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Landmark Activists Aim for New Clout

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ROCHESTER — One of Manhattan's leading activists in landmarks preservation, Brandon Gill, has urged a statewide conference on the subject to "let people know what is most precious in their community. Every day, we lose another landmark because no one ever told people what a marvelous thing they had."

Gill, a magazine writer and

one of the early promoters of New York City's landmarks preservation laws, was among more than 40 New York City area people who came here this weekend to help promote on a statewide level the kind of landmarks fervor that has been growing rapidly in the five boroughs.

Close to 400 people from around the state convened here to officially launch a citizens' lobby for the preservation of the state's archi-

tectural heritage.

It was the first statewide conference on "New Directions in Landmark Preservation" and resulted from what State Parks and Recreation Commissioner Alexander Aldrich called a "snowballing movement" to recognize, restore and celebrate the treasure of the past that have not yet fallen beneath the bulldozers of progress.

Aldrich was the conference's keynote speaker, sub-

stituting for Gov. Wilson.

Aldrich's speech was the first by a high state official on the subject of landmark preservation. His office and specifically its Division of Historic Preservation oversees state efforts in the field, including the maintenance of the state's 35 revolutionary war and other historic sites.

While promising an expanded program, Aldrich noted that the state budget for preservation efforts had

tripled in three years from \$800,000 to \$2.4 million. But he added this can only "begin to redress generations of neglect."

Aldrich and other public officials called the Rochester conference an historic event in itself, noting that it was the first occasion that such statewide concern was displayed.

"Until now," noted Kent Barwick, executive director of the Municipal Arts Soci-

ety, "no one ever met as a unit to collaborate instead of working separately." Barwick was one of the leading promoters of the recent strengthening of New York City's landmarks legislation.

It was the formation of such a united effort that the Rochester conference was intended to achieve, and it did so with greater success than its organizers dreamed. The turnout was twice the expected attendance. It brought together for the first time architects, economists, historians, planners, educators, public officials, restoration contractors and concerned citizens—all of whom have been involved in local preservation projects without ever fully knowing how many people were similarly involved in far-flung communities.