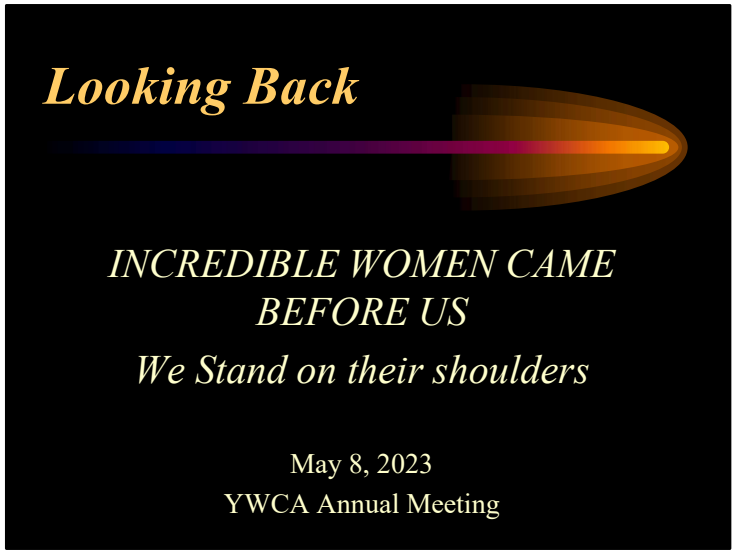


You will see the evidence in these slides of the brilliance of those women who led the YW over the past 109 years. There was very prudent board governance. With their fiscal management – they were wise, frugal & very successful with capital drives & fund raisers. They always came in over their goals. Their attentions to social concerns will be obvious as we go thru the slides.

And most importantly, the development of female leadership was critical in making a more egalitarian community and society.

Three years before women got the vote in NYS,

22 business and professional women met to study bible, basketry, sewing and cooking. And hopefully suffrage! But I have found no record of this. But I assume that they had to be involved. I will continue to research this.

These women met at 20th Century Club.

Rapid growth in membership necessitated the need for owning dedicated space.

They purchased the Randall house for $9K in 1919. Here it is facing Main St.

You will note that there are some elegant features of the building that are now missing.

Porches and towers were always difficult to maintain on older buildings.

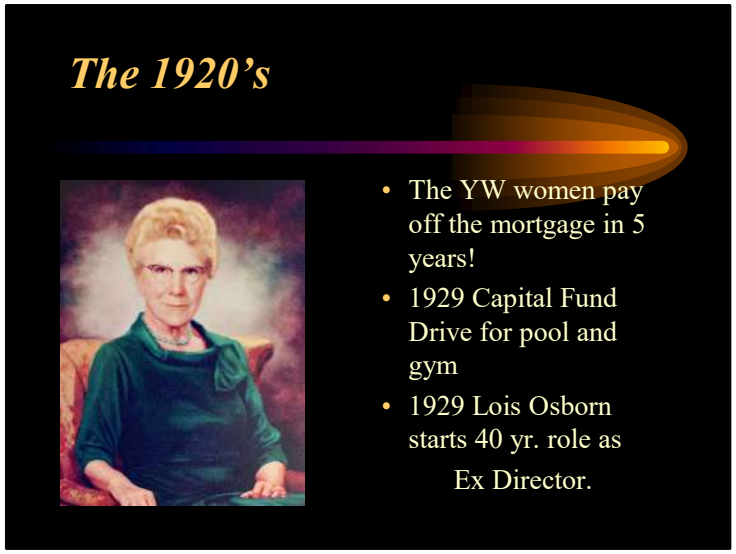
Probably why they stopped building them.

Here are the renovations that occurred in 1920.

Cafeteria is now Osborn Room.

The cafeteria open to the residents as well as the community.

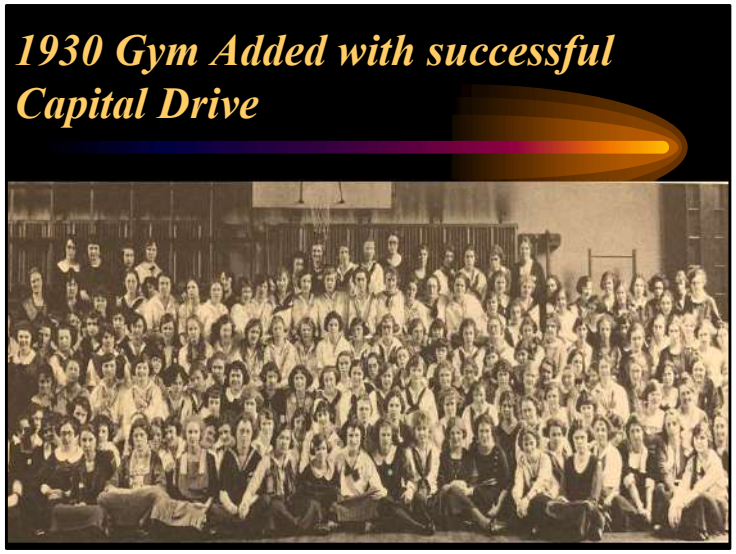
What if Grace Brown came in from south Otselic and moved into a room at the YWCA ?



We had some money-wise women who paid off the 9K mortgage in 5 years.
that's equivalent to 136K in today's dollars.

Who starts a capital fund drive at the beginning of a depression????

In 1933 Lois started the antique show that ran 60 yrs .
She was a force to be reckoned with.



Look at all these beautiful women in their middy blouses and skirts.

They don't look fragile to me -- in fact the YW encouraged teens women to be active with hiking clubs and summer camps.

There' s a basketball hoop behind them. Even if they played girl's half court, I am sure it was good exercise.

A beautifully tiled pool -- has stood the test of time but I am sure care of the POOL has been a major headache for every Executive Director.

White Fundraising Poster is from 1929.

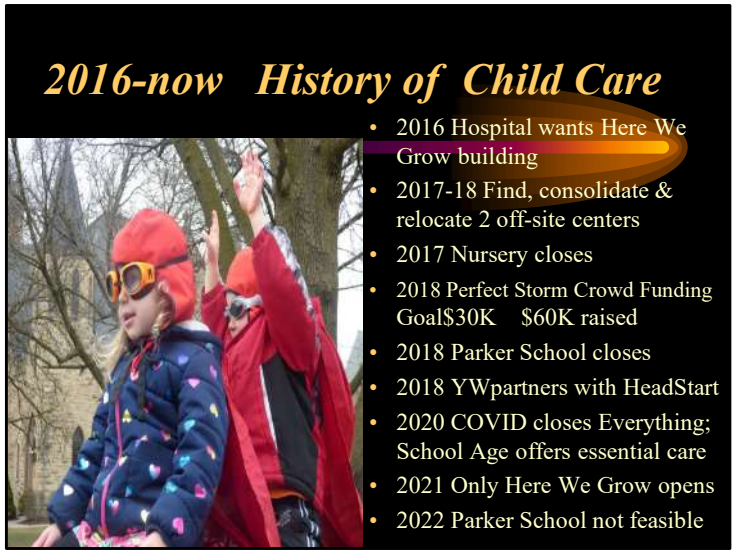
Childcare History needs 2 slides to tell its story

The YW has been meeting women's needs with childcare from 1919 on.

Here is a wonderful picture of our summer campers all in red shirts at Fillmore Glen

1970s As women entered the labor force in larger numbers, we evolved to meet their needs with the creation of many childcare programs.

2007 special ed services so that we would know how to serve a wider audience.



A lot going on here. --

Space needs for Hospital has us scrabbling to relocate.

Seen as a good opportunity to consolidate our 2 off-site centers --Learning Adventure & Here We Grow(HWG) to create an economy of scale.

Meantime nursery closes because working women needed more full time childcare.

A perfect storm happened in 2018 with legislation to raise minimum wage (additional $40K in salaries /1st yr alone) & the potential loss of HWG building.

So we did Crowd funding targeted at friends and relatives. It worked!

Then the Cortland B of E. closed Parker School . Perfect for us to repurpose that school

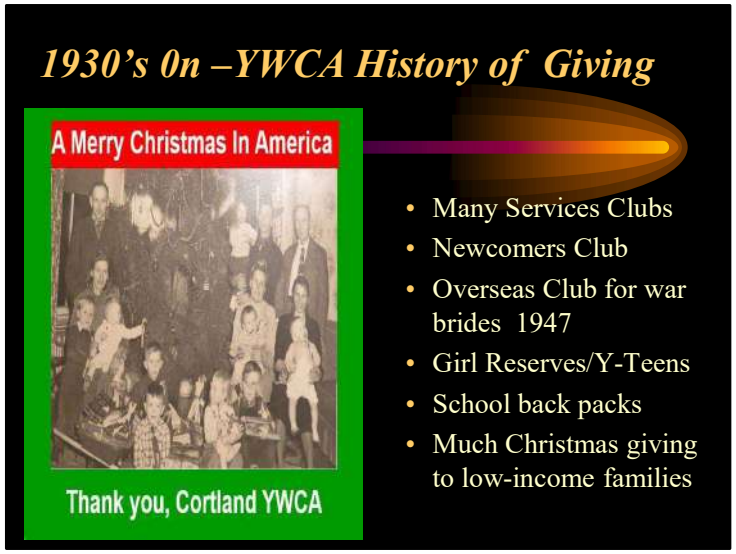
With Parker School we could put HWG, LA, CAPCO's Head Start & a training institute for childcare workers all in one fantastic building with a gym, industrial kitchen, a great playground and located across from Suggett Park and pool.

We are still recovering from the losses of Covid HWG only opens in '21.

During covid we were the designated care provider for school age children of essential workers.

Sadly Parker School was too expensive for all of us.

2022 YW Parking lot summer camp -- FINALLY pandemic free



Now here is the history of YWCA Giving

Here is a large group of immigrant families around our X-mas tree in the Osborn Room probably in the 1940s.

Many service clubs formed over the years

1947 Overseas club was for the war brides

Y- teens always helping low-income families particularly at Christmas

Now the antique shows

In 1910 the Randall house 's front lawn on Main St. was turned into the PostOffce.

In 1932, the Postmaster convinced Lois Osborn that an Antique show would be a good fund raiser.

ONLY One other had been held in the country at that time.

Sadly, the show had appeal bec some people were interested in antiques while some people needed to sell their furniture to support families. It was the depression with many people out of work.

The shows ran for 5 days. All three floors including the basement housed the antiques on display.

For many years Margaret Woodbury Strong of Strong Memorial roots came to purchase

antiques and the many, many dolls that are now on display at the Strong Toy Museum in Rochester.

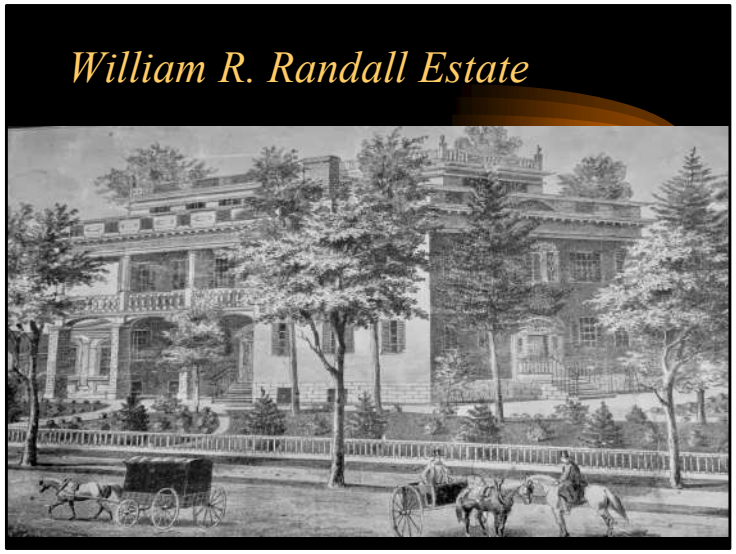
Church ladies prepared luncheon to serve guests outside under the Linden tree.

The show brought 1000 people to Cortland.

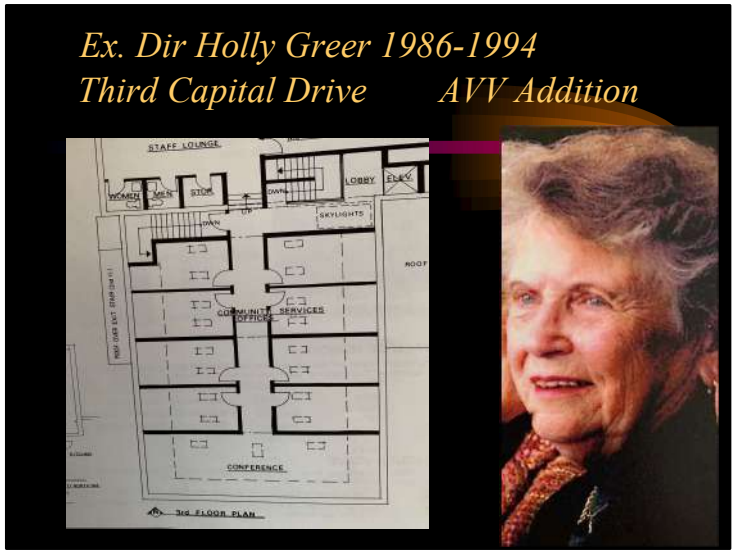
In 1934 YW women were promoting the Antique show with cows. 4 years later in vintage dresses.

1938 YWCA women on steps of William R. Randall's home for Antique Show promotion

Women in vintage dress pose at the other Randall Estate. It too faced Main St. and consisted of 6 arces of gardens and orchards rising up the West hill. It was located behind Mont Wards which didn't exit at this time.



Here is a better view of that house -- this beautiful building was torn down in the 1940s



My focus now is on several greats EDs. We continue to grow in very essential ways because of the foundations they laid for us.

Smith College grad: Holly told me that the motto for Smith College centennial was 100yrs of women on top. That was pretty feisty for back then.

Before coming to Cortland, Holly was the first female mayor of Marquette MI.

She helped found the Women's Center at Northern Mi Univ; and has a bike trail in MI. named after her.

We ran Capital Fund Drives because we grew and our missions changed.

We started AVV bec of a rise in domestic violence in Cortland in 1977. AVV started in a small room in the basement across from the janitor's office. A space heater was its only source of heat.

Not too safe when you had little children coming in with their Moms.

Holly added the 3rd floor to create a safe space for AVV, 8 offices and a conference room.
Also added: 1st Men's locker room, handicapped ramp and the 1st elevator, Osborn room updated, added a weight room, storage & office space.

Amy Simrell did the 4th Capital Fund Drive.

She had guts and the leadership skills to make this magnificent addition happen.

A full 2 story gym, the multi-purpose room, an art gallery in the back lobby another elevator.

Amy was blind-sided during this addition with the discovery that the north wall created during the addition of the pool in 1930 had no footers -- essentially no foundation.
It had to be created under the wall. A costly project.

Perhaps the First part of Kelly's tenure in 2014 was relatively calm but her baptism by fire arrived in the form of a worldwide Pandemic.

See slide

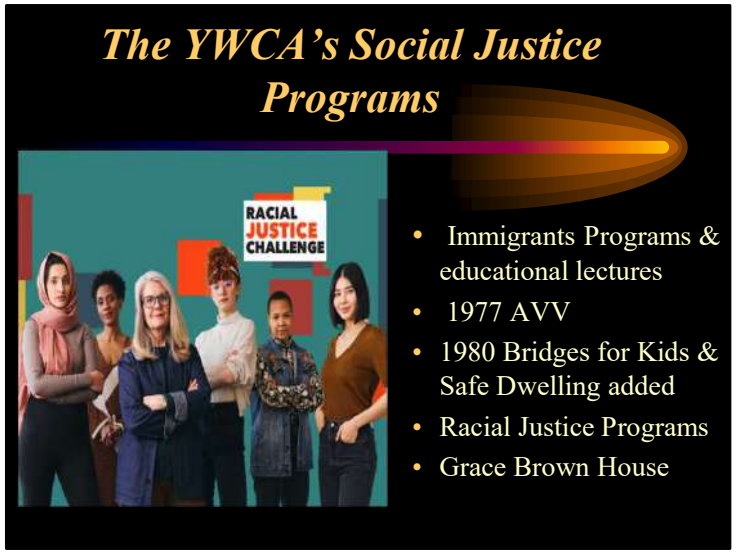
Covid caused a huge econ downturn. AVV stats have always followed the economy.
In bad times – many more calls.

DV is most dangerous times for the police.
We had the first cop shot in 20 years in a DV incident very early in the pandemic.

We survived the Pandemic bec Kelly was right on top of getting the resources that were out there for her staff. I can't think of a more stressful time for Kelly or the YW.

Here is Jessie Smith, AVV director of housing and Kelly literally running to deliver items to furnish the GBHouse.

Grace Brown House! the Central Piece of Kelly's tenure to date.



Now to social justice programs

1.Many Christmas celebrations with Immigrant families thru the years. Times change; These have been replaced by celebrations with our mentored & low-income families now.

2.Kathy Bertini presented a lecture on the UN food program in Muslim countries. She came dressed in a burka that covered her totally. Difficult to make your point when you can't be seen and you're speaking thru a mesh screen

3.MLK Birthday celebration in 2018 had a Harriet Tubman impersonator, 100 people were there including 40 kids from our childcare programs. The children were so involved, they were jumping out of their chairs to ask Harriet questions. I will never forget one question from an 8 or 9 yr old kid -- "Did blacks own slaves?" The answer was "yes."

4.IN 1977 Our AVV program was one of the first in the state and a model for the Nat'l YWCA and the state.

And we trained many staff from other programs.

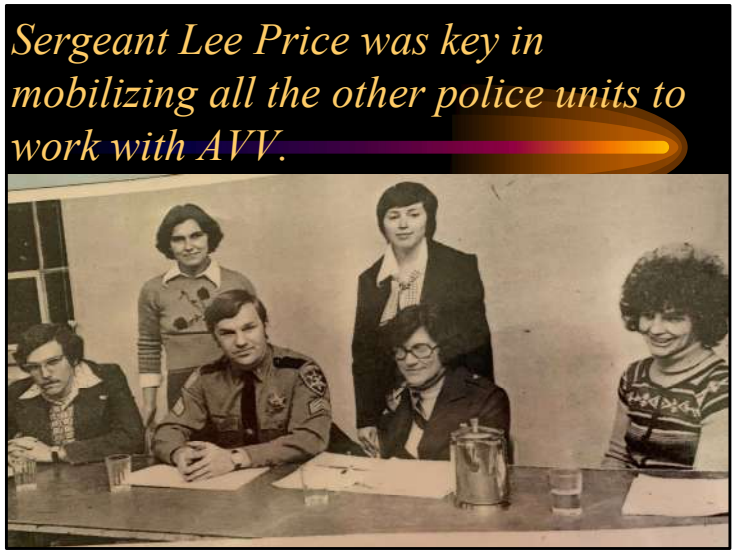
EX Dir Joan Dick took a chance welcoming AVV to the YWCA. Serving women in this way was quite a departure from

the usual programs of the YW. This was dangerous -- a far cry from White gloves and tea parties!!

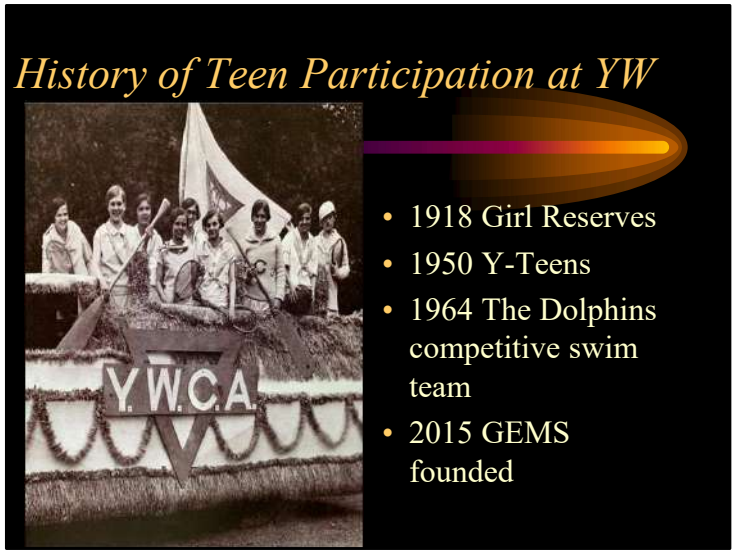
5.Racial justice programs offered annually in person and on-line in an attempt to eliminate racism.

6.The promise of safe, secure and permanent housing brings some justice to DV victims at GB House.

GBH 7 years in the making; Opened in May'22 filled by Nov '22 with pretty narrow criteria – DV and homeless or at risk for homelessness.



i want to give homage to Sheriff Lee Price who died in April of 2023.
Without his assistance, AVV would not have been able to establish
our good working relationship with the city, county and state police.



NOW the history of TEEN participation at the YW

Here is a beautifully created parade float created by the Girl Reserves, perhaps in the '30s. It shows athletically- involved women with paddles, basketballs and rackets. the young women had their gym and their pool!

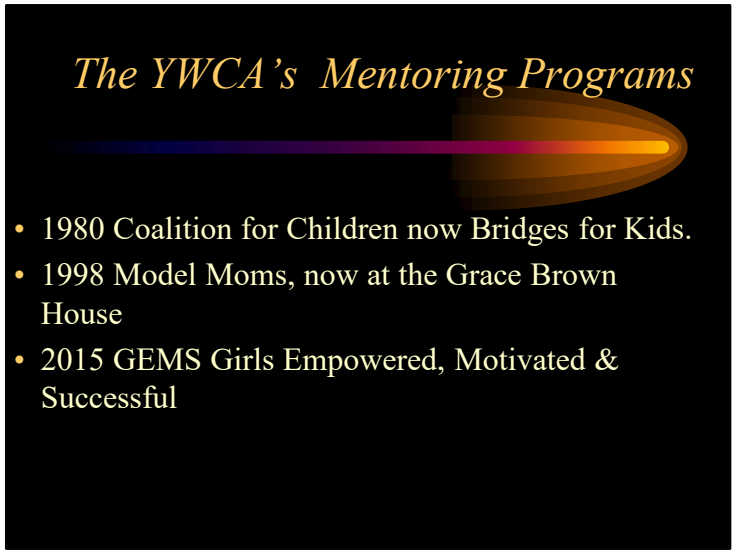
Y - Teens replaced the Girl Reserves.

As many as 500 girls participated in the early years of the Dolphins. In 1966, the girls swim team joined the YMCA swim team. They had just moved into their new Tompkins St. building with a bigger pool.

OFF TO NEW YORK — The 12th grade Y-Teens left yesterday morning for their three-day visit to New York City where they will enjoy a Broadway musical, the Radio City Musical Hall Easter Show, a full day's tour and a morning of shopping. They will be accompanied this year by Mrs. Eugene Fairchild, Y-Teen director, and Mrs. Werner Mellinger. Y-Teens are girls in junior and senior high school who belong to the YWCA, an organization open to girls and women of all races, creeds and nationalities. Y-Teen clubs elect their own officers and plan their own activities with the help of their adult advisor. They enjoy splash parties, pizza parties, trips, speakers, movies and mother and daughter banquets, as well as fund-raising projects to raise money towards their New York Trip in their final year. During YWCA Week, the Cortland YW would like to invite all girls in grades 7-12 to join the Y-Teens. Either pay a personal visit or call the YW at 753-1121 for more information. (Cortland Photo Service).

1972 or 73 Y-Teens travel to NYC

Y-Teen Monica West is still working out at the YW with Boomer Nation or Silver Sneakers



MENTORING

1980 AVV concerned that children in DV households were also traumatized.
So mentoring started with adults from the community coming forward to assist these young folks.

GBH women's group takes the place of Model Moms. the purpose of the group is to educate and empower the residents

GEMS next slide.

These girls aged out of the Mentoring Program for 5-12 year olds but did not want to leave the YW and the wonderful, creative women who mentored them. So they invented GEMS -- Not unlike the Y-teens of earlier years.

Ces Scott and Sara Earl took them to Cornell as a field trip. One of them (a 14yrs old) at that time said "this is where I want to go to school. "

8 of the 11 GEMS from the 2017-2018 school year are in college or college bound! (may or may not be pictured above)

They don't build them like this anymore!

We are in the process of applying for a Preservation Grant from the State. Amy Simrell applied for this grant way back & they said that we weren't bad enough.

Now we are!!

Permanent damage will occur without help now. Will be beyond repair.

Brick repointing – some bricks are falling out.

Wood? work or Beaver board meant for indoor construction is shown here rotting away.

bricks are falling out

Fire escape for Child Care

- Stairs are unusable in winter due to snow and ice – doesn't meet code.
- Left brick wall needs repointing.

Door rusted, wood rotted, and stairs crumbling – Original Main Door of Randall House

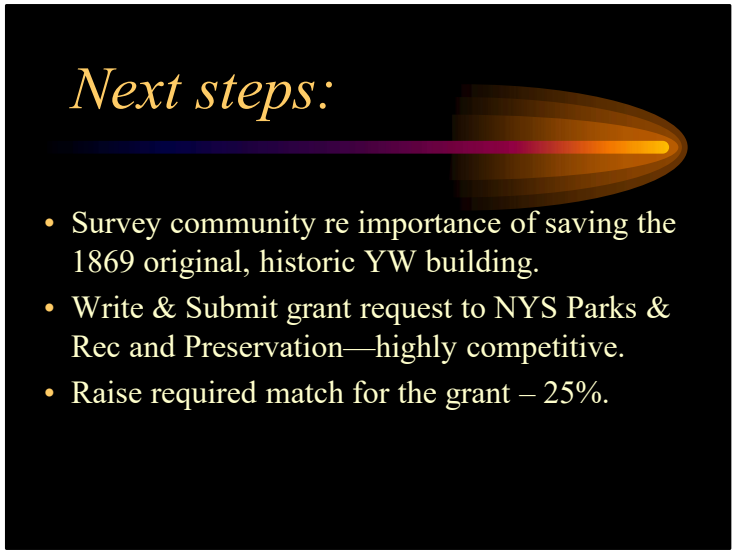
To the left of Front Entrance

- Door Rusting Out
- Concrete Crumbing

The angle of the ramp is too steep.

Air Conditioner is ugly & upper windows need replacement

These are not in keeping with an historic front of our building, according to city study.



Winning depends on being the most neediest project in the region.