



NATIONAL TRUST
for HISTORIC PRESERVATION™

NORTHEAST PRESERVATION NEWS

A Monthly Newsletter from the National Trust's Northeast Office

Volume 3, Number 12

www.nationaltrust.org

December 2004

Northeast Office

Seven Faneuil Hall Marketplace
Boston, MA 02109
617/523-0885
617/523-1199 (fax)
nero@nthp.org (e-mail)
Serving: CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT

Wendy Nicholas, Regional Director
Marilyn Fenollosa, Sr. Program Officer/Regional Attorney
Alicia Leuba, Director of Programs
Jennifer Warren, Program Assistant
Kate Huff, Administrative Assistant

Josh Bloom, Program Officer, National Main Street Center

Northeast Field Office

6401 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215/848-8033
215/848-5997 (fax)
nefo@nthp.org (e-mail)
Serving: DE, NJ, PA

Adrian Scott Fine, Director
Neeta McCulloch, Program Assistant

Shared Field Staff

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation,
Nina Harkrader, Brad Schide
circuitrider@cttrust.org (e-mail)
860/463-0193

Preservation Trust of Vermont,
Ann Cousins, Doug Porter
ann@ptvermont.org (e-mail)
doug@ptvermont.org (e-mail)
802/658-6647

Northeast Advisors

CT: Preston Maynard, Anita Mielert
DE: Mary Jane Elliott, Joan Hazelton
ME:
MA: Robert Kuehn, Marita Rivero
NH: Martha Fuller Clark, Alice DeSouza
NJ: Ron Magill, Maria Cerda Moreno
NY: Richard Hawks, Anne Van Ingen
PA: Caroline Boyce, Howard Slaughter
RI: Karen Jessup, Richard Youngken
VT: Robert McBride

Statewide Partners

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation,
Preservation Delaware, Preservation MASS, Maine Preservation, New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, Preservation New Jersey, Preservation League of New York State, Preservation Pennsylvania, Preserve Rhode Island, Preservation Trust of Vermont.

Statewide Main Street Programs

CT: Connecticut Main Street
DE: Delaware Main Street Program
MA (Boston): Boston Main Streets
ME: Maine Downtown Center
NH: New Hampshire Main Street Center
NJ: Main Street New Jersey
PA: Office of Community Development;
Pennsylvania Downtown Center
VT: Vermont Downtown Program

www.nationaltrust.org

Hartford Works on Preservation Ordinance

The City of Hartford is working on a strategy to preserve its historic buildings and neighborhoods by developing a Historic Preservation Ordinance (HPO), the first of its kind in the state of Connecticut. Through the work of the Connecticut Circuit Rider Program, a partnership of the National Trust's Northeast Office and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, assistance has been provided to a local task force by researching HPOs from across the country and making recommendations for the City of Hartford.

The basic premise of an HPO is simple: historic buildings should be treated in a way that preserves the physical evidence of their significance. Typically, an HPO sets up a commission which must approve applications for changes to historic build-

ings, for their adaptive reuse, or for their proposed demolition. Development and change can occur, but are managed so that their impact on the city's historic fabric is

positive. Some cities and towns rely on advisory, rather than regulatory mechanisms to protect historic properties. A number of Connecticut communities have established Village Districts, which rely on advisors



Hartford Skyline by Rob Maass.

to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Other communities employ zoning-based controls, such as historic overlay zones, to manage their historic buildings. In such a case, the Planning and Zoning Commission must grant a special permit for alterations, demolitions or additions within the historic overlay zone.

Several key points have emerged over

Continued on page 2.

Advisor Emeritus Receives Fitch Award

Pioneering historic preservation educator Chester H. Liebs has been awarded the James Marston Fitch Lifetime Achievement Award in Preservation Education by the National Council for Preservation Education. An early protégé of Professor Fitch — the father of historic preservation education in North America — Liebs is the first of Fitch's former graduate students to receive the award.

After helping to develop what is today the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation in the 1970s, Liebs went on to found and direct the highly successful Historic Preservation Program at the University of Vermont in 1975 — a program that has done much to save the extraordinary architectural and cultural heritage of Vermont.

Liebs is an Advisor Emeritus to the National Trust and is a co-founder of the

Preservation Trust of Vermont. His major 1985 work, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, helped encourage the study and preservation of historic roads, heritage corridors, and the recent past, all of which are now at the cutting edge of historic preservation efforts today.

Today Liebs' work in education continues at the University of New Mexico's School of Architecture and Planning, where he is Adjunct Professor and Director of the Southwest Summer Institute in Historic Preservation and Regionalism.



New Revolving Fund for New York Announced

Governor George Pataki recently announced the creation of the New York State Endangered Properties Revolving Fund to help revitalize and protect historic resources and neighborhoods across the state. The fund will act as a catalyst for future community revitalization activity, leverage additional funding from private and government sources, spur investment and spark community awareness of the importance of the State's heritage.

Under the new program, New York State will provide \$2 million towards the Fund and encourage private-sector and community organizations to match—or even exceed—the State's commitment. "We're proud to announce this new initiative, which will...allow us to build on our impressive record of preserving New York's unique historic properties and cultural resources," the Governor said.

Final Report on Vermont's Creative Economy

In July 2003, the Vermont Council on Rural Development, a non-profit organization dedicated to the support of the locally-defined progress of Vermont's rural communities, formed the Vermont Council on Culture and Innovation (VCCI) to examine the relationship between Vermont's cultural expression, community life, and Vermont business.

VCCI has just released its *Final Report and Recommendations* for boosting this important economic sector in Vermont with 17 key action steps based on collaboration among Vermont's private sector, cultural organizations and government agencies. The report provides arguments for strengthening economic and community development through culture and innovation, as well as examples of the creative sector at work, vital statistics tracking the impact of the creative economy, and a section identifying some of the many resources already available to help creative entrepreneurs.

Ordinance, continued

the course of the Circuit Riders' research. First, for a city with a large number of historic buildings, an HPO is the strongest and most effective way to protect its historic character. Zoning-based tools can work, but are much more limited than a preservation ordinance. In Hartford, there are more than 3,000 buildings listed on either the State or National Register of Historic Places that have no real city mechanism for protection. A historic preservation ordinance would extend review and protection to them.

Second, any commission created by the ordinance should have regulatory powers, not just an advisory role. Portland, ME has been cited as having a model preservation ordinance, but its Historic Preservation Committee can only advise, not regulate. It can be argued that if political realities make regulatory powers impossible, advisory powers are better than none at all. However, communities have found to their dismay that years after establishing advisory preservation bodies historic buildings are still being demolished inappropriately or altered in ways that destroy their character. Shaker Heights, OH is currently reassessing and revising its ordinance to give its board regulatory powers, after a decade of advisory powers has proved ineffective.

Third, drafting an HPO is only the first step towards better and more effective his-

toric preservation. Education—for local officials, for residents, for local businesses—on why an HPO is needed and how it would work is critical. The tangible economic benefits of preservation should be articulated as well: for example, a September 2003 study in New York City concluded that, all other factors being equal, prices of houses in historic districts are not only greater than those outside them, but overall property appreciation between 1975 and 2002 was greater for houses within historic districts than without.

Finally, a consensus of stakeholders needs to be developed prior to the passage of the ordinance, and there must be opportunity for public participation. In Pittsburgh, residents around the city initiated a process that resulted in the creation of Historic Architectural Review Boards and helped develop design guidelines for individual historic neighborhoods. Public support is important both to develop an ordinance and to ensure that it works effectively once adopted.

The historic fabric of a city is sometimes the only tangible link its residents have with who they were, who they are—and who they might become. Hartford's proposed HPO has the potential to serve as a model for the rest of the state—and other cities are already expressing interest. To paraphrase Tip O'Neill: All preservation is local. Hartford has recognized this and risen to the challenge.

Dates and Deadlines

Looking Ahead...

February 1, 2005 is the deadline for the National Trust's **Johanna Favrot Fund**, **Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund**, the next round of the **Preservation Services Fund**, and the newly created **Hart Family Fund for Small Towns**, intended specifically for towns with populations under 5,000.

All of the funds support preservation projects at their outset with dollar-for-dollar matching grants to non-profit organizations and public agencies. For more information, e-mail nero@nthp.org or visit www.nationaltrust.org.

December 10 — Deadline for the **State of Connecticut Historic Preservation and Museum Division's Historic Restoration Grants** for National Register and State Register buildings owned by non-profits and municipalities. For more information, call (860) 566-3005.

January 19 — Deadline for nominations to the **National Trust's 2005 11 Most Endangered List**, which highlights the plight of sites threatened with neglect, insufficient funds, inappropriate development or insensitive public policy. For more: www.nationaltrust.org/11Most.

February 1—Deadline for the 2005 **Save America's Treasures Grants**, which assist in the preservation of nationally significant historic sites and collections. For more, go to www2.cr.nps.gov/treasures/application.htm.

February 3 — Deadline for applications for the **National Endowment for the Humanities Implementation Grants for Museums and Historical Organizations**, which support interpretive museum exhibits and the interpretation of historic sites. For project eligibility and award information, visit www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/implement-museums.html.

Join the National Trust and Keep Up with News of the Northeast

Join our mailing list, request membership information and learn about the latest developments in preservation: send an e-mail to nero@nthp.org or visit the Trust's Web site, www.nationaltrust.org.