



Hartford Preservation Alliance

HPA Seeks to Create Rapid-intervention "SWAT Team"

Do you want to help save endangered historic buildings?

If so, you should become part of HPA's SWAT team, which is now organizing. It's not too late to get in, so to speak, on the ground floor. The SWAT team would react to a proposed demolition by contacting the owner, meeting with the City, looking for alternatives to demolition, generating publicity if appropriate, and, if necessary, exploring administrative appeals and litigation. Different SWAT team members would take responsibility for different buildings. If interested, please contact Rafie Podolsky at

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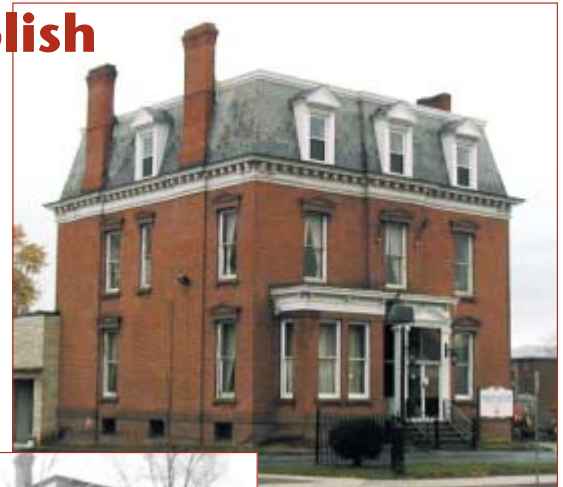
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Owner of Historic Kellogg House Files Notice of Intent to Demolish

Gennaro Capobianco, owner of the Kellogg House (247 Washington Street) and the Taylor & Moden Funeral Parlor (233 Washington Street), has filed notices of intent to demolish both these buildings, as well as 598 Farmington Avenue, a building he owns in the West End, and the adjacent carriage house at 117 Tremont Street.

The demolition notices were filed just two months after a sympathetic article in the Hartford Courant described the owner as a person who "always had an appreciation for history" and the Kellogg Mansion as "his true love." The article was

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247 Washington Street as seen in a 1875 photograph (left) and as it appears today (above).

Photo Courtesy
The Connecticut Historical Society

HPA Receives Grants to Develop New Historic Districts

Last winter, HPA received a grant from the Ensworth Charitable Foundation to expand the portions of Hartford which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. HPA has directed most of that grant to expanding the Frog Hollow Historic District south from Madison Street, where it currently ends, to Vernon Street. Architectural historian David Ransom is preparing the application.

HPA is also in discussion with the Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC) to help create a historic district in the Franklin Avenue area northeast of Barry Square. The spine of the district would be Franklin Avenue between Wethersfield Avenue on the east and Maple Avenue on the west.

The long-term goal of HPA's Historic District Project is to significantly expand the parts of Hartford which are included on the National Register. Nearly 4,000 of the city's buildings are already within National Register districts, primarily in Frog Hollow, Asylum Hill, Clay Hill, Upper Albany, and the West End. Many other parts of the city, however, are historic. For example, the Parkville Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Committee has indicated its desire to see the entirety of Parkville placed on the National Register. National Register applications, however, require detailed survey and analytical work and the participation of an architectural historian. HPA will continue to seek funds to hire consultants to make these applications possible.

Contrary to common perception, the listing of buildings on the National Register does not directly provide any protection for buildings. Listings are essentially honorary, and building owners remain free to demolish their buildings at will. There are, however, two very important benefits to National Register listing.

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Hartford Preservation Alliance is to seek to revitalize Hartford and its neighborhoods through the preservation and rehabilitation of Hartford's unique architectural heritage.



Historic Buildings at Park and Main Lost to Demolition

The decade-long effort to prevent the demolition of the South Park Block, a group of ten adjacent buildings at the southwest corner of Park and Main Streets has now ended in failure. As this newsletter goes to press, the City is in the process of tearing down the buildings.

As recently as three years ago, it appeared that the façades of the buildings would be preserved as part of a major South Green revitalization project, but financing for that project did not materialize and no new funded developer for the site has yet emerged.

The trigger event for the demolition was a fire on the night of September 2 and 3, which heavily damaged the two southernmost buildings in the South Park Block. The City responded by immediately demolishing the buildings damaged by fire, and by ordering the demolition of all remaining buildings, including one which was fully occupied. Except for the building nearest the fire, the remaining buildings had not suffered any fire damage and, although seriously dilapidated, were in no worse condition after the fire than before.

In an effort to save the buildings, HPA requested that the State Building Inspector review the demolition orders. He agreed that, with the exception of one building, their condition had not been worsened by the fire; but he also concluded that years of exposure to the elements had resulted in severe damage to the buildings and, with the exception one building, refused to overturn the demolition orders.

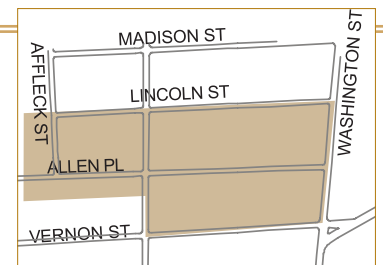
In the absence of a funded developer, the only alternative to demolition was for the City to stabilize the buildings, using the money that it would otherwise use for the demolitions themselves. The City has access to state funds, through the Capital City Economic Development Authority, which it can use for either demolition or stabilization. The City, however, rejected HPA's appeals to apply the money in this way.

This unfortunate situation highlights the problems which occur when the City fails to take the lead adequately to mothball and secure vacant historic buildings. Proper mothballing both reduces the risk of arson and prevents the structural deterioration of the building. Fire and water are the two biggest killers of vacant buildings. The standard way to preserve buildings on an interim basis — even a long interim — is to properly board and paint all openings in the building on all floors and to assure that the roof is protected against leakage. Not only does this prevent structural water damage, but it minimizes the risk of vagrants being able to get into the building and it largely eliminates the blighting impact of the building. ✿

Grants *Continued from Page 1*

Rehabilitation tax credits: National Register listing makes properties eligible for a variety of tax credit rehabilitation programs. The two most important are the federal Historic Tax Credit Program, which can provide tax credits of up to 20% of the cost of rehabilitation, and the state Historic Home Ownership Tax Credit Program, which allows the use of tax credits equal to 30% of rehabilitation costs up to \$30,000 per dwelling. The federal program is available for any property — residential or commercial. The state program, which is designed to promote urban home ownership, covers only one- to four-family buildings in which, after rehabilitation, the owner will live for at least five years.

Limited demolition protection: State or federal funds cannot be used to demolish a building which is listed on the National Register without a prior review under the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), who in Connecticut is Jack Shannahan, executive director of the Connecticut Historical Commission. In addition, Connecticut law allows any person to sue in state court to prevent the "unreasonable destruction" of a building on the National Register of Historic Places. ✿



Area of proposed Frog Hollow Historic District expansion.

The Parisky Group Hired to Help Strengthen and Expand HPA

The Hartford Preservation Alliance has received grants totaling about \$28,000 from the Surdna Foundation, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the J. Walton Bissell Foundation for its "Organizational Capacity Project." The purpose of the project is to help HPA, a totally volunteer organization, grow into a larger, broader-based advocacy association which will be able to maintain its own staff and office.

The Organizational Capacity Project has four focuses:

- the expansion and diversification of the HPA board
- the expansion of HPA's membership base
- the raising of significant on-going funds
- the production of a newsletter on a more regular basis of at least three times per year.

To accomplish this, the HPA board has hired The Parisky Group (TPG), headed by Sandy and Flora Parisky, who have long been active in assisting non-profit organizations in Hartford. It is beginning work on the project with what it calls an "environmental scan," interviewing key people in the Hartford community to assess their perceptions of HPA and to identify areas on which HPA should focus.

In the short run, the HPA board hopes that the involvement with TPG will produce a more active and broader-based board, a greatly enlarged membership, and a growing impact on City of Hartford policies concerning preservation. In the long run, it hopes that increased support from community funders will allow HPA to hire a full-time executive director and become a staffed organization with greater capacity to address preservation issues. 🌸

Connecticut Historical Commission Survives Budget Attack

This past summer, the Connecticut Historical Commission survived a budget fight which threatened severely to undercut its ability to protect the state's historic buildings.

The issue surfaced in June, when the final version of the state budget, negotiated behind closed doors by the Governor and legislative leadership, included a provision, radically different from all previous versions of the budget, which slashed the appropriation of the Commission by more than \$500,000 — an amount equal to nearly half of the Commission's budget. Although a small cut in the budget had been anticipated because of the state's financial problems, this drastic cut was completely unexpected and was pushed through the General Assembly without warning.

If implemented, the cut would have

resulted either in the closing of the four historic building museums operated by the Commission or in the virtual shutdown of the Commission's ability to comment on demolitions under state and federal laws protecting historic buildings. Had the funding loss been applied to this latter regulatory function of the Commission, it would also have resulted in the loss of federal matching funds, which would have doubled the adverse impact of the cut.

Led by Connecticut Preservation Action and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, preservationists throughout the state mounted an after-the-fact campaign to restore funding to the Commission. The lobbying effort had a major impact on legislators. In August, the General Assembly, meeting in special session to make adjustments to the June budget, restored \$350,000 to

the Commission. While not a full restoration of funds, this partial increase is sufficient to allow both of the Commission's divisions — Preservation and Museums — to function effectively. Two vacant staff positions will be permanently eliminated, and the Commission, for administrative purposes only, will fall under the jurisdiction of the State Library.

This entire sequence of events illustrates the need for vigilance in protecting the Commission from attack. In each of the last two years, floor amendments to weaken the Commission's review powers have surfaced at the last second under circumstances making them difficult to identify and defeat. It is clear that only careful monitoring of the legislature's activities can prevent similar attacks in the future. 🌸

Kellogg *Continued from Page 1*

generated by Capobianco's decision to take down and store parts of the 125-year-old cast iron fence which had surrounded the Kellogg House.

The demolition controversy began with Capobianco's desire to demolish the long-vacant and boarded Taylor & Modeen Funeral Parlor at the corner of Washington and Jefferson Streets. A city ordinance requires a 90-day waiting period before demolition in order to give those who might oppose demolition an opportunity to meet with the owner and try to find alternatives to demolition. Capobianco, however, requested a waiver of the 90-day waiting period. When the City did not agree to waive the waiting period, Capobianco filed notices of intent to demolish the Kellogg House and the two West End buildings.

HPA is working with the Connecticut Historical Commission and a wide variety of community groups to seek ways to prevent these demolitions. 🌸



The former Taylor & Modeen Funeral Parlor (left) that started the controversy and the Farmington Avenue property (below) also owned by Capobianco.



Preservation Week 2002: 2nd Annual Jeffery Czopor Preservation Awards

On May 20, the Hartford Preservation Alliance presented the 2nd Annual Jeffery S. Czopor Preservation Awards in a ceremony on the front veranda of the historic Hartford Times Building across Prospect Street from City Hall. Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez and architect Patrick Pinnell presided at the awards ceremony. Mayor Perez also issued a proclamation designating May 20, 2002, as Jeffery Czopor Day in Hartford.

Other speakers included Upper Albany NRZ chairperson Gerald Thorpe, speaking on the Upper Albany Main Street Project, and Ilene Lowenstein, head of Curriculum and Instruction for the Hartford school system, speaking on the

Hartford Heritage and Schools Collaboration Project.

Since 1971, the second week of May has been designated Preservation Week by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Its purpose is to publicize local efforts at historic and architectural preservation and to instill community pride in each community's historic assets. The theme of Preservation Week 2002 was "honoring and restoring the spirit of place."

The annual Preservation Week awards in Hartford are named in memory of Jeff Czopor (1972-2001), a young urban planner whose energy and commitment to historic preservation was an important factor in the creation of HPA, of which he was an original member of the Board of Directors. He died of cancer in 2001.

Special thanks for this year's ceremony go to JoAnne Bauer, who coordinated Preservation Week 2002 activities. 🌸

Historic restoration and in-fill: Mortson Street

Mortson/Putnam Heights Ventures, LLC

The rehabilitation of Mortson Street is the first half of a major project to revitalize two full blocks in the Frog Hollow neighborhood. The Mortson Street portion of the project involved the rehabilitation of seven "Perfect Sixes," each of which was converted to a row house divided into two owner-occupied units with a zero lot line. Five of the buildings have an owner-occupied two-story unit on each side. Two of the buildings have a vertical duplex on each side — one two-story owner-occupied unit and one rental unit. In addition, five new buildings were constructed to replace

buildings lost to demolition, three on Mortson Street and two on the adjacent portion of Park Terrace. The Mortson Street in-fill buildings, which are smaller than the rehabilitated Perfect Sixes but similar in design, have brick faces and bays designed to complement the original Perfect Sixes. The project also includes a wide range of streetscape improvements, including new street lighting, street trees, fencing, and brick pavers.

The rehabilitation is a unique joint venture of two non-profit developers and two for-profit developers. It made extensive use of state historic home ownership tax credits and of the city's gap financing program. All of the Mortson Street units have been sold or are under contract; and Phase 2 of the project, the rehabilitation of nearby Putnam Heights, is now beginning.



Interior restoration: Hartford County Courthouse State of Connecticut Judicial Branch

The Hartford County Courthouse has one of the most spectacular interiors of any building in Hartford. Built in 1929 and 1930, the courthouse was designed by architect Paul P. Cret of Philadelphia. The state-funded restoration removed decades of accumulated dirt and grime and returned the interior of the building's first floor, and particularly its two-story Art Deco-style lobby, to its original glory. The project included the cleaning and restoration of skylights, bronze chandeliers, terrazzo floors, and three large wall murals.



Historical education: Main Street Interpretive Center for History *Antiquarian and Landmarks Society*

In the early 1900s, a suite of offices was added to the Butler-McCook Homestead, Hartford's oldest still-standing residential building. In conjunction with the restoration of those offices, including tin siding on the exterior of the building, the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society created a new interactive interpretive center in the office suite which seeks to look at Hartford history from the perspective of the families which once lived in the Butler-McCook house. The Center thus offers a different way to look at the history of the city.

Historic restoration: 27-29 Benton Street
Advest, Inc. and Corporation for Independent Living



This Benton Street building, an Italianate duplex built around 1860, was the first building rehabilitated under the state's Historic Home Ownership Tax Credit Program. It is part of the revitalization of Benton Street between Wethersfield and Franklin Aves. in the South Green neighborhood, a project which includes both rehabilitation and new construction. The Corporation for Independent Living was the developer of 27-29 Benton Street. Advest, Inc., bought the tax credits. The Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC) and the Connecticut Housing Investment Fund (CHIF) have been involved in providing construction financing for the Benton Street project.

History education
Richard Mansfield

Richard Mansfield, Dean of the Cathedral of the Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Hartford, is the organizer of the Fifth Build luncheon and lecture series sponsored by the church. The name of the series derives from its theory that Hartford is now into its fifth rebuilding of downtown since the city was first settled in 1636. The series brings in educators, city planners, architects, developers, and financiers to speak about the most recent movement to revitalize downtown, with particular emphasis on the historical growth and rebuilding of Main Street.

Historic restoration: Wethersfield Commons
Community Renewal Team

Built in 1914 and 1915 and designed by local Hartford architect, Burton Sellew, these two apartment buildings at 32-38 Wethersfield Avenue in South Green were vacant when they were placed on the city's demolition list in 1997. Rehabilitated by the Community Renewal Team with financial assistance from the Department of Economic and Community Development, the buildings were completely renovated to provide 12 units of affordable housing, with new electrical systems, plumbing systems, windows, roofs, and interiors.

Historic restoration and in-fill
Park-Squire-Wolcott Project

Park-Squire Associates Limited Partnership

Park-Squire Associates is a joint venture of the Broad-Park Neighborhood Development Corp. and La Casa de Puerto Rico. The project, which was funded primarily with state bonds through the Department of Economic and Community Development, includes both residential and commercial development. The partnership rehabilitated three multi-family buildings on Squire Street dating back to the 1860s; rebuilt two existing commercial buildings on Park Street; and constructed both a new commercial building on Park Street and a substantial addition to one of the rehabilitated buildings. In order to match the historic commercial streetscape, the new building and the addition on Park Street have brick fronts and, like the rest of the block, stand directly on the sidewalk line.

Historic restoration: 90 Chadwick Avenue
Parkville Properties, LLC

The rehabilitation of this 1911 Perfect Six symbolizes a major attitude change about historic rehabilitation in the Parkville neighborhood. Vacant and blighted, 90 Chadwick Avenue was in 1997 targeted by its neighbors for early demolition, winning a promise from then-Mayor Mike Peters that it would be the first building to be torn down in the city's demolition program. After HPA intervention, the neighborhood decided to reverse its decision; and, after a difficult and persistent search by the neighborhood for a developer, the building was purchased and rehabilitated without subsidy by Parkville Properties, a Parkville-based for-profit development company. The Parkville NRZ, which also reconsidered and withdrew a number of its other early demolition requests, has now endorsed the idea of having the entire neighborhood placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic restoration: 83-85 Sargeant Street
Hill Housing Corp.

Built about 1890, this vacant two-family brick house in Asylum Hill was transformed into a rehabilitated single-family home, using funding through the state's Historic Home Ownership Tax Credit Program. The repair of this building is part of a larger rehabilitation and new construction program on Sargeant Street.





**Park improvement:
Corning Fountain**

Bushnell Park Foundation

The Corning Fountain, designed by Scottish sculptor J. Massey Rhind and built in 1899, has long been a landmark in the western portion of Bushnell Park. Made of bronze and granite, the fountain is 30 feet tall, with a statue of a deer in the middle surrounded by figures of Saukiog Indians, Hartford's first inhabitants. Damage from age and pollution necessitated a \$300,000 restoration which included the insertion of tension rods into the central basin of the fountain and epoxy into cracks which had developed.

Spirit of Place Award

Charter Oak Cultural Center

The Charter Oak Cultural Center is located in the former Charter Oak Temple just south of downtown. The Temple, built in 1876 as home for Congregation Beth Israel (now located on Farmington Ave. in West Hartford) was the first building in Connecticut constructed specifically as a Jewish synagogue. The Spirit of Place Award recognizes the Center not only for its continuing restoration of the building itself but for its multi-cultural programming which has made the Center into a vital part of the Sheldon-Charter Oak and South Green neighborhoods. While providing Jewish programming to maintain the building's Jewish heritage, the Center also sponsors concerts, dance performances, art exhibitions, and numerous other programs which reflect a wide range of ethnic traditions and cultures.

Preservation advocacy

Hartford Courant Editorial Board

The *Hartford Courant's* Editorial Board has proven to be a true watchdog on behalf of preservation. It wrote six editorials in support of the unsuccessful effort to save Fraser Place and has editorialized repeatedly on behalf of the preservation of the Sage-Allen Building. It detected and publicly disclosed two obscure but damaging legislative amendments to weaken state's preservation laws — one which prevented the use of the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act to block demolition of the Wilde Building in Bloomfield and one (not adopted) which would have allowed property owners to veto the placement of their properties on the State Register of Historic Places. It also spoke out against a last-second change in the 2002 state budget act which, had it not subsequently been modified, would have cut the budget of the Connecticut Historical Commissioner nearly in half.

Historic restoration and reuse:

Hartford Electric Light Co. substation

South Hartford Initiative

This long-vacant Neo-Classical Revival building at 686 Maple Ave. in the Barry Square neighborhood underwent a radical transformation in use from an unneeded electric substation into a functioning bakery, known as the Great Harvest Bread Co. Both the South Hartford Initiative and the Broad Park Neighborhood Development Corp. were involved in the redevelopment of this building.



Heritage Grant Program

Greater Hartford Arts Council

Organizations which promote the arts and organizations which promote historical heritage sometimes function in separate worlds and fail to build on their common interests and constituencies. In Hartford, however, the Greater Hartford Arts Council has played an important role in bringing these two groupings together. This linkage was highlighted last fall when the Council conducted a symbolic "marriage" of the arts, represented by Real Art Ways director Will K. Wilkins, and heritage, represented by Brenda Milkofsky of the Wethersfield Historical Society. The Council's Heritage Grant Program is one sign of that growing unity.

Façade restoration:

Professional Building

Smith/Edwards Architects and Allyn Street Partners LLC

The Professional Building at 179 Allyn Street near Union Station is a six-story office building constructed about 1890. Its first floor is dominated by a series of powerful arches, which in the 1970's were covered with stucco. Allyn Street Partners, which recently bought the building, had the stucco removed, revealing the arches' original dramatic design.



Sage Allen Project Moves Forward

The renovation of the historic Sage-Allen Building on Main Street has moved a step closer to reality with the approval by the City Council of a 15-year tax fixing agreement with the developer. The developer, 18 Temple Street LLC, plans to turn the former department store into a residential apartment complex sitting above street-level retail stores. The redevelopment plans include removal of the modern façade that had been added to the lower floors and its replacement with a façade which matches the upper floors. Two adjacent towers would also be constructed matching the existing tower in height, mass, and architectural design.

According to developer Marc Levine, the city tax deal was needed to obtain the major piece of the project's financing, a \$31 million mortgage from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority. The Capital City Economic Development Authority (CCEDA) has already agreed to provide \$3.6 million toward the project. CCEDA funding for downtown housing was part of the same state bonding package which included funds for Adriaen's Landing. 🌿

Goodbye to 11 Sherman Street

The building at 11-15 Sherman Street was demolished in October after a compromise was reached between the Colonial Theater Renaissance Corp. (CTRC), which owned the building and wanted to use its site for parking, the Connecticut Historical Commission, the West End Civic Association and HPA. The status of the building had been a sidelight to the unsuccessful effort to save the Colonial Theater, all but the façade of which was demolished last year. Demolition of 11-15 Sherman Street with state funds had been blocked by the Connecticut Historical Commission. The agreement will allow CTRC to move forward with the construction of a new building behind the Colonial Theater façade.

The 11-15 Sherman Street building was an oddity in Hartford. Built as a three-story brick Italianate building, it appears that a fourth floor was added, probably in the 1920s, by the construction of a new wood frame around the building. With a steep mansard-like gambrel roof on the new fourth floor, the expanded building took on a completely different architectural style. Advocates spent four years trying to save the building, but none of the proposed alternatives was acceptable to CTRC, which was insistent that it be demolished or relocated. In the end, to move the stalled Colonial Theater project forward, preservationists agreed to withdraw their opposition to demolition. 🌿

HPA Makes End-of-the-Year Fundraising Appeal

Events of the last few months of 2002 demonstrate more than ever the need for an active preservation organization in Hartford. The efforts to save the Rivard Building on Franklin Avenue, the Kellogg House and the Taylor & Modeen Funeral Parlor on Washington Street, and the Fraser Place buildings in Asylum Hill are made more difficult because these historic parts of Hartford have never been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The creation of a National Register district requires, among other needs, the hiring of an architectural historian, which in turn requires money.

HPA urges readers to help make effective preservation in Hartford possible by contributing to HPA's end-of-the-year fundraising appeal. Contributions may be sent to HPA at P.O. Box 230272, Hartford, CT 06123-0272. 🌿

Volunteers and Pro Bono Professionals Needed

HPA needs to find volunteers willing to provide a range of pro bono tasks for the organization. In particular, HPA is looking for:

Attorneys

HPA needs relationships with pro bono attorneys willing to help prevent building demolitions. Attorneys are typically needed in two different types of circumstances: representation of either HPA or a building owner in opposition to a city demolition order; and initiation of litigation under the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, on behalf of HPA, to enjoin the demolition of a building. The Capitol Center building at 410 Asylum Street, opposite Bushnell Park, is currently protected by a court injunction under this act. The other involves In most cases, an attorney representing HPA would play a secondary role in such litigation, with the Attorney General's Office taking the lead on behalf of the Connecticut Historical Commission.

Appraiser

On occasion, HPA may receive donations of property for which an appraisal is needed so that the donor can have a receipt for tax purposes. For example, HPA recently received a gift which included some prints and pictures. We are looking for a pro bono appraisal suitable for IRS purposes.

Accountant/bookkeeper

HPA needs a pro bono volunteer with accounting and/or book-

keeping skills to monitor its receipts and expenditures, prepare monthly budget updates, and prepare its annual tax returns.

National Register application preparer

A National Register application is a two-step process in which the applicant must first prepare a pre-study sufficient to convince the State Historic Preservation Officer to authorize a full-scale study of the district. While it is helpful to use a professional architectural historian for both the pre-study and the full-scale study, pre-studies can be prepared by amateurs with architectural and historical knowledge. For example, the pre-study for the effort to add Fraser Place to the National Register was prepared by HPA members Peter Diamond and Margaret Glynn.

HPA needs either interested amateurs or pro bono professionals willing to take on these tasks on an emergency basis when buildings not on the National Register are threatened. HPA is attempting to raise funds to hire a professional architectural historian to prepare applications for other districts on a longer-term non-emergency basis.

If you are available or know someone who is, please contact Rafie Podolsky (860-232-7748 | RPodo1898@aol.com) or Matt Blood (860-246-0167 | MDBlood@hotmail.com).

HPA Joins Neighborhood in Fight to Save Rivard Building

The Hartford Preservation Alliance has joined with neighborhood organizations in an effort to prevent the demolition of 307-311 Franklin Avenue, also known as the Rivard Building. This three-story brick Neoclassical Revival building, built in 1912, stands at the corner of Franklin Avenue and Adelaide Street in Hartford's South End.

A common type along the street, the building has ground-floor commercial space and apartments on the two stories above, all of which were occupied when the controversy began. In September, the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation placed it on its list of the Most Important Threatened Historic Places in Connecticut.

The owner of the building seeks to demolish it as part of a plan to clear the corner so that a Brooks Pharmacy and drive-through can be constructed. The neighborhood opposes the use of the site for a pharmacy, which would be only a few blocks from an existing CVS pharmacy. The new building

would be box-like and devoid of architectural detail. Set back from the street line, it would disrupt the flow of the streetscape.

In August, the owner filed a notice of intent to demolish the building and sought waiver of the 90-day demolition waiting period. HPA and the neighborhood successfully opposed the waiver. They also successfully opposed a zoning change which the owner needed to make the site usable for a pharmacy. In the meanwhile, however, the owner forced the occupants out of the building, creating a now-vacant building. The building is not in a historic district, and the 90-day demolition waiting period has now expired.

The fight over the Rivard Building is one of many examples of pharmacies attempting to place architecturally incompatible suburban-style stores on urban sites. Local zoning regulations which allow stand-alone, low-rise buildings with drive-throughs share the blame by permitting this type of construction. 🌿



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