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Jan. 22, 2016: For Immediate Release

**LAWSUIT SEEKS TO STOP DEMOLITION OF CHAUTAUQUA AMP
- Request for Restraining Order will be heard by Court on Monday afternoon –**

The Committee to Preserve the Historic Chautauqua Amphitheater (a/k/a “Save the Amp”) and five owners of residences at the Chautauqua Institution in Mayville, NY, filed a lawsuit in State Supreme Court, Chautauqua County, on Friday, asking the Court to block demolition of “the Amp” – the century-old facility that has been proclaimed a “National Treasure” by the National Historic Trust, and called the “the physical, functional and spiritual heart of the Chautauqua Institution” by the State’s Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation. The Amp’s podium has been graced by distinguished speakers and performers ranging from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Susan B. Anthony, Thurgood Marshall and Bobby Kennedy, to Ella Fitzgerald, Van Cliburn, Pete Seeger and Judy Collins.

The legal action was brought in response to the Chautauqua Institution’s announcement on January 13, 2016 that it had obtained demolition and building permits from the Town of Chautauqua Code Enforcement Office allowing it to start “Phase 1” of its plan to demolish the historic Amp (except for its organ loft) and construct what it is calling “a renewed Amphitheater” beginning February 1st. The court papers seek nullification of the previously issued demolition and construction permits, and an injunction barring demolition of the Amp until the Town of Chautauqua and Chautauqua Institution fully comply with two laws meant to preserve and protect historic resources: The Town of Chautauqua’s Waterfront Consistency Law, and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

The lawsuit names the Board of Trustees of the Chautauqua Institution, the Code Enforcement Officer for the Town of Chautauqua, and the Town Board of the Town of Chautauqua as Respondents. The Town Board, along with eight other towns and village adjoining Chautauqua Lake, adopted a local waterfront revitalization plan (LWRP) in 2008 that recognizes the Amp as “a site of historic significance.” The LWRP expressly calls on the Chautauqua Lake communities to “preserve historic resources of the waterfront area,” and asks each municipality to “maximize preservation and retention of historic resources.”

The Hon. Frank A. Sedita III, Justice of the State Supreme Court, has been assigned the case. Justice Sedita will meet with the lawyers for the parties at 2:00 PM on Monday, January 25, at the Chautauqua County Courthouse in Mayville, to hear argument on whether a temporary restraining order [TRO] should be granted to maintain the status quo until the Respondents have an opportunity to formally reply to the claims raised by the Petitioners.

A copy of the Petitioners’ court papers can be obtained via email from their attorney, Arthur J. Giacalone, by sending a request to AJGiacalone@tvc.com.