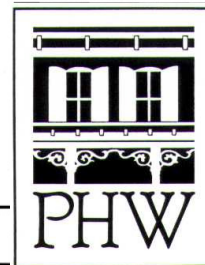


of Preservation Historic Winchester, Inc.



Spring 2006

Volume 29, No. 1

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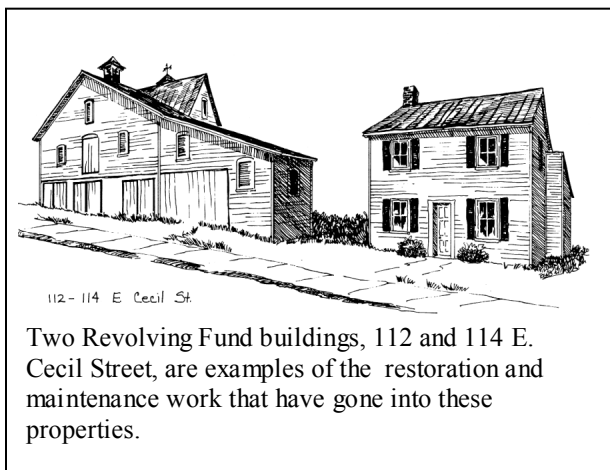
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A REVIEW OF THE REVOLVING FUND BY FRANKLIN WRIGHT

Your Board has undertaken a review of the Jennings Revolving Fund properties to ensure compliance with the restrictive covenants PHW previously obtained. You may recall that PHW, from 1975 to 1990, purchased 78 properties, sometimes undertook repairs, later sold, and in all cases attached covenants which generally restricted the buyer and subsequent owners from modifying the exterior or demolishing the structure without PHW approval, or selling the property without first offering it to PHW.



Two Revolving Fund buildings, 112 and 114 E. Cecil Street, are examples of the restoration and maintenance work that have gone into these properties.

Your Board undertook a review of the physical condition of the properties. Let me begin by saying the present Board members have all been awed and humbled by the important and difficult accomplishments of our predecessors through the Revolving Fund. We believe their efforts have established an important legacy for Winchester. These properties constitute an important care for the Historic District.

The good news is almost all of the 78 properties were found to be in good or satisfactory exterior repair.

Only five properties were thought to be in obvious need of repair or painting. And in the matter of a few months we have been able to obtain commitments of voluntary compliance concerning all of these properties. More importantly, in our negotiations with significant investors in the Historic District, we have obtained commitments to consult PHW on renovation plans for even non-Revolving Fund properties, as well as exploring the voluntary imposition of restrictive covenants on these properties when they are resold.

The recent booming real estate market has made it more difficult to find candidates within the Historic District for purchase by the Fund. For that reason, we are exploring:

- The voluntary adoption by property owners of covenants, perhaps in exchange for Façade Improvement Grants or loans;
- Seeking important properties outside the Historic District (as the Fund did on Potato Hill.)

The Board welcomes your thoughts concerning these or other initiatives. You may contact any one of us to share your ideas. ♦

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ECONOMICS, SUSTAINABILITY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DONOVAN D. RYPKEMA

As we've heard all week, the theme of this conference [the 2005 National Trust Conference] is Sustain America: Vision, Economics, and Preservation. So I'd like to expand the vision of the relationship among those things – economics, sustainability, and preservation.

Too many advocates too narrowly define what constitutes sustainable development. Let me give you an example. Over a year ago in Boulder, Colo., a homeowner in a local historic district applied paint to his window sash and trim, and approval was given the same day. Two weeks later, the landmarks commission learned that the historic windows had all been removed – a clear violation of the local ordinance – and had been replaced with new windows. This was done by a contractor who claims to specialize in “ecologically sound methods” and bills himself as “Boulder’s greenest contractor.”

What, actually, was the impact of removing the windows? First, from an environmental perspective:

1. The vast majority of heat loss in homes is through the attic or uninsulated walls, not windows.
2. Adding just three and one-half inches of fiberglass insulation in the attic has three times the R factor impact as replacing a single pane window with no storm window with the most energy efficient window.
3. Properly repaired historic windows have an R factor nearly indistinguishable from new, so-called “weatherized” windows.
4. Regardless of the manufacturers’ “lifetime warranties,” 30 percent of the windows being replaced each year are less than 10 years old.
5. One Indiana study showed that the payback period through energy savings by replacing historic wood windows is 400 years. The Boulder house was built more than 100 years ago, meaning those windows were built from hardwood timber from old growth forests. Environmentalists go nuts about cutting down trees in old growth forests, but what’s the difference? Destroying those windows represents the destruction of the same scarce resource.

The point is this: Sustainable development is about, but not only about, environmental sustainability.

- Repairing and rebuilding the historic windows would have meant the dollars were spent locally instead of at a manufacturing plant. That’s economic sustainability, also part of sustainable development.
- Maintaining the original fabric is maintaining the character of the historic neighborhood. That’s cultural sustainability, also part of sustainable development.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

How does historic preservation contribute to the environmental responsibility component of sustainable development? Let’s start with solid waste disposal. In the United States we collect almost one ton of solid waste per person annually. Around a fourth of

the material in solid waste facilities is construction debris, much of that from the demolition of older and historic buildings.

We all diligently recycle our Coke cans. It’s a pain in the neck, but we do it because it’s good for the environment. A typical building in an American downtown is perhaps 25 feet wide and 120 feet deep. If we tear down that one small building, we have now wiped the entire environmental benefit from the last 1,344,000 aluminum cans that were recycled. We’ve not only wasted a historic building, we’ve wasted months of diligent recycling.

Driven in part by concerns for sustainable development, there is an emerging movement made up of planners, architects, landscape architects, and some developers. At the National Governors Association, they call it New Community Design. In the association’s publication – New Community Design to the Rescue – they establish a set of principles, and they are these:

- Mixed use
- Community interaction
- Transportation/walkability
- Tree-lined streets
- Open space
- Efficient use of infrastructure
- Houses close to the street
- Diverse housing
- High density
- Reduced land consumption
- Links to adjacent communities
- Enhances surrounding communities
- Pedestrian friendly

That list of principles is exactly what our historic neighborhoods are providing right now.

If we want to slow the spread of strip-center sprawl, we must have effective programs of downtown revitalization. Throughout America we have seen downtowns reclaim their historic role as the multifunctional, vibrant heart of the city. Downtown is where I do most of my work. I visit 100 downtowns every year of every size, in every part of the country. But I cannot identify a single example of sustained success in downtown revitalization where historic preservation wasn’t a key component of the strategy. Not one. Conversely, the examples of very expensive failures in downtown revitalization have nearly all had the destruction of historic buildings as a major element.

Next is the concept of embodied energy. I hadn’t paid much attention of embodied energy, not until oil hit \$70 a barrel. So I did a bit of research. Embodied energy is the total expenditure of energy involved in the creation of the building and its constituent materials. When we throw away a historic building, we simultaneously throw away the embodied energy incorporated into the

building. How significant is embodied energy? In Australia they've calculated that the embodied energy in their existing building stock is equivalent to 10 years of the total energy consumption of the entire country.

Razing historic buildings results in a triple hit on scarce resources. First, we are throwing away thousands of dollars of embodied energy. Second, we are replacing it with materials vastly more consumptive of energy. What are most historic houses built from? Brick, plaster, concrete, and timber – among the least energy consumptive of materials. What are major components of new buildings? Plastic, steel, vinyl, and aluminum – among the most energy consumptive of materials. Third, recurring embodied energy saving increase dramatically as a building's life stretches over 50 years.

ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITY

An underappreciated contribution of historic buildings is their role as natural incubators of small businesses. It isn't the Fortune 500 companies that are creating the jobs in America. Some 85 percent of all net new jobs are created by firms employing fewer than 20 people. One of the few costs firms of that size can control is occupancy costs – rents. In downtowns and in neighborhood commercial districts a major contribution to the local economy is the relative affordability of older buildings. It is no accident that the creative, imaginative, start-up firm isn't located in the corporate office "campus," the industrial park, or the shopping center – it simply cannot afford those rents. Historic commercial buildings play the natural business incubator role, usually with no subsidy or business of any kind.

I'm often introduced as a preservationist, but I'm really an economic development consultant. The top priorities for economic development effort are creating jobs and increasing local household income. The rehabilitation of older and historic buildings is particularly potent in this regard. As a rule of thumb, new construction will be half material and half labor. Rehabilitation,

on the other hand, will be 60 to 70 percent labor with the balance being materials. This labor intensity affects the local economy on two levels. First, we buy and HVAC system from Ohio and lumber from Idaho, but we buy the services of the plumber, the electrician, and the carpenter across the street. Further, once we hang the drywall, the drywall doesn't spend any more money. But the plumber gets a haircut on the way home, buys groceries, and joins the YMCA – each recirculating that paycheck within the community.

Many people think about economic development in terms of manufacturing, so let's look at that. In Oregon for every million dollars of production by the average manufacturing firm, 24.5 jobs are created. But that same million dollars in the rehabilitation of a historic building? Some 36.1 jobs. A million dollars of manufacturing output in Oregon will add, on average, about \$536,000 to local household incomes. But a million dollars of rehabilitation? About \$783,000.

The area of preservation's economic impact that's been studied most frequently is the effect of local historic districts on property values. It has been looked at by a number of people and institutions using a variety of methodologies in historic districts all over the country. The most interesting result is the consistency of the findings. By far the most common conclusion is that properties within local historic districts appreciate at rates greater than the local market overall and faster than similar non-designated neighborhoods. Of the several dozen of these analyses, the worst-case scenario is that housing in historic districts appreciates at a rate equivalent to the local market as a whole.

Donovan D. Rypkema is a principal in Place Economics, a Washington DC-based real estate consulting firm. "This article is excerpted and reprinted with the permission of National Trust Forum, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW Washington DC 20036, (202) 588-5053, www.nationaltrust.org." ♦



The Schroths' home at 112 S. Washington St. awaits patrons on the morning of the tour with a festive wreath and present-loaded sleigh.

HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR

PHW's 29th Annual Holiday House Tour, held on December 3 and 4, 2005, was one of the most successful tours in recent history. Approximately 630 visitors toured the five historic homes along and near Washington Street and browsed the Bough and Dough Shop's baked goods, fine crafts by local artisans, and fresh cuttings for wreaths and holiday trims. We sincerely thank all of the time and effort donated to the tour by the volunteers and homeowners who made this year so successful.

The tour is traditionally held the first weekend of December. Each year, the Holiday House Tour requires the services of over 75 volunteers. These opportunities include docents, decorators, musicians, and organizational leadership. PHW is also seeking overgrown berried holly, nandina, and magnolia trees to trim for our Bough and Dough Shop. PHW will send a crew to the property shortly before the house tour to do the work at no cost to you.

If you are interested in any of the above areas or have suggestions, please drop by the PHW office on the first floor of the Kurtz Bldg., or call the office at (540) 667-3577.



Preservation
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NEWS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ARCHITECTURAL TREASURE HUNT

To celebrate National Preservation Month this May, PHW and the Old Town Development Board, with special support from *The Winchester Star*, are co-sponsoring an architectural scavenger hunt on the Old Town Mall.

Enclosed in this newsletter is an entry form to the treasure hunt, featuring twelve buildings visible from Loudoun St. Locate the buildings featured and return your form to the PHW office for a chance to win a prize from a downtown merchant. Make this your excuse to dally along Loudoun Street and see preservation and economics in action. Full contest rules can be found on the entry form. ♦

PHW'S ANNUAL MEETING IN JUNE

The 42nd Annual Meeting of PHW is slated for the afternoon of Sunday, June 11. This year's historic location

will be the recently rennovated Old Frederick County Courthouse, now operating as a Civil War museum. We invite all our members to attend the lecture and awards presentation and to welcome new members to the Board. Watch for your invitation in the mail in late May. ♦

THIRD ANNUAL JOHN KIRBY JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Coalition for Racial Unity is co-sponsoring the jazz festival to revive the memory of one of Winchester's noted musicians. In addition to reviving the memory of John Kirby, an important figure in the development of swing jazz in the 1930's, the festival is also dedicated to the preservation of the Daniel J. Farrar Elks Lodge at 414 N. Kent St. This year, the event will be held on July 29, 2 to 8 p.m., at the Old Town Event Center, 403 S. Loudoun St. ♦

NEW BOARD MEMBER WALTER JACKSON HELM

Mr. Helm is a native of Winchester, VA. He recently returned to the United States and Winchester after a number of years working in banking and finance in Germany. He is now restoring a pre-Civil War home in the local historic district in Winchester. "Jack" has an abiding interest in American history, especially Civil War history, in the preservation of Civil War battlefields, in historic preservation in general, and in the interpretation of our nation's history. His family's home where he was raised recently celebrated its 200th birthday. Mr. Helm currently serves on the board of directors of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and Fort Collier Civil War Center, Inc.

ARE YOU A PHW MEMBER?

Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc., is a 501 © (3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting Winchester's architectural heritage. PHW depends on income from membership and contributions to achieve its goals. *All contributions above membership are tax deductible.* Join today by completing this form and returning it to PHW, 2 N. Cameron St., Winchester, VA 22601.



___ Individual \$25
___ Corporate \$100

___ Family/Business \$45
___ Other

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