



# Preservation *of* Historic Winchester, Inc.

Membership Newsletter

Fall 2018

Volume 41 No. 2

## 2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### CONTACT

*Phone*  
(540) 667-3577

*E-mail*  
phwinc.org@gmail.com

*Website*  
www.phwi.org

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## East Piccadilly and North Kent Development By Sandra Bosley

Over the summer, the PHW board, Preservation Virginia, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and concerned individuals sought to redirect a proposed development on the corner of East Piccadilly and North Kent Streets which would call for the demolition of three architecturally contributing buildings over 75 years of age, as well as several contributing younger buildings, and one structure outside the Historic District and Board of Architectural Review purview. While we were initially successful at the Board of Architectural Review and subsequently tried to redirect the plans to a compromise before the applicant appealed at City Council, we were unsuccessful in asking the applicant to work with us for a more historically-sensitive plan to retain at least the two most significant buildings at 206 N. Kent and 202 E. Piccadilly. As we expected, City Council overturned the Board of Architectural Review on all the appeals in September. We have spoken again several times to the applicant to try to secure reassurance 206 N. Kent at the very least could be retained, but we remain highly concerned about the fate of the James Barr house.

This pattern of development is extremely distressing, harkening back to the road paved with good intentions of the Urban Renewal heydays. While PHW is not opposed to development on this site, we are extremely concerned at the proposed loss of scale and continuity of the streetscape on North Kent negatively impacting the surrounding structures. As stated by the applicants, none of the buildings proposed for demolition could be termed structurally unsound. Demolition of these properties would likely be the first time structurally sound contributing buildings have been demolished instead of rehabbed as part of a larger redevelopment. These will be the first buildings lost not to neglect, wear, fire, or insects, but the almighty dollar.

Historic buildings are truly community assets in a historic district.

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As many preservationists have noted, the value in the historic district and a board of architectural review is not a peer-review of your proposed changes for your own house, but the knowledge your neighbor also is subject to the same peer review process and will not be able to do something bizarrely out of character that will negatively impact your own properties and those you enjoy. The system worked as intended for this proposal.

We hope this moment serves as a reminder why PHW exists, why we are a necessary organization, and why, even with our beautiful and thriving downtown, we cannot rest on our laurels and need to expand our focus to the North End. As we learned from our short research into this block, there is a rich story to be told from the houses in this neighborhood, primarily focused on the workers from the knitting and woolen mills, the railroad, and the mom and pop corner stores. Without the actual buildings to illustrate these stories, it would be useless for us to take walking tours from downtown conferences into this area, aside from the same cautionary tale we used last time in the loss of the Virginia Woolen Mill buildings. Cautionary tales are useful but depressing, especially when people come to these events to take back ideas on how to do better in their own communities.

**Here is how you can help us to make preservation a priority again in Winchester:**

- ◆ **Apply for vacant citizen board positions**, particularly the Board of Architectural Review, Board of Zoning Appeals, Economic Development Authority, Old Town Advancement Commission, and Planning Commission. As of the time of this article, there are three vacancies on the BZA, one vacancy on the EDA, four vacancies for OTAC, and two vacancies upcoming for Planning Commission. Applications may be submitted online for each board at <http://winchesterva.ig2.com/Citizens/Board>
- ◆ **Attend public meetings and make public comments** when necessary. A calendar of meetings is available here: <http://winchesterva.ig2.com/Citizens/calendar.aspx>
- ◆ **Join the PHW board and take on a specific project.** While we cannot add anyone to the board without a membership meeting, which we normally do at our annual meeting in May, we have up to 14 slots we could fill in a special meeting called at any time with proper notice. Please speak to our President Bruce Downing if you are interested in joining the board. We particularly need help to coordinate our outreach, special events, and Jennings Revolving Fund. We especially want to coordinate with North End residents for our long-range planning for the Jennings Revolving Fund.
- ◆ **Consider PHW for a bequest in your estate planning.** We have had several members name PHW as a recipient of funds after their passing, or for a memorial fund like the Jennings Revolving Fund. PHW is also empowered to receive real estate, which we could hold under our Jennings Revolving Fund. While our mission is focused on historic buildings, in the past we have received and/or swapped undeveloped land or new construction.
- ◆ **Keep your membership dues current.** Your financial support helps us keep the lights on so the office can be staffed with someone knowledgeable for issues relating to the historic district, working with BAR, finding specialty restoration services and products, or just finding out more history on old buildings. ◆

# Limestone Book Update

By Sandra Bosley

As part of Winchester's upcoming 275th commemoration in 2019 led by the Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, PHW has agreed to republish Winchester: Limestone, Sycamores & Architecture. As you may know, the book was first published in 1977 as we completed the first comprehensive architectural survey of what would become the Winchester National Register Historic District, slightly predating our Board of Architectural Review and coinciding with our Revolving Fund launch.

The text still reads true today—the good and bad, the history, the architecture. The photos are timeless, but as you may know, most of the originals in the printing process were lost, destroyed in a fire with our previous publisher. Assuring the reprint will be as high quality as we can may be the real challenge, as for most of the book we will need to work from scans of the original edition. Any image replacement will be as minimally invasive as possible and we will work to recreate the original shots by James Morrison if needed.

We are also planning to expand the list of contributing historic structures in the appendix to encompass the National Register District through the latest update in 2014, as well as officially include the index that was drawn up but not published for the original volume in addition to the later index to the image locations put together in 2010.

If you would like to join the publication review committee to help proofread and approve of any changes in the images or text, please let us know at 540-667-3577 or [phwinc.org@gmail.com](mailto:phwinc.org@gmail.com). We plan to work chapter by chapter in the review after Holiday House Tour. ♦



*Steps at the County Clerk's Office, by James R. Morrison*

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## Bough & Dough Shop Supplies Needed

PHW is accepting donations now through mid-November for gently used or unused shopping bags, bubble wrap, and foam packing sheets. Drop your donations off at the back porch of the Hexagon House, 530 Amherst St. You may tuck items between the back doors if no one is in the office when you stop by.

We are also accepting donations of freshly-cut greenery after Thanksgiving through the week of December 2. Please contact PHW at [phwincorg@gmail.com](mailto:phwincorg@gmail.com) or 540-667-3577 if you would like PHW volunteers to cut greenery for you. Greenery may be dropped off in the rear yard of the Hexagon House—you may prefer to do it before 10 AM or after 5 PM to lessen congestion in the parking lot during working hours.

Thank you! ♦



# Preservation of Historic Winchester

Hexagon House ♦ 530 Amherst St. ♦ Winchester, VA 22601

## NEWS

Fall 2018

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US Postage  
**PAID**  
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Winchester, VA

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Now-Nov. 15:** Drop off your gently used shopping bags, bubble wrap, and foam packing sheets at the Hexagon House, 530 Amherst St. You can tuck items between the back doors if no one is in the office.

**November 16-December 9:** Bough and Dough Shop at the Hexagon House. Over twenty artists and vendors will have a variety of high quality and unique handcrafted goods for you to browse during the Holiday House Tour season. Check out the artist line up at <http://www.phwi.org/hhtartisans.php>.

**December 1 and 2:** Daylight guided walking tours and site tours in the Fairmont, Peyton, and North Loudoun neighborhood. Look for more information and online tickets sales at <http://www.phwi.org/hht.php>

### ARE YOU A PHW MEMBER?



Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc., is a 501 (c)(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, 530 Amherst St., Winchester, VA 22601.

Individual \$30       Family/Business \$55  
 Corporate \$100       Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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