southold Town Historic Preservation Commission is currently considering an application to demolish a house in the Orient Historic District at 675 Skipper’s Lane. We believe that allowing the demolition of this house would set a dangerous precedent for the community and the Town of Southold and would endanger the integrity of the entire Historic District.

The Oysterponds Historical Society has a serious stake in this matter because it was instrumental in the creation of the Orient Historic District, by spearheading the research and writing of the application to New York State, which in turn submitted a successful application to the U.S. Department of the Interior. The District was placed on the National Register on May 21, 1976. The Orient Historic District is a natural outgrowth of the Society’s mission of preserving and interpreting the history of Orient and East Marion, as the buildings included in the district tell the story of the community in a way that no written account ever could.

675 Skipper’s Lane was built by Edward S. Vail, a member of a prominent early Orient family, in 1918. The condition of 675 Skipper’s Lane is not significantly different from many houses in Orient that have been successfully renovated and preserved and are now ornaments of the Historic District. In addition to this property being within the boundaries of the Orient Historic District, *675 Skippers Lane was designated as a landmark by the town of Southold in 2007.*

In 2010 when the Southold Town Historic Preservation Commission denied the demolition of 130 Village Lane, Orient, NY (SCTM #1000-18-5-6), the commission stated:

- ***Retention of the landmark in its current or similar form and location is important to the village's history and character.*** The property is significant within the context of other properties in the Orient Historical district which together reflect the history and growth of the early village from a farming and fishing community to a prominent year-round and summer residential district. There are few examples of this type and size home left in Orient. Its demolition would significantly change the character of Village Lane.
- ***The landmark is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty.*** Although not historically significant because of its design, its type – a small, rather plain and unadorned workman's or fisherman's home of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century – makes it an important contributor to the overall streetscape .....

675 Skipper's Lane makes a similar contribution to the streetscape of Skipper's Lane as 130 Village Lane does to the streetscape of Village Lane. And it is an example of a modest, early 20<sup>th</sup> century summer residence, one of the categories of buildings the Commission is charged to preserve in its Vision Statement, quoted above.

We have formally voted to send this letter to request that the Southold Town Historic Preservation Commission deny the application to demolish 675 Skipper's Lane, Orient, NY.

Respectfully submitted,

The Board of Trustees of the Oysterponds Historical Society