



Hartford www.HartfordPreservation.org Preservation Alliance

Historic Preservation in the Capital City

The 2012 inspirational views of one HPA Program Department Staffer

By Tomas J. Nenortas



The relatively small staff of HPA has had a dramatic effect on preservation thinking and practices in Hartford over the past several years. There is a permeable and positive change in the way City Departments

much of it forged in the crucible of misguided programs such as “urban renewal”, an oxymoron in my book, that have clearly demonstrated the folly of destroying a place in order to save it.

The staff of HPA believes there is a better way. Having encouraged and assisted neighborhood revitalization efforts in the Capital City, we are convinced that the best way to restore vitality and livability to a community is to build on its strengths, to save and enhance the character and ambience that make each of Hartford’s neighborhoods unique, and to



Tomas admiring the view from his Hartford home. “Abandoned buildings can break a neighborhood’s heart. Demolished buildings can destroy its soul.”
- Tomas Nenortas



Left above: Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company, Main & Pearl Streets.

Left and below: The home of Amos Whitney (Pratt & Whitney) at 568 Farmington Avenue corner of Whitney Street. The carriage house survives, now home to local favorite Mo’s Midtown Restaurant.

handle historic properties and how developers and property owners view their holdings as economic drivers with a greater potential on the amount of their return on investment through City, State, and Federal economic incentives.

Abandoned buildings can break a neighborhood’s heart. Demolished buildings can destroy its soul. In the past, when disinvestment, poor maintenance and abandonment left Hartford’s seventeen neighborhoods marked with vacant and dilapidated buildings, public officials and citizens often sought a quick solution to the community’s woes by razing the deteriorated structures. Demolition may affect a dramatic change in a neighborhood’s appearance, but it’s rarely a change for the better. Hartford has had years of experience,



preserve and celebrate the tangible evidence of the community’s history instead of smashing it to rubble and carting it off to the landfill.

Each preservation issue is different. This is testimony

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Mission Statement

*The mission of the
Hartford Preservation Alliance
is to advocate for the preservation
and revitalization of
Hartford's unique architectural heritage
and neighborhood character.*

From the Office

Laura Knott-Twine, Executive Director



I am pleased to share with you three great pieces of news! In October 2011, we hired Ewa Koza of Tolland for the position of Financial



Assistant. We were able to afford this through the generosity of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Nonprofit Support Program. I cannot be more pleased with the contribution that Ewa is making, not only to the day-to-day tasks of financial management but also her ability to help with our preservation programs as well. Ewa will be entering her Senior year at Central Connecticut State University in the fall and will be graduating in May 2013. She holds a steady 4.0 GPA. Her talents are augmented by cutting edge accounting practices which she is studying. After graduation she hopes to go on to become a Certified Public Accountant. Pleasant to work with and totally organized, she

adds in many ways to the HPA team. She says, "I am very happy to be a part of the team here at HPA. I am very eager to experience the financial side of the non-profit world and I hope that my accounting background will support the organization effectively. I am looking forward to assisting in the effort for the restoration and preservation of the great city of Hartford!" Welcome on board Ewa!

I am also pleased to announce that Tomas Nenortas was promoted to Associate Director on January 1, 2012. Tomas has grown substantially since joining HPA in 2004. He oversees the Program Department. Beyond the technical assistance he offers to property owners and the enormous task of researching Hartford's built treasures he has written successful grant applications for the creation of new historic districts. Tomas works diligently with the local neighborhoods, helping them advocate for historic preservation in their own communities, assisting with anti-blight actions, and encouraging involvement in overall neighborhood revitalization. Recently he was named by the Mayor as Co-chair of the "Streetscape Improvement Project" in Coltsville and The Bushnell Park Foundation has hired him as the Foundation Manager. Tomas works closely with Mary Falvey in building a substantive repository of historical documents and mapping the growth of Hartford's built environment since 1636. Learned preservationist, writer and author, community activist, and generous community volunteer, Tomas is a deeply admired and respected member of HPA's Team.

Mary Falvey has been promoted to Senior Program Associate and Web Master as of January 2012. Mary started at HPA as a volunteer in 2007 after she had attended a Walking Tour with us. A year later, she was hired as Program Assistant working 20 hours per week. Her background as a Licensed Realtor® and thorough knowledge of the properties in Hartford, led her to train with both the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the CT Trust for Historic Preservation for certificates in trained historic real estate sales and purchases. In her new position here she works 25 hours weekly. Mary has developed our Walking Tours into educational, interesting and exciting adventures for our participants. Ninety percent of Mary's work is dedicated to research, analysis, documentation and archival management of which she and Tomas' work will be shared on our new web site portal later this year. Mary's deep commitment to accurate records and interesting nuggets of history tied to the built environment has all of us here celebrating her membership on our team.



Hartford Preservation Alliance

★★★

Thursday MAY 17, 2012

★★★

ROARING 20'S AWARDS CEREMONY

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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT WWW.HARTFORDPRESERVATION.ORG OR CALL 860-570-0331.

Supporting HPA



DECD

State of Connecticut
Department of Economic and
Community Development
State Historic
Preservation Office



Nonprofit Support Program
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

The Hartford Preservation Alliance has been financed in part by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG), the City of Hartford, the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, in cooperation with the Connecticut Humanities Council, HFPG Non-Profit Support Program and The Hartford. Many others, including businesses and our members, have contributed to the operation of our organization, and we wish to thank them for their support.



EXPERIENCE THAT COUNTS.

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"Advocating for Historic Preservation
Since 1980"



New England Management, Corp.
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Membership Dues:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$ 15 |
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56 Arbor Street, Suite 406, Hartford, CT 06106
All contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

News from the Board!

It must be Spring! Change is in the air! These are two clichés that we hear all of our lives but we have to say that this year it is true. Happily, all of the changes come with exciting opportunities and blessings for members of our Board of Directors. Former president of the Board, Richard Ott, is moving on; he is participating in the annual Junior League’s Designer Show House in Hartford this year, Todd Jones has a new position in Washington DC as a “Reservist” for FEMA; he is sent to disaster areas all over the nation to report on damage and loss of historic buildings, Marianne Donahue has taken a new Board position at the Wadsworth Atheneum in the textile collection division, Synfoni Bailey-Green, an architect who has been on the Board for 8 years is moving to the DC/Maryland area to work, Gabriela Galarza-Block and her husband Ed are expecting their baby boy in August. We appreciate all of the hard work these dedicated people have done for HPA and Hartford’s historic treasures, and for all of the great friendships we now have.

But wait there is more good news! Board members who are not leaving but have equally good news are: Jared Grisé got married last September, Julianne Lugo is getting married this May, Scott Orsey and his wife had a baby boy on March 22nd. Katherine Harris was appointed by the Governor to serve on the state-wide Historic Preservation Council and she was featured in a Fox news story on television on the Black Governors & Kings of Connecticut. We welcome Don Neel of Corporation of Independent Living (CIL) who was voted on the Board in March. In January, at our Annual Meeting, the following Board members were elected to serve on the Executive Committee: Natalie Sweeney, President, Jack Kemper, Vice President, Kevin Donovan, Treasurer and McKinley Albert as Secretary.

Officers and Directors



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and Project Manager



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Independent Living



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and Incentives



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Jared Grisé, Esq.,
Director
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Santander,
Assistant VP



Heidi Sirota,
Director
Optum Health,
Vice President
Financial Mar-
keting Services

Not pictured:
Dr. Katherine J. Harris, Director
Central Connecticut State University,
Professor

If interested in serving on the Board of Directors please contact Laura Knott-Twine, Executive Director, LKTwine@hartfordpreservation.org, 860-570-0331.

Historic Preservation in the Capital City

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that there is no “silver bullet” which will solve all problems as well as guarantee a successful revitalization. HPA staff has won some and lost some over the years but with each year the wins are ever increasing. Some of the preservation cases illustrate simple “why didn’t I think of that?” ideas, while others require a patient process that could take years involving thoughtful planning and tenacious advocacy. Hartford’s preservation successes share a couple things in common: They recognize the power of historic preservation as an effective tool for sustainable revitalization, and they suggest ways to harness that power in everything from zoning ordinances and reinvestment incentives to preservation friendly building codes and innovative new uses for old buildings. More and more people are embracing a vision that uses a respect for a community’s past as a solid foundation to build a better future.

Winston Churchill said, “We shape our buildings, and then our buildings shape us.” The same thought holds true for communities: The way we design and maintain them exerts a powerful influence on the quality of our lives. HPA staff strives towards a revitalized Hartford by working with elected officials, neighborhood activists, card-carrying preservationists, citizens, and of course HPA’s Board of Directors. The tools we have and the relationships we have fostered with government and public & private funders will help shape a community that is safer, more attractive, vibrant and truly livable in 2012.

The HPA Program Department is looking forward to the New Year with several plans and proposed projects that will help feed greater recognition of HPA’s services. The current roster of 2012 partners in these plans and projects include the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the City of Hartford, the CT Trust for Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) within the Department of Economic and Community Development, as well as local stakeholder organizations such as CT Landmarks, the Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe Houses, and the Wadsworth Atheneum. All of these entities already have an instilled preservation ethic and harnessing opportunities for greater collaborations can only greater promote HPA’s mission.

- The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has awarded HPA grant funds to enhance resources for the greater community and greatly expand our on-line presence. An ability to cloud compute will allow HPA’s trove of technical and historical information to be accessed by the public. Program staff has already begun assembling items from the hundreds of photographs, slides, drawings, and maps from my personal collection of Hartford ephemera which I am ecstatic to share. On-line Technical Assistance materials will assist property owners in finding resources, techniques, and cost-effective tools for their preservation projects. The goal is to share HPA’s expertise with these technical assistance tools. The vehicle will be the enhanced web site that will market HPA staff as the experts, the go-to people.

**“We shape our buildings,
and then our buildings
shape us.”**

-Winston Churchill

- The City of Hartford supports HPA through the Mayor’s Budget for free technical assistance to private property owners. The goal is to provide expanded services at no charge to the general public. Strategic participation through the City’s thirteen Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Committees will be streamlined. HPA staff participation will be held to respective NRZ subcommittees that specifically deal with the built environment.
- The CT Trust for Historic Preservation is HPA’s state-wide partner who protects and nourishes the vitality of Connecticut’s significant buildings and landscapes. Their Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants have provided funding to Hartford non-profit developers, organizations, owners of sacred places and the City of Hartford. HPA staff refers eligible clients to the CT Trust to take advantage of these funding programs. The referral does not stop there as staff works with CT Trust Circuit riders in assuring a successful application and project through letters of support, community outreach meetings, and direct technical assistance. HPA itself has benefitted from CT Trust programs that fund historic district creation and other preservation projects.
- The State Historic Preservation Office is one of HPA’s stongest allies. With basic operating support the SHPO office has made historic preservation activities sustainable in Hartford by funding a professional office. Besides operational funding SHPO funds HPA’s Historic District initiatives and building inventory surveys. Program staff will be working with SHPO on the creation of a citywide preservation brochure that will be used in community engagements. Currently staff is working with Stacey Vairo, National Register Coordinator, in verifying all properties listed on Local, State, and National Registries. With SHPO’s stamp of approval the list will be delivered to the City so they may update the files being used by the City’s Licenses and Inspections Department. L&I is the first stop when a person applies for a building or demolition permit. Historic properties are flagged and a Historic Review application is then given to the applicant along with a copy of the Preservation Ordinance brochure. This brochure, stocked at the L&I counter, lists HPA as a resource.

2012 will be busy for Program Staff. Work will continue on advocacy through support and enhancement of the Preservation Ordinance, the creation of historic districts, one of which already in the works will be the West End South-East District and with concerted effort Parkville, and the HPA membership program. Educational opportunities will include expanded workshops and walking tours, intern offerings, and greater promotion of the State and Federal Historic Rehab Tax Credit programs. As always two great newsletters and an inspirational awards ceremony are on the menu.

The End

CONNECTICUT
LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS
AND PROPERTY VALUES



Prepared for: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
Prepared by: PlaceEconomics, Washington, DC, October 2011



Funded by the Connecticut Department
of Economic and Community Development
with funds from the Community Investment Act

The CT Trust for Historic Preservation commissioned an economic study of the benefits of historic preservation and historic designations as economic drivers. The full study can be found at www.CTTrust.org.

By the Numbers

Historic Preservation in Connecticut: 2000-2012
Donovan Rypkema, Consultant

- **\$450 Million:** Private sector investment in historic buildings
- **\$242 Million:** Direct salary and wages in Connecticut from rehabilitating historic structures
- **\$128 Million:** Indirect salary and wages in Connecticut from rehabilitating historic structures
- **\$15.1 Million:** Personal Income Taxes from rehabilitating historic structures
- **\$15 Million:** Grants to local governments and non-profit organizations
- **10.8 Million:** Sales Taxes from historic preservation projects
- **7.8 Million:** Increased property taxes to local governments **each year**
- **2.0 Million:** Business Income Taxes from rehabilitating historic structures
- **4,144:** Direct jobs in Connecticut from rehabilitating historic structures
- **2,293:** Indirect jobs in Connecticut from rehabilitating historic structures
- **400+:** Housing units rehabilitated using the Historic Homes Tax Credit
- **302:** Number of historic preservation projects using Federal and/or Connecticut tax credits
- **99%:** Historic preservation projects in areas identified as priority areas for development
- **89%:** Historic preservation projects in neighborhoods identified as *Very Walkable* or *Walker's Paradise*
- **83:** Number of Connecticut communities that have received grants for historic preservation
- **75%:** Tax credit projects in neighborhoods with a median household income of less than \$25,000

VERY IMPRESSIVE!!

##



Hartford Preservation Alliance has much to offer!
How can we serve you?

Technical Assistance for Hartford Homeowners: (Free)

- We help determine if:
- Your home is on a Local, State or National Register of Historic Places.
 - You reside in a Historic District.
 - Your rehab project qualifies for State or Federal Tax Credits.
 - Your project conforms to the Historic Preservation Ordinance.
 - You have the right contractor for the job.
 - You know all the resources available to you in Hartford and beyond.

HPA offers Walking Tours in Hartford in the Spring and Fall (\$15 each)

- Check our web site calendar for dates, places, and times.
 - We do offer Walking Tours for groups:
Flat fees: \$150 for 6-10 participants
\$225 for up to 20 participants
\$375 for 21-40 participants
- Tours available to groups such as: Religious Organizations, Clubs, Neighborhood Residents and Employee Groups. School Groups – (6th grade and up and accompanied by teachers and chaperones).

HPA offers Lectures: \$125 an hour

- Why Historic Preservation?
- Preservation as an Economic Stimulus.
- Before and After Restoration projects completed in Hartford.
- Preservation as the “greenest” way to protect the built and natural environments.

HPA offers Workshops for groups: (members \$15 & non-members \$20, minimum 15 people)

- Care for your Old House.
- Understanding the Design Guidelines - “Repair rather than Replace.”
- Contractors and Construction Workshop “Working on an Historic Building.”
- Preservation topic of your choice.

**HPA also consults with for-profit businesses such as:
Developers, Real Estate Professionals, and Commercial Building Owners.
(Fees based on projects undertaken)**

Call us today for all your Historic Preservation Needs!
860-570-0331



Is your home on the National Register of Historic Places? Then you are eligible to purchase and display a stylish National Register plaque featuring the landmark Charter Oak. Individually listed buildings are also eligible for a similar plaque. If you are unsure of your home's status, please contact HPA for additional information. Send your name and address with a check or money order for \$35.00 payable to Treasurer, State of Connecticut to:

**Stacey Vairo
State and National Register Coordinator
Historic Preservation and Museum Division
Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism
One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor
Hartford, CT 06103**



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What Once Was...

This handsome Victorian stood at 510 Farmington Avenue on the corner of Girard Avenue. It was the home of Lester and Martha Ensworth and family. Lester made his fortune in manufacturing carriage parts.



By 1919 Mary Martin moved her Oxford Street school for girls to this address. The most famous graduate was Katherine Hepburn who attended from 1918-1922. The school eventually merged and is now Kingwood-Oxford. The house was demolished in 1934 for a gas station. The imposing carriage house is all that remains, now home to Albano Ballet.