

# Where history & a new mission lead to neighborhood pride

The **Nancy Kimball house** anchors the historic near west neighborhood. When constructed it overlooked the Chicago Street bridge, an important crossing point along the Fox River. The Kimball family's political and business leadership contributed to the city's success. One of six remaining cobblestone structures in Elgin, this rare building is the only one in public ownership.



## The Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House

### A Short History of the Building

The house was built in 1846 for the widow of one of Elgin's founders, **Joseph Kimball**. Their sons, William and Samuel, served as mayors of the city and prominent businessmen. Nancy lived in the house until 1888 when she passed away at age 101. Members of the Kimball family owned the property for 105 years.

In 1951 this small house was divided into four apartments. Two more units were added in the 1970s. As rental property, the building deteriorated and became a trouble spot. The **City of Elgin** acquired the house in 2009. The City entered into an agreement in 2015 with the **Elgin Area Historical Society** to rehabilitate the building for public and educational uses.

### Architectural description

Cobblestone buildings are constructed using field stones, masonry debris and cement. This loose material, known as **rubble**, is used to create walls. Cobblestones, about the size of baseballs, are arranged in rows or courses, creating a relatively uniform appearance to the façade. This method of construction was brought to the Midwest by the earliest settlers when they arrived from New England.

### Vision for the Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House

This building is an important asset benefitting the surrounding neighborhood as a:

- Distinctive entryway landmark
- Demonstration project promoting architectural preservation & adaptive re-use
- Encourage neighborhood pride & identity
- Base for grass-roots organizations working on behalf of the neighborhood

### When rehabilitated for public use, the building will serve as a:

- Gallery space for exhibitions of local history, decorative art & architecture
- Meeting space for small groups, including the Near West Neighborhood Association
- Setting for educational programs serving nearby schools & adult learners
- Work room for hands-on demonstrations & community projects

Save the cobblestone, build the neighborhood



Workers improving the cobblestone's grounds



Interior, lathe for plaster wall peeled from a single log



Interior, example of rubble walls 16" thick



ELGIN HISTORY MUSEUM



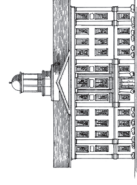
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I/We want to support the  
Nancy Kimball **Cobblestone House**  
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[www: ElginHistory.org](http://www.ElginHistory.org)  
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## Partners

This project is a partnership of the  
**Elgin History Museum** and the  
**City of Elgin**, in cooperation with the  
**Near West Neighbors Association.**

Groups and individuals are welcome to  
join the effort to save the cobblestone!  
Please contact the Elgin History  
Museum to get involved.

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Kane County Riverboat Fund  
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THE ELGIN HISTORY MUSEUM 360 PARK STREET, ELGIN, IL 60120 | [www.elginhistory.org](http://www.elginhistory.org)

The Nancy Kimball **Cobblestone House** 302 W. Chicago St., Elgin, IL

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