

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE TOWN OF WARWICK
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 18, 2010

**WARWICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY PREPARES FOR PHASE I OF 1906 UAME
CHURCH RESTORATION**

The early fall morning in October 2007 dawned bright and warm. An historic event was about to take place as the 100 year old Union A.M.E. Church was moved from McEwen Street to its new location on Forester Avenue. Following a benediction by the Union A.M.E. pastor and farewells by members of the congregation, the century old structure began its journey witnessed by crowds of Warwickians along the route. Trees were trimmed; utility lines were moved to make way as the 40-foot flatbed truck began the slow and precarious trip through narrow Village streets. Many hours later the church was gently placed on its new foundation, a lot donated by the Warwick Historical Society, next to the Society's Shingle House, Sly Barn and Lehigh and Hudson Caboose. In its new home and new life the Union A.M.E. Church will serve as a museum of the region's African-American Heritage.

Over the past few months, with the financial help of a generous local donor and grant monies from a local foundation, the Society was able to begin restoration of the church so it could become a functioning meeting place and museum. David Brandt was retained to complete architectural plans. Extensive restorations and enhancements will be made to the building. The work will be completed in two phases. Phase One will include: reinforcement and replacement of structural elements, expansion of a rear addition to include a handicap accessible bathroom, service kitchen and storage space, construction of a handicap ramp and entry, new roof, insulation and siding, restoration and replacing windows and doors and roughing in of electric and plumbing in preparation of final installation of heat and air-conditioning and the addition of a front walk and steps up to the front entry.

Overseeing the project are Society President, Pat McConnell and Curator, Michael Bertolini, along with the Building and Grounds Committee members, Sandy Glazman, John Skinner, Raey Webster and Sheila Warner. It is hoped the work in Phase I will be completed by year-end 2010. Phase II will include final installation of heat, air-conditioning and lighting, interior finishes, landscaping including proposed terraces, and installation of a permanent exhibit to display the region's African-American heritage.

Additional funds will have to be raised by the Society for the second phase of this project. Volunteers will be needed to assist in some of the work and in the fundraising. Please contact the Society at 845-986-3236 or e-mail at: whs@warwick.net if you are interested in helping.