



# Press Advisory

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## **Cincinnati Preservation Association Announces Agreement to Purchase the Eckstein School in the Village of Glendale, Ohio**

### ***Historic African American Elementary School was at Risk of Substantial Demolition***

Today Cincinnati Preservation Association announced it has entered into an agreement for the purchase of the Eckstein School in the National Historic Landmark Village of Glendale, Ohio. It is with 42 Washington Ave., LLC., the current owner.

The elementary school was in operation from 1915 to 1958 and served the African American students of Glendale. Recent development plans called for demolition of more than half of the historic structure. This purchase will ensure that the historic site is preserved and developed as the Eckstein Cultural Arts Center (ECAC).

"This purchase is an important step in honoring Glendale's rich African American history," said Paul Muller, Executive Director of Cincinnati Preservation Association. "The Eckstein School's legacy spans themes that range from segregation in education to the powerful role of community meeting places." "CPA is grateful to partner with the Eckstein School advocates and the Village of Glendale in saving the school and in advancing plans for the Eckstein Cultural Arts Center."

Glendale Mayor Don Lofty reacted to the news of the purchase by saying, "The entire Village of Glendale is pleased that an important part of our heritage and history will be preserved! The Village bought the property more than 10 years ago in the hopes it could be repurposed in a way that acknowledges its unique meaning to many. There have been a number of different solutions proposed over the years, but none as fitting as the one we have before us today. We welcome Cincinnati Preservation Association's willingness to use its funding and other resources to save the building, and look forward to seeing it take on its new role in the heritage of our community." We also congratulate Glendale resident Bill Parrish on this opportunity for him and the Eckstein Cultural Arts Center to realize the dream that he has held for so long!"

William Parrish, Executive Director of the ECAC, welcomed the purchase stating "After working for years to secure the Eckstein School, our supporters could not be any happier! Cincinnati Preservation Association has come forward with vision, action and funding! They are a welcome partner in this effort to bring the Eckstein School back to once again serve as the center of community life. It will be a site that expands the story of the Village of Glendale by celebrating its rich African American heritage"

Cincinnati Preservation will transfer the title to the [The Hamilton County Land Reutilization Corporation](#) (“Landbank”) while the Eckstein Cultural Arts Center prepares plans and raises funds for the rehabilitation of the property. The ECAC will move to the site after renovation. It is currently in a temporary facility and serves as a community gathering place, Eckstein Cultural Arts Center provides a creative setting for youth and adults in the Historic Village of Glendale, Ohio.

“The Landbank is perfectly positioned to assist Cincinnati Preservation Association and the Village of Glendale in the acquisition, holding, and restoration of the Eckstein School,” said Laura Brunner, President and CEO of The Port, which manages the Landbank. “The Landbank is a frequent partner to municipalities and local communities, and its unique tools and expertise in holding and maintaining vacant properties will position CPA, the Village of Glendale, and the community to put this property back to productive and culturally relevant use.”

Developer and architect Denny Dillinger of 42 Washington Ave., LLC, who is selling the property to CPA, withdrew his Conditional Use Zoning Application today and noted that “while the project we proposed would have been a high quality innovative addition to the types of senior housing available, I am happy to assist the Village of Glendale and the residents in preserving this important piece of history.”

Funding for the purchase of the Eckstein School is provided by CPA’s new Revolving Fund for Historic Preservation. This fund enables CPA to make loans or take direct action to save key historic sites. The Revolving Fund has received several grants from the [1772 Foundation](#) in Providence Rhode Island.

The Village of Glendale has deep connections to the abolitionist’s activities and to the Underground Railroad. Many African Americans settled in Glendale prior to the Civil War. Elenora Eckstein opened a school for African American students in 1870. The 1915 building being purchased by CPA was named in her honor. It continued to serve as a segregated school until 1958, four years after the landmark Brown versus Board of Education case. In recent years Eckstein advocates have worked to acquire and restore the school. This purchase will facilitate and accelerate that project.

The Village of Glendale is recognized by the Department of the Interior at the highest level of significance. It has the rare honor of being designated as a National Historic Landmark Village. The Eckstein School, and other sites of African American history, were added to the Village’s designation recently.

The work by Cincinnati Preservation to increase awareness and preservation of sites that tell the story of the African American experience in Cincinnati is part of a program initiated in 2020. Our “Preserving and Celebrating Sites of Black History” program works with communities throughout the region. It was created with funding from [Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr. Foundation](#) and the [Greater Cincinnati Foundation](#).

The transformation within the preservation movement is also occurring across the country. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has established the [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#) to extend preservation’s benefits to previously underserved historic sites. In October, Cincinnati Preservation Association will host Brent Leggs, executive director of the Trust’s African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, at our annual Fall Forum. Information on this event is available at [Annual Fall Forum Lecture – Cincinnati Preservation Association](#).

Photos of Eckstein School for download: [Link](#)

More about the school on CPA's website:

<https://cincinnati-preservation.org/eckstein-school-a-vital-site-of-black-history-in-glendale/>

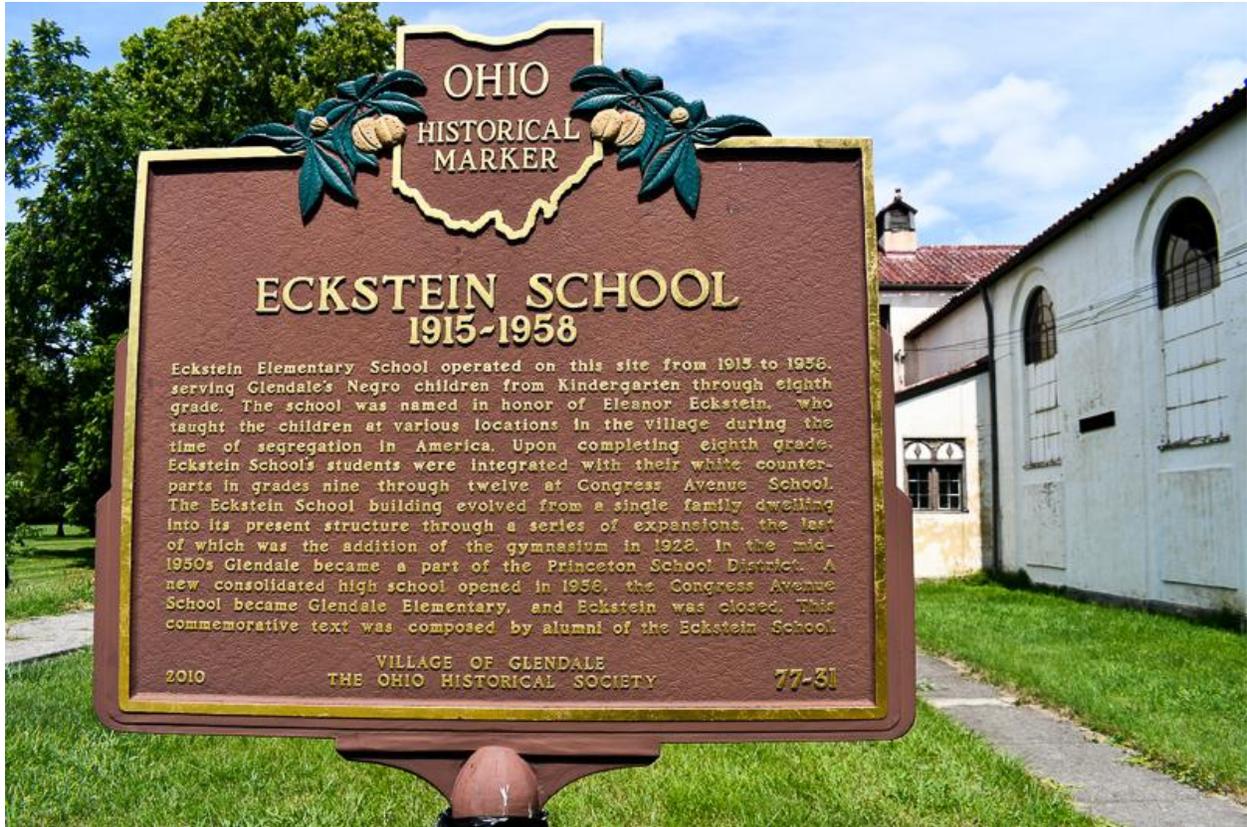
**About Cincinnati Preservation Association:** Cincinnati Preservation Association is a private, nonprofit, membership organization that serves the Greater Cincinnati community. For more than 50 years, Cincinnati Preservation has been working to save the places that make Cincinnati special. We see preservation as part of a larger mission, to promote vibrant, walkable, sustainable neighborhoods that strengthen the sense of community. [www.cincinnati-preservation.org](http://www.cincinnati-preservation.org)



The Eckstein School, which opened in 1915, was named in honor of Eleanor Eckstein for her work to educate African American children in Glendale. Her "Icehouse School" began in 1870 and served the growing population of the Village of Glendale's African American community. Photo Credit: Cincinnati Preservation Association.



The 1928 Eckstein School gymnasium was designed by noted Glendale architect Stanley Matthews. Matthews designed many significant structures in the Cincinnati area and was the grandson of United States Supreme Court Justice Stanley Matthews. Photo Credit: Cincinnati Preservation Association.



Historic marker at the Eckstein School. Photo Credit: Cincinnati Preservation Association.