



STAFF REPORT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DATE: 10/26/11

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Report by Department of Planning regarding public outreach items

BACKGROUND

No relevant case history.

ANALYSIS

As of October 12, 2011, the *Historic Connection* newsletter has been sent to the Office of Communications for final printing and distribution by October 20, 2011.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

No action required.

BACKUP DOCUMENTS

- Fall 2011 *Historic Connection* newsletter.
- Article, "Lots of Scenery, History along Byway in Utah," Las Vegas Review Journal, September 18, 2011.
- Article, "Councilman, Activist Now Question Reopening of F Street," Las Vegas Review Journal, September 21, 2011.
- Article, "Cultural Affairs Department Going into 'Foster Care'," Las Vegas Sun, September 23, 2011.
- Article, "Retrace Nevada History along Old Spanish Trail," Las Vegas Review Journal, September 25, 2011.
- Article, "Nevada Magazine Marks 75 Years of Spreading the Word," Review Journal Capital Bureau, September 26, 2011.
- Article, "USS Nevada Bell Back in State's Historic Collection," Las Vegas Review Journal, September 28, 2011.
- Article, "The Mob Museum," Las Vegas Review Journal, October 10, 2011.
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions newsletter, *Alliance Review*, July-August 2011.
- Article, "Glamour, El Cortez Style," Vegas Seven, August 18, 2011.
- Article, "Eureka Serves as Quaint Diversion en Route to Elko," Las Vegas Review Journal, August 28, 2011.
- Article, "Lounge to Morph into Mob Bar Before Museum Opening," Las Vegas Review Journal, August 29, 2011.
- Article, "Downtown Looking Up for Restaurateurs," Las Vegas Review Journal, August 31, 2011.
- Article, "Plaza Set to Reopen Thursday After Massive Renovations," Las Vegas Review Journal, August 31, 2011.

CM

- Article, “Las Vegas’ Decatur Boulevard’s History Pulls from the Navy,” Las Vegas Review Journal, September 6, 2011.
- Article, “Las Vegas Secures \$5.5 Million for Mob Museum Construction” Las Vegas Review Journal, September 7, 2011.
- Article, “Mob Museum to Advance with Tax Credits,” Las Vegas Review Journal, September 7, 2011.
- Article, “Shakespeare Troupe Moving Downtown to Reed Whipple Center,” Las Vegas Review Journal, September 7, 2011.
- Article, “After 30 Years, Ethel M Celebrates its Sweet Sameness,” Las Vegas Sun, September 8, 2011.
- Article, “BLM, Volunteers Scheduled to Clean Up Sloan Rock Art Area,” Las Vegas Review Journal, September 13, 2011.
- Article, “Zappos CEO’s Purchase of First Friday Shocks Arts District Gallery Owners,” Las Vegas Weekly, September 13, 2011.
- Article, “Zappos Foursome Buying First Friday Arts Event,” Las Vegas Review Journal, September 13, 2011.
- Article, “Golden Gate Plan Expansion,” Las Vegas Review Journal, September 14, 2011.

HISTORIC & CONNECTION

A newsletter of the city of Las Vegas Department of Planning. The Historic Preservation Commission is dedicated to saving the city's legacy and heritage.

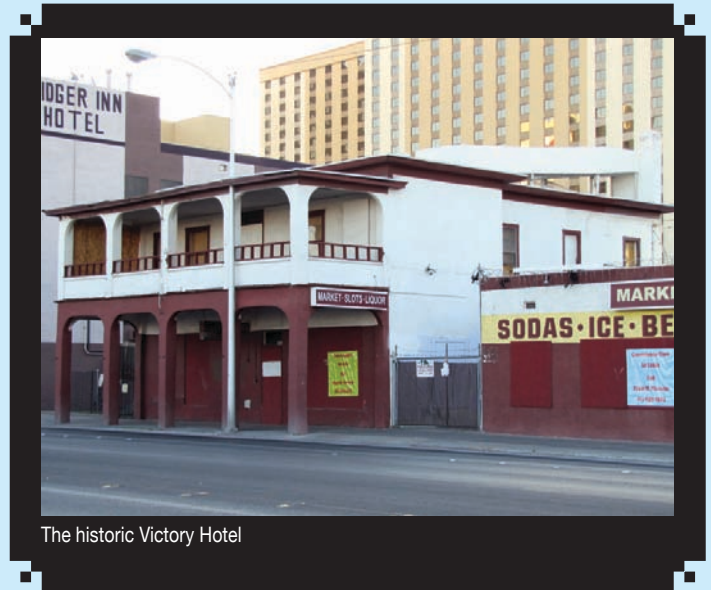
Threatened: Victory Hotel, 307 S. Main St.

by Courtney Mooney, historic preservation officer

The Victory Hotel is one of the oldest buildings in Las Vegas, and is the last local example of a small hotel built to serve patrons as they exited the train depot at Main and Fremont streets. The hotel opened in 1910 as the Lincoln Hotel. Built in a modest Mission Revival style prior to air-conditioning, the hotel featured an arched covered walkway and central hall with doors at each end which allowed air to circulate through the building.

The hotel's history is arguably one of the most colorful in Las Vegas. It was owned and operated by local businessman Dan Hickey who catered to the notoriously rowdy railroad workers and miners. Hickey himself had several scrapes with the law, usually for taking matters into his own hands. In 1913, Hickey shot A. J. Kelly, a railroad switchman and customer of the hotel, over an "unfortunate quarrel." Local legend claims that the Victory was once a brothel with sixteen rooms and a small bar. In 1933 an explosion injured a 22-year-old "entertainer." The cause of the explosion was never determined, causing speculation about a suicide attempt and a scorned lover.

Currently the Victory Hotel property and the property to the south are owned by Oakbrook Realty and Investment Company from Oakbrook, Ill. A sign on the front facade states that the entire block is for sale. The Victory Hotel property consists of the two-story hotel building facing South Main Street, two one-story hotel buildings toward the rear of the lot and a small storage building. A small market facing South Main St. shares the lot. The hotel buildings have been vacant since the property sold in 2008. The property was found to be eligible for the National Register in 1986; however, the property owners objected to the nomination and it was not listed.



The historic Victory Hotel

The Victory Hotel continues to be threatened by development pressures because of its location within the downtown area, so near to large-scale public and private developments such as the Las Vegas City Hall, Symphony Park, Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health and other office, retail and residential complexes. A creative solution is possible, as the lot is large enough to accommodate new development to the rear of the property while maintaining the 1910 hotel. If the property becomes listed on the National Register of Historic Places, historic tax credits and historic preservation grant opportunities may be available. The city of Las Vegas Historic Preservation officer looks forward to helping with any historic preservation endeavors. HC



In This Issue

Fall 2011

Vol. 14 • No. 2

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Introducing: Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman

Carolyn G. Goodman was sworn into office as the city's newest mayor on July 6, 2011, by her husband of 49 years and then current, three-term-limited mayor, Oscar B. Goodman. Her colorful swearing in ceremony carried the distinction of being the only known instance of a spouse succeeding a living spouse as mayor in the United States.

Having been born in New York City and having attended college in the Philadelphia area where she met her husband, the new mayor has long had a passion for history and historic building preservation. Unfortunately, Las Vegas tends to implode its history, so the mayor is particularly thrilled with

the efforts to preserve the city's first Federal Courthouse and the Historic Westside School. Both buildings hold a special place in the mayor's heart; her husband won his first court case in that first Federal Courthouse – now being turned into a mob museum – and the mayor worked with many of the alumni of the Historic Westside School when she worked in West Las Vegas for the Department of Labor shortly after arriving in Las Vegas in 1964.

Just as the cities of New York and Philadelphia are teaming with historic buildings, the mayor wants to see the same consideration given to historic buildings in Las Vegas. The preserva-



Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman attends a community meeting to discuss the rehabilitation of the Historic Westside School.

tion of the Fifth Street School School is another example of what is being accomplished to that end.

The mayor plans to stay very involved with the Mob Museum and Historic Westside School as she supports all of the efforts of the Historic Preservation Commission to preserve the city's history. HC

Biography Corner: Historic Preservation Commissioner Jarmilla McMillan-Arnold



HPC Commissioner Jarmilla McMillan-Arnold

Commissioner Jarmilla McMillan-Arnold is one of three new commissioners appointed to the HPC within the last six months. Ms. Arnold was appointed by former city of Las Vegas Mayor Oscar B. Goodman on March 2, 2011 to serve in Category 7 as a member-at-large. This appointment is one of several in which she serves her community.

Ms. Arnold is a native of Detroit, Michigan. Her father moved the family to West Las Vegas in 1955 to the then brand new Berkley Square neighborhood. At the time, West Las Vegas was the only area of town that would allow blacks to live, and Berkley Square was considered very upscale when the majority of homes in West Las Vegas still had outhouses. Later the family moved to the Twin Lakes Estates near Rancho Drive and Washington Avenue.

Ms. Arnold's father was Dr. James B. McMillan, the first black dentist in the state of Nevada. As president of the local chapter of the NAACP, Mr. McMillan was well-known in the community for his leadership in integrating the casinos and hotels on the Strip. He encouraged his family to be involved and "take note of history in the making." As a child, Ms. Arnold was fortunate to be surrounded by community leaders such as Dr. Charles West, the Hoggard family, Woodrow Wilson, Lubertha Johnson, Bob Bailey and Sarann Knight Preddy. She cites their influence and growing up as an African American during the 1950s and 1960s as inspiring her to get an education and become active in her community.

After studying psychology at Tennessee State A&I University, Ms. Arnold returned to Las Vegas. She is a recently retired compliance auditor with the state of Nevada Division of Industrial Relations. But it was her work as a substance abuse counselor for 10 years,

and her memberships in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Citizen Review Board (an independent oversight agency that reviews complaints of misconduct against Metro peace officers), the West Las Vegas Advisory Board, Historic Westside School Coordination Team, Southern Nevada Coalition of Concerned Women (an African American women's service club), and treasurer of her homeowner's association, that have been her most rewarding callings. Undoubtedly her years of experience as a government employee is invaluable to each organization, helping them navigate the bureaucracy to accomplish goals and objectives.

Ms. Arnold hopes to pass on her love of history and community service to her two granddaughters. She is busier than ever now, balancing family time with board activities. She definitely keeps the folks at the city on our toes! Please join us in welcoming Ms. Arnold to the Historic Preservation Commission. HC

HP Update:

Historic Westside School Master Plan

The city of Las Vegas hosted the second of three community stakeholder meetings on July 25, 2011, to discuss recommendations for rehabilitation of the historic school, located at 330 W. Washington Ave., and redevelopment of the adjacent Variety Early Learning Center site. The architects, KME, presented two design options for mid-block access to the campus. One option would create a tree-lined pedestrian walkway, and the other would create a one-way vehicular access road. Participants voted for the vehicular access.

The Historic Westside School is listed on the city of Las Vegas Historic Property Register, as well as the state and National Register of Historic Places. The city continues to work with the State Historic Preservation Office on guidelines for rehabilitating the historic buildings.

How you can contribute: If you or someone you know attended the school, please contact the Historic Westside School Alumni Foundation at www.westsideschoolalumnifoundation.org/index-1.html to share your stories. The city is also looking for historical photographs of the school for research and future exhibit purposes. Please contact the city via any of the methods below to share your photographs.

For updates on the progress and dates, times and locations of public meetings, please visit www.lasvegasnevada.gov/westside-school, Facebook at www.facebook.com/HISTORICWESTSIDESCHOOL and Twitter at www.twitter.com/HWSCHOOLLV. You can also e-mail questions to HISTORICWESTSIDESCHOOL@LASVEGASNEVADA.GOV.

2011 Mayor's Urban Design Awards (MUDA)

The city of Las Vegas is accepting nominations for the 2011 MUDAs. The four criteria include: 1) Buildings and Their Environs, 2) Public Places, 3) Public Art, and 4) Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse.

Nomination forms are available at the front counter at the Development Services Center located at 333 N. Rancho Drive or online at www.lasvegasnevada.gov/files/2011_MUDA.pdf beginning Oct. 3, 2011. Anyone is invited to nominate projects; however, the project must be located within city limits and be completed by Dec. 31, 2011 to qualify. The awards will be presented at the State of the City address in April 2012 by Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman.

2011 Historic Preservation Fund Grants

The city of Las Vegas has been awarded \$44,000 from the Nevada State Historic Preservation (SHPO) office through the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF). The HPF originates

with the National Park Service and is administered by the SHPO to assist with inventories of historic properties throughout the state. The city of Las Vegas is a Certified Local Government which allows for priority status for HPF grant applications. The city is typically awarded approximately \$30,000-\$40,000 annually.

The 2011 HPF grant will fund the second phase of the Beverly Green neighborhood historic resource survey and inventory. The survey area is generally bounded by East St. Louis Avenue to the north, East Sahara Avenue to the south, Las Vegas Boulevard South to the west, and South Santa Rosa Drive to the east. The survey area contains Ranch style homes constructed in the 1950s.

A survey of this area is part of the recommendation by the city of Las Vegas Historic Preservation Commission to develop a Mid-Century Architecture Historic Context Report for WWII and post-WWII development within the city of Las Vegas.

Historic Preservation Commission Centennial Legacy Grant

The deadline for submitting an application for the HPC Centennial Legacy Grant is Feb. 1, 2012. Grants are limited to \$5,000 and are for historic preservation projects within the city of Las Vegas boundaries. Past grant projects include lectures, educational materials and tours of mid-century architecture. For more information, please visit www.lasvegasnevada.gov/files/HPC_Centennial_Legacy_Grant_Application.pdf.

City of Las Vegas Centennial Grant

Grants are for historic preservation projects within the city of Las Vegas boundaries, and are limited to \$100,000. Past grant projects include historic preservation events, lectures, educational materials, statues of historical figures, and historic property restoration and rehabilitation. For more information, please contact Esther Carter at (702) 229-6672, or ecarter@lasvegasnevada.gov.

Historic Preservation And Archaeology Day On The Cultural Corridor Trail

The city of Las Vegas is working to keep the spirit and tradition of the Cultural History Fair alive. This year, the city of Las Vegas Historic Preservation Commission, Cultural Corridor Coalition, Department of Planning and Office of Cultural Affairs sponsored the Historic Preservation and Archaeology Day on Saturday, May 14, in donated space at Cashman Center. The event included free tours of the Neon Museum Boneyard, the Las Vegas Natural History Museum and the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park. The event also

featured a lunchtime presentation about the Old Spanish Trail and ice cream sandwiches from Anderson Dairy. Thank you to all of the folks who volunteered time and supplies to make this event a success.

Helldorado Days Parade



Commissioner Jack LeVine and friend ride in style.

HPC commissioners and friends rode in the 77th annual Helldorado Parade in gorgeous classic automobiles provided by the Las Vegas Cadillac and LaSalle Club, and the Sunbelt Auto Museum. Thank you to both of these clubs and the vintage car owners for letting the HPC ride in style.

Historic Preservation Month Proclamation And Awards For Excellence In Historic Preservation

During the ceremonial portion of the May 18, 2011 City Council meeting, former Mayor Oscar B. Goodman and HPC Chairman Robert Stoldal presented the Historic Preservation Month Proclamation and the annual HPC Historic Preservation Month awards. This year's awardees included the city of Las Vegas Department of Operations and Maintenance for the restoration of the barns and corral at Floyd Lamb Park at Tule Springs, Preserve Nevada for their advocacy for and assistance with stabilizing funding in the FY 2011-2013 Nevada State Budget for the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Clark County Museum for the relocation and historic preservation of the Candlelight Wedding Chapel for the Clark County Museum Heritage Street. Congratulations to the awardees!

Floyd Lamb Park At Tule Springs Markers Docent Manual Exhibit

The city of Las Vegas has completed the draft language for new historical markers and exhibits at Floyd Lamb Park at Tule Springs. The project included historical research, data and image gathering for the new markers. The city will begin looking for a qualified company to fabricate the markers and exhibits this fall. The entire project is paid for by a \$200,000 grant from the Las Vegas Centennial Commission.

Neon Museum

Construction on the new Visitors Center and staff offices for the Neon Museum will begin this October 2011, with completion in late spring of 2012. The Visitors Center, adjacent to the Neon Boneyard, will be located in the historic La Concha Motel Lobby. This amazing concrete shell-shaped structure was designed by famed African- (continued on page 4)

Upcoming Events:

Las Vegas News Bureau Presents "A Place In Paradise" At The Boulevard Mall

Aug. 6-Dec. 31, 2011

Boulevard Mall Food Court

Las Vegas News Bureau presents an historical photographic exhibition including 24, large-format images of the Boulevard shopping mall; aerial images of the Historic Paradise Palms neighborhood and its resident celebrities, including Caesars Palace developer Jay Sarno, comedian Rip Taylor, actress and entertainer Debbie Reynolds and Casino De Paris show producer Frederic Apcar; the Tournament of Champions Golf Tournament with Arnold Palmer teeing off in 1967 and many more.

Atomic Vegas: A Celebration Of Midcentury Modern Lifestyle & Design

Oct. 19-23, 2011

Atomic Testing Museum

Dust off your vintage fashions and get ready to travel back to 1950s and 60s Las Vegas! The Architectural & Decorative Arts Society (ADAS) announces *Atomic Vegas: A Celebration of Midcentury Modern Lifestyle & Design*, Oct. 19-23 at various locations throughout the Las Vegas valley. Building on the success of midcentury modern-oriented events in 2009 and 2010, ADAS is expanding this year's program to include a reception and tour of the Atomic Testing



Shoppers enjoy "A Place in Paradise" Exhibit at the Boulevard Mall.

Museum, a midcentury home renovation seminar, a gala dinner, educational panel discussions and an updated bus tour of Las Vegas' midcentury modern architectural treasures.

Guests can purchase tickets for individual events or immerse themselves in all things mid-mod by purchasing a discounted five-day pass. A complete program and tickets are available at www.adas-lv.com. For more information, call (702) 236-9483.

Fourth Biennial Three Corners Conference

Oct. 29, 2011, starting at 9 a.m.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

This conference is a presentation of scholarly papers that will address the growing scope of archaeology and shifting orientation of archaeological research in the Las Vegas area. The increase in the number and types of archaeological sites that have been discovered has created a need for regional researchers to present and discuss findings to promote the development/refinement of regional theory, methodologies and management goals. For more information, please visit threecornersconference@yahoo.com, or contact Mark C. Slaughter at (702) 293-8143

Nevadaween

Oct. 29, 2011 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park

Come celebrate Nevada's statehood with Mark Twain at the historic Mormon Fort, hosted by Soldiers of the Fort. There will be games, pumpkin decorating, balloons, pioneer activities, mountain men, a soup cook-off and free birthday cake. Admission for 12 and under is free, and \$1 for 13 and up. For more information, please visit <http://parks.nv.gov/olvmf.htm>, or call (702) 486-3511.

Helen Stewart Statue Dedication

Dec. 3, 2011 from noon-1 p.m.

Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park

The Friends of the Fort and the Nevada State Parks are pleased to unveil the statue and preview a documentary of

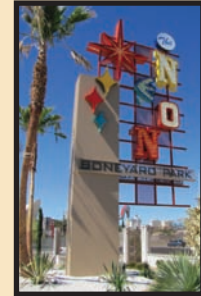
Helen J. Stewart, the "First Lady of Las Vegas" and former resident of the Old Fort. The statue's sculptor, Benjamin Victor, created a design that would reflect Helen's independence and passion for women's rights. Fittingly, the statue and the event is the result of a collaboration between several local women's organizations including the Nevada Women's History Project, League of Women's Voters, Mesquite Club and Daughters of the American Revolution. The statue and documentary was funded by the Las Vegas Centennial Commission and Nevada Humanities. For more information about the event, please visit <http://parks.nv.gov/olvmf.htm>, or call (702) 486-3511.

Cowboy Christmas And Charity Event Dec. 3, 2011 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Floyd Lamb Park at Tule Springs
9200 Tule Springs Road, Las Vegas

Join Councilman Steve Ross for a fun day of family activities and support area charities who bring food, toys and clothes to people in need. HC

HP Update – continued from page 3



Neon Boneyard sign lights the way to the new visitors center, opening in Spring 2012.

American architect Paul Revere Williams and constructed in 1961. Originally located next to the Riviera Hotel and Casino, the building was moved to its current location on the Las Vegas Scenic Byway in 2006 where it remains a Strip landmark.

Currently the museum is open for tours and photo shoots by appointment only, and reservations need to be made at least two weeks in advance because of the high demand and limited availability. The new facility will allow for walk-in traffic, greatly improving this situation. Until construction is complete, staff offices are located at Emergency Arts on Sixth and Fremont Streets. For more information, please visit www.neonmuseum.org, or call (702) 387-6366.

Funding for the project was provided by the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, the Nevada Commission on Cultural Affairs, the Las Vegas Centennial Commission, the Nevada State Legislature and the Federal Scenic Byways Program. Additional support has been provided by the city of Las Vegas.

The La Concha Motel Lobby is listed on the city of Las Vegas Historic Property Register. HC



The Historic Preservation Commission is an 11-member board made up of community members appointed by the Las Vegas City Council. The board is responsible for hearing and making recommendations regarding the designation of historic landmarks, properties and districts to the city's historic register; overseeing alterations and new construction of designated historic properties and making recommendations to the City Council. Meetings: Fourth Wednesday of each month, 12:15 p.m., Historic Fifth Street School, 401 S. Fourth St., Las Vegas, NV 89101 except in November and December when they are often combined.

Bob Stoldal, chairperson
Dorothy Wright, vice-chairperson
Mary Hausch
Patrick J. Klenk
Robert Bellis
Richard H. Cuppitt
James Veltman
Claytee White
Jarmilla McMillan-Arnold
Jack Levine
Colleen Beck
David Millman, ex-officio

For more information about historic preservation efforts, contact:
Courtney Mooney – Historic Preservation Officer
Department of Planning 333 N. Rancho Drive, 3rd Floor, Las Vegas,
Nevada 89106
phone:(702) 229-5260 • fax:(702) 384-1397
cmooney@lasvegasnevada.gov

Newest Commissioner

On June 15, 2011, the Las Vegas City Council appointed Colleen Beck, Ph.D., to Category 10 (experience in the archaeology profession). Please join the commission in welcoming our newest member. HC

Margo Bartlett Pesek | TRIP OF THE WEEK



Lots of scenery, history along byway in Utah



MIKE MILLER/FOR THE LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Southwestern Utah's Smithsonian Butte Scenic Byway remains a little-known treasure. » [Buy this photo](#)

Posted: Sep. 18, 2011 | 2:00 a.m.

Short, but spectacular, the 9-mile Smithsonian Butte Scenic Byway in southwestern Utah near Zion National Park remains a little-known gem. Used primarily by locals as a shortcut, the graded road links Highway 9, the main route into Zion, with Highway 59, the road from Hurricane across the Arizona Strip toward Kanab, Lake Powell, Grand Canyon's North Rim and other attractions.

To reach the byway from Las Vegas, head north on Interstate 15 into Utah through St. George. North of St. George, watch for the exit toward Hurricane on Highway 9. Continuing on Highway 9 through Hurricane takes you along the Virgin River to approach the byway from the north in Rockville. You approach the byway from the south if you turn on Highway 59 in Hurricane and drive about 11 miles to Big Plain Junction and then turn north.

Following this back road reveals glimpses of frontier history and splendid scenery. It offers panoramic looks into Zion Canyon, the best views of some of Zion's towering formations and calendar scenes of striated Canaan Mountain rising above the aptly named Vermilion Cliffs. Smithsonian Butte, a 7,000-foot geological feature at the western end of the cliffs, was named by

expeditions into the area in the late 1860s and early 1870s. Powell gained fame as the leader of the first group to course the Colorado River through its fearsome canyons using wooden boats in 1869.

The byway crosses the Virgin River at Rockville on a narrow steel bridge. A little more than a mile across the river, a road forks to the right. This leads to the remains of Grafton, a frontier farming town established by Mormon colonists. Stop at its little cemetery to read headstones that tell stories of pioneer deaths by disease, disaster and massacre. The fence around a mass grave marker is a recent restoration. The road ends at Grafton, where several buildings still stand.

In 1859, several families settled on the southern bank of the Virgin River to establish farms, build homes and raise cotton, among other crops. The river soon wiped them out. Determined, they moved a mile upriver and rebuilt on higher ground. This settlement and several others in the vicinity disrupted the lives of the native people established there. By 1865, Indian troubles began in isolated places. The mass grave in the cemetery marks the massacre of a young man, his wife and his brother. Mormon leaders ordered the pioneers to group together for safety. Families from Grafton moved across the river to larger communities in 1866 but returned in 1868 when treaties settled the conflicts.

Visitors today see a two-story school building also used as a church and community center, three family homes, a couple of barns, a raised granary and an original split-rail fence. A nonprofit interested in preserving Grafton oversaw several restoration projects. Renovation stabilized the 1886 adobe school and the oldest house in town, an 1862 adobe home next door. That home was occupied by members of the same family until 1944. Private owners restored the other houses and outbuildings, most dating from the 1870s. The group nominated Grafton and surrounding features for a national listing of historic sites as a historical district, a designation not yet finalized.

If Grafton looks familiar, it might be from the movies. Hollywood discovered Grafton as a location first in 1929 with the Cisco Kid in "Old Arizona," the first "talkie" in color. "Ramrod" with Joel McCrae followed in 1947. The most famous film using Grafton for key scenes was "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," starring Robert Redford and Paul Newman. The notoriety made the Grafton Schoolhouse one of the most photographed buildings in Utah. The appeal for filmmakers is obvious to visitors, for Grafton has 19th-century charm and Zion's gorgeous scenery as background.

Retrace the road to the fork to continue on the byway. The drive may be made in passenger vehicles. Just slow down on bumpy portions, and don't attempt the drive after a heavy rain. Follow the twisting route from the river valley to higher country cloaked with pinions and junipers. Allow time to pull over for unmatched views of vividly colored landscapes under skies made bluer by contrast. At Highway 59 turn right for Hurricane or left for Pipe Spring National Monument, a frontier fort.

Margo Bartlett Pesek's column appears on Sundays.

Councilman, activist now question reopening of F Street



JOHN LOCHER/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL FILE PHOTO
People protest the closure of F Street by marching along the Las Vegas Strip on April 18, 2009. » [Buy this photo](#)

BY [BENJAMIN SPILLMAN](#)
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Sep. 21, 2011 | 12:24 p.m.

A Las Vegas councilman and a community activist are second-guessing a plan for the city to spend another \$20 million reopening a blocked street in a low-income neighborhood.

On Wednesday, Councilman Bob Coffin and activist and former mayoral candidate Katie Duncan questioned the wisdom behind the effort to reopen F Street, a thoroughfare in a historically black neighborhood that was the subject of controversy in 2008 when an Interstate 15 widening project permanently blocked the street.

At the time, residents in the area, including Duncan, said the closure segregated the neighborhood from the rest of downtown and was a reminder of a period in Las Vegas history in which black residents were isolated to the neighborhood.

Although Duncan and Coffin raised questions about proceeding, another community activist and the councilman

project is located said support for reopening the street is strong.

Still, Coffin said after the meeting there are enough questions to warrant further study of the necessity of the project.

The controversy made it to the Legislature, which in 2009 passed a bill that mandated the street be reopened with the city paying up to \$22.5 million and the state picking up costs beyond that amount.

At the time legislators, including Senate Majority Leader Steven Horsford, D-Las Vegas, said the costs were a bargain compared with the potential costs of losing a lawsuit should a court determine the closure was improper.

The doubts raised Wednesday came during a discussion of the city's redevelopment agency, which is made up of City Council members, about an agenda item to authorize spending \$2.5 million on the design portion of the project.

The redevelopment agency and the council approved the measure unanimously but not before Coffin and Duncan said the city might be wise to stop the project.

"I am not a certain vote for continuation of spending money after this first \$2.5 million," Coffin said.

Afterward, Duncan said the reduction in traffic and other unintended consequences of the blockade have been an improvement for the people who live and own property along the street.

"The homeless people are now on the other side instead of our side," said Duncan, who was once a critic of the closure.

Councilman Ricki Barlow -- the project is in his Ward 5 -- was clearly irritated by the criticism.

Barlow said it is too late to reverse the project because the Legislature has directed the city to move forward. He also said Duncan and another resident who showed up did not represent the will of the broader community.

"It is only a couple people, and she is one of the couple people I am referencing," Barlow said of Duncan. "Other than that there are hundreds of people who have come before this council on separate occasions" in favor of reopening the street.

Coffin, a former state senator, said just because the Legislature acted doesn't mean the reopening is a done deal.

He said legislators were told in 2009 that the city and Nevada Department of Transportation didn't properly notify people near the closure about the pending project.

Since then, Coffin said he learned from city staff members that wasn't true and that plenty of notice was given.

Trish Geran, a former neighborhood resident whose mother still lives in the area, said support for reopening the street remains strong.

Access to the neighborhood, she said, has been a controversial issue for decades, and residents have had to fight to prevent street closures.

"It is not about going around the block. It is about doing things for that community that they want done. It is a principle of the thing," Geran said.

Geran, chairwoman and founder of the F Street Coalition, said she and other residents won't let anyone stand in the way of reopening.

"Katherine Duncan does not speak for us," she said.

other objections to the reopening from people in the community near the project.

"The majority still remain and continue to emphatically proclaim they are in favor of open access for commerce to flow in and out of the community," he said.

Contact reporter Benjamin Spillman at bspillman@reviewjournal.com or 702-229-6435.

GOVERNMENT:

Cultural Affairs Department going into 'foster care'

By **David McGrath Schwartz (contact)**

Friday, Sept. 23, 2011 | 2 a.m.

The state's Cultural Affairs Department dies Oct. 1 after an 18-year run — the latest victim of budget cuts.

To preserve the functions of the agency — state museums, grants for artists, historic preservation and archived information — state officials said they had to cut off the head.

The elimination of the department will save about \$1.1 million over the next two years, and \$1.3 million every two years after that, according to the budget office. Most of that is in personnel costs.

The divisions will still function, but as part of other departments.

"We're sending them to a place to be cared for, without further harm," said Dale Erquiaga, senior adviser to Gov. Brian Sandoval and a former Cultural Affairs director under Gov. Kenny Guinn.

He said the moves are temporary, until the state comes up with a permanent plan and hopefully has more money. "The way I look at it, these divisions are in foster care," he said.

A year ago, the agency's proposal to meet a 10 percent budget cut target would have closed four of the seven state museums indefinitely.

Today, the facilities all remain open, though only four days a week. And a new museum of Nevada history, from prehistoric through the mob days, is scheduled to open in Las Vegas on Nevada Day, Oct. 28.

The \$51.5 million Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas, was commissioned during boom times, and will open with the help of the Las Vegas Valley Water District at the Springs Preserve.

The plan to close the department was made by Sandoval's administration and passed by the Legislature this year.

During the past four years of budget cuts, the agency saw some of the steepest cuts. Workers in the department were cut from 40-hour workweeks to 32 hours. The state restricted library and museum hours.

The woolly mammoths that once roamed Nevada's great basin have a tough time competing against education, public safety and health care

Las Vegas Natural History Museum 20th Anniversary



Dale Erquiaga

Shifting entities

- The [Division of Museums and History](#) will move under the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, which was previously the Department of Tourism. That will become a cabinet-level agency for the first time.

for the poor and elderly.

"We have finite dollars," Erquiaga said. "We have to make those decisions, and education, health and human services and public safety will always come first."

Even advocates for the department understand its dissolution.

"What people are trying to do is save what we've got left," said Guy Rocha, a former state archivist who retired in 2009.

Mike Hillerby, a former chief of staff to Guinn and director of the department, said, "I have to acknowledge a little personal sadness. It was nice to have a cabinet-level agency looking after various parts of culture in one place."

But, he said, he doesn't expect average citizens to see major changes in services. "All government has to do more and more with less and less," he said. "These are challenges of our time that every agency faces."

The Museums, Libraries and Art Department was created in 1993 during a reorganization of state government by then-Gov. Bob Miller, a Democrat.

Rocha said it was anticipated that bringing the four sections under one umbrella agency would result in cost savings, and bring "synergies" — museums working with archives working with historic preservation, etc.

But what started out as a bare-bones top gradually grew, and at a rate faster than the divisions that performed the "cultural functions" the administrators oversaw.

Rocha, who worked for the state for 28 years, said that despite some earnest efforts, the four divisions never coalesced around the Cultural Affairs banner.

"Ultimately, people will welcome the breakup," Rocha said. "Whether these are the best locations for the agencies, the verdict is still out. Let's see."

And some appeared ready to debate where they best fit within state government. Secretary of State Ross Miller made a bid in 2009 to have Cultural Affairs brought under his office; the Legislature rejected the proposal.

Erquiaga said officials want to develop a plan for culture and history around the state sesquicentennial in 2014. By then, Erquiaga said, he hopes the state will have more money. He called the closure "unfortunate," but said, "out of adversity comes creativity."

- The [Nevada Arts Council](#), which hands out grants through its board, will also be under Tourism and Cultural affairs.

- The [Nevada State Library and Archives](#) will go under the Department of Administration

- The [Nevada State Historic Preservation Office](#) will go under the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Margo Bartlett Pesek | TRIP OF THE WEEK



Retrace Nevada history along Old Spanish Trail



MIKE MILLER/FOR THE LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Parts of the Old Spanish Trail remain visible from today's highways in Southern Nevada. » [Buy this photo](#)

Posted: Sep. 25, 2011 | 2:02 a.m.
Updated: Sep. 25, 2011 | 1:31 p.m.

Most Nevadans don't realize, when they drive many of the state's highways, they're following historic trails.

Travel Interstate 15 from Las Vegas toward Utah, or head west into the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area and then follow the highway over the mountains to Pahrump, and you're retracing the Old Spanish Trail

In 2001, 152 miles of the state's oldest transportation route was listed as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places. Portions of the Old Spanish Trail are visible from today's highways, if you know where to look.

Unknown except to native cultures, Nevada's remote distances lay unmapped when the United States was young. Controlled by the Spanish, the unknown regions sat beyond the reach of several exploratory expeditions sent to find overland routes linking interior settlements with those along the coastlines.

The Spanish kept a tight grip on trade. In 1821, newly independent Mexico opened trade with other countries, including the developing United States. Meanwhile, the fur trade encouraged English and American trappers and traders to push westward along rivers and streams in search of beaver and other animals. In

1826, American trapper and trader Jedediah Smith followed waterways, including the Colorado River, across Nevada's southern tip and charted a way to reach Mexican California, the first American to approach overland from the east.

During the winter of 1829-30, Santa Fe trader Antonio Armijo blazed an overland route using a network of old trails heading north and then southwest to avoid chasms such as the Grand Canyon. He led 60 men and a pack train loaded with woolen goods 1,120 miles to California to trade for horses and mules. Various offshoot routes developed over time, known collectively as the Old Spanish Trail.

Armijo's route entered Nevada near Mesquite, climbed from the Virgin River, crossed the Mormon Mesa and dropped into the Moapa area for the last water for 50 miles. While the party recovered from the longest waterless stretch of the trail at an oasis in the Mojave Desert, young Rafael Rivera dubbed the place Las Vegas.

The trail then headed west toward the mountains, where every canyon had water, climbed 2,000 feet through Mountain Springs Pass, then dived down into Pahrump Valley. The trail linked a series of springs south into California to the Mojave River. It reached the San Gabriel Valley through Cajon Pass.

In 1830-31, American traders William Wolfskill and George C. Yount followed Armijo's route, the first transportation corridor used by Euro-Americans across Nevada. Despite its length and hardships, the trail remained busy with legitimate traders, as well as rustlers and slave traders.

John C. Fremont followed the Old Spanish Trail east from California in 1844, mapping and noting available water and pasture. Published within a year or two of his return, Fremont's maps and notations assisted future travelers, including the Mormon Battalion that marched to California from Utah and returned in 1847-48. When the battalion came back, it drove the first wagon on the trail. Widened and improved for use by wagons, the Old Spanish Trail across Southern Nevada carried so much traffic between Utah and California, it became known as the Mormon Road.

The Mormons sent a group to establish the Las Vegas Mission in 1855, the first permanent non-native settlement in Southern Nevada. The colony lasted two years, leaving behind an adobe fort, orchards, fields and the area's first mines. You can visit the site at the Old Mormon Fort State Historic Park downtown. Trace the history of the area and the old trail in a small urban park on Tara Avenue south of Sahara Avenue, where wagon tracks cut ruts across a desert flat.

As other trails developed, portions of the Old Spanish Trail fell into disuse. Railroads changed transportation completely in the late 1800s, as did the automobile in the 1900s.

The Old Spanish Trail/Mormon Road into the Las Vegas Valley became variously the Arrowhead Trail or Arrowhead Highway, then U.S. Route 91 and later Interstate 15. The highway through Red Rock and the Pahrump road, Nevada Route 160, over the mountains parallel the old trail. Sharp eyes will still spot it.

Margo Bartlett Pesek's column appears on Sundays.

Nevada Magazine marks 75 years of spreading the word



BY [ED VOGEL](#)

REVIEW-JOURNAL CAPITAL BUREAU

Posted: Sep. 26, 2011 | 1:51 a.m.
Updated: Sep. 26, 2011 | 7:57 a.m.

In the fall of 1935, Nevada state government leaders found themselves in a pleasant predicament:

The Depression was over in the Silver State, which had a budget surplus. Boulder Dam had been dedicated by President Franklin Roosevelt that Sept. 30. Valley of Fire and other state parks just had opened. Nevada had been handed a \$5 million federal road-building grant. And about everyone had access to an automobile.

What better way to publicize the wonders of Nevada and gain tourism money than to start a state magazine? On Jan. 1, 1936, the Department of Highways launched Nevada Highways and Parks, a black-and-white tablet-sized "bulletin" filled with pictures and stories about state parks, places to visit and the department's highway construction program.

On the back of many early issues were maps showing the progress of road work. U.S. Highway 95 between Las Vegas and

gravel road; the maps showed you where pavement was being placed. Best of all, if you sent a letter to the Highway Department, you would be sent a free copy of the magazine.

This year Nevada Magazine is celebrating its 75th anniversary with a series of issues devoted to Las Vegas, Indian Country, Cowboy Country and other parts of the state. A larger special anniversary edition was issued in the spring and included reprinted stories on Howard Hughes, the Beatles in Las Vegas and the "Bonanza" television program.

But times have changed since 1936. Today, Nevada Magazine is a glossy, full-color publication that costs \$4.95 an issue. It also is on the Internet, even available for free on one website. And you can read about the magazine on Twitter and Facebook.

Creating an online presence is one reason that the magazine still exists, officials say. Another is that the magazine, faced with the threat of outsourcing this year by state officials trying to deal with a deep recession, has become self-funding.

Weaning itself off state dollars, though, has come at a price, one critic says. And that price is quality.

SAME MISSION FOR 75 YEARS

The product's readership is "now online," Nevada Magazine Publisher Janet Geary said.

"Magazines are really for an older demographic. Online is for younger readers," Geary said.

Still the mission of Nevada Magazine is the same one that faced Highway Department employee Frank Greulich when he put out the first issue: Sell the wonders of the state to the traveling public.

"What we are doing now is not a lot different than what they did in the 1930s," Editor Matt Brown said. "They traveled around (the state), took photos and wrote about it."

Brown also tweets 2,500 readers about the interesting places he visits and what's coming up in the magazine. He maintains the magazine's Facebook site and uploads almost all the photos he and photographers take to a Flickr website.

For most of its 75 years, Nevada Magazine, now a division of the state Commission on Tourism, has operated with help from taxpayers. The state subsidies infuriated legislators as early as the 1980s and in recent years have enraged some members of the state Tourism Commission as well.

The magazine has been a paid publication, at least its print edition, since 1964. Former state Sen. Floyd Lamb of Las Vegas frequently called in magazine staffers in the early 1980s to question why they needed state support instead of surviving on advertising and sales. Today most state government agencies have gone through round after round of budget cuts. As much as legislators like the magazine, they don't want taxpayers to subsidize it, even though a



Editor Matt Brown and Publisher Janet Geary talk about the 75th anniversary of Nevada Magazine in their Carson City offices.
CATHLEEN ALLISON/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL
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recent reader survey showed it brought in an extra \$45 million in tourism revenue.

In stepped Geary. The first publisher of the magazine to come from a business and not a writing background, Geary over the last three years has reduced spending by \$500,000 and now can proclaim that it no longer needs state financial support.

OUTSOURCING REJECTED

Few people realize that Nevada Magazine came close to dying as a state-written and -produced publication in recent months.

But on Wednesday the Tourism Commission rejected a proposal to turn it over to a private company. In some states private companies publish state magazines.

"After a lot of soul-searching, the decision was made not to outsource," said Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki, who chairs the Tourism Commission. "We will run it more like a business than a government enterprise. It needs to stand on its own. It is a fantastic product that helps drive revenue and tourism for us."

"We cut everything we could to keep the magazine running," said Geary, who was raised in Las Vegas and learned the print business through years of selling advertising and running Northern Nevada newspapers.

The cuts included trimming staff from 13 to eight and cutting the budget to \$1.2 million a year.

"Our revenue comes from selling advertising and subscriptions. We are in the black and doing very well financially," Geary said.

That is saying something at a time when many print publications around the nation are barely breathing after losing subscribers and advertisers.

Arizona Highways, widely acclaimed as one of the best state magazines, sells 140,000 copies, down from a peak of 375,000 in the early 1980s.

The bimonthly Nevada Magazine sells only 20,000 copies a month counting newsstand sales and has just 9,700 subscribers. About 40 percent of the subscribers are Nevada residents.

Geary, who earns \$85,000 a year, has increased newsstand sales of the magazine by 57 percent since she became publisher. The magazine now can be found at many supermarket checkout lines. But increasing subscribers will be difficult, especially in the recessionary economy where subscriptions are one of the first things people cut, she said.

A CRITICAL VOICE

Former Publisher-Editor C.J. Hadley said she sold 65,000 copies per issue at the end of her 10 years at the helm of the magazine in 1975-85.

Now publisher of 48,000-circulation Range Magazine, which focuses on threats to the American West, Hadley is critical of what she sees in Nevada Magazine.

"What they are doing now is what every state and city magazine does: write about restaurants, where to golf, where to swim," she said. "I was trying to find the essence of Nevada, the miners and cowboys and sheepherders and horsemen."

Hadley said she operated with a staff of six and depended a lot on freelance writers and photographers, some with national reputations.

Twitter and the Internet, of course, were not around at the time, but Hadley considers Twitter a narcissistic hobby, useless for selling a state magazine.

"I don't tweet," she said. "What can you tell me about Nevada in 28 words?"

But Geary contends Nevada Magazine had no choice but to embrace the Internet and the social media to survive and not be a

"It's not like the 1980s when everyone advertised," she added. "It is a totally different economy than when I lived in Las Vegas."

The magazine still emphasizes state history and unusual characters, but it had to move online to keep up with a new generation of readers.

HISTORICAL ARTICLES MOST POPULAR

A reader survey found historical articles are the most popular, Geary said, and the magazine responded with stories on gold finds and the Amargosa Opera House in its September-October edition.

She noted 7,000 copies of its special 75th anniversary edition, priced at \$19.95, have been sold. Most of its stories were historical and character-based.

Nevada Magazine's website features a lot of content not found in the print product. And the entire print version of the magazine also is available for free on the Issuu.com website. Keeping the free site on the Internet, however, is subject to change, according to Larry Friedman, acting state tourism director.

Brown, 29, a former Reno Gazette-Journal writer, said he looks for stories and photos that appeal to readers of all ages. Ideas for stories often come from email tips by readers.

There have been fewer stories about people this year, but that is because the magazine has been celebrating its 75th anniversary with special issues about each part of the state. These issues have told the history of communities and promoted attractions that tourists might visit.

Brown welcomes ideas for stories. With the demand to cut costs, he no longer hires as many freelance writers. Most stories in the magazine now are written by him or Associate Editor Charlie Johnston.

In its original issue, Greulich explained the magazine would "promote a wider knowledge of (Nevada's) mountains, deserts and the real western, friendly spirit of its people."

Brown and Geary agree. The friendly spirit of Nevadans is why millions of visitors return to the state.

It's hard times, but Geary sees a brighter future now that the magazine survives without state subsidies. She sees tourism growing and has no doubt Nevada Magazine will be around in another 75 years.

"As long as tourists come here, we will be here, too."

Contact Capital Bureau Chief Ed Vogel at

USS Nevada bell back in state's historic collection



BY KEITH ROGERS
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Sep. 28, 2011 | 6:58 p.m.

A bell from one of World War II's most famous ships -- one that rang when the badly damaged USS Nevada escaped the Pearl Harbor attack and survived to clang during the invasions of Normandy and Iwo Jima -- was returned to Nevada's historic collection Wednesday.

The return came 61 years after Sen. Pat McCarran gave the bell to the Kiwanis Club of Las Vegas.

In a ceremony attended by three Pearl Harbor survivors, Gov. Brian Sandoval gratefully accepted the silver-plated, brass bell from the club's president, Willard Wooten, who dinged it with his gavel one last time before sending it to retirement at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City.

Sandoval promised to "guard that bell with my life" and make it available for all Nevadans to see. The USS Nevada's master bell is already at the State Museum. Sandoval retrieved the ship's wheel from storage for display at his office along with a watercolor painting of the ship undergoing repairs at the Puget Sound Navy Yard after it was torpedoed and bombed by Japanese warplanes during the Dec. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor attack.

"I'm just very proud that this Kiwanis Club is willing to share this original bell from the



Gov. Brian Sandoval speaks to the Kiwanis Club of Las Vegas luncheon Wednesday at Lawry's restaurant before accepting a bell from the USS Nevada, the only ship in Pearl Harbor's Battleship Row to get under way during the Dec. 7, 1941, attack.

JOHN LOCHER/LAS VEGAS
REVIEW-JOURNAL

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state," he said after the club's luncheon at Lawry's restaurant. "It's going to have a proud place in Carson City at the Nevada State Museum for all the kids to see."

Kiwanis Club of Las Vegas officials decided to retire the bell to the state's custody because it had served a long-standing tradition of being rung by the club's presidents at meetings since McCarran presented it to the community organization during the club's 25th anniversary year in 1950.

The bell was one of several from the historic ship and survived not only Pearl Harbor and other major sea battles but also the 1960 fire at the El Rancho Vegas, where the Kiwanis Club held its weekly Wednesday meetings, board member Owen Lloyd said.

Sandoval recognized three local Pearl Harbor survivors, who received a standing ovation from the Kiwanis members:

Petty Officer 1st Class Ike Schab, a musician from the admiral's band who was on board a destroyer tender and loaded ammunition during the attack.

Army Air Corps Pvt. Ed Hall, who helped recover dead personnel and drove the wounded to hospitals.

Naval Air Corps Aerial Radioman 2nd Class Jack Leaming, a machine-gunner who responded to the attack with pilot Dale Hilton in a Douglas scout aircraft from the USS Enterprise. Three months later their dive bomber was shot down. They were captured by Japanese troops off Marcus Island and held in prisoner of war camps until they were liberated more than three years later.

Mob Museum changes identity



BY KRISTI JOURDAN
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Oct. 10, 2011 | 4:59 p.m.

Nothing personal, Las Vegas. It's just business.

The Mob Museum is now known as the National Museum of Organized Crime & Law Enforcement -- swapping its original Las Vegas title for one more reflective of its content, museum officials said.

The museum, which is scheduled to open Feb. 14, 2012, to coincide with the 83rd anniversary of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre, will tell the story of organized crime as it affected the entire country, not just Las Vegas.

That isn't to say Sin City's mob stories are lessened in any way, said Jonathan Ullman, the museum's executive director.

in other cities nationwide, including Chicago and New York.

"You really cannot tell this story without addressing larger national content," Ullman said. "We cover Prohibition, immigration and the evolution of the criminal justice system. We believe our name should reflect our status as a world-class museum and a foremost venue for an informal education on this subject matter."

The name change is showcased on the museum's website, themobmuseum.org. The decision was finalized in August and "embraced by representatives at the city, the museum board and other key stakeholders," Ullman added.

"We hope it's not perceived as a slight on anyone in the local community," he said. "There's a great deal of community pride

Former Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman, who used to work as an attorney representing reputed organized crime figures and was involved in bringing the museum to the area, said he welcomed the change.

"It should be more expansive," Goodman said. "I think it should be called the international museum. As we got into this whole project, we saw this is an international story of folks coming from foreign lands into the United States as immigrants and becoming a part of what was referred to as organized crime."

Goodman added that no one should consider the change negatively.

"This is a great thing," he said.

On Wednesday night, Goodman's appearance on the television show "CSI," which showcases the Mob Museum's opening in its plot, will be aired at a viewing party at the Plaza.

Goodman takes a bullet at the museum, which "CSI" re-created on its own because the actual location won't open until next year. The event starts at 8:30 p.m. with a 10 p.m. screening.

The \$42 million Mob Museum will be dedicated to the history of organized crime and the law enforcement that hunted mobsters for decades. It is expected to draw 600,000 visitors annually once it opens at 300 Stewart Ave.

The Depression-era building is a historic former federal courthouse and post office included on both the Nevada and National Registers of Historic Places.

Contact reporter Kristi Jourdan at kjourdan@reviewjournal.com or 702-455-4519.

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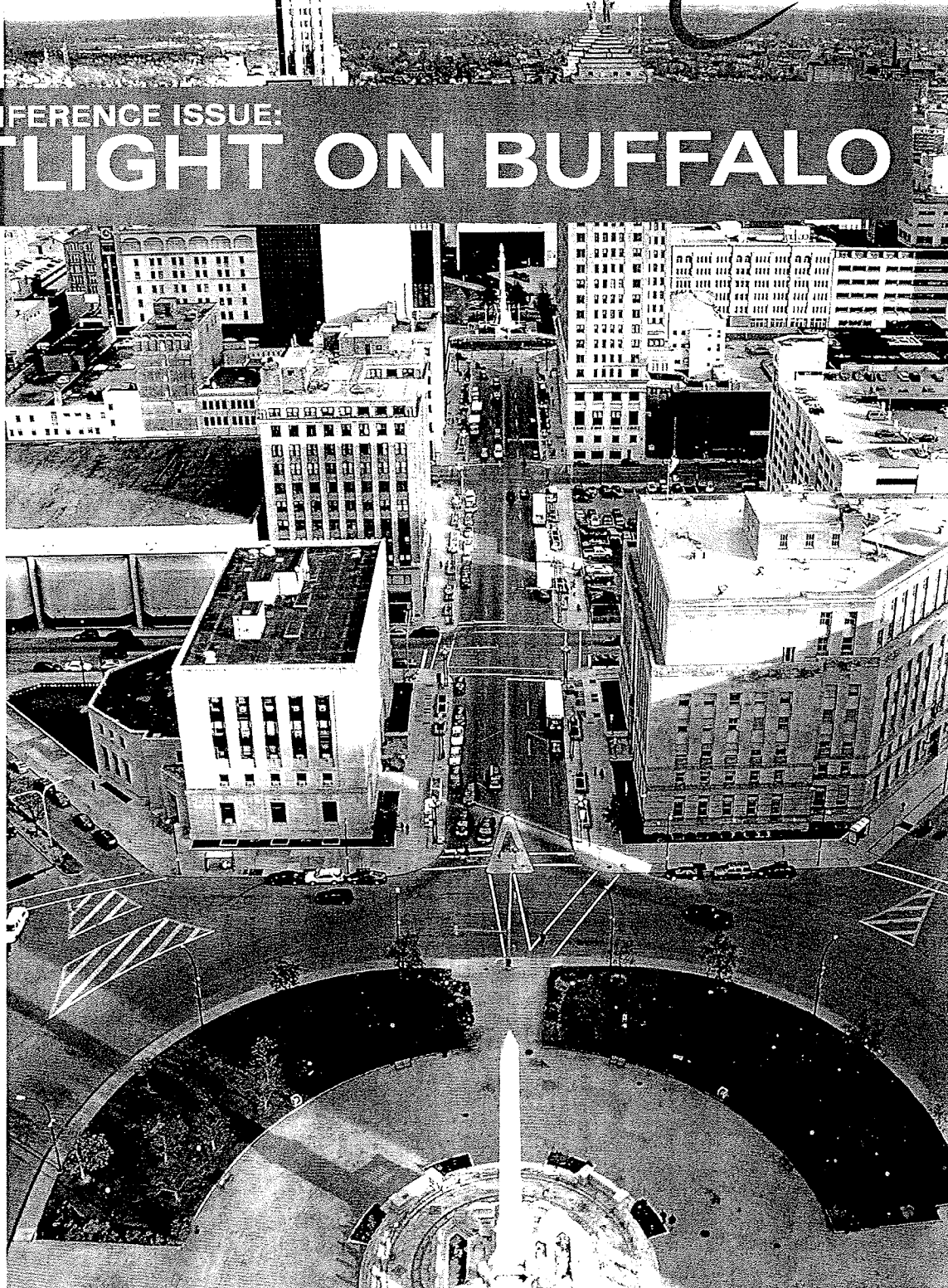


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In this Issue

This issue of *The Alliance Review* is dedicated to the 2011 National Preservation Conference in Buffalo, New York, October 19-22.

By Paul Trudeau, NAPC Program Director

Many NAPC members will attend "Alternating Currents," the conference theme. There will be numerous opportunities to learn new techniques, network with other preservation advocates from across the country, and explore one of America's great cities. The National Preservation Conference puts preservation on a national stage and reenergizes those who work in the field. As always, there will be several educational sessions tailored specifically for historic preservation commission members and staff. In addition to sponsoring many of these sessions, NAPC will be holding our twice yearly Board of Directors meeting, as well as joining our national partners – the National Trust, National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, and Preservation

Action – for the Partners in Policy luncheon to discuss what's going on in preservation policy at the national level and how it impacts your work at the state and local level.

This issue offers an overview of preservation in Buffalo as a preview of the conference and host city. Buffalo established its local ordinance over 30 years ago, which has resulted in ten locally designated historic districts and nearly 200 individually listed landmarks. In addition to a breakdown of commission-related sessions at the conference, you'll learn about the operations of the Buffalo Preservation Board and the grassroots efforts of Preservation Buffalo Niagara, the conference's local host organization. Enjoy, and I look forward to seeing you in Buffalo! ✂

RENEWING NAPC MEMBERS:

NAPC would also like to recognize our recently renewing members.

Marilyn Kebschull (Kenai Historic District Board - Kenai, AK);
 John McConnell (Tuscaloosa HP Commission - Tuscaloosa, AL);
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 Raleigh Historic Districts Commission (Raleigh, NC);
 Donna Muir (Heritage Commission - Concord, NH);
 Christine Lewandoski (Princeton Township HP Commission - Princeton, NJ);
 Peter Siegrist (City of Rochester Preservation Board - Rochester, NY);
 Andrea MacDonald (Penn. Historical and Museum Commission - Harrisburg, PA);
 Kiera Reinertsen (Town of Mt. Pleasant, Dept. of Planning & Dev. - Mount Pleasant, SC);
 Dr. R. Phillip Stone, II (City of Spartanburg Planning Dept. - Spartanburg, SC);
 Brenda Davis (Murfreesboro Historic Zoning Commission - Murfreesboro, TN);
 Matt Synatsch (Texas Historical Commission - Austin, TX);
 Judson Rex (Town of Strasburg, ARB - Strasburg, VA);
 Kristen Giffin (City/County Office of Historic Preservation - Spokane, WA);
 John McDonagh (Port Townsend HP Committee - Port Townsend, WA);
 Gale Price (Janesville Historic Commission - Janesville, WI); and
 Tammy Szudy (City of Wauwatosa, HP Commission - Wauwatosa, WI).

Welcome to NAPC

NEW NAPC MEMBERS:

Capitol Zoning District Commission
 Little Rock, AR

Esther Hall
 Raleigh, NC

Kenneth D. Hammel
 Hammel Associates Architects
 Lancaster, PA

Tammy Johnson
 Benton County Historic Preservation Commission
 Rogers, AR

Caroline Labiner
 Harvard Heights HPOZ
 Beverly Hills, CA

Dolly MacIntyre
 Coral Gables Historic Preservation Board
 Coral Gables, FL

Larry Phillips
 Taylors Falls HPC
 Taylors Falls, MN

Erin Shore, AICP
 Monroe County Historic Preservation Board
 Bloomington, IL

Paul Somerville
 Hoboken Historic Preservation Commission
 Hoboken, NJ

NAPC Board of Directors 2011 Call for Nominations/ Applications

The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) is soliciting Nominations/Applications for membership on its Board of Directors. The NAPC is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established in 1983 and is dedicated to helping build strong preservation programs through education, advocacy, and training. The NAPC is committed to having an ethnically, culturally, geographically, and professionally diverse board to meet the needs and challenges facing local commissions in the 21st century. The organization draws from the expertise, experience, and energy of its board members to provide timely and meaningful technical support and information to local preservation stakeholders. Areas of expertise currently needed include board governance experience, preservation law, fundraising, and public relations/marketing. Board members are expected to be individual members of NAPC, make financial contributions to the organization, participate in membership development and fundraising activities, as well as actively serve on committees and attend board meetings. The NAPC provides non-profit directors and officers liability insurance for members of its Board of Directors.

The organization's nominating committee will evaluate Nominations/Applications. The committee's recommendations will be made and acted upon at NAPC's board meeting October 19 in Buffalo, NY, in conjunction with the National Historic Preservation Conference. **The deadline for Nominations/Applications is Friday, September 16.** Please submit Nominations/Applications to:

NAPC Nominations/Applications
P.O. Box 1605
Athens, GA 30603
napc@uga.edu

Nominations/Applications *must* include the following:

Cover letter stating the following:

- ⇒ Name, occupation, address, phone, fax and e-mail.
- ⇒ The population of community over which your commission has jurisdiction.
- ⇒ The name of your commission and the capacity in which you serve it and dates of service including when your current term expires if applicable.
- ⇒ A brief statement describing your interest in serving on the Board of Directors.

Current Résumé or Curriculum Vitae containing at least the following information.

- ⇒ Academic background—schools attended, degrees earned and dates.
- ⇒ Any professional certifications.
- ⇒ Professional experience.
- ⇒ List any awards and/or publications you have received/written.

Priya Chhaya is a program associate in the partnerships office at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For more information about the National Preservation Conference, visit www.preservationnation.org/conference or email conference@nthp.org.

BUFFALO: The Living Laboratory

By Priya Chhaya



View of downtown Buffalo. Many of the National Preservation Conference events will be held in architectural masterpieces all over the city. Speakers include James Howard Kunstler and Isabel Wilkerson. Credit: ©iStockphoto.com/Caitlin_Mirra

The City of No Illusions

What lessons can Buffalo teach preservationists? As a city that has been experiencing the recession longer than most, Buffalonians have embraced ideas of neighborhood development and sustainability and are looking to the past in order to move the city forward. Earlier this year, PUSH Buffalo (People United for Sustainable Housing) won an Ashoka *Changemakers* award for the formation of a Green Development Zone (GDZ) on Buffalo's West Side. An online global community, *Changemakers* gives awards to projects and individuals that seek to change the status quo — in essence, to make change.

This particular project was accomplished through an extensive planning process that involved hundreds of neighborhood residents and other stakeholders to create a GDZ which concentrates investments in green affordable housing, geo-thermal and solar energy, green jobs training, and urban agriculture (Source: www.changemakers.com, www.pushbuffalo.org).

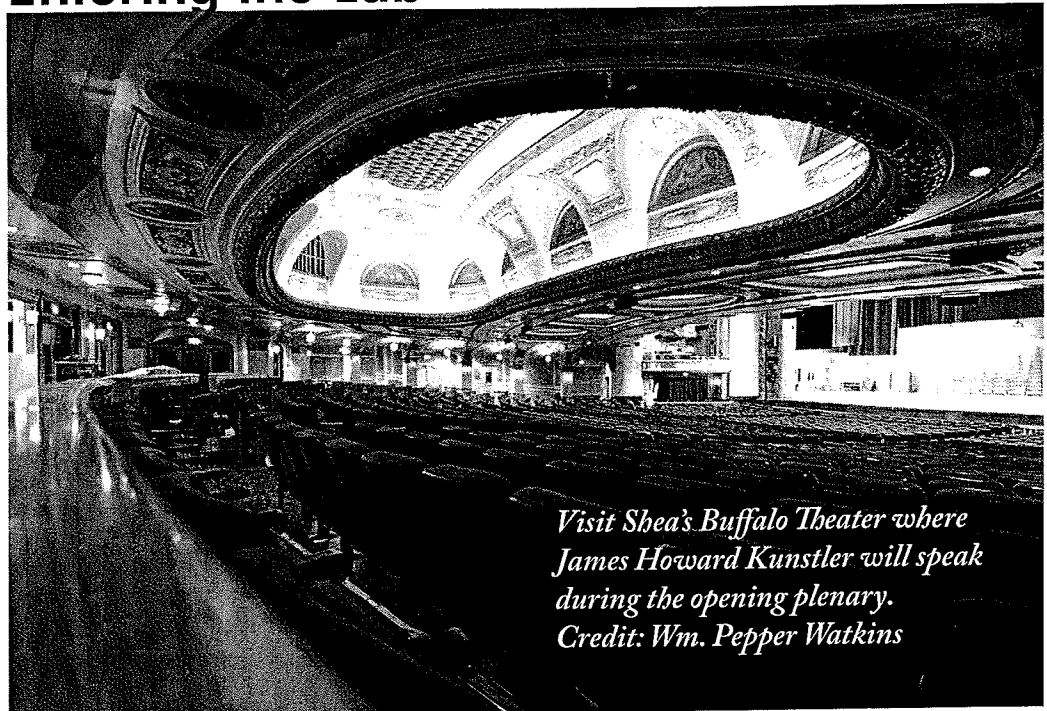
In addition to looking for ways to redevelop struggling neighborhoods, preservationists are also working to ensure that "green" projects are developed in a way that protects cultural resources. For example, Buffalo is home to the nation's first urban wind farm that is located on a former industrial site. Called Steel Winds, this successful alternative energy project (built on a brownfield and Superfund site) serves as a model of how future sustainable projects can work hand in hand with preservation. (Source: www.epa.gov, Summer 2011 *Forum Journal*.)

And, finally, in recognizing the importance of neighborhood schools in creating a lasting community, Buffalo has embarked on the final phase of a \$1 billion project to rehabilitate and integrate green technologies into Buffalo's historic school buildings.

Each of these three examples illustrate how Buffalo, the "City of No Illusions," has embraced new ideas and new visions for preservation and revitalization.

It has many names: The City of Good Neighbors, the Queen City, the Nickel City, and the City of Light, but for those attending the National Preservation Conference this coming October, Buffalo, New York is also a living laboratory for preservation in the 21st century. While the conference will have plenty of sessions and discussions centered on current issues in the field (see accompanying article by Susan West Montgomery, page 8), Buffalo the city presents attendees with an opportunity to look at the alternating currents of preservation in person.

Entering the Lab



*Visit Shea's Buffalo Theater where James Howard Kunstler will speak during the opening plenary.
Credit: Wm. Pepper Watkins*



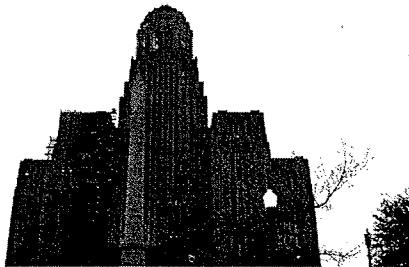
So how will attendees of the National Preservation Conference learn from Buffalo? While visiting the Nickel City October 19-22, attendees will have a number of opportunities to learn outside the session rooms. **Here are a few field session suggestions:**

Credit: Wm. Pepper Watkins



Built between 1927 and 1930 The Buffalo Central Terminal is an Art Deco structure that once serviced fourteen different railroad lines. Attendees will be able to visit the structure and learn more about plans for rehabilitation in "Polonia: New Vision for an Ethnic Neighborhood", and "Taming White Elephants: Adapting the Buffalo Central Terminal and Richardson Olmsted Complex."

Credit: National Trust for Historic Preservation



One of the cornerstones of downtown Buffalo, stately City Hall can be seen in the field session entitled: "Buffalo Overview: Alternating Currents on the East and West Side".

Credit: Jason Clement



Started in 1935, the Colored Musicians Club fosters an environment for all people to come together over their love of jazz. Check out field session "Sanctuary to Speakeasy: A Model for African American Heritage Tourism" to get a tour of this important musical landmark.

➔ Buffalo Overview: Alternating Currents on the East and West Side

Visit Buffalo's greatest landmarks and its hidden gems on this adventure through "the best-planned city in America." Find authentic Polish and Irish neighborhoods, and an Indian burial ground, as the tour traverses beyond the grain elevators of south Buffalo and the east side. In the west side, enjoy picturesque mansions on "Millionaire's Row" among vibrant Allentown and Elmwood Village shops. Take in a Presidential historic site, a century-old market, and a Japanese garden. View renowned Olmsted parks and streetscapes from the 350-foot-high observation deck. See how modern preservation challenges are met with Buffalo's own special blend of ingenuity and community activism.

➔ Preservation Cross-section Restoration Projects in Historic Allentown

Visit eight complicated historic restorations in Allentown—a vital 150+-year-old neighborhood that was once the largest historic district in America. These rescued homes, apartments, offices, commercial space, and a theater were all near demolition, saved (some with contentious fights), and adaptively transformed into functional 21st-century spaces with historic characteristics intact. In every case, developers overcame significant obstacles – structural, financial, and/or architectural. An owner, architect, or contractor will present each property to discuss the challenges and solutions.

➔ East Aurora: Protecting Small-Town Identity

Explore East Aurora, a village fighting to retain its small-town character. Learn about the struggle with Wal-Mart, the preservation and restoration of the Roycroft Campus National Historic Landmark District, the reconstruction of Main Street, and other initiatives to protect the village's unique identity. See what progress has been made since 1995, when East Aurora made the National Trust's list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. The session will include visits to the Roycroft Campus and other local museums and sites involved in preservation. For more information: <http://www.pbs.org/wned/elbert-hubbard/>

➔ West Side Community Development Tour

By highlighting specific innovative projects, this walking tour will present the overall strategy community development organizations are taking to revitalize one of Buffalo's most diverse and dense communities. The partners are taking a multi-pronged and cooperative approach, saving the best of the past while incorporating today's technologies to ensure sustainability for the future. With a dual focus on people and place, this approach includes not just making existing programs work in innovative ways, but also a commitment to policy development directly suited for challenged neighborhoods.



Credit: Jason Clement

A symbol of Buffalo's lost industry, the iconic Grain Elevators stand as a monument to the past. At the National Preservation conference, attendees will be able to visit the elevators through the sessions "River Boat Trip to the Grain Elevators, Harbor, and Pumping Station," and during the Buffalo Overview Tour.

In addition to the tours being offered through the conference, there is a variety of options for you to explore Buffalo on your own time. These include neighborhood tours, along with tours of Frank Lloyd Wright's Darwin Martin House, and the infamous grain elevators.

Details about these tours and the field sessions above are available in the preliminary program at www.preservationnation.org/conference.

Attending special events or doing some of the on-your-own tours will take you into some of the greatest buildings in the country, such as the Statler Hotel, Kleinhans Music Hall, and Sullivan's Guaranty Building — not to mention the legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted, which is exhibited beautifully in Buffalo. Come and take part in the National Preservation Conference this October! ☞



Credit: Jason Clement

Everyone loves Frank Lloyd Wright, and Buffalo certainly won't disappoint. While at the National Preservation Conference you can tour the Darwin Martin House on your own or through the field sessions "All Wright, All Day" or "Frank Lloyd Wright and the Martin Family: the Architect and the Client."



Credit: National Trust for Historic Preservation

Come enjoy the historic Statler Building where the 2011 National Preservation Conference will be hosting the Closing Plenary, and the preview of the Buffalo Unscripted documentary!

BUFFALO unscripted

A DOCUMENTARY PROJECT
by the National Trust for Historic Preservation

Buffalo Unscripted is a documentary about the Nickel City and the historic place it occupies about the film's debut during the National Preservation Conference.

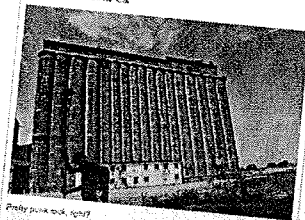
Act! No Party Like a Panoramic Party 'Cuz a Panoramic Party (Almost) Don't Stop

If you've been following us lately, you're well aware that we've been changing out our Buffalo and expansion agenda via some extremely therapeutic showing and telling. It's inspired by our superfly shuttlebugs.

While the photos are beautiful, these folks got sick, yet have you noticed how fast they're everything in EUP? Take the Digital Festival, for example, the T&E, not to stop.

Anyway, when you've got really big buildings on your hands, it's best to have cameras that take really big pictures. We were fortunate enough to be joined on our excursion by B&N Junior (check out the middle).

Basically, this is how we did it.

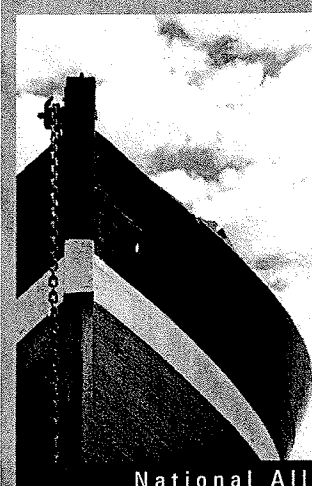


Pretty pink rock, right?

As you can imagine, B&N got some really solid shots — pictures that, in their own right, are unique and perspective. It's a great volume about both the challenges and the opportunities the Nickel City faces. Time for mortal!

Starting the Experiment: Buffalo Unscripted

This past July the National Trust for Historic Preservation hit the streets of Buffalo to tell the real story of a city that everyone seems to have an opinion about — whether they live here or not. Through meet-ups scheduled in neighborhoods across town, three of our dedicated staff members asked Buffalonians to go on camera to talk about the place they call home, its past, and its future. Learn more about this project at www.buffalounscripted.org



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National Alliance of Preservation Commissions 8th Biennial Forum

ALTERNATING Currents

National Preservation Conference
Buffalo, New York
October 19-22, 2011

"Alternating Currents" will be the focus of this year's National Preservation Conference in Buffalo and you can be sure the issues facing historic preservation commissions will be part of that discussion. Two general sessions, "Preservation in the Age of Sustainability" and "Thinking about Shrinking," will give commission staff and board members a chance to consider how their work intersects with the larger drive to create communities that work for the 21st Century. Following these sessions will be more targeted workshops devoted to the operations of historic preservation commissions, including a discussion about using substitute materials and strategies for surviving and succeeding in an era of limited resources. The Conference will also bring together leading professionals in the field for an in-depth conversation about the state of historic preservation commissions today. A brief summary of commission-related sessions is listed below. For more detailed information about the programs at the Conference and registration visit: <http://www.preservationnation.org/conference>.

Compiled by Susan West Montgomery, Associate Director for State and Local Partnerships and Policy, NTHP, and NAPC Staff

National Preservation Conference, Buffalo, New York

Wednesday, October 19

Preservation Commissioner
Training: The Basics and Beyond
9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Presented by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, this workshop provides essential, in-depth training for preservation commission members and staff. Topics covered include legal issues, design review, procedures, using standards and guidelines, survey and designation, planning, and ethics. This workshop is a must for beginning staff and commissioners but also provides an excellent refresher for those who already have some experience. \$90 (price includes lunch and all materials, pre-registration required)

Thursday, October 20

GENERAL SESSION: Preservation
in the Age of Sustainability
8:00-9:30 a.m.

Wonder where all the federal money is for community-based projects? Do you want to know how the preservation can be involved in the entire planning process for sustainable communities? Come learn about the federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities program and how preservationists can get in on the action. This session is geared at the intermediate level.

Sustainable Communities: How to
Bring Assistance and Funding to
Your Community
1:15-2:45 p.m.

What are Sustainable Communities and how does historic preservation play a role? Representatives from USDA, EPA, HUD and DOT will discuss the

Sustainable Communities Coalition, while revealing nuances among agency programs. After panelist presentations, an interactive dialogue on Sustainable Communities grant application criteria and best practices will take place. Bring your questions and learn how to make your historic community a sustainable community! This session is geared at the intermediate level.

Keeping the Wheels On: The Nuts
and Bolts of Historic Preservation
Commission Operation
3:30-5:00 p.m.

The operation of a preservation commission is a dynamic, ongoing process, constantly adjusting as it responds to community needs and evolving preservation practice. But when commissions ignore the basics, the "nuts and bolts," the wheels can fall off. Learn the fundamentals of effective commission operation. This session is geared at the intermediate level. Presented by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.

Friday, October 21

GENERAL SESSION: Thinking
about Shrinking
8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

A conversation among national thought leaders on the process of right-sizing a city and the role preservation should play in the process. Three national leaders will share their experiences and engage with the audience in a discussion on right-sizing a city and the role preservation should play in the process.

Doing More with Less: Effective
Management of a Historic
Preservation Commission during a

Time of Budget Cuts
10:15-11:45 a.m.

Today's economic climate demands creative problem solving and strategic partnerships. Learn how to maintain, enhance, and even expand current historic district commission services by getting out the "historic preservation ordinance" box and engaging the community. This session is geared at the intermediate level. Presented by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.

Bellbottoms, Legwarmers and
Parachute Pants: What Are the
Current Trends with Historic
Preservation Commissions?
1:15-2:45 p.m.

In an in-depth conversation, panelists explore the experiences, challenges, and obstacles being faced by historic preservation commissions today. Topics include such concerns as "greening" design guidelines, maintaining budget and staffing levels, and fighting off legislative threats. This session is geared at the intermediate level.

Substitutes and Synthetic
Materials: A Sustainability-based
Review Methodology for Historic
Preservation Commissions
3:00-4:30 p.m.

Local preservation commissions often must review requests by property owners to use substitute material as replacements. Drawing upon actual applications reviewed by commissions, this session will demonstrate ways to evaluate proposals for substitute materials and to identify the sustainability of these materials. This session is geared at the intermediate level. Presented by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions. 

The National Alliance of
Preservation Commissions
is pleased to announce its eighth
biennial National Commission Forum
in Norfolk, Virginia, July 18-22, 2012.

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July 18-22

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for historic preservation
commissions, staff and
their local partners.

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- Participate in charting the course for the future through working roundtables.
- Network with your fellow commission members and professionals in the field.



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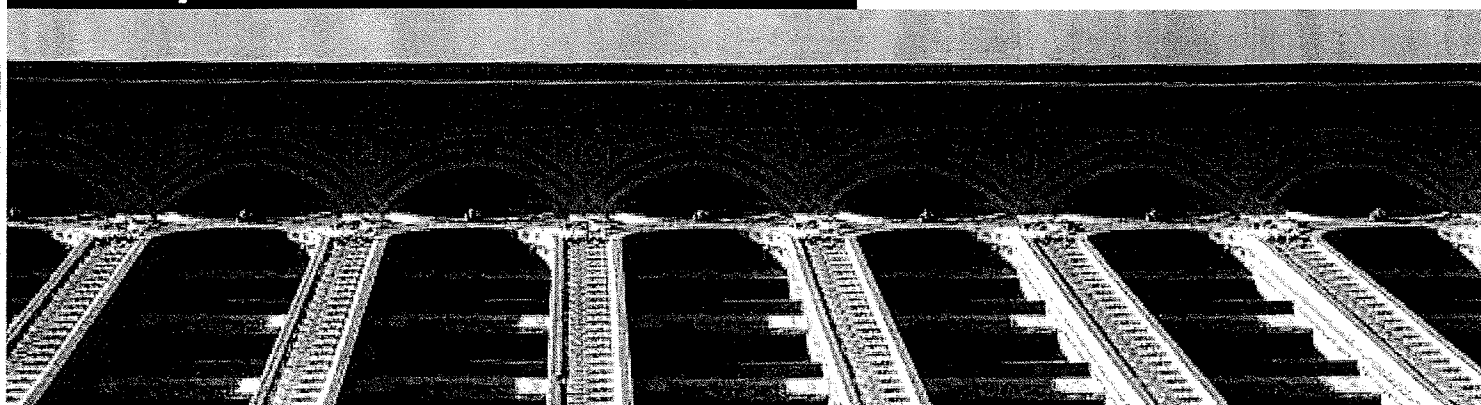


The University of Georgia

National Alliance of Preservation Commissions 8th Biennial Forum

Alternating Currents: The Tides of Preservation in Buffalo, New York

by Michele Brozek Knoll, AICP



The theme for this year's annual National Preservation Conference to be held in Buffalo this October is "Alternating Currents." For me, an image of water came to mind almost immediately – after all, Buffalo and the Western New York region is surrounded by several major waterways including the Niagara River which flows into the awesome Niagara Falls. The Alternating Currents theme conjures images of two or more bodies of water coming together; opposing currents making their way to the same place, sometimes with some choppy, uneven waves. I couldn't think of a better metaphor for preservation in Buffalo.

As a planner charged with staffing the City of Buffalo's historic preservation commission, I have the unique opportunity to get an up-close look at the alternating currents of preservation in Buffalo every day. Buffalo is a well-established preservation community – it has a preservation ordinance that is over thirty years old, and its preservation commission, the Buffalo Preservation Board, was created

around the same time. The City of Buffalo has ten locally designated historic districts and nearly 200 individually listed landmarks for a total of about 3,500 locally designated properties that require Preservation Board review for all exterior changes with the exception of paint color and minor repairs. The City of Buffalo has been regulating preservation for quite some time and has an outstanding collection of preserved historic districts and landmarks to show for it.

The City of Buffalo preservation ordinance works in a similar way to many other commissions throughout the country when it comes to the review of designated properties. Typically, property owners or owner's representatives such as contractors, architects, or other design professionals are referred to Preservation Board staff from the City Permits Office when proposing exterior work to a building or site that is designated as historic. These properties have been "flagged" in a computer system so preservation review must be completed before a



One of several impressive shingle-style residences in the Linwood Local Preservation District.

permit can be issued, and the preservation “release” of a permit is only performed by select staff within the City. From this point, the applicant makes contact with my office and the preservation review process is started. A unique feature of the Buffalo preservation ordinance is the ability of staff to issue what is called a Certificate of No Effect for work that is in-kind restoration or rehabilitation of existing historic fabric, such as the repair of an original wood window, the removal of rotted porch decking, or the installation of new in-kind flooring. Often these approvals are granted on a same-day basis.

Large-scale projects and those that do not include in-kind repairs are referred to the Preservation Board for review, which meets every two weeks. Sometimes a clash of alternating currents begins at this point, especially if the vision of the applicant does not comply with the review guidelines required under the code (The Board refers to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings as their design review criteria, and they are in the process of creating their own tailored design guideline manual based on the City of Rochester’s guidelines). Perhaps they’ve proposed removing character-defining historic features from a building or are proposing a new addition that is out of scale with the district. Sometimes, by the time they make it to our office, they have significant energy, time, and resources devoted to their project; maybe they have

spent many hours and resources working with an architect, securing financing, and have committed to their vision. Sometimes in their mind, permitting is seen as the last step in the road to getting their project started, but a review by the Preservation Board might be seen as an obstacle in their path.

The key to calming the choppy waters is to work with the applicant as early as possible to not only be sure their application is thorough and complete, which facilitates a smoother and more efficient review, but also to inform them of the Standards and guidelines that apply to their project. It’s easy to forget how confusing working with a preservation commission can be to the first-time applicant, and it’s important to allow plenty of time for explanation of the application and review process to create clear and realistic expectations. Creating informative handouts, websites, as well as a detailed and straight-forward application can also be helpful.

Along with up-front and early information-sharing, it’s important to make the application submittal process as easy for applicants as possible. Gone are the days of requiring numerous hand-delivered paper copies and color-printed photos to accompany applications. If an applicant has the tools and skills to visit the property and snap a few photos with their smartphone and email them over with their application and other required materials, we welcome it. We’re constantly striving to make the process easier and as painless as possible for applicants.

For larger projects that may involve a design team, staff will often meet with an applicant, review the project and provide advice on how the project conforms (or does not conform) to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and local guidelines. These meetings often set expectations for the review with at minimum the goal of alleviating surprises at the meeting and at best encouraging applicants to modify their applications before submitting final versions to the Board for review.

Even after taking the time to work closely with applicants to ensure that their application packets are complete and that they understand the criteria for review, there are often applicants who choose to put little effort into their applications or submit

proposals that they know do not comply with the standards. Or, sometimes, there is a grey area where it is unclear as to how the standards might be interpreted. These are circumstances that can set the stage for a rocky Board meeting.

Sometimes the best place to observe the alternating currents of preservation is actual preservation commission meetings. Members of the Preservation Board often see themselves as ardent defenders of a preservation code with the goal of protecting and preserving the City's rich historic resources and districts. These members are architects, lawyers, business people, real estate professionals, and historians – all who have a deep knowledge of historic buildings and Buffalo's local history. Through regular trainings, such as NAPC's Commission Assistance Mentoring Program (CAMP) brought to Buffalo in 2009 and regular refresher trainings provided by State Preservation Office staff, they have become skilled in reviewing projects that impact historic properties, and how to apply the Standards. Board meetings are intended to be organized and efficient meetings that run in a predictable pattern and create fair and equal environments for project review. But when a project arrives at a Board meeting that does not meet the preservation guidelines and standards, and is presented by an applicant that is inflexible or uncooperative, the crashing of alternating currents can occur. You can sometimes see and feel the tension between the Board and applicants who may feel as if they are threatened by a perceived loss of control over their property or angry about the process. The best way to calm the waters is through an honest and fair dialogue, along with a healthy dose of compromise, without steering too far away from the Standards.

Along with Certificate of Appropriateness reviews, the Buffalo Preservation Board also has the opportunity to review every upcoming permit application for demolition throughout the entire city. With a massively shrinking population beginning in the 1950s came the issue of vacant and abandoned buildings, and as a result, a huge swell of demolition throughout the city. In reaction to this widespread loss of building stock, especially throughout the east side of Buffalo, local legislation was introduced in 2006 to give the Preservation Board the ability to

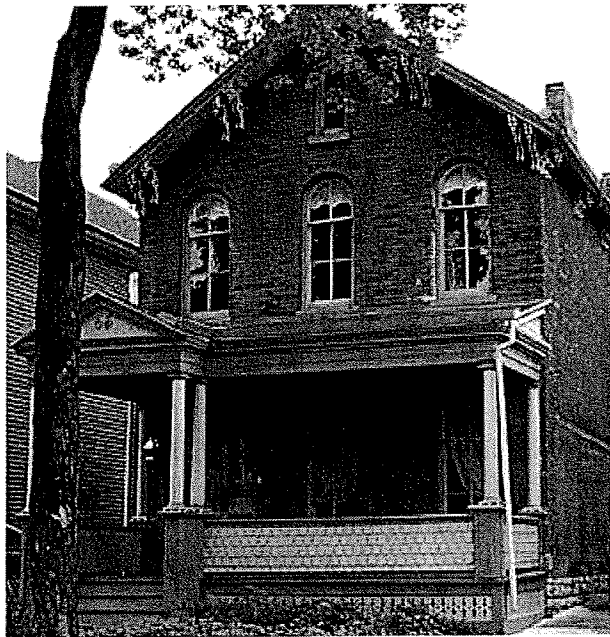
review the planned demolitions. Unfortunately, the legislation did not grant the Board any authority beyond an advisory role to the Office of Permits and Inspections, and the Board has struggled to have their recommendations heard and upheld when the time comes to issue permits for these properties.



The marquee and blade sign at Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo, opened in 1926 as a grand movie palace and today is in use as a performing arts center.

Meanwhile, many of the City's historic neighborhoods have not been surveyed, so there is no formal identification of where our most important historic resources are located in these parts of the city. A city-wide preservation plan for Buffalo has just been undertaken with help of the State Preservation Office and private foundation grants that will, among other things, establish priorities for identification and survey of previously un-surveyed areas of the City. The plan will tie together past preservation planning efforts that stalled due to funding and other constraints throughout the last decade and will become an important component of the Buffalo Green Code and Land Use Plan – an ambitious initiative that will entirely re-write Buffalo's sixty-year old zoning code and create the City's first citywide land-use plan in more than 30 years.

For those areas that have been surveyed, designation of these resources – which would give the Board “teeth” when demolition applications arise – is another challenge. In the past several years, the City has designated only one, new, small local historic district but has seen more success with the nomination of several National Register of Historic Places districts, one being the first National Register District nominated in over twenty years, an over 200-property residential district called University Park in the northeast corner of the City directly across from the University at Buffalo south campus. The other new National Register historic district is a small, yet highly significant portion of one of the most historically significant areas of the City, Black Rock, with a history dating back to the War of 1812 and earlier. The first National Register District on the East Side of Buffalo, Hamlin Park (which already enjoys local designation) will be nominated to the Register this fall. Another existing local district, Allentown, one of Buffalo’s largest and oldest local districts, is currently having its National Register boundaries expanded so they fit the local boundaries, as well as adding in a few new properties to the new unified district.

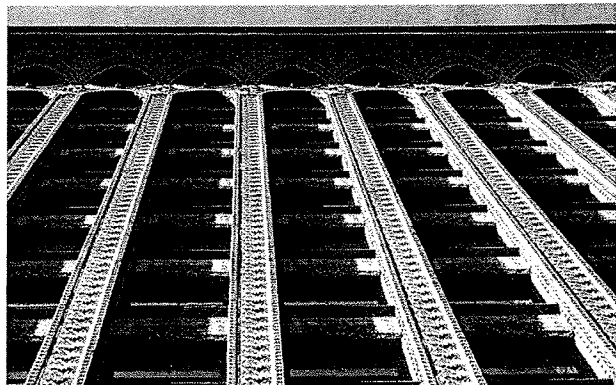


A brick Italianate cottage located in the Allentown Local and National Register Historic District.

Completed in 1895, the Guarantee Building is recognized as one of the masterpieces of Louis Sullivan, one of the most important American architects of the 19th century and acknowledged as the “Father of the Skyscraper.”

While there has been much enthusiasm and success for National Register listing in many neighborhoods, some property owners have expressed an interest in the protection that a local district offers. It appears that most property owners are at best very cautious and at worst totally uncooperative in the effort to nominate a new local district in some of the neighborhoods that have been under consideration for National Register listing. Perhaps a lack of proper outreach and education is to blame in some cases, but many times the decision to remain National Register-only seems to be a conscious decision based on unwillingness to submit to Preservation Board review for a variety of reasons. The alternating current between protecting historic resources versus perceived property rights is always an underlying current in Buffalo and throughout other historic communities.

As Buffalo prepares to host the National Trust conference in Buffalo, it’s easy for those of us working locally in the field of historic preservation to see the challenges of preservation in Buffalo – the sometimes choppy waters that alternating currents create. But I’m very confident that the conference will bring a unique energy to Buffalo and coalesce some of great talents in the field so we can learn together using Buffalo as a living laboratory. Preservation in Buffalo is a study in contrasts: It is one of the poorest cities in the country with one of the richest collections of historic resources; it has some of the earliest preservation districts in the country, yet we struggle to identify and locally nominate new districts; and the clashing currents of preservation versus property rights is a theme here as well as in other communities throughout the country. Come to Buffalo, take in the alternating currents, and learn with us about how to grow preservation in Buffalo and in your community! 



Staff Profile



MICHELE BROZEK,
Senior Planner,
Historic Preservation
[City of Buffalo, New York]

Q. What is your background in historic preservation? How long have you been in your position/in your city? How/when did you enter the field?

This fall will mark my fourth year as a Senior Planner with the City of Buffalo. Prior to that, I worked for about a year in the private sector and before that, served as the Historic Preservation Administrator and Main Street Manager for the City of Bellevue, Kentucky, a small yet thriving river-town located just outside of Cincinnati, OH. I first became interested in preservation when I was completing my Master of Community Planning degree from the University of Cincinnati, where I graduated with a Certificate in Historic Preservation. My first professional experience was an internship in the City of Covington, where I was given real-world experience and knowledge about how a local preservation program works. I've always had a "planner's perspective" on preservation, and enjoy thinking about preservation against the backdrop of the bigger picture of how a city works and how the different layers of the physical, social, and economic forces that shape a city come together.

continued on page 15

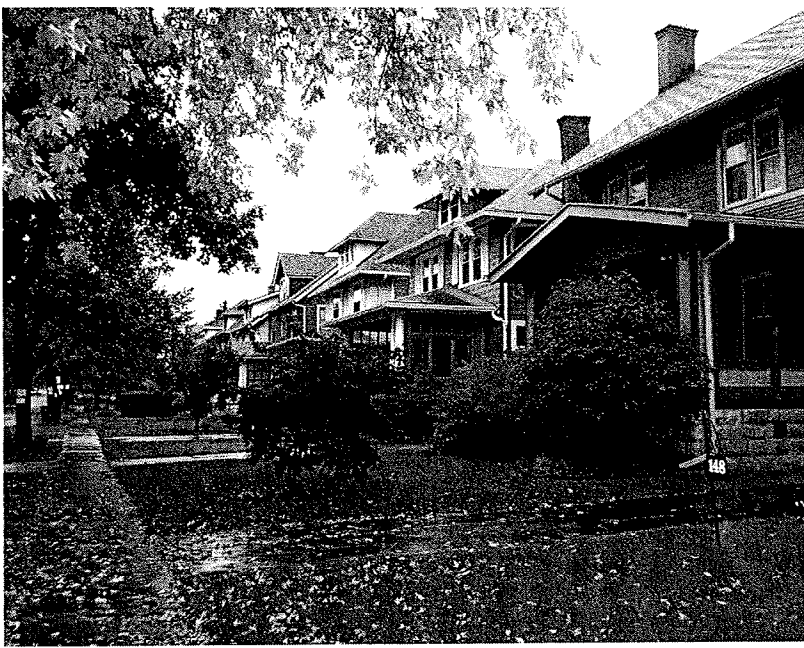
University Park, Buffalo's newest National Historic District

Paul McDonnell, AIA
Chair, Buffalo Preservation Board

Buffalo added a new neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places in the spring of 2011 with the inclusion of University Park. This new district, the first in almost twenty-five years in Buffalo, is located directly across from the University at Buffalo south campus and is bounded by Main Street and Kenmore Avenues and includes Capen Boulevard, Allenhurst Road, Pelham Drive, Larchmont Street, Radcliffe, Bellevue and University Avenues.



University Park has long been identified by its stone entrance gates along Main Street, planted medians, and fine examples of early twentieth-century residences, especially its arts and crafts bungalows and foursquare homes. One of its most prominent features is the recently restored and previously landmarked brick-paved Niagara Falls Boulevard. The neighborhood was developed by developer and owner Anthony Huck in 1913 as "a restricted residence subdivision." The original marketing brochure describes "University Park (as) one of the most unique and attractive home-building propositions, not only in the city of Buffalo, but in the whole country." Deed restrictions mandated each lot to be at least 40 feet wide, every street at least 60 feet wide, and the design for every house to be submitted to the owner of University Park for his approval, because as Huck would ask, "would you want somebody with freak ideas to put up a house next to yours that would be detrimental to your property?" It was a true departure from the urban character of the rest of Buffalo. This attention to detail combined with its convenient location along a streetcar line made this neighborhood very desirable. It remains so today with its proximity to the University, subway station, adjacent suburbs and its high quality housing stock.



In the autumn of 2009, Michele Brozek, Senior Planner for the City of Buffalo, Daniel McEneny from the New York State Preservation Office, Kerry Traynor, Architect and University at Buffalo Urban Planning Instructor and I toured the neighborhood and discussed the possibility of nominating University Park to the National Register of Historic Places as a district. Mr. McEneny described the neighborhood as a great candidate for historic district status due to its clearly defined borders, its superior planning and its design, and the fact that the vast majority of homes were well maintained and retained their historic fabric. Ms. Traynor suggested that this project be part of an urban planning class with the students surveying the neighborhood and preparing the nomination document. The nomination would be prepared by Annie Schentag in collaboration with Mr. McEneny and Ms. Brozek.

The district includes 429 structures, a park, a circle, and six landscaped medians. After each and every home was surveyed and documented, a community meeting was held with over 70 residents in attendance. They were explained the benefits of becoming a historic district; first and foremost was the fact that any qualifying improvements to income-producing properties, when approved by the State Historic Preservation Office and Park Service, would be eligible for up to a 20% tax credit. There was unanimous community support, and after review by the State of New York and the Department of Interior, University Park was added to the National Register.

The entire process leading up to acquiring status as a National Register District has become a great example of collaboration between the residents of University Park, the State University of New York at Buffalo (UB), the City of Buffalo Preservation Board, and especially the UB students. The neighborhood became a living laboratory for them to participate in a meaningful project, allowing them to practice their skills and leave a legacy that will endure long after they graduate. ☞

Staff Profile | cont'd

Q. What are the biggest challenges currently facing the commission and historic preservation in your city? How is your program equipped to deal with them?

A huge challenge for preservation in Buffalo is dealing with a "shrinking city," where the built environment of the City that exists today does not match the population of a city that has seen a major loss in population throughout the past sixty years – with population shifting both out of the region but also with many moving to the suburban fringes of the area. As a result, the issue of vacant and abandoned property has become a huge concern in a city where a majority of the building stock was built between approximately 1880 and 1920 and the threat of demolition of many buildings that seem to have no viable future use and many of which quickly are deteriorating because of lack of proper sealing or mothballing. Those involved in historic preservation in Buffalo have struggled to find ways to slow and manage the demolition so that potentially important historic resources are not permanently lost, especially in areas of the city that have not been surveyed; the level of historic significance in these areas may be unclear. Even in areas where historic significance has been established, it is difficult to identify the people and resources to take over these properties. In recent years, some areas of the City, such as portions of the West Side have capitalized on their historic character and have seen a surge in re-investment and rehab of existing housing stock. These areas have done so without creating historic districts, however. The concept of preservation is changing in Buffalo – it no longer is limited to the traditional local preservation districting. Neighborhoods like the West Side that are capitalizing on their historic resources but aren't necessarily taking the traditional approaches of preservation represent a new wave of preservation in Buffalo and other communities.

Q. Do you foresee any new trends or direction for historic preservation in the coming years?

I think preservation regulation will change in the next decade to include a greater range of protection and enhancement of historic properties that goes beyond just local and National Register designations, including tools such as character districting, where only certain features of a historic neighborhood are regulated. Just as the concept of zoning has been shifting – and as the City of Buffalo works towards overhauling its 60+ year-old zoning code to convert it from a Euclidian structure to a form-based code – the way we think about regulating historic preservation will also begin to shift in Buffalo and beyond.

Q. Any advice – or special insights – for new people entering the field?

My advice to someone interested in entering the field of preservation is to find your niche early – whether you approach preservation from a planning, architectural history, design, or other perspective – and reach out to professionals working in that niche to gain valuable knowledge and skills. Internships are a great way to learn and absorb the everyday practical knowledge needed to work in the field. ☞

California Demolition Delayed for Richard Neutra's Kronish House

Source: http://www.laconservancy.org/issues/issues_kronish.php4

August 4, 2011

Reportedly 500 letters and emails to the City made all the difference in helping buy much-needed time for the 1955 Kronish House in Beverly Hills, designed by legendary architect Richard Neutra. The home is one of only three Neutra designs ever built in Beverly Hills, and it's the only one that remains intact (one was demolished, the other completely altered). At the August 2 Beverly Hills City Council meeting, the owner's representative for the property agreed to hold off on demolition until at least October 10. If not for this action, the Kronish House could have been demolished as early as mid-August. While this will be a huge challenge, it provides a critical time-out to develop a plan to save the landmark residence.

Kentucky Downtown district proposed for Louisville

Source: <http://www.wave3.com/story/15140637/downtown-district-proposed-for-louisville>

July 25, 2011

A neighborhood advocacy group is proposing a preservation district in downtown Louisville to protect historic buildings. The move comes after a developer was given approval to demolish a historic three-story on East Main Street. Curt Morrison, a board member of the Neighborhood Planning and Preservation group, told The Courier-Journal that the move would give people who purchase property downtown notice that historic buildings are not to be torn down.

Mississippi Preservation board member pushes to save post office

Source: <http://www.cdispatch.com/news/article.asp?aid=12337>

August 1, 2011

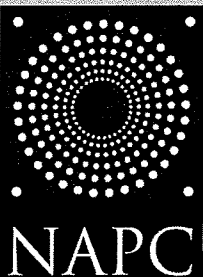
Columbus Historic Preservation Commission member Joe Boggess Monday urged his fellow commissioners to try to stop the closure of the historic downtown post office on Main Street. The United States Postal Service issued a list last week containing 3,653 locations nationwide slated for possible closure in an effort to slash costs. The downtown Columbus post office, which is one of 61 that may close in Mississippi, has served Columbus residents since 1939. Boggess said he would like to see a coordinated effort by the Preservation Commission, Columbus City Council, Columbus-Lowndes Development Link and citizens to keep the post office open. Potential actions may include the creation of a Facebook page to save the post office and a petition.

New Mexico Changes made to protect Taos historic properties

Source: <http://taosnews.com/articles/2011/07/30/news/doc4e31801e9b7e3891171482.txt>

July 30, 2011

The Taos Town Council approved changes to the Land Use Development Code in order to allow more architectural styles in the Historic Overlay Zone and give the Historic Preservation Commission more authority. Long-range planner Matthew Foster told the council the former code was "too limiting" in terms of the architectural styles that were allowed. The amended ordinance allows for "bungalow/craftsman style" buildings and combinations of architectural styles as allowed by the Historic Preservation Commission. Bungalow/craftsman-style buildings are defined as structures one to 1.5 stories tall "with low, simple lines and projecting roofs." The amended ordinance also allows for more variety in the color of buildings. Pastel and fluorescent colors are prohibited, but the Historic Preservation Commission will have discretion over other colors, as long as a sample of the colors is provided to the town. ☞



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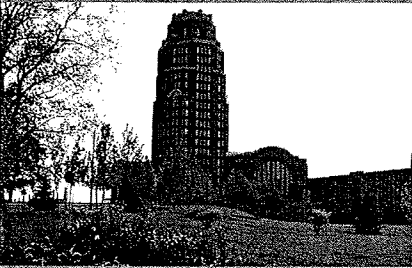
education + advocacy + training

Catherine Schweitzer is co-chair for the 2011 National Preservation Conference and Henry McCartney is executive director of Preservation Buffalo Niagara, the conference's local host organization. Visit PBN's web site, www.p-b-n.org, for more about the local On Your Own activities during the conference and additional information on buildings and issues mentioned in this article.

BUFFALO

is Building a Preservation Movement

By Henry McCartney and Catherine Schweitzer



Taming While Elephants is the title of a National Preservation Conference field session that will explore energetic but quite different approaches to saving these massive, long vacant structures: HH Richardson's Buffalo Psychiatric Center and the New York Central Terminal.



There is no surety that a city rich with historic assets will have the preservation movement it needs. Historic preservation is a local movement, albeit with state and national supporters, and the success – or weakness – of historic preservation rests largely on the competence of our local preservation organizations and commissions.

Buffalo's history with historic preservation is mixed. There have been some wonderful individual projects and initiatives, such as the saving of the Guaranty Building and the Roycroft Inn, the almost completed resurrection of Frank Lloyd Wright's Darwin Martin House and Graycliff, Buffalo's unique system for managing its Olmsted parks, current efforts to save the Richardson Psychiatric Hospital and the New York Central Terminal, local and statewide efforts to embrace the Erie Canal, and much more. All of these distinctive sites will be on display during the National Preservation Conference this October.

Unfortunately, less progress has been made to foster a stronger historic preservation movement throughout Buffalo and its region. Unlike our cousins in the environmental movement, preservation organizations are not chapters of national groups. Preservation is a collection of independent groups, acting to save an individual property, citizens banded together to protect their neighborhood, and city and regional organizations that act as watchdogs, advocacy groups, educators, promoters, and even sometimes non-profit developers, to ensure the survival of their area's historic resources.

Local preservation ordinances also provide communities with powerful tools to protect their historic assets, but, as NACP members certainly know, competent, citizen-led commissions must be created, supported and maintained to identify and create local landmarks and districts and to rule wisely on Certificates of Appropriateness.

Over 30 years, Buffalo went from having one small preservation organization to two small preservation organizations and then three small, fragile preservation organizations. Given their limits due to size and capacity, with little or no staff and few resources, there was little a small organization can do other than alert the public to threatened historic resources. As a result, too often Buffalo's preservationists have been branded as whinny and obstructionist, using the media to sound an alarm but having few solutions to offer. Nevertheless, these organizations did some very important things, but the level of historic preservation successes enjoyed in many other communities has eluded Buffalo.

Now, Buffalo is changing, and the catalyst to do so has been the upcoming National Preservation Conference. The push to bring the conference to Buffalo began in 2006, with leaders from a wide range of organizations working together. One of the early efforts resulted in a successful welcoming dinner for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and former Trust president Dick Moe as an honored guest, attended by 430 people in 2007.

The National Trust responded to this new energy not only with the selection of Buffalo for its 2011 conference, but also with greater involvement in a series of important preservation

issues and support for developing a more dynamic preservation movement. Together with the National Trust, Buffalo's three preservation organizations engaged a consultant to assess the Buffalo preservation movement. The resulting report, "Buffalo Historic Preservation Issues and Opportunities" (February 2008) called for a more unified movement and concluded that the lack of a substantial, professionally staffed preservation organization limited Buffalo in many ways.

Responding, the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier and the Preservation Coalition of Erie County started talking in earnest in March 2008 about a merger, despite having very different cultures and approaches to preservation.

We then became heavily involved in this effort – co-writer Catherine Schweitzer, a local foundation executive and National Trust Advisor, became head of a Transition Committee and later the first chair of Preservation Buffalo Niagara (PBN); co-writer Henry McCartney, long-time former director of a preservation organization in Rochester, became a consultant to this committee and eventually PBN's Executive Director.

At the time, it seemed we were moving slowly, but PBN actually was created very quickly; in October 2008, the members of both organizations voted to join forces, a new board of trustees was elected and new by-laws approved. Key grants from local foundations were already in place, structured to allow PBN to develop quickly while having time to build necessary community support. The objective of this planning was to create a substantial, professional preservation organization to serve Western New York. We are now proud to tell you we have done so. Of significant help was our success at becoming a Partner in the Field, the National Trust initiative supporting over 100 statewide and local organizations to start or expand their field services.



Multi-year grants from local foundations and the three-year Partners in the Field matching grant program jumped started Preservation Buffalo Niagara. Show (l to r) are Kim McHenry, Heather Solberg, Henry McCartney, Andrea Rebeck and Fred Schrock.

As a result, PBN today has the most significant, experienced staff ever assembled for an organization dedicated to advancing historic preservation throughout Buffalo and its region.

Are we making a difference? You bet! One vital role for a preservation organization is to be available when the alarm

bells ring or when opportunity strikes. For the historic Statler building, once the flagship of the heralded hotel chain, we did both. In 2010 we raised the alarm as the Statler situation became more and more precarious, an alarm that revealed great community affection for the historic hotel. And then PBN strongly backed an innovative plan to reopen the public spaces while keeping 15 upper floors "dry wall" ready. Title transferred from Bankruptcy Court in March 2011, and work began immediately to reverse damage caused by water infiltration and crippled HVAC systems over a 14-month period. Incredibly, the National Preservation Conference's opening reception will be at the Statler, where attendees will meet the hero of this saga, local businessman and restaurateur, Mark Croce.

Bankruptcy proceedings in 2010-11 almost decided that Buffalo's former Statler Hotel had no value. If removed from the bankruptcy, ownership by a foreign national, an international bankruptcy and existing liens would have clouded the Statler's title for years and seriously jeopardizing its future. Happily, the Statler will be the site of the National Preservation Conference's opening reception.



In Buffalo's Prospect Hill, a neighborhood was threatened by a bridge expansion project for over 20 years and in 2008 was placed on the National Trust's 11 Most Endangered List. Until June 2011, over 100 structures were threatened with demolition to expand the Peace Bridge's customs plaza, but insufficient traffic to justify the scale of the undertaking and the current dearth of public funds have now killed this project. There never was money to greatly expand this plaza and build a new bridge, but the preservation controversy surrounding these proposed demolitions likely prevented a premature destruction of this neighborhood; in New York State, as elsewhere, there has been a long tradition of getting major projects underway, assuming politicians will follow with more money!



These Prospect Hill homes are no longer threatened with demolition from a now abandoned plan to expand the Peace Bride Customs Plaza.

PBN is also delighted that it can now use its resources, contacts and staff to assist the National Trust conference planning. We strive to reach our goal to make the 2011 National Preservation

Conference the best ever! Buffalo is a unique laboratory, and the Conference will be offering an unusually high number of field sessions, dealing with a struggling economy, industrial & population decline, neighborhood revival and many other issues that bedevil preservationists. This opportunity for professional development should not be missed. Also, there will never be a better time for a person interested in architecture to visit Buffalo and Western New York, both as a preservationist and as a tourist. Reinforcing conference sessions will be a wide variety of "On Your Own Activities," with even more being developed by extremely excited Buffalonians. Some of these activities, such as an open house within a grain elevator and a ride on a National Historic Landmark fireboat, are highly unusual even for Buffalo.

While 2011 is proving to be a wonderful year for PBN and preservation in our region, and despite our tremendous progress, we still view Buffalo's preservation movement as a "glass half full."

A core belief of PBN is that a citywide, and especially a regional, preservation organization cannot undertake even a fraction of the preservation work that needs to be done. So, one of our strategies is to expose more and more people to historic preservation as a positive force with useful tools. Without question, preservation works best where its principles are deeply rooted and where vital efforts are initiated by a variety of people, organizations, and public agencies. So, our key job is to reinforce the work of others.

Through the Partners in the Field program, Andrea Rebeck, a preservation architect, is in her second year of working with preservation commissions, property owners, preservation organizations, and municipalities to give them basic information about preservation techniques, introduce them to appropriate people at the state, and provide a wide array of technical assistance. She works closely with our colleagues at the National Trust, SHPO staff, and the Preservation League of New York State, connecting people to information and other resources on grant programs, project review, Certified Local Government programs, or other needs. We provide information to people through workshops, and since 2010 we've been reaching a wide variety of constituents in the field of historic preservation. Topics for our workshops include:

- Using the upper floors of historic commercial buildings
- Promoting sustainable stewardship and energy conservation for historic buildings
- Using historic preservation techniques in neighborhoods
- Operating historic commissions (we recorded a video to share)
- Repairing cemetery markers

PBN was still new when New York State created investment tax credits for rehabilitation for both income-producing and owner-occupied structures. Working with SHPO and Preservation League staff, PBN organized a series of workshop on these credits in different cities and key neighborhoods; Buffalo homeowners responded with the largest number of owner-occupied tax credit projects in the state.

All Photos courtesy of Chuck LaChiusa, whose Buffalo Architecture and History web site, <http://buffaloab.com/>, is a trove of info on architectural styles, terms, furniture styles and, of course, Buffalo's architecture.

PBN is also undertaking historic preservation surveys and National Register nominations and has encouraged others to do so. Epitomizing preservation's ever changing frontiers, PBN is currently working with the Nash House Museum, an African-American historic site, to nominate Willert Park, a 1938 public housing project featuring WPA sculptures, to the National Register.

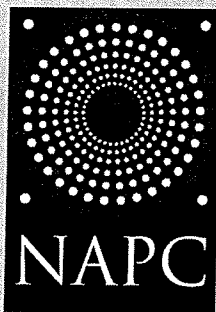
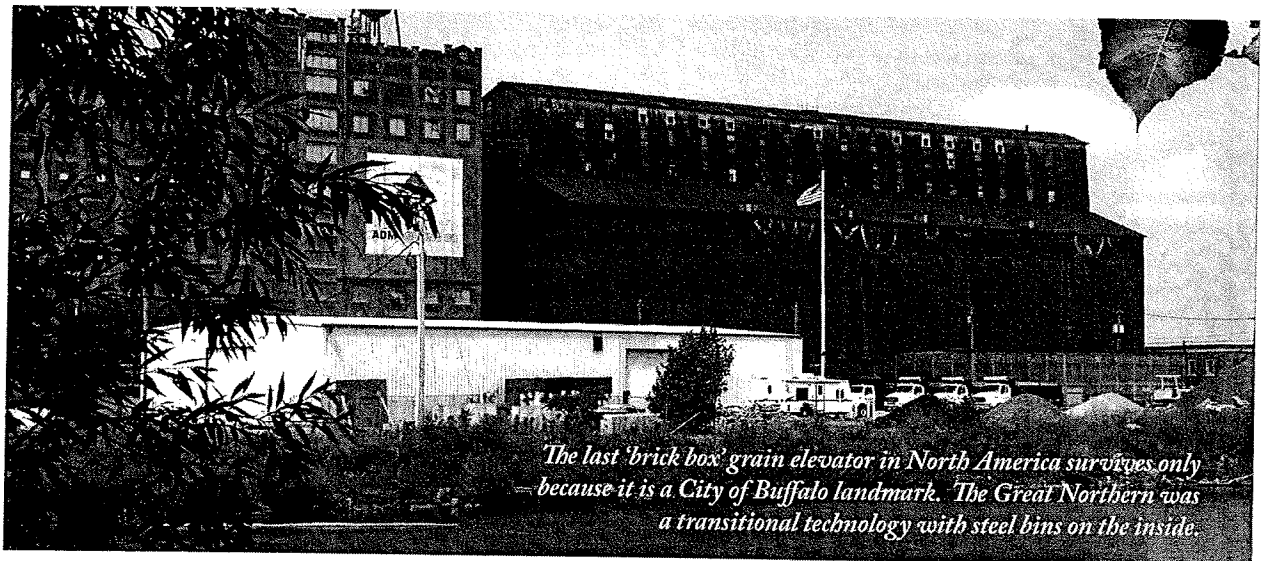
PBN has also greatly expanded its Buffalo Tours program, with a volunteer core of over 100 trained docents that show off Buffalo's downtown and neighborhoods through a wide variety of tours and events. While we are delighted to reinforce Buffalo as a tourist destination, our goal is to inform residents and visitors about the importance of our extraordinary architectural heritage.

Remarkably, these efforts – the workshops, the close working relationship with our state and local partners, expanded heritage education efforts and the provision of technical assistance – are largely new initiatives for Buffalo and its region. Also, until recently, there has been little effort to praise people and organizations that are doing outstanding

preservation work and hold them up as models. So, we will need to keep working for years into the future to reach more and more people, municipalities and organizations and excite them about the positive efforts they can undertake. For Buffalo, we believe there can be no better cause than historic preservation!

Historic preservation commissions will be vital in this effort, given their potential to list and protect historic resources at the village, town and city level. Our vision is to encourage more and more communities to recognize the benefits of historic preservation and realize the importance of having historic preservation commissions. As important, commissions themselves must be well-trained, articulate about the benefits and responsibilities of living in a locally designated historic district, helpful to the public as responsible stewards, and cognizant of their own responsibilities to use their powers fairly when dealing with the owners of historic properties.

Our goal is to have cities, villages and towns throughout our region truly embrace historic preservation, for our benefit as well as our children's, and for many future generations. **CS**



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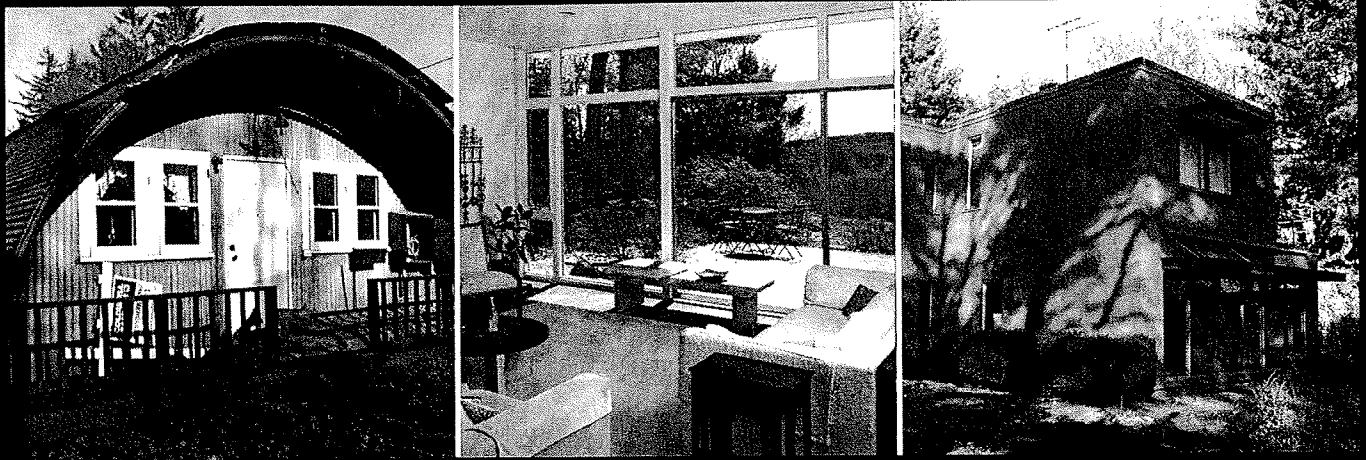
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What will preservation look like in the 21st century?



Looking Forward— Preservation in New England in the twenty-first century

Saturday, October 1, 9 AM–5 PM
Roger Williams University
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Join a new generation of preservationists as they articulate a vision for what is to be preserved in New England in the twenty-first century. Graduate students from the nation's top preservation programs explore topics in three different areas: evaluation, assessment, and interpretation; integrity and treatment; and advocacy and activism.

This symposium, the first of its kind, is sponsored by Historic New England in partnership with Roger Williams University. Having recently celebrated its centennial, Historic New England is committed to creating dialogue around the next hundred years of preservation in the region.

Keynote speaker:

Ned Kaufman, Ph.D., adjunct associate professor, Pratt Institute; director of research and training, Rafael Vinoly Architects, New York; and author of *Place, Race and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation* (Routledge, 2009)

For a detailed schedule, list of partners, and registration, please visit HistoricNewEngland.org/LookingForward.

This project has been funded in part by a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Antoinette Downing Preservation Fund for Rhode Island.


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Funding

With the fiscal year set to end on September 30th, a grim Interior spending bill stalled in the House with more than 200 amendments, a polarized Congress, a contentious Presidential election year about to start, and a 12-member Debt Reduction Committee appointed to find a way to cut spending before an arbitrary deadline does it for them, there is great uncertainty over what the final outcome will be for preservation funding.

Before leaving for summer recess, the House punted further consideration of H.R. 2584 - the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (which includes a number of preservation spending items) until they return in September. Hours of debate on the huge number of amendments proposed to the unpopular bill that in addition to making huge cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, would set funding for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) at \$49.5 million or 9% less than FY 2011, cut in half funding for National Heritage Areas, reduce National Park Service construction funds by 17.6% and reduce funding for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation by 6%. This of course comes one fiscal year after Congress cut more than 30% from the HPF by eliminating all funding for the Save America's Treasures program. Funding for Preserve America also was eliminated.

The Senate, which prior to the spending limit established by the debt ceiling deal had failed to pass a budget resolution, has not introduced an Interior spending bill at all. With time running short, there will likely need to be a series of Continuing Resolutions to keep the government operating until an agreement – heavily informed by the twelve-member Debt Reduction Committee (4 of which are members of the Congressional Historic Preservation Caucus) on or before their November 23rd deadline, can be reached. In the meantime, Preservation Action is encouraging its members to contact their legislators to emphasize the importance of preservation funding to not only heritage conservation, but to job creation and to acknowledge that while spending cuts may be the rule of the day, we should be sure not to disproportionately target our national heritage programs.

To learn more, visit the Preservation Action website at www.preservationaction.org.

Historic Tax Credit Bills Introduced

In July, Rep. Michael Turner (R-OH), and Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-MO) introduced H.R. 2555, the Historic Homeownership Revitalization Act, one week following the introduction of the Creating Prosperity Through Preservation Act (H.R. 2479) or CAPP introduced by Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL) and Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR).

The former bill, essentially the same as H.R. 3670 that was introduced but not passed in the 111th Congress, if enacted, will establish at long-last a historic tax credit of 20% (up to \$60,000) for homeowners of historic properties, and for developers of for-sale historic housing. Currently, the federal historic tax credit program is available only for developers of commercial properties. The latter bill, CAPP, is designed to make improvements to the existing Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program. Unlike the Community Restoration and Revitalization Act (H.R. 3715) that also did not pass in

the 111th Congress, this bill only has five key provisions: an increase in the tax credit for smaller projects, a provision making the credit more usable for non-profit organizations, an energy efficiency supplement, a clarification of the 50-year rule for the 10% non-historic older building credit, and a provision exempting the sale of state historic tax credits from federal income tax. Preservation Action is working with its partners and members to secure co-sponsors and support for these long sought-after pieces of legislation. More information and resources, visit www.preservationaction.org/tax.htm.

Federal Historic Preservation Program Task Force Releases Report

After more than a year of work and over 1,000 participants, the Federal Historic Preservation Program Task Force, convened by Preservation Action and the Preservation Action Foundation has released its report: *Aligned for Success: Recommendations for Increasing the Effectiveness of the Federal Historic Preservation Program*.

The report results from a consensus among national preservation organizations, including the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, that the administrative structure in place to ensure that America's "vital legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic, and energy benefits will be maintained and enriched for future generations," is not permitting the programs administered by the National Park Service to live up to their full potential. Further, a disproportionate focus on environmental and parks-based resources has led to stagnation in fulfilling the Federal mandate to also provide "maximum encouragement" for the preservation of significant historic resources that are privately owned. The result is unhelpful competition for resources, lack of program visibility, and a lack of innovation that is not serving either well.

Informed by historic research, several national listening sessions, more than 50 subject matter expert interviews, and an open survey that yielded more than 800 responses, the report provides a set of very reasonable and fiscally responsible recommendations to lay the foundation for more effective public-private partnerships, innovation, collaboration and accountability.

The four recommendations focus on simple changes to the cultural resources program area in the National Park Service, added visibility within the Department of Interior, representation on the President's Council on Environmental Quality and the appointment of a full-time Chair on the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The organizational members of the Task Force are Preservation Action, the Preservation Action Foundation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, the National Trust Community Investment Corporation, the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, the Alliance of National Heritage Areas, the American Cultural Resources Association, the Historic Tax Credit Coalition, the U.S. National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, and the Society for Historical Archaeology.

The full report, research findings and more information about the Task Force can be downloaded at www.preservationaction.org.



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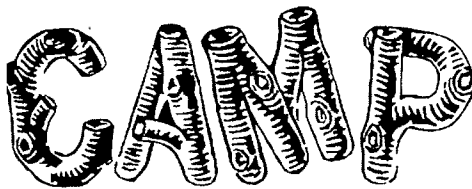
Questions? 202.637.7873, mail@preservationaction.org

Membership Application

You can download this application form at preservationaction.org

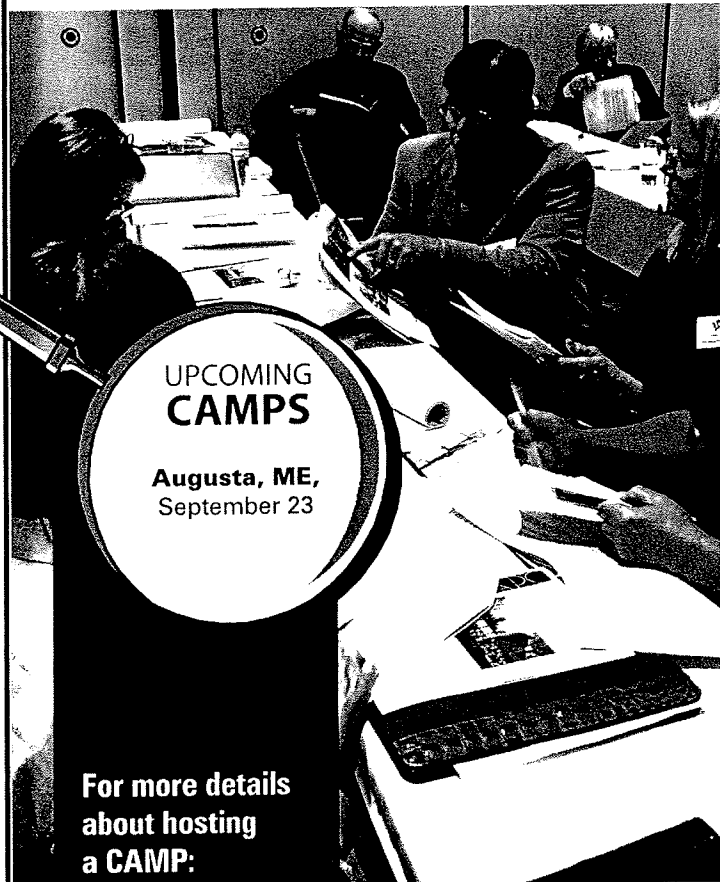
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1. The legal framework of local preservation
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4. Public support and outreach

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One-Day CAMP features three nationally recognized experts and focuses on preservation commission fundamentals that every commission member should understand. The customized curriculum includes Legal Issues, Standards and Guidelines, and two additional topics from the CAMP Menu.

COSTS:

\$2,500 + speaker expenses + \$55/participant

DAY AND A HALF

The customized Day-and-a-Half CAMP curriculum includes preservation commission fundamentals and builds upon them to explore more topics in greater detail. Four nationally recognized experts explore Legal Issues, Standards and Guidelines and four additional topics from the CAMP Menu.

COSTS:

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Downtown

Glamour, El Cortez Style



Rendering of a spiffed-up El Cortez.

By **Xania Woodman**

August 18th, 2011

Before it turns 70 this November, El Cortez is getting all gussied up. On Sept. 1 the new Parlour Bar & Lounge debuts at the heart of the casino floor. The redundantly named Lounge Bar has undergone a tasteful overhaul, leaving intact classic touches including the brass ceiling panels and the vintage rope lights. Otherwise, it's a whole new bar.

Gone is the horseshoe bar. Instead, guests can choose between small groupings of leather club chairs and sofas with cocktail tables or the seven-stool granite gaming bar. Warm chandelier lighting plays off smoked mirrors and shows off the deeply stained wood finishes. Velvet curtains can be closed or drawn back to reveal the room to the casino. "It's timeless and rich, yet you won't necessarily know that this is a new bar," says Alexandra Epstein, executive manager.

At the bar, a classic cocktail menu offers libation of the Ramos Gin Fixx, Brandy Alexander and Singapore Sling variety, courtesy of Southern Wine & Spirits' mixology director Armando Rosario. Nothing is off the liquor gun; every spirit is premium or super-premium.

So is the average El Cortez loyal ready for \$8 cocktails? Yes, says food and beverage director John Civitello. He's been testing out prices, menus and promotions on the property, and he is confident the customer sees the quality. This will also close the gap between the traditionally price-sensitive casino barfly and the more brand- and image-conscious Fremont East imbibers.

El Cortez's restoration began five years ago with the creation of Jackie Gaughan Plaza and the casino's new porte-cochere. Next came The Flame Steakhouse, guest room upgrades and the Cabana Suites renovation. Following The Parlour, El Cortez will receive a paint job (pictured) and a pool at the Cabana Suites. The Parlour is just one, Epstein says, "in a series of steps El Cortez is making to be a part of the changes going on in the neighborhood."

Eureka serves as quaint diversion en route to Elko



DEBORAH WALL/CERCA CONTRIBUTOR

The Eureka Opera House, next to the restored Jackson House Hotel, was built in 1889

BY DEBORAH WALL
CERCA CONTRIBUTOR

Posted: Aug. 28, 2011 | 2:01 a.m.
Updated: Aug. 28, 2011 | 9:40 a.m.

Earlier this summer a friend and I headed to the northeastern region of our state to enjoy its cooler climate, taste a big dose of somewhere different, visit historic sites and view some of the finest scenery the American West has to offer. Our main destination was Elko, but for a change from the usual route up the state's east side, we looped west from Ely, passing through the historic mining town of Eureka. It added only about half an hour to the driving and gave us more than enough new experiences to compensate.

During its heyday in the late 1870s, Eureka boasted a population of more than 9,000; now only about 500 live there. But the town doesn't have the look of a place about to blow away. It's still the administrative seat of a relatively prosperous mining and ranching county, and its location on U.S. Highway 50 means there are a couple of modern motels and lively bar/restaurants. The town's main attraction for casual visitors is the clear visibility of its 19th-century beginnings.



The Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway travels 12 miles into the picturesque Ruby Mountains. DEBORAH WALL/CERCA CONTRIBUTOR

has preserved the integrity of its history," explained Andrea Rossman, the cultural, tourism and economic development director for the county.

The Eureka Sentinel Museum may be unique in the West. Eureka's daily newspaper was published in the same building from 1879 to 1960, and that building became, almost by accident, a time capsule representing all small newspapers of the era, one in which they were extraordinarily important. Typecases and tools lie about, as if the printers might return from lunch and get back to work. Job-printing samples are pasted to the wall, advertising events and political campaigns finished two lifetimes ago.

The most important events were held at the Eureka Opera House, built in 1889 but lately restored and now open for tours. We spent most of our time here, learning how America's far-flung frontier cities managed to have an aspect of live entertainment and high culture. Operas, concerts, plays, dances and speeches were presented here. The old-fashioned oleo curtain, bearing advertisements for vanished local businesses, still hangs over the stage. Nowadays, musical tours occasionally stop here, drawing rural families from much of the state, and the building also hosts small conventions and business meetings.

We made it to Elko by late afternoon with the sun at our backs, making the isolated city glow like a pretty seashell on the shore of a sagebrush sea. Elko proved not only an agreeable place to kick back for a couple of days but a great base camp for exploring the majestic Ruby Mountains.

While American Indians had lived in this region for thousands of years, fur trappers were the first white men to set foot here. By the 1840s, settlers were heading west following the Humboldt River. But it wasn't until the Central Pacific Railroad laid track in 1868 that the community came together. Elko became a county seat the following year.

After arriving in town, we took a self-guided walking tour around town. A good place to start is the old Sherman Station Ranch House, which serves as the Chamber of Commerce and visitor center. Here you can pick up maps and brochures and other information you might need for your visit.

The ranch house is made of limber pine logs, 2 feet thick. Completed in 1903, it originally stood about 60 miles south of Elko and was used at various times as a private home, post office, stage stop and community center. It was relocated here in 1998. We also took a look around at the authentic outbuildings on the property; the most interesting were a one-room schoolhouse, a livery stable and a blacksmith shop.

Just a couple of minutes' walk from here we found the Northeastern Nevada Museum. Exhibits here focus on mining, ranching and the railroad as well as two ethnic cultures that remain important here: Basque and American Indian. They also have many fine collections including some G.S. Garcia saddles, once made in Elko and still adored by Western horsemen. There is an unusually well-preserved collection of antique firearms, too.

The museum also houses the Wanamaker Wildlife Wing, which has the state's largest collection of wild animals from around the world, preserved by taxidermy. There are approximately 300 animals, ranging from those native to Nevada to some from Africa and Australia.

The historic Pioneer Hotel has become perhaps the best-known place in Elko, thanks to its role as headquarters of the Western Folklife Center and at the heart of the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, an annual celebration of life in the rural West. Many Western towns present cowboy poetry events nowadays, but this

one started the custom in 1986. Reciting one's work here is the buckaroo bard equivalent of an appearance at Carnegie Hall.

The center has an exhibit gallery, 300-seat theater, 20-seat black box theater, gift shop and a working saloon.

Elko is home to many people of Basque descent. They first immigrated to the western United States in the 1850s, hailing from rural parts of northern Spain and France. Many came to work originally as sheepherders. There are a couple of fine Basque restaurants in town, and no visit to Elko would be complete without a hearty meal at one of them.

My favorite Basque restaurant is the Star Hotel, which originally opened in 1910 to serve Basque herdsman. It offers a variety of entrees such as beefsteak, lamb and seafood, but we were really looking forward to the side dishes. We were first served a vegetable soup and bread, then a salad with a great creamy garlic dressing. The beef main course came with skinny French fries, green beans and seasoned red beans. There was a lot of everything. We were so well-fed, we passed on dessert.

We even ordered the traditional Basque drink, Picon Punch. They pour the glass about three-quarters full with Picon (a bitter orange cordial), then add a shot of brandy. They top it off with a twist of lemon and a splash of soda, the only nonalcoholic ingredients. It has quite a strong flavor, and I couldn't drink the entire glass.

The next morning we were up at dawn and set out for the western foothills of the Ruby Mountains. Here, about 23 miles from Elko, we found the picturesque community of Lamoille. Primarily consisting of cattle and sheep ranches and private residences, it also is home to the Community Presbyterian Church. Best known as the Little Church of the Crossroads, it is more than 100 years old and one of the most charming churches you might ever come across. So charming, in fact, it is one of the most photographed churches in Nevada.

After photographing the church and taking a stroll along the town's quiet streets, we set out to drive the celebrated Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway. The road travels 12 miles into the Ruby Mountains through granite cliffs, waterfalls and alpine lakes, all within a stunning landscape that reminds me more of the Swiss Alps than the Great Basin. With winter snowfalls averaging 8 to 10 feet, this is one of the wettest and lushest places in Nevada's mountains. The place is stunning any time of year, but it should achieve glory about the first week of October, when aspens and other deciduous trees start bursting into fall color.

There is plenty of wildlife to see, including mountain goats, rare or unseen elsewhere in Nevada, and the Rocky Mountain bighorn. If you're a birder, this might be the place to add a real celebrity sighting to your life list: the exotic Himalayan snowcock. Native to Central Asia, these birds were introduced here beginning in 1963 and are very wary; just seeing one is an accomplishment.

When we reached the end of the byway, called Roads End, and at 8,800 feet in elevation, we headed out on foot to the main trailhead. There are plenty of excellent day hikes from here, including a few that take you up to picturesque alpine lakes. If you have the time and want a little more adventure, I would highly recommend taking the Ruby Crest National Recreation Trail. It starts from here and travels about 43 miles south along the range to Harrison Pass. Most people complete it in five or six days as a through hike.

After leaving Lamoille Canyon, we headed down through Mound Valley and up and over the Ruby Mountains to Ruby Valley and Ruby National Wildlife Refuge. From now to early autumn, it is a treat to drive, but in winter, heavy snow makes this route impassable. There are other routes to the refuge, but all of them involve a dozen miles or more of gravel roads.

Containing almost 40,000 acres, the refuge is mostly meadows, ponds, marshes and grassland and serves as an important migratory stop and nesting area for big flocks of waterfowl, besides many other birds.

The Elko County Fair opened Friday and runs through Labor Day.

Elko is at an elevation of 5,060 feet, so late summer and early fall temperatures are ideal, averaging daytime highs in the 70s and 80s. If you put it off too long you'll find the weather nippy, but even winter in Elko is suitable for the fine times of the Cowboy Poetry Gathering, and maybe another Picon Punch.

GETTING THERE

Location: Elko, in Northeast Nevada, about 427 miles from Las Vegas.

Directions: From Las Vegas take Interstate 15 north for 21 miles, exiting onto U.S. Highway 93 north, the Great Basin Highway. Follow for 85 miles and go left and then an immediate right onto state Route 318. Follow this north for 111 miles. Turn right onto U.S. Highway 6 and travel for 24 miles to Ely. Go west onto U.S. Highway 50 for about 77 miles to Eureka. From Eureka, continue west on U.S. 50 for about 3 miles and go right onto state Route 278. Follow for about 87 miles to Carlin. Take Interstate 80 east and drive about 17 miles to Elko.

Lodging: Red Lion Hotel and Casino, 2065 Idaho St.. (800) 545-0044. www.redlion.rdn.com. Comfort Inn, 2940 Idaho St.. (800) 228-5150. www.comfortinn.com. Thunderbird Motel, 345 Idaho St. (775) 738-7115. www.thunderbirdmotelko.com.

Services: Elko has complete services, including a wide variety of restaurants, lodging and service stations and a hospital and an airport.

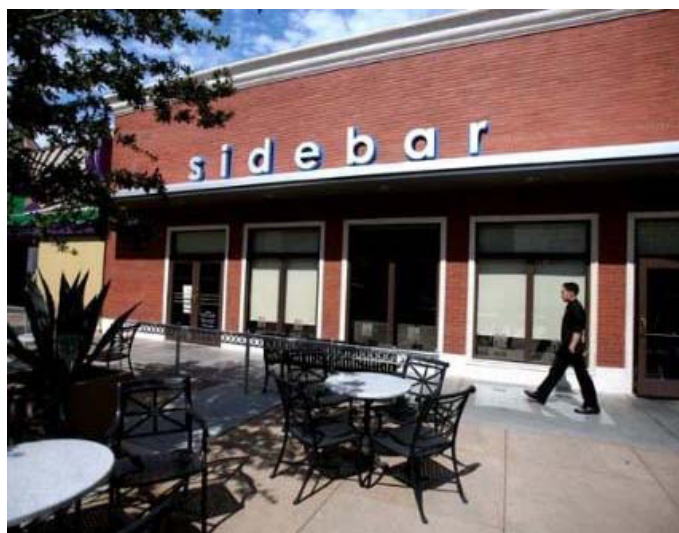
Northeastern Nevada Museum: 1515 Idaho St.. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and 1-5 p.m. Sundays. (775)738-3418. www.museum-elko.us.

Western Folklife Center: Open 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays. 501 Railroad Street. (775) 738-7508. www.westernfolklife.org.

Elko Convention and Visitors Authority: 700 Moren Way. (800) 248-3556, www.exploreelko.com.

Elko Chamber of Commerce and Sherman Station Visitor Center: 1405 Idaho

Lounge to morph into Mob Bar before museum opening



JEFF SCHEID/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Triple George host Anthony Sandoval walks by the Sidebar, 201 N. Third St. The bar plans to transform into the Mob Bar to take advantage of the opening of the Las Vegas Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement, aka The Mob Museum.
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BY BENJAMIN SPILLMAN
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Aug. 29, 2011 | 1:59 a.m.
Updated: Aug. 29, 2011 | 8:04 a.m.

Las Vegas' city-sponsored shrine to its mobbed-up roots is making a mark downtown and it hasn't even opened.

Sidebar, a quiet, upscale lounge on Third Street, is planning a makeover into a 1920s-style supper club in an effort to capitalize on the scheduled February opening of the city-funded Mob Museum.

When it opens as Mob Bar on Dec. 5 -- the 78th anniversary of the repeal of the 18th Amendment that outlawed alcohol -- the ambiance will include a dark, shrub-shaded facade, vintage decor and Italian food from recipes and ingredients that would have been common during the 1920s.

The idea is to tap into the enthusiasm, and wallets, of people who come to Las Vegas nostalgic for the days when a hostile takeover involved baseball bats



purchase offers.

LADY LUCK REDUX HOPED FOR

It will be the first major change on Third Street since property owner CIM Group hired Fifth Street Gaming to operate the bars and restaurants near the shuttered Lady Luck.

CIM Group and Fifth Street Gaming, which control Third Street between Ogden and Stewart avenues, are working to re open the Lady Luck under a new name and attract more foot traffic from the Fremont Street Experience, and are betting the city's Mob Museum will help.



Other new mafia-tinged attractions include the Mob Experience at the Tropicana.
JERRY HENKEL/LAS VEGAS
REVIEW-JOURNAL
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Fifth Street Gaming CEO Seth Schorr, 34, a longtime Las Vegas who spent part of his childhood living in the Golden Nugget, said he expects the mob theme to grow in popularity now that the mainstream gambling industry is far enough removed from the days when mobsters siphoned pre-tax cash from the count rooms.

In addition to the pending Mob Bar, which has a license for unrestricted gambling, other mafia-tinged attractions tied to casinos include the Mob Experience at the Tropicana on the Strip and Oscar's at the Plaza Hotel downtown, a steakhouse named for former Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman, who rose to prominence as a defense lawyer for notorious Las Vegas mobsters.

"You couldn't do this in the early 1980s because there were still (mob) remnants in the early '80s," said Schorr, whose father, Marc Schorr, is a longtime associate of Steve Wynn dating back to Wynn's days operating the Golden Nugget downtown. "Now I think we have the opportunity to look back from where we are to that era."

The Mob Bar will focus on the 1920s, an era that predates legalized gambling in Nevada and the rise of organized crime in Las Vegas.

Some of the period decor will include vintage fixtures and old-timey touches like tabletop cigarette lighters, Schorr said.

AUTHENTIC AMBIANCE

The food will come from the kitchen of the attached Triple George restaurant, but the Mob Bar will have its own menu.

Triple George chef Ro Fernandez said the menu will include dishes such as Al Capone braciolo, a steak pounded thin and stuffed with prosciutto, pepperoni and mozzarella cheese roasted and served with tomato sauce; and a chicken piccata sauteed with olive oil, lemon, white wine, mushrooms, parsley, capers and chicken broth.

Fernandez and Schorr said the plan is to keep the dishes simple and fresh and the ambiance authentic so guests get a true taste of the period.

"This is a place that a gangster would have gone to, not a theme place about a gangster," Schorr said.

It remains to be seen whether the property can accomplish more as the Mob Bar than it did as Sidebar when it comes to attracting foot traffic downtown.

While the block of Third Street where it's located is visible from the

Fremont East, the stretch of bars on Fremont between the canopy and the El Cortez.

Tim Dressen, 39, a frequent Las Vegas visitor from Minneapolis who operates the website www.FremontStreetBars.com, said the makeover is a good idea because Sidebar doesn't have a strong identity.

"They each tend to have kind of a unique schtick," Dressen said of Fremont East bars like Insert Coins, a video game lounge, and Beauty Bar, which features live music and a 1950s salon decor. "Whereas Sidebar, there's not really anything in and of itself that is its own."

Monica Miranda, 25, of Las Vegas, a former Sidebar bartender and a customer, said the challenge will be to attract tourists drawn to the Mob Museum without alienating locals who already frequent Third Street.

"As long as they don't go too theme-y ... I don't think the regulars would mind a little bit more action," she said.

Contact reporter Benjamin Spillman at bspillman@reviewjournal.com or 702-229-6435.

Downtown looking up for restaurateurs



JERRY HENKEL/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Customers wait for their orders in the dining area of The Verdict's Inn in downtown Las Vegas. The cafe features a whimsical courts-and-legal theme to reflect the neighborhood. » [Buy this photo](#)

BY HEIDI KNAPP RINELLA
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Aug. 31, 2011 | 2:00 a.m.
Updated: Aug. 31, 2011 | 1:45 p.m.

If you haven't been downtown lately, this may come as a surprise: There are a lot of places to eat, many of them mom-and-pop spots. In most cases, they're owned by people who flew into a leap of faith on not only the economy in general but the future of downtown as well.

One of the newest is The Verdict's Inn, at 801 Las Vegas Blvd. South, which opened for business in February and had its official grand opening in April. Maggie Cupp, owner ("one of them ..."), said it was the idea of being downtown that drove the concept for the restaurant, which has a whimsical courts-and-legal theme.

"We definitely wanted to be downtown," Cupp said. "We just wanted to be part of the new stuff happening. We wanted to be part of the excitement of the revitalization."

One of the oldest is Dona Maria, at 910 Las Vegas Blvd. South, which opened in 1991.

More Photos



Shannon Laviguer readies her scooter for a delivery outside The Verdict's Inn at 801 Las Vegas Blvd. South. The restaurant provides delivery service via the scooters to nearby businesses. JERRY

HENKEL/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL » [Buy this photo](#)



manager. "Downtown's been great to us. I think it's just the vibe, the different kinds of customers we get -- attorneys, judges and office people during the day, and at night we get the tourists."

But from the Dona Maria vantage point of 20 years, Johnson has seen good times and bad.

"It's really up and down," she said. "I think (former mayor Oscar) Goodman, when he was in office, he really tried to revitalize downtown, and I think he did a good job. But it goes through phases. Sometimes it can be a little scary. There's a lot of movement."

Right now, Johnson is optimistic.

"I would say it's on the up, for sure," she said, adding that Dona Maria's is looking forward to Zappos' move to the current Las Vegas City Hall after the new city hall opens.

Ali Imtiaz, owner of the Kabob Korner at 507 Fremont St., is optimistic as well. Kabob Korner opened six years ago, and in October Imtiaz took a flier and opened the Maharaja Hookah Cafe across the street at 506 Fremont.

Imtiaz said when Kabob Korner opened, downtown didn't have much in the way of restaurants that weren't in casinos or didn't serve fast food. That has changed in the ensuing years, and he sees more change coming. The Zappos move is expected to bring more than 1,000 employees downtown, and "we'll need more restaurants to serve those people," he said.

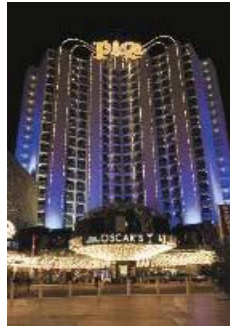
"There's a lot of big changes coming to downtown," he said. "Other businesses are coming as well."

"It's very good change," he said, mentioning newcomers including the Don't Tell Mama piano bar at 517 Fremont St. and Insert Coins, an arcade lounge at 512 Fremont St. "There are a lot of people standing outside and going in there on Fridays and Saturdays."

The Beat Coffeehouse in the Emergency Arts Building at 512 Fremont St. has been open only about a year and a half, but managing partner Jennifer Cornthwaite said she has seen immense change in that time.

"When I think about what everything looked like in January 2010, which is when this project started, we're talking about having no Ogden (residential project) open, no Insert Coins open," she said. The Plaza would close later that year for renovations, and Cornthwaite said that despite being friends with the Plaza's operators, "I wasn't convinced that things were really going to move forward."

That's clear now, with the Plaza's official opening scheduled for Thursday and more projects having become reality or under way. Among other landmarks Cornthwaite cited were Resnicks Grocery, an "urban bodega" at 900 Las Vegas Blvd. South, and Artifice Urban Lounge, 1025 First St., both of which opened earlier this year and helped drive traffic for local restaurants, and Bar + Bistro, which opened in the Arts Factory at 101 E. Charleston Blvd. in March 2010. La Thai, from the former owner of Mix Zone Cafe, is due to open soon directly across from Emergency Arts, she said. In



Oscar's Steakhouse will be one of the new restaurants that will open in the remodeled Plaza hotel downtown.

development.

An enterprising soul has even opened a hot-dog-and-sandwich stand in the parking lot of Gold and Silver Pawn Shop, 713 Las Vegas Blvd. South, site of the History channel's "Pawn Stars" and itself responsible for an increase in downtown tourism.

Cornthwaite's husband, Michael, is the owner of the Downtown Cocktail Room, which opened five years ago, and is a consultant on the Plaza, which is opening with several new restaurants.

"We had a few years where we weren't quite sure; I don't think anybody was quite sure in the country, and I think downtown was the exact same way," she said. "I think they thought, 'This will come around in three or four years.' The crazy economy just put everything on hold; 2008 and 2009 were super-tough and we didn't know what to do."

Now, she said, "our position is OK. Fingers crossed and knock on wood, we're slowly growing."

Cupp said she sees business growing as well.

"There's such opportunity down here for so much," she said. "We've touched it so little."

It seems that Goodman's brand of evangelism was a point of faith for many business owners.

"Of course, he has been the driving point for downtown for so long," she said. "We believed in him; we believed in his theory. We believe downtown is where it's going to happen. This is very much city, very much urban. There's a heartbeat down here that's different than the Strip.

"And now -- thank God -- with Carolyn Goodman, it can't not be great. I think Oscar left a little bit too early because he set the plan in action. Carolyn has the benefit of seeing those seeds grow. It's exciting down here. It really is."

Cornthwaite said that while much of what's driving growth downtown is big business -- Zappos, the Ogden, the Plaza -- most of the restaurant owners don't fit that description.

"This isn't side money," she said. "We're not rich people. We're just every day saying, 'OK, this month we can pay our mortgage.' There are so many people, including us, who are all in.

"We're of course really excited about Zappos coming in and the Plaza opening. We're all just kind of in a state where we're trying to work as hard as we can and support each other and keep it moving."

Contact reporter Heidi Knapp Rinella at hrinella@reviewjournal.com or 702-383-0474.



Plaza set to reopen Thursday after massive renovations

BY CHRIS SIEROTY
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Aug. 31, 2011 | 9:37 a.m.

The Plaza, which has been a hip downtown spot since 1971, returns Thursday with its grand reopening after a year of renovations.

The upgraded hotel will feature new guest rooms, suites, new bars, restaurants and entertainment options. Beginning next year, the Plaza will introduce mobile gaming after reaching a deal with Cantor Gaming, the hotel's parent company said Wednesday.

Terms of the "exclusive long-term" deal were not disclosed.

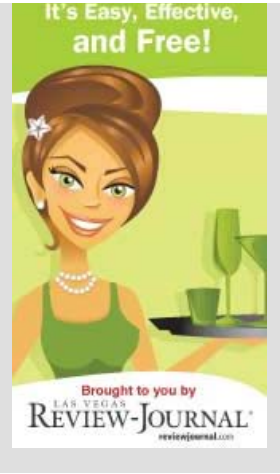
"We are excited to offer a fully refurbished race and sports book next year," said Tony Santo, president and CEO of Santo Gaming, operator of the Plaza.

The Plaza's opening on Thursday is just in time for college football. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas opens its 2011 season at 5 p.m. PST Thursday as a 35-point underdog against Wisconsin, according to Cantor Gaming.

"We are thrilled and honored that the Plaza has chosen us as its long-term partner, further demonstrating and expanding our leadership position in creating a unique sports trading experience in Las Vegas," said Lee Amaitis, president and CEO of Cantor Gaming.

Amaitis said the new sports book will include mobile gaming, in-running betting, which allows for wagers during games, and other gambling options.

Contact reporter Chris Sieroty at csieroty@reviewjournal.com or 702-477-3893.



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tvegas wrote on *August 31, 2011 11:25 AM:*

Sports trading experience? hahaha!

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tvegas wrote on *August 31, 2011 11:20 AM:*

Plaza hip? When?

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gehrig wrote on *August 31, 2011 11:07 AM:*

mebbe they finally changed the rugs. or at least turned them upside down. carpeting isn't supposed to be shiny. and if they again set up the faro game back by the cage, i'll stop in.

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Mark.Henderson wrote on *August 31, 2011 10:55 AM:*

I wonder if they did away with the stench this casino had for decades.

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Blue Man Group | Wed. 8/31 7:00 p.m.

Zumanity... | Fri. 9/9 7:30 p.m.

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Las Vegas' Decatur Boulevard's history pulls from the Navy

BY JESSICA FRYMAN
VIEW STAFF WRITER

Posted: Sep. 6, 2011 | 12:17 a.m.

Nearly 25 miles long, Decatur Boulevard is a major staple for Las Vegas commuters traveling north-south in the city. Nestled in the west, it crosses the Las Vegas Beltway twice and is divided by U.S. Highway 95. The boulevard, running from West Cactus Avenue and past Iron Mountain Road, provides access to hundreds of businesses, half a dozen parks or community centers, a college campus and an airport.

The street's roots are equally deep. The boulevard was named for Decatur, Ill., which honors naval war hero Stephen Decatur Jr.

In the 1930s, Leonard Frechette moved to Las Vegas and worked for the Union Pacific Railroad, according to Mark Hall-Patton's book "Asphalt Memories." Frechette and his wife lived on Vegas Drive at the corner of what is now Decatur Boulevard and were one of two families on the street.

"The Carrs were not interested in naming the street, so Frechette did," according to Hall-Patton's street history book.

Frechette lived there until 1977, when he moved to California. His home was difficult to tear down after it was sold, as it was made of railroad ties, Hall-Patton wrote.

Details on whether Frechette had any connections to Decatur, Ill., are not included in the brief history of how the street was named.

Decatur, Ill., a town about 46 square miles, is three hours south of Chicago and two hours northeast of St. Louis by car. About 75,000 people lived there in 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The town was also the first Illinois home of Abraham Lincoln, who settled just west of

Naming Las Vegas

The history behind the naming of various streets, parks, schools, public facilities and other landmarks in the Las Vegas Valley will continue to be explored in a series of feature stories appearing in View editions published on the first Tuesday of every month. If you're curious about how or why something got its name, post a comment on our Facebook page, facebook.com/viewnews, or email sblust@viewnews.com. Thanks for reading View.

Decatur in 1830 with his family.

Stephen Decatur Jr., of Maryland, joined the Navy as a midshipman in 1798. He was promoted to lieutenant the following year.

In 1803, he commanded the vessel Enterprise and captured the enemy ship Mastico, according to his U.S. Navy biography.

It was taken into the U.S. Navy under the name Intrepid. Decatur then used it for an 1804 night raid of Tripoli harbor, destroying a former U.S. ship that had been captured.

The successful operation made Decatur "an immediate national hero," according to the Naval Historical Center. He later became a captain and led dozens of other missions over the next eight years, including the capture of the British ship Macedonian in 1812. He persuaded Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli to sign peace treaties in 1815. Five years later, he died of injuries from a duel with a brother officer. The U.S. Navy has named five ships in Decatur's honor.

Contact Southwest/Spring Valley View reporter Jessica Fryman at jfryman@viewnews.com or 380-4535.

Las Vegas secures \$5.5 million for Mob Museum construction

Funding coming from state in historic tax equity credits

By **Dave Toplikar (contact)**

Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2011 | 12:16 p.m.

About \$10.6 million in historic tax credit equity — including \$5.5 for construction costs — is expected to be brought in over the next five years to help pay for the \$42 million Mob Museum in downtown Las Vegas.

That funding is being secured thanks to action taken today by the Las Vegas City Council along with efforts by the 300 Stewart Avenue Corp., the nonprofit organization overseeing the museum.

The Mob Museum, which is being constructed in the former post office and federal building at 300 Stewart, is thought to be the largest project to receive historic tax credits in Nevada, according to the state Historic Preservation Office.

Because the funds won't be available until next year, part of today's council action was to reallocate to the museum \$2.5 million in funds previously set aside for the Regional Public Safety Complex so the museum construction costs can be paid this year.

Under today's action, the city will be compensated for the \$2.5 million in 2012, when the city receives \$5.5 million in tax credit equity for its role as developer of the Mob Museum.

The remaining amount of the \$10.6 million in historic tax credit equity will be distributed to an affiliate of the nonprofit 300 SAC, which is expected to manage the museum when it opens next year. The museum's construction funding is coming through a variety of sources: local, state and federal grants, matching grants and the city's redevelopment agency.

The Mob Museum, dedicated to the history of organized crime and law enforcement, will feature interactive exhibits when it opens Feb. 14, 2012. Much of the focus has been on how law enforcement defeated and continues to battle organized crime.

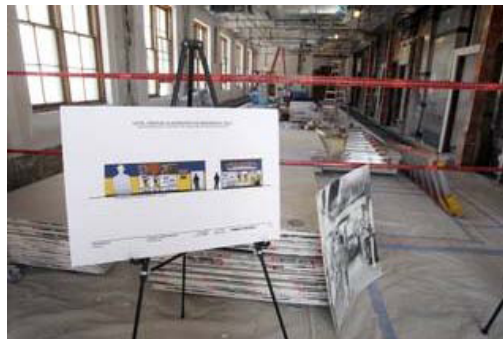
The 41,000-square-foot museum is expected to draw hundreds of thousands of tourists to the downtown area when it opens.

It includes about 16,800 square feet of exhibition space on three floors in addition to a specialty retail store, special event areas, educational areas and office space.

Mob Museum



Mob Museum Media Tour



Mob Museum to advance with tax credits

BY DOUG MCMURDO
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Sep. 7, 2011 | 6:14 p.m.

The mob always knew there was money to be made in Las Vegas. Now Las Vegas is ready to make some money off the mob.

A big step was taken in that direction Wednesday when the City Council approved several agreements intended to move the Mob Museum project forward in downtown Las Vegas.

Because the museum is housed on Stewart Avenue in the first post office and courthouse built in the city, the city and the affiliated nonprofit organization, the 300 Stewart Avenue Corp., are eligible for historic tax credits, which are made available when municipalities breathe new life into historic structures.

The City Council voted unanimously to accept \$10.6 million in the equity credits, with \$5.5 million due the city for its role as project developer and the remainder going to the 300 Stewart Avenue Corp., which will manage the museum.

But the tax credit money won't be available until next year. To keep the project moving along, the City Council also agreed to reallocate \$2.5 million from the Regional Public Safety Complex.

The complex, now in its infancy, will help the county's multiple jurisdictions train for and respond to emergencies.

Funding for the complex won't be needed until next year, and when it is, the city will replace it with tax credit funds.

The Mob Museum will cost \$42 million. Dedicated to the history of organized crime and the police officers who hunted and hounded them for decades, the museum is expected to draw 600,000 visitors a year after it opens Feb. 14, 2012 -- the 83rd anniversary of the infamous St. Valentine's Day Massacre.

Seven men were gunned down in a Chicago garage. Most were members of Bugs Moran's gang.

Al Capone is generally credited with masterminding the violent Prohibition-era crime.

Contact Doug McMurdo at dmcmurdo@reviewjournal.com or 702-

Shakespeare troupe moving downtown to Reed Whipple Center



JESSICA EBELHAR/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Las Vegas Shakespeare Company actors Morgan Hill, left, Wester Cooley, Cory Goble and Louisa Lawson rehearse a scene from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at Opportunity Village on Wednesday. The troupe will move into the Reed Whipple Cultural Center. » [Buy this photo](#)

BY DOUG MCMURDO
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Sep. 7, 2011 | 6:44 p.m.
Updated: Sep. 8, 2011 | 9:06 a.m.

All the world's a stage, says a character in William Shakespeare's comedy "As You Like It."

For the Las Vegas Shakespeare Company, that stage is soon to be the Reed Whipple Cultural Center.

The Las Vegas City Council on Wednesday enthusiastically approved turning over the center to the acting troupe, bringing high culture to downtown and saving taxpayer money at the same time.

Artistic Director Dan Decker told Mayor Carolyn Goodman and council members that his award-winning company will keep seven full-time employees year-round and will hire as many as 200 part-time workers whenever a production gears up -- six or more times a year.

But council members seemed more interested in having a tenant for one of its more important but vacant venues in the

The Shakespeare Company will pay only \$10 a year to rent the facility, but taxpayers will be off the hook for about \$300,000 a year in building and grounds maintenance costs, city officials said.

Councilmen Steve Ross and Stavros Anthony were so thrilled, they ponied up \$10 to pay the first year's rent.

"This will give people another reason to come downtown," said Ross, who noted the area already has the Neon Boneyard, Las Vegas Natural History Museum, Old Las Vegas Mormon State Historic Fort and Cashman Center.

The Rainbow Company Youth Theatre, a city-sponsored group, and the private Las Vegas Youth Orchestra were the most recent occupants of the center, but budget woes led to their departure last summer.

Decker said any changes to the interior of the building would be cosmetic because it already has staging, lighting and a sound system.

"We're not going to tear down any walls," he said.

He hopes to reconfigure the seating to make it more flexible for directors and increase capacity from about 275 to 400.

The move also will allow the company to centralize its far-flung operations. Rehearsals now are held at Opportunity Village on Buffalo Drive; the office is downtown; and stage props are warehoused off Interstate 15 near the Las Vegas Speedway.

Once retrofitting of the center is complete, performances will start next year with an expanded schedule.

Decker and his troupe will continue educational outreach to students in the Clark County School District and clients at Opportunity Village.

While council members seemed excited about reopening the Whipple Center, they became more so after actors Cory Goble and Louisa Lemos gave them a taste of the talent when they performed a scene from "Romeo and Juliet."

Councilwoman Lois Tarkanian said the community is "hungry" for what Decker's company offers.

Councilman Ricki Barlow, who revealed he was a theater major in college, said, "This is big cultural news for our city."

The first production is scheduled for April.

"The whole community is invited to come join the adventure," Decker said.

And if Shakespeare isn't your cup of tea, the company also will put on musicals, new works and a holiday program, Decker said.

Contact reporter Doug McMurdo at dmcmurdo@reviewjournal.com or 702-224-5512.

After 30 years, Ethel M celebrates its sweet sameness



LEILA NAVIDI

Chocolates for sale at Ethel M Chocolate Factory in Henderson on Thursday, Aug. 25, 2011.

By [Conor Shine \(contact\)](#)

Thursday, Sept. 8, 2011 | 2 a.m.

When billionaire candy tycoon Forrest Mars Sr. retired and moved to Henderson in the late 1970s, the man who invented M&Ms and the Mars bar wanted to make chocolates distinct from the ones that made him a fortune.

The man, referred to as a “modern day Willie Wonka” and the “Howard Hughes of candy,” chose a spot near Sunset Road and Mountain Vista Street and opened a gourmet chocolate factory named in honor of his mother.

When [Ethel M Chocolates](#) opened in 1981, it was surrounded by desert. Henderson’s population was a fraction of what it is today. Although the city around it has changed dramatically and its proprietor has died, 30 years later the factory is

Ethel M Chocolates



still making high-quality chocolates using the same recipes as the day it opened.

From the Ethel M Archives

“The colors in the store may have changed. What happened outside of the building has changed. But inside here, nothing’s really changed that much,” said Jennifer Gudgel, Ethel M’s director of gourmet chocolate.

Over the years, Ethel M has become part of the flavor of Southern Nevada. It has retail stores throughout the valley, including four at McCarran International Airport; out-of-state tour buses frequently visit the factory; and the annual lights show on its three-acre cactus garden has become a holiday tradition for many.



The store has, of course, added candies along the way, but the chocolates that made Ethel M famous — the satin cremes, the liqueur-filled chocolates and almond butter crisps — are as popular as ever.

“The classics are still there,” Gudgel said. “The American palate loves caramels, nut clusters, and milk chocolate. You hear a lot about people liking dark chocolate now, and we see a bit of that trend, but ultimately people love what they love.”

Ethel M is quietly celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, marking it with a commemorative tin. Although there hasn’t been a lot of fanfare, the small factory is proud of its three decades in Henderson.

It’s unclear why Mars chose to settle here. Some speculate it’s because Nevada’s lax regulations allowed him to sell the liqueur-filled chocolates, which were illegal in other states. Gudgel said Mars was a savvy businessman, and knew he could make the chocolate factory a destination to capitalize on Las Vegas’ tourism industry.

“It’s one of the only Mars factories you can see into ... Putting a chocolate store in the middle of the desert, you probably want to create some kind of attraction,” Gudgel said. “Here in Las Vegas, the whole world comes to us.”

The factory is designed to be tourist-friendly, with long windows giving visitors a look at the entire chocolate making process, from cooking the cocoa beans to packaging the finished product.

All of the chocolate, peanut butter and caramel is made in-house, and the factory also houses a test kitchen to innovate new candies for its parent company, Mars Inc.

Ethel M focuses on making fresh, high-end chocolates in small batches without preservatives. A typical day will see the factory producing 20 varieties of treats.

“All Ethel M Chocolates are made right here. They’re not made anywhere else,” Gudgel said.

Many of the recipes are the same Ethel Mars, Forrest Sr.’s mother and the factory’s namesake, used in her kitchen in 1911.

During the early years of Ethel M, Forrest Mars kept an apartment atop the factory and often worked on the lines with his workers, Gudgel said. Legend has it that on early mornings, he could be seen wandering the floor in his robe and slippers, doing quality control.

Gudgel said his work ethic and high expectations have left an impression.

“He set the bar high. We’re still a family-owned business, and our philosophy is if your name is on it, we want to put out the best product,” she said. “We give people what they’re looking for, and deliver it exceptionally.”

BLM, volunteers scheduled to clean up Sloan rock art area

BY [DOUG MCMURDO](#)
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Sep. 13, 2011 | 1:59 a.m.

When it comes to the American Indian rock art in Southern Nevada, few examples are as impressive as the petroglyphs at Sloan National Conservation Area near Henderson on the south end of Las Vegas Boulevard.

In honor of National Public Lands Day, employees of the Bureau of Land Management and scores of volunteers will descend on Sloan Sept. 24 with work gloves and sturdy boots.

Sloan, called the Sistine Chapel of Native American rock art by the Conservation Lands Foundation, has been victimized by litterbugs and vandals in recent years.

The volunteers will also pick up litter, plant native trees, remove invasive plants, install signs and restore trails, according to BLM spokeswoman Kirsten Cannon.

The Public Lands Foundation will provide water and snacks.

For more information and to register, go online to www.getoutdoorsnevada.org.

Contact Doug McMurdo at dmcmurdo@reviewjournal.com or 702-224-5512.

Zappos CEO's purchase of First Friday shocks Arts District gallery owners

Kristen Peterson

Tue, Sep 13, 2011 (12:14 p.m.)



First Friday, the monthly celebration of art, in the downtown Arts District on Friday, Aug. 5, 2011.

Photo: Justin M. Bowen

News that a crew involved in Zappos, including CEO Tony Hsieh, are buying the First Friday trademark and taking the event out of the hands of non-profit Whirlygig has the Arts District community buzzing.

But just as surprising as the announcement itself, is that business owners in the area had no idea this was happening. Apparently, those involved with the deal hadn't spoken with some of the main Arts District players and gallery owners, which concerns Blackbird Studios owner Gina Quaranto, who has been involved in First Friday since 2001 and built her career from an artist on the street at the monthly event.

Mostly though, Quaranto and others are excited about the change and the money and marketing that might be poured into the monthly art festival.

"Tony Hsieh is such a forward thinker. He's got a lot of ideas so it could be interesting," says Victoria Hart, gallery director at Brett Wesley gallery, which



Photo: Justin M. Bowen

Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh is shown at a Las Vegas City Council meeting Dec. 1, 2010, when it was officially announced the existing City Hall building would be used as the headquarters for Zappos.

sits on the corner of Charleston and Casino Center Boulevard. "They have more bandwidth to communicate to a broader audience. The problem with some Downtown people who have been there so long is that they're not open to new ideas. Fresh blood would be really great."

Hsieh is moving his online retail corporation into the soon-to-be-vacated City Hall building and has said that he wants the company to be involved in Downtown's redevelopment. He recently donated \$5,000 to artist Jerry Misko's Downtown mural project and says that his role with First Friday is simply that of a silent investor: "I had heard that it had run into financial challenges and I didn't want the event to go away. I think it's a great event for downtown Las Vegas. I would like to see it continue and grow so I decided to personally support it financially."

Hsieh didn't say what the group paid for the trademark, but said that they will likely spend \$500,000 over the next 12 months to keep the event going.

The news is the second surprise to hit the Arts District this summer. In July, Whirlygig Inc. announced that First Friday would be canceled for August and September. Business owners not directly involved in the Whirlygig portion of the festival went into panic mode trying to alert First Friday visitors that their business would remain open for the event, which draws thousands to the Arts District each month.

Las Vegas Mayor Carolyn Goodman said in a statement that she is "thrilled" with this new partnership and that it will "infuse additional resources and new energy into this grand downtown festival."

In the past, Whirlygig has worked with the City of Las Vegas on street closures, paid insurance, pulled permits and handled the music stages and artist tents outside the Funk House. But Whirlygig officials say the event became too big for just a couple of people to be running and that they need to work on streamlining the event and working with the City on how to keep it manageable and safe—responsibilities that will now likely fall to the new owners.

"It will be great to see if they're going to set up some sort of committee and get the community involved or if they're just going to take it over," Hart adds.

The *Review-Journal's* Doug Elfman reported that the four involved in purchasing the LLC are Zappos CEO Hsieh, Zappos partner Fred Mossler, developer Andrew Donne and marketer Joey Vanas, and that the group plans on expanding First Friday to other Downtown areas and bringing in "better artists," including out-of-town artists.

First Friday 08/05/2011

Vanas said this afternoon that a meeting has been scheduled for tomorrow with gallery owners and that the group has plans to listen to what the community—gallery owners, artists, vendors, city representatives and attendees—has to say about First Friday. "These people have been a part of this community event for nine years and we will learn as much as possible from them about how we can help make it the best First Friday event you will find in any city," Vanas says. "We also want to extend the marketing and commerce of art in Downtown Vegas to more than just the First Friday of each month.

"This event has been very positive for the city of Las Vegas and First Friday's return in October is beyond exciting. We're committed to a continuing investment in Downtown and to supporting the community that backs the growth of such a culturally-active, and historical, area of Las Vegas."

Marty Walsh, owner of Trifecta Gallery inside the Arts Factory, says that it sounds like the new operators are

looking for voices in the community: "They're looking for guidance and steering. That's a really good sign. I think they're in for the greater good, so I welcome it. We need a bigger audience, anyway."

Quaranto says she's trying to have a positive perspective, but that she isn't quite sure how she feels about it.

"This is overnight. We went from 'Whirlygig is on hiatus and will be back in October' to 'Zappos is taking over.' I'm excited for change. Change is good, but change is also scary. I don't know any of these people, and for me not to know any of these people is strange, because I know everybody," Quaranto says. "I just hope that they include listening to people who have been involved in First Friday for years. We didn't work so hard so out-of-town artists can reap the benefits while we're brushed aside. That's probably not their intent, but I don't know that because I haven't had one discussion with them."

Quaranto also says she wishes that they would have used the word "different" rather than "better" in regards to additional artists.

"It's not easy to start something from scratch," she continues. "Anyone can move to Portland or any other city and mooch off their already created art scene."

As for the "better art," Hart, at Brett Wesley gallery says, "It's great to get better art, but you have to have a community that supports better art. You have to educate the community about better art or buying art in general."

This could be that chance.



Zappos foursome buying First Friday arts event

Posted: Sep. 13, 2011 | 2:00 a.m.
Updated: Sep. 13, 2011 | 7:32 a.m.

First Friday's operations are being sold later this week to four men involved with Zappos. They vow to expand art exhibits, parking and shuttle service for the downtown art party.

The foursome, operating as First Friday LLC, are buying First Friday's trademark, Internet presence, mailing lists and assets from nonprofit Whirlygig Inc.

The new First Friday Four are Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh; Zappos partner Fred Mossler; developer Andrew Donner (who facilitated the Zappos relocation deal downtown); and Joey Vanas, a marketer who works on many Hsieh projects.

Zappos does not have any ownership stake, says Vanas, who handles the LLC's day-to-day operations. This is a personal investment.

Their launch event will be the ninth anniversary of First Friday on Oct. 7. Whirlygig founder Cindy Funkhouser will help with their transition for a month or more.

The deal came suddenly. Whirlygig suspended functions two months ago, although events continued in August and September.

During that time, Whirlygig approached Zappos for sponsorship but also expressed interest in selling, "to hand it off and give it some wings," Vanas says.

Hsieh and friends, downtown boosters, chose to buy.

"Cindy and Whirlygig did a great job in creating something for the community," Vanas says.

But there was only so much the one- or two-person Whirlygig could pull off without major resources, he says.

"We wanted to come in and put some real support behind it -- put some infrastructure in place, and help it build and grow."

Initial plans: More art booths and music stages; an expansion of art locales starting in Fremont East; and more and better artists.

"There are artists in Las Vegas that are great artists that don't come out and show at First Friday because there isn't the buyer audience for their level of work," Vanas says.

"We want to change that perception, but we don't want to cut off the young artists that are trying to make their first break."

Vanas also intends to invite outside artists from Phoenix, Southern California and other places that stage First Fridays.

As for the event's dreaded parking, Vanas (who got a \$20 parking ticket Friday) is seeking more parking lots and shuttles.

And because Vanas' background is in marketing -- at Miami's Fontainebleau hotel, plus events here and Hsieh projects -- he's developing more marketing, advertising and public relations.

As a for-profit LLC, the group will wield more financial leeway to expand, but they're not expecting riches, he says.

"It won't be a profit-turner but a community event that will hopefully sustain its own growth," he says. "It's more of an investment in the community that we all live in now."

No doubt. Three of the four live in Ogden condominiums, and Vanas is nearby.

They hope their larger infrastructure will lure more sponsors. Money also comes in from food and liquor sales, vendor fees and Friends of First Friday memberships.

Vanas is counting on the city to transform the epic permit process into a yearly event, instead of a monthly chore.

He won't divulge the purchase price.

"It wasn't a huge number," he says.

Funkhouser says the price will pay off an operations loan and some debts.

"Our entire board is very excited to pass the torch on to someone that capable," she says.

"They enjoy the grass-roots part of it.

"They come to the events," she says. "I'm gonna sleep pretty good at night."

Vanas says his approach is to reach out to First Friday veterans for input.

"They've been thinking about it for years. We've been thinking about it for a month. So let's listen to those people."

Doug Elfman's column appears Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Contact him at delfman@reviewjournal.com. He blogs at reviewjournal.com/elfman.

Golden Gate plans expansion



JEFF SCHEID/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Golden Gate bartender Christine Koehler tries to get two pigeons to stop fighting on Tuesday. The downtown Las Vegas hotel-casino announced plans to expand the property by about 29,000 square feet. » [Buy this photo](#)

BY BENJAMIN SPILLMAN
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Sep. 14, 2011 | 2:00 a.m.
Updated: Sep. 14, 2011 | 10:56 a.m.

Las Vegas' oldest hotel is looking to become the freshest face on Fremont Street.

The downtown Golden Gate hotel-casino recently filed plans with the city for a major expansion and renovation of the property at Fremont and Main streets where it first opened as a hotel in 1906.

The expansion seeks to blast through the south wall of the existing building to add a five-story structure with 16 new hotel suites, including two 1,600-square-foot suites that will occupy the top floor.

Owners would also move and modernize the existing deli, move the hotel lobby to the new structure and expand the casino floor.

The \$12 million proposal would be the fifth major hotel-casino renovation in the area of Fremont Street since the beginning of the Great Recession, a period marked by stalled projects and shuttered casinos on the Strip.

Downtown, the Golden Nugget, El Cortez,

Gold Spike and Plaza have also made big upgrades in recent years.

The Planning Commission voted 7-0 late Tuesday in favor of the two items needed to approve the project. It goes to the City Council Oct. 19.

Customer Jeff Spain said it is long overdue. Spain, a longtime Las Vegas visitor from Nashville, Tenn., who plays blackjack at a rate of \$150 per hand, said he prefers Golden Gate's cozy atmosphere to gambling on the Strip but doesn't like the small hotel rooms and limited food choices.

"I think they desperately need it," Spain said. "They can give me comps all day long but it is just a coffee shop."

Spain says the ability of a casino to offer big bettors modern rooms makes it more likely that he and others like him will spend money on Fremont Street, an area that's critical to the success of the city's larger vision for downtown.

"There are some things downtown has, and Golden Gate in particular, that the Strip doesn't," Spain said. "One is that sort of old Vegas style and feel."

Besides the large suites, the addition will include 14 suites that are about 500 square feet each, some conference rooms and larger, modern restrooms that will serve the entire casino.

The existing restrooms will be removed to make more room in the casino, and the deli will move into what is now a small hotel lobby.

Stevens hopes to have the casino phase completed in March and the hotel rooms open by May. Construction will require at least a temporary closure of the existing deli, but the casino's signature shrimp cocktail will still be available on property at the restaurant.

Besides temporary construction jobs, the project will also result in about 25 new permanent jobs working the expanded casino floor and the new hotel rooms. The Golden Gate already employs about 260 people.

The approximately 30,000-square-foot expansion is the biggest upgrade to the Golden Gate since at least 1990, said minority owner Mark Brandenburg.

Derek Stevens, who with his brother Greg Stevens is a majority owner, said the time is right for investment because visitation to Fremont Street appears to be bouncing back from the recession years and they want to be part of the comeback.

"We are really right at the cusp of a significant turnaround downtown," Stevens said, citing a recent \$35 million renovation of the Plaza at Fremont and Main streets and hundreds of millions of dollars Landry's Restaurants Inc. has invested in the Golden Nugget in recent years, including the construction of a new hotel tower.

Year-to-date gambling revenue downtown is up 1.1 percent, including a 10.2 percent bump in July. If it holds up for the year it would be the first annual increase since a 0.4 percent uptick in 2007.

In addition to improving the landscaping between Fremont and Carson streets, plans call for the new structure to have a colorfully lit facade topped by a large, digital billboard-type screen.

"It is going to make the Nugget look better, it is going to make our parking lot look better and it is going to make Main Street look a hell of a lot better," Stevens said.

Contact reporter Benjamin Spillman at bspillman@reviewjournal.com or 702-229-6435.