

PRESERVATION COMMISSIONS: EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Jo Ann Radetic, National Park Service, CLG Coordinator, Missouri SHPO

The most important method of preserving local historic resources is public outreach and education. Citizens must be informed about **what** in their community is worth preserving, **why** it should be preserved, and **how** to preserve it. A local commission must work constantly to build and maintain public consensus on the importance of preserving local historic resources.

Working within Local Government

Preservation Commissioners

Before preservation commissioners begin to consider educating their community and public officials, they must first educate themselves. Even commissioners who are supported by professional preservation staff should not sit back and let the staff do their learning for them.

All commissioners should be good spokespersons for historic preservation. They must understand not only the powers and duties of the historic preservation commission, but also the "system" of the local government within which they operate. The most important thing that historic preservation commissioners should remember is that they serve at the pleasure of the local elected officials. Without some support from elected officials, the commission will not exist.

To assure that commissioners understand their role within local government, the commission should conduct an annual self-assessment and review of the local historic preservation ordinance. Review of the ordinance will help the commission set goals and evaluate the role of preservation in the community. The commissioners will also reinforce their knowledge of their responsibilities and assess the progress toward integration of historic preservation into local government's structure.

The commission should issue an annual report that summarizes their activities and accomplishments, which can be used as a tool to train new commissioners. This report should be presented at a public meeting or city council meeting and should be distributed to the city's elected officials, staff, and to the media.

The commissioners must attend annual training to keep informed on preservation methods and issues. If the commission is to effectively guide and educate the community on preservation matters, then commissioners must maintain their knowledge and expertise on those subjects.

Local Government Staff and Appointed Boards and Commissions

The commission will find it necessary to work with every department of city government and every employee at City Hall should know that the historic preservation commission is a part of city government. The preservation commission may be the "new kid on the block" compared to other city commissions and departments; and may have to work to be recognized as an established part of city government. To be effective, commissioners must appreciate the technical expertise of city staff and promote an atmosphere of candor, fair dealing, and mutual respect in working with city staff.

Using their training and expertise in historic preservation methods and design review, the preservation commission can assist city staff and other appointed commissions. The building official, the planning department and the planning and zoning commission, the parks commission, and the economic development department can all benefit from information provided by the preservation commission. Such assistance will help those city departments understand the important



Historic preservation public outreach effort by the City of Pasadena Hills, Missouri.

Photo courtesy of Kris Zapalac, Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

The entire City of Pasadena Hills (pop. 1147) is being nominated to the National Register, including their structures, landscaped areas, streetlights, streets and sidewalks. They are in the process of designating the entire city as a local historic district, also. The preservation commission has been working tirelessly on a number of public outreach projects.

role that historic preservation plays in maintaining and improving the quality of life in the community.

Commissioners should be a visible part of city government by regularly attending city council meetings and keeping informed on all of the issues and projects undertaken by the city. When invited, commissioners should attend city social functions such as the annual holiday party and the City Employees Picnic.

Local Elected Officials

As part of the local government, preservation commissions have a unique advocacy role. It is important to emphasize again that historic preservation commissioners must remember that they serve at the pleasure of the local elected officials. Without some support from them, the commission will not exist.

Presenting an annual report is a necessary part of educating the elected officials about the work of the preservation commission. This is also an opportunity to **give the elected officials credit** for the accomplishments of the historic preservation commission.

The commission should design programs to explain to the elected officials **specifically** how historic preservation benefits the community, and should show how preservation addresses specific concerns such as neighborhood revitalization or restoring and maintaining economic vitality in the historic downtown area. Demonstrating the economic advantages of historic preservation is a particularly effective method of gaining support from elected officials.

The mayor should appoint a liaison from the City Council to the historic preservation commission. This council member attends the preservation commission meetings and regularly reports to the council on commission activities.

If an issue arises on which the elected officials and the preservation commission do not agree, the commission should not argue with the elected officials. The preservation commission should make their recommendation or decision according to their duties as outlined in the preservation ordinance. The elected officials can then act on the recommendation or reject it. The elected officials generally have the final decision and, right or wrong, they usually reflect the feelings of the community that elected them.

Effective Advocacy: Integrating Preservation into Community Decision-Making

General Public

Since the elected officials generally reflect the feelings of the community that elected them, it is important to have a community consensus in favor of good historic preservation practices.

The historic preservation commission should play a significant role in promoting an appreciation of the community's heritage. To be really effective, they should do this in cooperation with non-profit groups such as the local historical society, the local non-profit preservation organization, the downtown Main Street organization, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Public outreach and education efforts by the preservation commission should not only increase a community's appreciation of the local historic resources and the value of preserving the community's character, but should also increase the public's confidence in the expertise of the preservation commission. Demonstrations of the commission's knowledge and ability to assist



Horton House (1859) in the historic Museum Hill District of St. Joseph, Missouri, before rehabilitation.

Photo courtesy of Caroline Petrie.



Horton House (1859) in the historic Museum Hill District of St. Joseph, Missouri, after rehabilitation.

Photo courtesy of the City of St. Joseph.



The Webster Groves, Missouri, historic commercial district has recently been nominated to the National Register.

*Photo courtesy of Jo Ann Radetic,
Missouri Department of Natural
Resources*

"At the heart of our Webster Groves business districts are historically preserved buildings. These lovely, old, charming structures house attractive and successful shops, restaurants and offices. Doing business in historic buildings complements our historic homes and neighborhoods to enrich Webster Groves' reputation as a community that values its past as the key to the future."

*Gerry Welch, Mayor
Webster Groves, Missouri*

property owners in preserving local historic resources support the ways in which the historic preservation commission can assist in protecting those resources.

Decision Makers

The historic preservation commission must identify the key decision-makers in the community. In addition to the elected officials, this group includes property owners, business owners, bankers and other community leaders. The preservation commission should conduct special workshops to educate these decision-makers about the economic value of historic preservation, financial incentives, using design guidelines, and planning for preservation.

Commissioners should attend meetings and public hearings and testify for the integration of preservation into the city's comprehensive plan as well as proposed transportation plans and other community planning and zoning issues. The process of developing or updating local historic preservation plans and design guidelines presents good opportunities for building support for the local historic preservation program. The course of action leading to the publication of preservation planning documents should involve soliciting

input from community leaders as well as the general public. Community leaders provide input and ideas for the plan thereby giving those involved a sense of ownership and responsibility for implementing those ideas.

Conclusion/Summary

Preservation commissioners must be well versed in preservation issues and methods to be able to educate the public. If the public supports preservation, then the elected officials, reflecting the views of their constituents, will support a knowledgeable historic preservation commission and allow it to be stronger and more effective in their efforts to assist in the preservation of local historic resources.

There is a wealth of educational resources available to preservation commissions. Organizations like The National Trust for Historic Preservation and The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions are prepared to help historic preservation commissions in their public outreach efforts and a number of resources are available online and through local libraries. Commissioners must take time to take advantage of what is available.

Sources of preservation commission training and information

Always check with your state CLG coordinator for this information. Other resources are:

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/workingonthepast>

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/training.htm>

If commissions have not already joined NAPC, they should seriously consider doing so. In addition to NAPC's biennial Forum, which is the best preservation commission training in the world, NAPC has the Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP), and a great bibliography of "must read" information for preservation commissioners. When I was just starting out in the preservation commission business, NAPC was a lifesaver. I would make a call to NAPC to receive wonderful support and information.

In addition to all of their other publications, **the National Trust** publishes a great list of "Preservation Resources on the Internet" every year as a supplement to Forum News. Of course, the National Trust Conference is a good source of annual training and preservation networking for commissions.

The website of **the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation** is also a good source of preservation information

<http://www.achp.gov>

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PARTNERSHIPS

Public Outreach Activity

Media releases

Radio programs

Regular newspaper columns

Newsletters

Public meetings televised over
Local cable TV community access

Guided walking tours of historic districts

Preservation workshops

Neighborhood meetings

Presentations to civic groups

Presentations to school groups

Assisting school teachers with
lesson plans that include a local
historic preservation focus

Technical advice

Public access files:
Technical information
Survey information
Historic information

Design Guidelines

Preservation Plans and/or
Historic District Plans

Architectural Treasure Hunt

Local Partners/Source of Assistance

Non-profit preservation organizations, preservation commissions and historical societies are potential partners in all activities

Newspapers, radio stations

Radio stations

Newspaper

Corporate sponsors, print shops

City staff, community college

Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations,
Eagle Scouts

Main Street org., Chamber of Commerce
Local contractors, hardware stores

Property owners, historic district residents

Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimists, Lions

Teachers, schools

Teachers, schools

Local craftsmen, SHPO

Museum, Public Library
City Hall, Genealogical Society
Local historians, SHPO

Main Street org., Chamber of Commerce
City Hall

Main Street org., Chamber of Commerce
City Hall

Main Street org., Chamber of Commerce,
Newspaper, print shops

For details on the above activities contact: Jo Ann Radetic, Phone: (573) 522-2473, Email: jo.ann.radetic@dnr.mo.gov

WORKING COOPERATIVELY: LOCAL COMMISSIONS AND NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

Lisbeth Cort, Executive Director, Washington Trust for Historic Preservation

Successful local preservation programs depend on three sectors. Public Sector process, government mandates, citizen support and city politics all have an impact on the strength of local preservation ordinances, commission designees, and staffing levels. All give commissions great regulatory power and influence in times of supportive local governments but can threaten the very existence of local programs when detractors are in office or controversial decisions put heat on local elected officials. In the "Independent Sector," non-profits live and die by their success in being focused on their mission, creative in their outreach, strategic in their advocacy, and successful in building public support for their organization (translate dollars) and preservation. Private Sector developers can be our greatest heroes when they articulate vision and secure financing for rehab projects or they can swing into the "evil developer" camp if they bring money and influence to the task of redevelopment without preserving existing historic assets.



This property in East Tennessee was saved through public and private sector collaboration.

Photo courtesy of Nancy Jane Baker, Memphis Landmarks Commission.

In the ideal, yet fully-achievable, world of successful local preservation, the government (Public Sector) along with the non-profit (Independent Sector) and business (Private Sector) are an unbeatable combination to reach the highest level of preservation in a city. Between the three, they possess the full range of tools necessary to achieve preservation success. Alone, each can accomplish good things but never maximize the environment for local preservation in a way that strategic advocacy, targeted public education, financial investment, complimentary public policy, and government regulations can achieve. In fact, none can do it alone and each very much needs the other to achieve the best preservation on a local level. Beyond need, when working at cross purposes we have—at best—bad PR for preservation, public confusion about what "hysterical preservationists" do and want, and silly time- and resource-consuming back biting and turf wars. At worst, we have buildings demolished, a negative reactionary swing in public policy against preservation, and a platform for property rights advocates to gain the ear of the public.

Local non-profit preservation organizations and landmark commissions obviously do business very differently. Everyone's busy and it's hard to find time to look beyond what we each must do to think bigger than ourselves and work in concert. But, I submit, however, that working closely together, thinking bigger, and being strategic are not luxuries of time but are, instead, essential in order to build the most effective local preservation program possible. What are the keys to success in that "ideal yet achievable" world of public and non-profit sectors working toward common purpose?

Identify roles

To the outside world it sometimes seems that our movement has redundant players; why does it take a local non-profit and a commission to achieve preservation? We in the field know each has distinct as well as overlapping roles; and we know that's a good thing. Government preservation programs exist to provide preservation services to citizens, to implement zoning codes, forward public policy, carry out public processes, apply planning regulations, and protect a community's public assets—historic buildings that make our communities better places to live. Preservation non-profits exist to educate, advocate (and yes, lobby within legal limits), and promote preservation. Both build community leadership through their commissions, boards, and committees. Both can provide economic incentives for rehab through grants, loans, and easements. Both can provide expertise and technical assistance. Both can hold property. When used most intentionally, the *distinct* roles absolutely maximize the power of preservation.

For instance:

- If a building is threatened, the commission's role in being able to delay demolition won't ultimately save a building if the will and players aren't there to rehab. A non-profit who testifies in support of demolition delay, builds positive PR for rehab, helps educate elected officials about the value of saving the landmark, brings awareness in the press about the value of preservation, and helps identify new owners, technical experts, similar successful models, or financing options can make the difference on whether demolition is just delayed or rehab is achieved. Alternately, a non-profit can't help turn around a proposed demolition if there are no tools to "buy time" for negotiations, identify additional resources, or change political will.

When used most strategically and cooperatively, the sectors' *overlapping* roles result in a full range of expertise, services and incentives to property owners, and an environment of support for preservation as a fundamental community value.

Establish partnerships and use the roles to your advantage

No matter how good the commission or how strong the non-profit, neither can do everything. Because human and financial resources are not limitless, difficult choices have to be made about what each can do and where each should focus its energies. Choices have to be made and priorities determined for where to direct scarce resources to best advance preservation. Each has to ask itself, if we can't do it all, then what can our partners do and what kinds of things are they better positioned to do?

For instance:

- If the commission is beginning to work on survey and designation of a mid-Twentieth century landmark or historic district, the non-profit could focus public education beforehand on the architecture of the recent past. Then the public and elected officials are better attuned to the value of such "modern" buildings before the designation comes before them.
- A commission in my state wanted to spotlight and reward owners who had completed projects under design review guidelines but felt that doing so might be perceived as prejudicing itself if the same owners came before the commission again on another matter in the future. The non-profit therefore, added an award category to its already successful annual preservation awards program and began highlighting owners who completed model projects in compliance with local design review guidelines. The commission's processes were recognized in a positive way, there was a venue to praise city staff and elected officials, perceived future conflicts were avoided, and regulation's positive role was reinforced.

Get beyond turf issues and keep your eye on the prize

It's human nature to get comfortable with the "way we do things" and feel protective of our hard-earned status. If, however, we "keep our eyes on the prize," stay focused on our mutual preservation mission, and keep that at the forefront of how we do business, rather than who gets the credit or who does what work, we can achieve great things.

- One non-profit with a strong revolving loan program uses its revolving fund committee to make lending decisions. It has a member of the city's preservation staff on its committee and has found that member to be invaluable. The staff person gives valuable insights into regulatory, zoning, political, or code issues associated with a particular project. He also assists when the committee plans for the future by helping identify "emerging" areas for lending or districts that are being surveyed and soon-to-be

No matter how good the commission or how strong the non-profit, neither can do everything.

designated in order for the non-profit to focus loan resources concurrently with designation. The expertise and perspective of each bring more tools together for property owners.

- A local landmark commission has strong architectural expertise on staff. The city's non-profit is relatively new and has achieved great success in public education and events that involve the public in preservation. Rather than focusing limited resources on providing technical preservation expertise, the non-profit chose instead to direct technical preservation questions to commission staff and use its time to build membership, provide activities for children and adults to be involved in preservation, and help build a stronger preservation ethic locally. It easily could have felt threatened by not having that architectural expertise on staff; but, it was building a better local movement by focusing on its strengths and having the strong commission staff focus on theirs. Together they provided strong assistance to property owners - just in different ways.

Successful partnerships demand strong and regular communication. Keeping the other partner informed, including them at times of key decision-making about a strategy or initiative, and giving each other a heads up when there are potential delicate political issues, make the difference between disjointed local programs and a strong environment for preservation.

For instance:

- One local non-profit, like many, has a board Advocacy Committee which meets monthly. In its case, the local historic preservation officer attends the monthly meetings. This insures that the committee and the city preservation staff know what issues each is dealing with, can communicate freely about positions and potential strategies, can help "pick battles", and can be clear about the roles each will play on difficult preservation issues. It helps insure a strong non-profit advocacy position, an informed city staff and politicians, and the use of regulatory, advocacy, and public awareness tools to the highest degree.
- Including the historic preservation officer in a non-profit's annual planning retreat can insure that both are informed about each other's work and coming initiatives. It also helps insure that citywide preservation-related issues are tackled from both the public and the non-profit sides.
- One commission had a regular informational item on each meeting agenda that offered the non-profit an opportunity to bring forward key preservation issues and/or opportunities to the commission's attention. This simple measure kept commissioners educated about upcoming public education or advocacy issues, brought advocacy issues to the public front, and got items on the record early.
- In one western city, the commission denied an inappropriate modern awning on a house in an historic district. Stubborn owners installed the awning anyway and the city began enforcement which eventually led to a civil suit against the owners. Unfortunately, contentious enforcement led to bad PR for the commission, which was portrayed by the local media as being the "taste police." The local non-profit moved quickly to distance itself from the issue and reinforce that it was not the same as that group of overbearing regulators. In the end, preservation lost. The public didn't know or care what the difference was between the commission and the non-profit. The

property owners appealed and then sued and ultimately hated preservation. City council took a public hit and looked less favorably toward strong preservation regulations next time they considered ordinance changes. Summarily, preservation in the city got a black eye. If, instead, the commission and non-profit staff had communicated about the issue early and often, things could have been different. The non-profit could have understood and been better positioned to advocate publicly for the commission's difficult design review decision and resulting city enforcement. Likewise, they could have been proactive in exploring ways to get positive press about good design review decisions and satisfied historic district property owners. If the staff and board had been knowledgeable about the decision and resulting enforcement, they might have been prepared to develop a positive spin in the press or among colleagues instead of reacting defensively and distancing themselves from the regu-

Cultivate and build local leadership

Non-profits generally know that a major part of their success in sustaining and in growing their organization comes from building a strong board of directors. They also know that board development is a pointed task, not just luck. Similarly, good commissions don't just happen. They are the product of the dedication and skills of the people who serve on them.

- Commission chairs and staff can take a cue from non-profits who focus time on board development by recognizing the need to identify and develop a constant pool of qualified people to serve, take the initiative to place their names in front of the appointing bodies, and train commissioners in the regulations as well as broader local preservation issues. Leadership skills are different from preservation skills. Good commissioners need to have both. Cross cultivation between potential commissioners and non-profit board members can also help ensure that skilled and connected leaders serve preservation in the best way they can—either on the public or non-profit side.
- Likewise, as part of board orientation and ongoing board education, non-profits should educate their boards about local regulations and processes, about the benefit of these and the arguments in favor of design review, preservation zoning, and demolition delay or denial. Board members are often well-connected individuals who span lots of different worlds in a community. If they are educated, they are better able to be advocates for local government preservation and the value that distinct public and non-profit preservation tools bring to a community. Similarly, if they are briefed about controversial commission decisions, they are better prepared to defend such actions as they interact professionally and socially with a range of contacts in the community.

Before asking others to preserve, we owe it to ourselves, our constituents, our members, and the public we serve to best position preservation to be successful. If we can't work together, how can we ask a property owner to work with one or the other of us? How can we advocate for more funding for preservation if we're not convinced we're using our existing human and resources most efficiently? How can we best fight against demolition if we fight among ourselves? How can we strengthen public ordinances if we don't support the decisions that commissioners are making?

We craft an environment for preservation to be supported and buildings to be saved if we work together and work smart. If we communicate about what needs to be done to ensure that we have the best policies, laws, incentives, and public support for preservation; if we set aside our egos and determine who does what best and how we can best support each other to build the strength of the other sector; and, if we keep communication open and our eye on the prize, we will reach our goals. Together.



Public/private sector partnerships can turn the press' attention to your advantage.

NAPC file photo

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH PLANNING FOR PRESERVATION COMMISSIONS

by Stacy Patterson, Preservation Consultant, Silver Spring, Maryland

Red tape, “paint police,” “hysterical commission”—every local preservation commission has heard these words at one time or another. How can a commission combat these stereotypes with little or no staff, small budgets, and lots of work? By creating an outreach and education plan, commissions can proactively address these challenges and many others. Although public outreach and education are central responsibilities of historic preservation commissions, these important activities and opportunities often come second to the commission’s regulatory duties. Outreach and education at the local level is often perceived as work that would be nice to do instead of something that is critical. Small or no staff and budgets, public apathy, media misrepresentation, and local bureaucracy can make it more difficult to conduct activities specifically focused on outreach and education; yet these same challenges are the reasons outreach and education are essential. An outreach and education plan can be an effective tool to overcome these challenges.

What is an Outreach and Education Plan?

An outreach and education plan is a tool any commission can create to streamline their public programming efforts. The plan addresses current and future needs of a commission, staff, and the community they serve, as well as the promotion of local historic resources. Through the planning process, a commission can discuss and evaluate their current outreach and education resources, research and develop new ideas, and plan for the specific implementation of the chosen activities. Like a master plan or work plan, an outreach and education plan is a fluid document, meant to be reviewed and updated as programs are implemented and new needs and opportunities arise.

Taking an organized and methodical approach to the outreach and education planning process allows a commission to develop a plan that meets their needs and falls within their budget and capabilities. A plan should serve as a tool to increase an entire community’s knowledge and understanding of the significance of local historic resources and the need to protect them through designation, regulation, and review. It should identify community values and how historic preservation fits in or protects those values. Overall, an outreach and education plan is a way for a commission to demonstrate to the public how its regulatory role benefits a community through printed materials, public forums, and personal efforts.

What are Outreach and Education Resources?

Outreach and education resources can be broadly defined as any material or activity which revolves around an aspect of historic preservation and is available to local stakeholders and the general public. These can include brochures, walking tours, websites, design guidelines, newsletters, events, workshops, meetings, books, maps, technical, and procedural information. Any document released to the public by the commission should be considered in an outreach and education context. Through outreach and education planning, these resources can be redesigned, redistributed, publicized, and promoted to further the understanding of historic preservation in a community.

Why should your commission create an Outreach and Education Plan?

By educating the public about local historic resources and their preservation, and demon-

Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission

the Preservationist

Winter 2006

Tax Credits Can Save You \$\$\$!

Apply Now!
In 2007 did you paint your house, replace the roof, or finally repair that leaky pipe? Those, and other projects such as storm window/door installation, chimney relining, and foundation repair qualify for the tax credit. As long as you've spent at least \$1,000 over the course of the year (not a hard rule) on exterior maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or other preservation work you could benefit from this County program.

Tax Credits from the State, Too!
Another significant tax incentive for revitalization and rehabilitation of historic structures is the Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Program administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. This provides Maryland income tax credits equal to 20% of the qualified capital costs expended on exterior and interior rehabilitation work (with a \$5,000 cumulative maximum over a 24 month period). Unlike the county program, the state applications must be completed before the work begins.

The required forms and more information are available on the Maryland Historical Trust website (www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net) or by calling the Office of Preservation Services at 410-514-7639.

Completed forms must be postmarked by April 1, 2006. Don't miss out.

Additional forms can be obtained, or inquiries about any aspect of the program answered, by calling the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission at 301-563-3400, or by visiting our website at www.montgomerycountypc.org/info/instructions/info_tax.htm

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Newsletters are good examples of outreach and education resources.
Photo courtesy of the author

strating how preservation connects to existing community values, commissions can bring historic preservation into the mainstream. Failing to educate the community about preservation hurts the preservation movement as a whole and can compromise the commission's efficacy. While it is nearly impossible to convince every citizen of how important historic preservation is as a community value, it is still possible to raise community awareness about historic preservation and gain better coverage in the local media.

Planning specifically for outreach and education can refocus commission efforts toward these important activities and garner new support. While many preservation commissions include outreach and education as a goal within their larger work plans or action plans, it is frequently the part of the plan that is least implemented. By developing a formal, stand-alone outreach and education plan, a commission can ensure that it works toward accomplishing that part of its mission.

Preservation commissions stand on the front lines of historic preservation and their impact—or lack there of—determines the public's impression of historic preservation as a movement overall. Appreciation for cultural and historic resources often starts at the local level, where people feel the greatest sense of connection to a place. Whether a commission is large or small, whether they have public support or not, all commissions can benefit from planning for outreach and education.

Step-by-Step: Creating an Outreach and Education Plan

Creating an Outreach and Education Plan is a major commitment for any preservation commission, but it is also an important investment in the community and the role historic preservation will play within it. The following nine steps provide a suggested formula for the creation of a plan for a local commission.

1. Commit

Deciding to create and implement an outreach and education plan is a major step. This means a commission must commit time and money to the development, implementation, and ongoing review of the plan. To make the plan successful, it is essential to designate someone—a staff or commission member—to lead the effort. The organization as a whole must commit to helping in the development, implementation, and review process in one way or another. Make sure everyone is willing to accept potential changes resulting from the plan. When the time and budget become available, the planning can begin in earnest.

2. Develop Goals and Identifying the Target Audience

Since the organization is committing time and money to the plan, it is essential that the final product satisfy the needs of the commission as well as the community it serves. It is therefore important to establish a set of goals for the plan. The commission, staff, and other important stakeholders should be included in the development of goals. These goals can include more organized planning of outreach and education activities, stronger media relations, better educational materials and opportunities, and greater participation at local events. During this process it is also necessary to identify the plan's target audience. The target audience can include the commission, staff and residents of historic districts, as well as school children, politicians, local architects and builders, or an entire city or county. As the target audience broadens, so must the reach of the plan.

3. Evaluate Current Resources

An important preliminary step is identifying resources and activities a commission

already has in place for outreach and education. Examining all current brochures, books, events, and websites will help establish where the commission stands. To keep an organized record, these resources can be logged into a database. Once the list of current resources is complete, the commission or staff can analyze how well these serve the needs of the organization. Asking questions like “Is this brochure current?”, “How easy is it to find and navigate the website?” or “How effective is our participation at this event?” can help an organization make the most of its current materials before investing in new ones.

4. Conduct Interviews and Surveys

Once current resources have been identified and established, it is time to find out which outreach and education activities work, which ones need to be changed, and which need to be removed. The best way to address this is through interviews and surveys. The person leading the planning process should take time to interview staff and commission members as well as other stakeholders such as district residents, business people, local non-profit organizations, civic groups, educators, and elected officials to learn their opinions on current resources, as well as what they would like to see in the future. Do not be afraid to think outside the box—or budget. Even if an idea will take a lot of money and time, if it is in the plan, it may become possible to secure a grant in the future to see it accomplished. Next, it is important to involve the community you serve. By surveying a historic district or creating focus groups, the commission and staff can learn the opinions of residents, business owners, politicians, and visitors. Surveying your target audience before the plan is created will help assure that the time and money spent on new and improved resources won't be wasted.

5. Look Around

So far the process has been rather internally focused, but now it is time to move outside of your commission and look to others. Get in touch with other commissions to see what has worked for their organizations. Learn the nitty-gritty of a successful project by asking about funding sources, time commitments, partnerships, and publicity. Do not be afraid to copy another idea, in this case imitation *is* the highest form of flattery. Creating open communications between commissions can only benefit each organization. Look at other commission websites, brochures, and events for inspiration. Attend local, state, and national conferences to network and gather new ideas.

6. Get Organized

Now that the staff and commission have identified their goals and target audience, their existing resources, and their needs, it is time to get organized and set priorities. The leader, along with the commission and staff must decide which resources and activities are most important to accomplish their goals and which must be accomplished right away. It is often helpful to categorize activities based upon which goal they will meet and then select a priority from each category. For instance, if your goals involve more organized planning of outreach and education activities, stronger media relations, better educational materials and opportunities, and greater participation at local events, you could choose a priority from each of these goals. In that case, you could include in your plan monthly outreach and education updates at staff meetings, drafting regular press releases, holding an annual tax credit seminar, and taking part in a new local event. With commission priorities organized and set, the plan can begin to develop as a document.

Do not be afraid to think outside the box—or budget. Even if an idea will take a lot of money and time, if it is in the plan, it may become possible to secure a grant in the future to see it accomplished.

7. Develop a Timeline

The next essential step in the process is developing a timeline for implementing the plan. This work becomes easier once organizational priorities are set. Based on the priorities established, it is possible to organize activities on a timeline. Take into consideration the people-hours and budget needed for each activity as well. While there are numerous ways to construct a timeline, simple categories can be Existing (never forget to pat yourself on that back for what you are already doing), Immediate, One year, Two years, and Future (five or ten years). Referring to the plan each year when planning for the next assures that outreach and education activities will be budgeted for and accomplished.

8. Compile

Now that the commission and staff have goals, a target audience, a list of prioritized outreach and education activities, and a timeline for implementation, all of this information can be compiled into the plan. The plan can be a simple spreadsheet or a lengthy document, so long as it is organized and useable. Insert relevant graphics, such as examples of brochures or websites, as well as any relevant tables. A detailed plan will provide a clear picture of the organization's goals and how they will be met.

9. Implement, Share, and Review

After all of the hard work on planning, do not just put the document on a shelf! This plan is meant to be used, shared, and constantly updated. Implement the activities listed under immediate and feel the satisfaction of checking them off the list. Have the plan formally adopted by the commission and celebrate its completion. Bring the plan to yearly meetings for updates and think up new ideas for the plan over time. Remember to share the plan, especially with anyone who contributed through an interview, survey, or research.

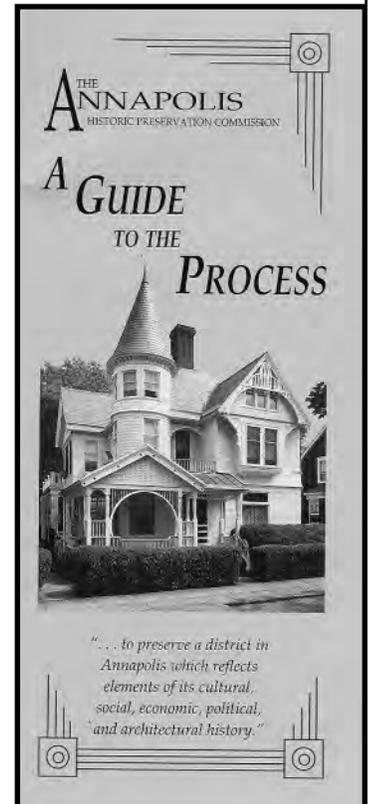
Recommendations for a good Outreach and Education Plan

After reviewing input from plans already in use and advice from practicing professionals with experience in outreach and education, the following recommendations have been developed for commissions interested in creating their own outreach and education plan. The recommendations are structured based upon the examples of organizational goals listed previously—more organized planning of outreach and education activities, stronger media relations, better educational materials and opportunities, and greater participation at local events—but are relevant to all outreach and education planning. The recommendations were abbreviated into the following categories: planning, media, education, and events.

Planning

Planning for preservation outreach and education in a formal way is critical, whether it is through a master plan, an action plan, or a yearly work plan. The plan must address the needs of the community and the commission, and be realistic given staff and budget limitations.

Advanced planning and assigning members to specific tasks can help keep the plan on track. Commissions should plan for more costly activities in advance to allow time to secure funding. Another critical element is updating the plan regularly as various elements are implemented and new needs arise.



Effective outreach requires good printed materials that familiarize applicants with the review process.

Photo courtesy of the author

Media

All relevant materials should be made available to the public. This can be done through websites and in print, by promoting the commission at local events, in the media, at community presentations, in schools, within the local government, and by any other means possible. Commissions and staff should think outside the box when considering locations to distribute material. All information should be easy to find, easy to use, and highly detailed.

Create a website that educates citizens about historic preservation through a wide variety of written material, such as histories, design guidelines, and plans, as well as images including photographs, drawings, and maps. Utilize technology such as video, audio, and blogging capabilities. An interactive site can allow residents to post information and images of local historic properties and can assist in engaging the public in historic preservation. Staff or commissioners should maintain the site and take responsibility for moderating any interactive features.

Commissions should keep citizens up to date on the variety of historic preservation resources available to them. Provide technical material and assistance when and wherever possible. Maintain useful print and online resources, as well as contractors' lists, organizations that assist preservation projects, and examples of past projects for interested parties.

Education

Integrate historic preservation into the lives of community members by teaching the importance of preserving community heritage along with historic preservation goals, benefits, and techniques to students in grade school, college and graduate students, craftsmen, architects, contractors, planners, politicians, realtors, bankers, the media, historic property owners, and any other interested parties. Develop a curriculum for schools and educational opportunities for students of all ages, or provide assistance so local educators can create lesson plans based on historic resources.

Inform local government officials about the work of the commission on a regular basis. Be sure to educate them about how preservation can benefit the communities they serve and address many larger social, economic, and planning issues.

Develop a proactive media campaign that tackles the negative perception of commissions and highlights the many benefits historic preservation has provided a community through time. Letters to the editor can be an effective tool to address problems when they arise, and to keep the media apprised of the good work preservation is doing. Take advantage of opportunities to appear on public access cable TV programs, and other media outlets.

Create strong partnerships with local, state, and national historic preservation and preservation-related organizations to assist in providing technical information, funding, advocacy, and support for outreach and education goals. Along with partnering, take advantage of opportunities to network with and learn from other preservation commissions by attending state and national conferences, attending commission meetings in other jurisdictions, and co-sponsoring preservation events.

Provide seminars and workshops to help owners of historic properties and professionals learn proper techniques and understand the procedural aspects of historic preservation. Also discuss the economic incentives for doing historic preservation work. Develop hands-on workshops and classroom seminars on a wide variety of topics and hold them on a regular basis. Strive to familiarize local craftsman, homeowners, and professionals with

proper preservation techniques. Partner with local hardware stores and other companies to raise the profile of an event and provide funding and tools. Inviting banks and developers to seminars about economic incentives can show these companies how preservation can work for their business and the community. Publish information about these events in the local media and leave information with local businesses.

Events

Hold events that emphasize historic preservation efforts in the community, including award ceremonies, dedications for preservation projects, and local events during National Historic Preservation Month.

Utilize local historic resources as education and outreach tools by hosting events, walking tours, exhibits, and other public activities that demonstrate the importance of historic preservation and the critical role the commission plays in protecting these resources.

Demonstrate how historic preservation ties into the broader ethics of maintaining a healthy environment and reducing sprawl. Explain how the goals and work of preservation are environmentally friendly and encourage re-use of old structures rather than the construction of new ones. Publish or provide information about how saving and using cultural resources can help preserve natural resources around Earth Day to draw particular attention to these connections. Finally, don't forget that commission meetings are events and work to make participating in them a positive experience. Help residents understand that the approval process protects the investment they have made in their neighborhood along with their responsibilities to protect their historic resource. Provide applicants with procedural information about hearings so they can be prepared should they need to appear before the commission. Hold pre-hearing meetings with applicants and invite new residents to commission meetings. At the commission meetings, try to maintain a positive atmosphere to avoid the notion that the commission is unnecessary, bureaucratic "red tape."

These recommendations are only a starting point for developing for a strong outreach and education program. The most important concept is to be proactive. Develop a plan, implement it, and bring historic preservation to your community rather than waiting for the community to come to you. A plan won't eliminate all of the challenges, but it will ensure that your commission and community are ready to meet them when they arise.



Make effective use of the World Wide Web to reach a broad audience.
Photo courtesy of the author



GET YOUTH INVOLVED

to Build a Better Preservation Ethic – and Nation

By Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA

A wise person once noted that the best time to plant a tree is 50 years ago. The next best time is today. The national historic preservation community has always depended upon volunteers and local action to preserve America's heritage. We need to get those acorns that we should have planted a half-decade ago planted now.

The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions is uniquely situated to partner with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation (National Trust), federal agencies, SHPOs and other key players in historic preservation to reinvigorate the preservation community by bringing more young people into the field. As the 40th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) approached in October 2006, the ACHP thought it was a good time to take stock and see what worked well and where improvements were necessary.

A series of panels were held prior to the anniversary, and participants gathered in New Orleans, Louisiana, in

October 2006 at the Preserve America Summit. Preserve America is a federal initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our cultural and natural heritage. Part of the 2006 summit was a contingent of young people, organized and sponsored by what was then known as The History Channel's (now officially known as HISTORY) *Save Our History* project, who were considering historic preservation issues from their perspectives and informing Summit participants and the larger preservation community. (see <http://www.preserveamerica.gov/youthsummit.html>)

Subsequent to the Summit and informed by all the panels that studied various aspects of the nation's preservation

Prior to the Preserve America Summit in New Orleans in October 2006, an expert panel of educators and historic preservationists held a two-day brainstorming session in Detroit to discuss how to create a stronger and more widespread national preservation ethic. That panel's recommendations, melded with findings from other groups, led to the recommendation to work across the national preservation community to bring more youth into preservation activities with strategies such as youth summits and service learning partnerships with local schools.

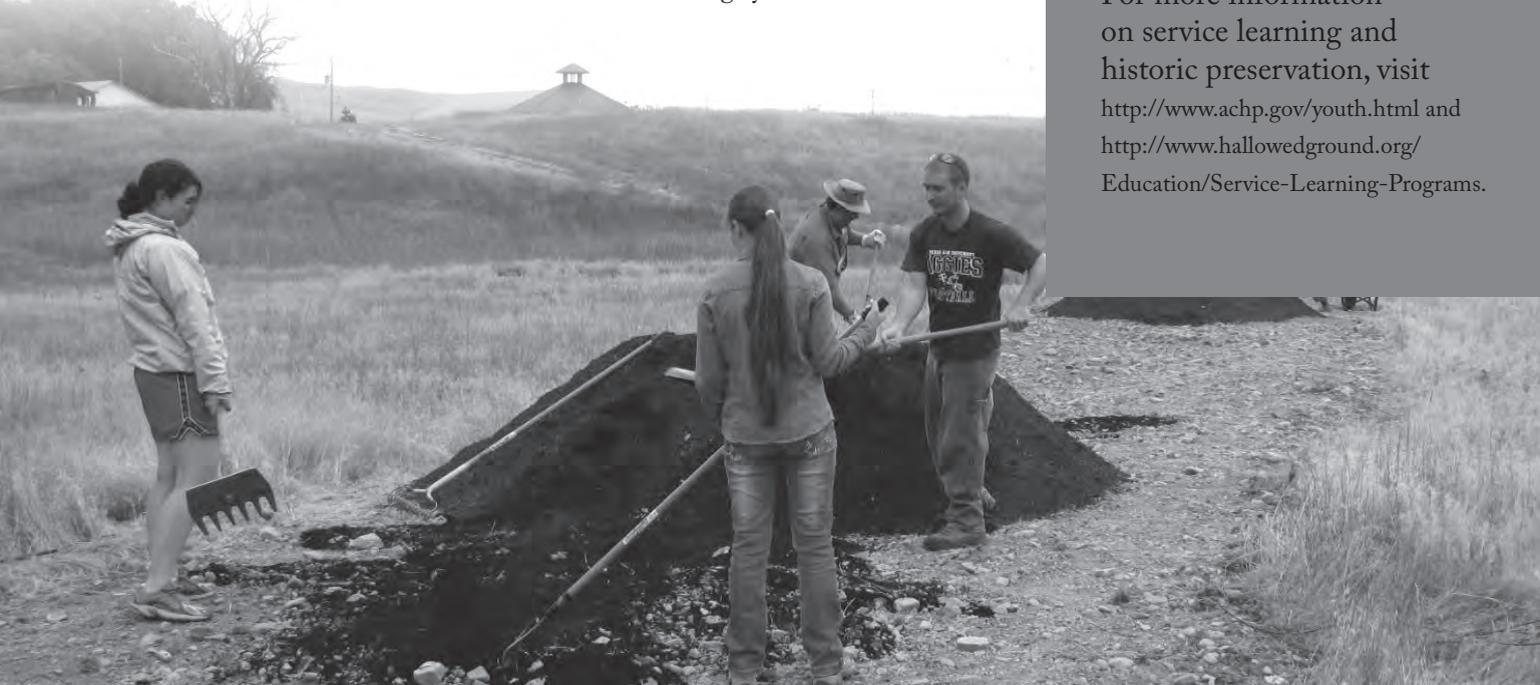


infrastructure under NHPA, a number of recommendations emerged. One of them is critically important to the future of historic preservation. It was: *Engage youth in historic preservation by promoting programs that involve them in hands-on preservation activities and through the possible establishment of an ongoing youth summit as part of the Preserve America initiative.*

At the Preserve America Summit and in subsequent programs the ACHP has participated in and used as models, the inspiration, energy, and insight of fully engaged youths has been transformative.

The ACHP has promoted several paths to involve young people in historic preservation. One has been to urge federal agencies to engage young people in their youth programs (notably the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture) as well as other preservation and affiliated entities such as the National Trust, the Small Museum Association, the American Association for State and Local History, the Partnership for the National Scenic and Historic Trails, State Historic Preservation Officers and many others. The ACHP recommends using programs such as Service Learning in partnership with local community schools. Another approach has been to stimulate a series of local youth summits involving partnerships with preservation organizations, federal, state, and local government entities, schools, and others to help with preservation projects. The aim of these efforts is to create a more diverse and younger group of Americans who are involved in historic preservation activities, volunteerism, public service, and create a wider national historic preservation ethic.

While this sounds like a great centralized strategy, actually these educational and involvement efforts are all largely local in nature.



At Harper's Ferry Middle School, WV, a project by 70 students who created six video podcasts on the eve of the 150th anniversary of John Brown's Raid in 2009 was unveiled by the partnership that created the effort that resulted in student-to-student interpretive materials for Harper's Ferry National Historical Park. The ACHP, the National Park Service, the middle school, and the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership (JTHGP) worked on the project. The JTHGP is working on similar Of the Student, By the Student, For the Student efforts to create interpretive materials and involve youths from many other school districts and 13 National Park Service units contained within the JTHGP Heritage Area.

The ACHP is participating with other federal agencies and their partners to integrate programs such as service learning and youth summits for preservation into this energetic and effective effort.

For more information on youth summits, see <http://coloradoyouthsummit.org/> and <http://historiccorps.org/>.

Service learning is an effective and efficient strategy that can begin as early as kindergarten. For more information on service learning and historic preservation, visit <http://www.achp.gov/youth.html> and <http://www.hallowedground.org/Education/Service-Learning-Programs>.



Young intern participants in the 12th Conference on National Scenic and Historic Trails helped accomplish three service projects at Traveler's Rest National Historic Landmark along the Lolo Trail, where the Lewis and Clark Expedition camped on both its westward and eastward journeys. The actual campsite was bisected by this gravel road, which was replanted in native vegetation. The Lewis and Clark Expedition camped in military fashion, and its main camp fire was placed just to the left of the person at the far left of the picture.

Fortunately for the preservation community and the ACHP, the Obama Administration has launched an effort called America's Great Outdoors to bring the benefits of authentic experience of natural and cultural places to the nation's youth. Many exciting things are taking place and the program is evolving at a rapid pace. America's Great Outdoors is particularly interested in reaching younger Americans who are more urban and less readily acquainted with the nation's rich heritage regarding public lands, stewardship, conservation and cultural and historic preservation than the generations that came before them. The effort seeks to engage, employ, and educate young people (see www.youthGO.gov).

These are grassroots activities that depend upon volunteers forming alliances with federal agencies, natural and cultural preservation nonprofits, and local schools to create opportunities for place-based learning, stewardship, and civic participation. Preservation commissions are natural partners in spurring such efforts, since the volunteer stewards that characterize commission memberships are precisely the sort of people who are likely to initiate these projects.

The ACHP has discovered that involving youth in educational and volunteer activities is one of those cases of a rising tide lifting all boats. Organizations involved primarily in environmental or natural conservation activities benefit historic preservation by their efforts. Preservation commissioners find that working to introduce youth to historic preservation also offers the benefits of civic involvement, community pride, and serves as a conduit to interesting young people in the professions typically occupied by preservation commissioners. Plus, partnering with local schools

inevitably involves parents and a larger segment of the community in historic preservation matters.

The natural and cultural preservation communities realize that they need to connect with and include more young people to create a stronger preservation ethic that will not only endure but grow. You could say that the necessity of bringing young people to historic preservation is somewhat parallel to the first rule of initiating Section 106 consultation: It needs to start as early as possible in order to be most effective and useful.

For those who may not be familiar with Section 106, in a nutshell it is a law that requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects carried out, approved, or funded by them on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places (historic properties), and provide the ACHP with a reasonable opportunity to comment on them. While Section 106 requires federal agencies to attempt to negotiate measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effects of their undertakings on historic properties, it does not mandate in favor of preservation.

Oversight of the Section 106 process under the NHPA is the bread and butter activity of the ACHP. There are approximately 100,000 federal undertakings that go through the Section 106 processes every year. The vast majority are handled by State Historic Preservation Officers on the state or local levels, often with commissioners or review boards involved either by direct involvement or consultation and education. Most 106 cases are relatively routine and/or do not pose significant threats to historic places, and never need the direct attention of the ACHP membership. However, several hundred cases do directly involve the ACHP staff each

The Colorado Preserve America Youth Summits initiated by Colorado Preservation, Inc., that have spread to other states, done in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and National Park Service, were recognized by the ACHP as exemplary ways of involving youth in historic preservation activities. Participating in the award ceremony were (from left) Harris Sherman, Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, Department of Agriculture; Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior; Ann Pritzlaff, ACHP member who initiated the summits; and Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, ACHP Chairman.



year. Further, when a Section 106 process involves a National Historic Landmark, the federal agency leading the process must notify the National Park Service and may be required to minimize harm to that landmark.

Among the more significant current contemporary preservation concerns that are reflected in Section 106 cases are downsizing city centers and sustainability issues, conventional and emerging alternative energy development and related transmission corridors, and how federal agencies handle government-to-government consultation with Indian tribes. In fact, the ACHP has created a special section, the Office of Native American Affairs, because this issue and related concerns like dealing with Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) are of such key importance to the federal government and the larger preservation community in the USA. Section 106 is an essential and important tool for local communities.

The NHPA itself resulted in 1966 from widespread local concern that federal activities – notably highway construction and urban renewal – were heedlessly destroying too many important historic resources. The U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Trust, with local historic preservation partners across the nation, were instrumental in urging Congress to enact the legislation to “stop the federal bulldozer.” Section 106 is an important tool that continues to function in this way.

The ACHP would be pleased to work with you in starting up some of these youth involvement efforts in your communities, and we would be pleased to provide any additional information you might desire. The best place to start is at our Web site, www.achp.gov. Or directly contact Bruce Milhans, communications coordinator, at bmilhans@achp.gov, 202-606-8513, to reach the right person at the ACHP to provide the information you need.

The ACHP has recently published an updated “Protecting Historic Properties: A Citizen’s Guide to Section 106 Review” that is available to local preservation interests. It is available at the ACHP Website at: <http://www.achp.gov/docs/CitizenGuide.pdf>.

The ACHP offers Section 106 training tailored for differing needs and professional backgrounds several times a year. The class schedule is available at <http://www.achp.gov/106select.html>.

Other useful materials about Section 106, and its regulations, can be found at: <http://www.achp.gov/work106.html>.

FORUM 2012
NORFOLK, VA
July 18-22

TOPICS + SPEAKERS!

SEE PAGE 17 FOR DETAILS
Call for Topics and Speakers
deadline is August 5, 2011

National Alliance of Preservation Commissions 8th Biennial Forum

Wade Broadhead is a Planner for the City of Pueblo focusing on the Preservation Commission for five years as well as Bicycle and Walkability Coordinator. Wade grew up in Palatine, Illinois, and received his B.A. in Geology / Anthropology from Western State College of Colorado in Gunnison. After seven years in the world of federal and contract archaeology and GIS he switched gears and went to the 'dark side' of planning and urban preservation, where he found his calling. He will be speaking about creative ways to weave preservation into planning at the Four Corners Planning Conference in Santa Fe and the National Preservation Conference in Buffalo this year. Wade's submission was delayed while he was welcoming his first daughter, Elowyn, into the world.

Advocacy through Action: Lessons from Pueblo, Colorado

by Wade Broadhead

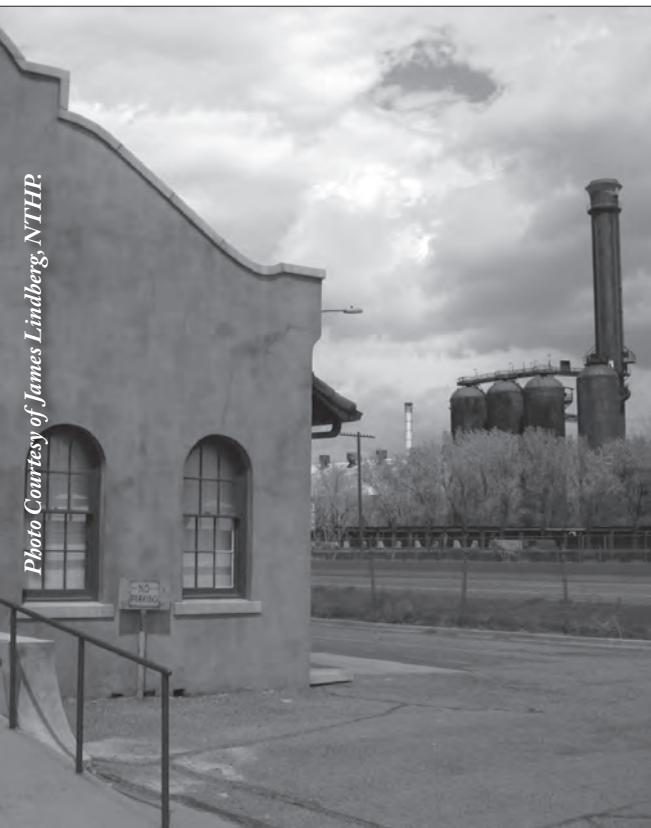


Photo Courtesy of James Lindberg, NTHP

Pueblo's iconic "Steel City" image of the Bessemer Historical Society's Nationally Renowned Steelworks Museum and the last remaining portions of the Blast Furnace across the interstate.

Situated at the confluence of the Fountain Creek and Arkansas River lies the town of Pueblo, Colorado (population 106,000). Dubbed “The Steel City,” Pueblo has one of the largest operating steel mills west of the Mississippi and a population of 50% third-fourth generation Hispanic. The city has a strong Euro-Hispanic working class culture that is part Pittsburgh, part Denver and part Northern New Mexico. This eclectic socio-economic mélange makes for a challenging and rewarding place to conduct preservation activities. Despite a long tradition of preservation in Pueblo through local societies and museums, a City Historic Preservation Commission was not created until 2003 after the loss of an architecturally significant elementary school. Although the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was initially staffed by a dedicated planner without preservation experience, he created good guidelines and in 2005 Pueblo achieved Certified Local Government status. I took over as staff for the commission in 2006-7 and immediately encountered among commission members a high level of frustration about a lack of attention by the City Council and their inability to achieve what I call “relevance.” I noticed this frustration was shared by many small and midsized cities throughout Colorado. How we addressed this challenge, how we overcame it to create successful outcomes, and how we took it on the road is the subject of this article.

With a part-time staff and no budget, creating relevance for the HPC was no small challenge. Luckily, Pueblo has access to some powerful local partnerships that have promoted the municipal preservation program and allowed it to become relevant in an economically challenged city, which could just as easily forgo a preservation program in exchange for better code enforcement or a new sign code. Pueblo has a local nonprofit advocacy group, Historic Pueblo, Inc., that raises

money and financially supports the commission in the form of a cash match for grants and a successful plaque program – bronze plaques are purchased for all landmarks. In addition, Colorado has access to a magnificent CLG program which has enjoyable and thorough training as well as a robust, no-match grant program for survey and education programs. I've noticed city councils are always supportive of programs – like those funded with CLG grants – that cost the

and preservation were needed to guide efforts toward a broader relevance to city officials, staff members with the Urban Renewal Authority of Pueblo (URAP), and citizens facing challenges in their neighborhoods. The second significant observation was that in a working-class town, actions speak louder than words (or interpretive plaques and pamphlets), and in a land of private-property rights, outreach, engagement and education are crucial to excite the population.

landforms; therefore its neighborhoods developed densely (for the West) and in a manner more like Midwestern cities. This neighborhood character gives the city its appeal and is how people relate to their built environment. Also, nothing seems to be more meaningful to citizens than city officials taking a genuine interest in the history of their neighborhood with the purpose of using that knowledge to make smarter planning decisions.

Our solution was the NHE Program, which provides historic contexts to each neighborhood. Unlike most relatively dry historic-context reports, Pueblo teamed with a consultant, Adam Thomas of Historitecture, whose contexts are more like exquisitely written historical novels than bureaucratic technical reports. The consultant's passion for historic neighborhoods, paired with that of our staff, showed people that the city was genuinely interested in their welfare and positive development. We started with a Northside context and survey, which resulted in our first residential historic district,

HPC's Non-Profit Partner - Historic Pueblo, Inc.

Historic Pueblo, Inc. (HPI) is a non-profit organization that was founded in 2003 after the city adopted the Pueblo Historic Preservation Ordinance. The ordinance was established to preserve and protect historic structures and sites. No city funding was available with the preservation ordinance, nor was there an established organization to promote the actions that could be taken as a result of the ordinance. Thus HPI was created by citizens interested in promoting and fostering the vision of historic preservation.

HPI's Mission Statement
Historic Pueblo, Inc. is a non-profit corporation whose responsibility it is to educate and promote ideas, programs, actions and plans to enable our community to respect and preserve our unique architectural resources and cultural heritage.
HPI works to foster greater understanding of the importance of historic preservation for the future growth of our city based on an understanding and appreciation of our past.

2009 Landmark Plaque Ceremony / May 11, 2009 / City Park Rides / 1 National Register Plaque / 25 Landmark Plaques / 3 Resource Plaques



2009 Historic Home Tour / October 4, 2009 / 502 Visitors / 7 Homes / \$7,381 generated for LOCAL preservation efforts!



Other HPI Events in 2009:
Gus' Tavern Tour - February
Gus's Coor's Tavern Tour - March
Central High School Tour - April
Presentation Walking Tour of Corona Park - May
Rosemont Museum Tour - June
Edgar Allan House Tour - July
Orman Adams Mansion Tour and Membership Drive - December



2009 Annual Report of the Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission Page 3

A page of the HPC's 2009 Annual Report presented to City Council describing the relationship to, and help from, Historic Pueblo Inc.

city nothing. Finally, at a more subtle level, the city management and administration allows staff flexibility to pursue grants and to work with the public on designations.

The key to generating a higher profile for historic preservation was that my role as “current planner” and HPC staff allowed me to spot places where history

Once excited, citizens come to you for preservation programs that have relevance to them. With that perspective, we created the Neighborhood Heritage Enhancement (NHE) Program almost by accident.

Pueblo was originally formed from four towns, combined in 1894 and separated by two rivers and a couple of unique



Members of the Planning, Urban Renewal, and Latino Chamber showing off locally produced East Side pride shirts at the 2011 Cinco De Mayo parade. The white shirt “Rich in History” (worn by the author) was based on the historic context cover.



A homeowner talks about his 1880s residence during a South Pueblo Architectural Walking Tour sponsored by a CLG grant and woven into a Public Health 'Walk N Roll' Campaign, May 2011. The study fascinated locals by determining Pueblo had a nationally significant, garden-style suburb design platted in 1872.

and moved to our East Side neighborhood, which is 70-80% Hispanic. Seeing widespread disinvestment, staff noted that URAP was setting its sights on the area of 14,000 people and quickly moved to get a historic context report completed of the area (using CLG funds). It was so well received that the city reprinted almost 100 copies, which were both donated and sold to benefit the neighborhood association. Once URAP began a planning effort there, everyone on the redevelopment team received a copy of the study, and neighborhood leader Eva Montoya pushed to rename the neighborhood "The Historic East Side," which was adopted. The area's councilman donated copies of the study to local high schools, where they were used to teach students about designation and history. This simple context began to address long-standing issues of racism, post-La Raza politics, and mid-century city

corruption, which had distanced the city and neighborhood residents.

The City is now finishing its South Side neighborhood context, while adding walking tours to the outreach program, and through the support of the CLG program and the State Historic Fund has obtained grants for the last historic charter neighborhood and even all of its postwar developments. Historic Pueblo Inc. has provided a cash match for the grants, meaning the city has received over \$150,000 in preservation grants at no cost; those are the types of actions city councils notice. As the saying goes: "Nothing succeeds like success."

The HPC, through staff, then began a series of intergovernmental exchanges, first with Colorado Springs, then with Denver and Greeley, and even providing some information for tiny Colorado towns without ordinances like Saguache and Fountain. In most cities, people engaged with historic preservation shared the frustration about not being taken seriously or appreciated by elected officials. I always ask them what they have done, and whether it was relevant to what city officials and citizens needed. In turn, I have benefited from attending other city's HPC meetings, in one case changing the content of my staff report and finding crucial information about an architect for the East Side's first local landmark. We now have a nascent regional network enhanced by official CLG training and expanded by

these personal relationships and experiences from visiting staff and commissioners. I am now on the state's Preservation Plan Implementation Team, working on a statewide speaker's bureau tasked to exchange information, experiences, failures, and successes.

Groups like the National Trust of Historic Preservation and statewide nonprofits have always built networks, but the preservation commissions themselves need to build networks and relationships and share stories of the dirty work of implementing preservation activities that non profits sometimes don't always understand. Nothing proves your relevance and your dedication to citizens and councils more than action. Forging projects which create "preservation commodities" that citizens and officials can see, touch, read, share, and use to further their goals will speak for themselves.



The East Side's First Local Landmark (soon to be National) and most iconic church and focal point constructed in 1926. Inter-commission exchanges led to the discovery of the location of the original plans which were housed in Colorado Springs. The landmarking of this community symbol resulted in numerous newspaper stories and thanks during a mass to city staff, Historic Pueblo, Inc., and community leaders.



DECATUR, GEORGIA:

By Regina Brewer

Putting a Positive Spin on Preservation

Regina Brewer, MPH, is the Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Decatur in Georgia. She lives in the City of Atlanta in the local historic district of Inman Park and served on the Atlanta Urban Design Commission for 7 years. She currently serves as the President of Easements Atlanta and serves on the board of directors for Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions and the Metropolitan Public Art Coalition.

The City of Decatur is 4.2 square miles and has approximately 10,000 structures. In 2009, the City Commission budgeted to have a city-wide historic resource survey completed in response to a failed controversial effort to create a local historic district in the Oakhurst Neighborhood. The question the residents kept asking was, “How do you know this is historic?” The survey was a partial response to that question. Using the standards and procedures established by the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, Historic Preservation Division and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, the survey concluded that more than half of Decatur’s structures were contributing and it also identified 13 potential National Register and local historic districts. The city had the data but needed to educate its residents and property owners on why these structures were historic and why the City needed to identify them.

The role of a preservation commission and its staff is not solely to review and approve changes to structures located in local historic districts (although for some jurisdictions like the City of Atlanta, the sheer number of applications consumes nearly 100% of their staff resources). Public outreach and education are vital to successful preservation efforts, whether creating National Register districts or taking on the local designation of historic resources.

In 2007, Decatur determined it needed a dedicated staff person to create a preservation ethic for the city. Decatur has always valued its historic downtown and the leafy, bungalow neighborhoods, but the knowledge was intrinsic, not necessarily recognized as “preservation.” Hiring a professional trained in historic preservation was a key component to creating a branded program that established preservation in a positive framework as something that benefits the city in terms of environmental, economic, and quality of life initiatives.

Education was the first step to creating consensus to support preservation. The Decatur Old House Fair was held in 2008 (partially funded by a generous CLG grant from the GA SHPO) and is one of the few events of its kind in the country. Education seminars at the fair included researching houses, determining style, applying for preservation tax incentives, restoring wood windows (a must!), preserving historic landscapes, installing storm windows, improving energy efficiency, and creating a maintenance plan for old homes. There were



Wood window hands-on workshops at the Decatur Old House Fair let owners try their hand at re-glazing.



The Brick Store, a nationally known microbrew pub, occupies one of the turn-of-the-century retail buildings on the historic square.

over 30 exhibitors and preservation-related nonprofit organizations. The event had an extremely successful first year and is now in its fourth year with sessions such as “Plaster Repair” and “Restoring Wood Floors and Trim” being added. The tickets to the event are reasonably priced and the location is accessible by all forms of public transportation. The website (www.decaturoldhousefair.com) is up continuously and the presentations are available online, as is the program which lists all the exhibitors and local/national preservation resources. Residents have been given the tools they need to restore, rehabilitate, and repair their historic houses.

The City also instituted a “Homeowner’s Night,” which allows only homeowners to come in between 6 and 8 p.m. to talk to the Planning Director, Building Code Official, Zoning and Permitting Technician, and the Preservation Planner about their project. Since 50% of the homes in Decatur are historic, homeowners are also given information on preservation tax credits. In Georgia, the residential incentives are significant, including a maximum tax credit of \$100K and an 8 ½ year property tax freeze on the unimproved assessed value. At each Homeowner’s Night, more residents came in looking for information on these credits. Suddenly, preservation became interesting! Additionally, Planning Department staff members have been ‘indoctrinated’ to these credits and continuously refer inquiries to the Preservation Planner regardless of their property is located in a local district. In 2010, four projects were approved for the tax credit program in Decatur, which is sizable given the number of residents and buildings.

The City also looked carefully at the list of potential National Register Districts and determined that the historic downtown should be nominated to the National Register as an important step in creating the preservation ethic. Again, turning to the Georgia CLG Grant Program, Decatur received a \$6,000 grant to hire a consultant to write the nomination. Public meetings were held to inform the commercial property owners about the value of being listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Some were skeptical, but most were convinced. In January 2010, the Downtown District was approved for listing in the Georgia Register of Historic Places and is currently under consideration by the National Register staff in Washington DC. This nomination facilitated the renovation of three storefronts in the historic square that will become the new home of



Renovation of three historic storefronts on the downtown square to become the new home of the Cakes and Ale Restaurant.



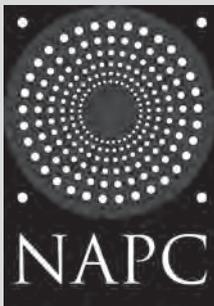
The Ponce Court Neighbors group photo before carpooling to the National Register Review Board Hearing.

the Cakes and Ale Restaurant, a national award-winning restaurant. Utilizing Federal and State tax incentives will give the property owners and restaurant owners \$660,000 in credits and savings. Now all the commercial property owners are very supportive of creating National Register Districts for small commercial nodes throughout the city. The City also utilized the local preservation program at Georgia State University for student internships. One of the interns prepared the nomination for the Ponce de Leon Court neighborhood to the National Register. Ponce Court is already a local district, but a few of the homes in this small district needed substantial rehabilitation and were perfect candidates for the preservation tax credits. Public meetings were held and the owners were very supportive of the nomination. In fact, they car pooled to the National Register Review Board Hearing and took a group photo next to the historic pine trees in the district.

The City has also become a leader in Georgia for creating a city-wide program on energy efficiency and sustainability. The recommendations for this program encourage the residents to restore their old windows, to use high-quality storm windows, and to insulate and repair rather

than replace and send building materials to the landfill. Decatur residents now talk about “embodied energy costs” in their blogs.

Decatur now has a strong preservation ethic despite not having created a local historic district since 2006. The property owners now know why preservation matters. It matters not only because they embrace a “greener” and more sustainable way of life, or because they value their sense of place; it also matters in dollars and cents. In 2010, the GA SHPO commissioned PlaceEconomics to determine the impact of preservation on the Georgia Economy. The results of the study (http://www.gashpo.org/Assets/Documents/Economic_impact_study.pdf) were not surprising to preservationists but certainly shocked some folks in the State Capitol. In the last decade, preservation projects such as those in Decatur resulted in over 10,000 jobs and \$420 million in household income, and spurred 117,000 jobs in heritage tourism. All of these factors can be seen in Decatur as a result of education and outreach in a collaborative effort by its city employees, its elected officials, and its residents.



Join NAPC-L

NAPC-L is the only national listserv for local preservation commissions.

NAPC-L gives you access to local commission members, staff, and others across the United States.

*Access to NAPC-L
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To join NAPC-L, simply send an e-mail to napc@uga.edu, subject line: Join NAPC-L.

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Social Media Tips for Historic Preservation Commissions

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INTRODUCTION:

A growing number of historic preservation commissions are using social media (Web 2.0) applications to actively communicate with and engage their constituents. Social media is fast becoming a necessity for many historic preservation commissions to maintain an effective online presence in their communities. It provides an easy way to communicate general information and publicize important dates and times. Social media is a distinctive assortment of internet-based applications aimed at the transmission of information in multiple forms to a vast array of interested parties. It should be thought of as a means to create a self-supporting community to move an agenda forward.

Social media applications are beyond basic internet tools like e-mail, webpages and listservs, they actively engage users and visitors in the construction of their experience, rather than just passively absorb existing content. While there are many social media applications available (too many to list here) and each have a unique purpose, the list below highlights some of the more commonly used social media applications. For additional information about different social media applications refer to the resources section below.

APPLICATION TYPES:

- Twitter – Short-form messaging tool for online communication that enables listening and interacting to the communication of others in new ways. [www.twitter.com]
- Facebook – Hybrid of many Web 2.0 technologies which combines blogging, video and photo sharing applications to create virtual representations for others to interact with while enabling active and passive participation of visitors. [www.facebook.com]
- Foursquare – Geo-social networking tool that allows users to physically participate by visiting, attending and exploring a particular place or experience. [<https://foursquare.com>]
- YouTube – Forum for people to connect, inform, and discover original content about specific topics of interest. Enables users to watch and share original videos and comment and share with others. [www.youtube.com]
- Flickr – Publishes and organizes photos based on content, location or date. Requires a minimal investment of time and helps garner interest and promote learning opportunities. [<http://www.flickr.com>]

RESOURCES:

- Twitter – [<http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/>]
- Facebook – [<http://mashable.com/guidebook/facebook/>]
- Foursquare – [<https://foursquare.com/business/>]
- YouTube – [<http://www.youtube.com/nonprofits>]
- Flickr – [<http://www.flickr.com/tour/>]