

Hartford

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Preservation Alliance

Strong Partners in the Hartford Preservation Ordinance



Detail of Historic Districts Map showing Asylum Hill.

In our last newsletter (Winter 2007) we were so pleased to share the successful adoption of the Hartford Preservation Ordinance and our part in making that happen. In this issue, we want to bring attention to the many collaborations and partnerships that will make the ordinance an effective tool for historic preservation. Each participating group is a full partner in ensuring the success of this important ordinance. Mayor Perez was recognized on November 16, 2005 by the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism with an award for his leadership and HPA also recognized the city's leadership in an article (Autumn 2005) where we began by stating, "In a major victory for preservation, the Hartford City Council, with the support of Mayor Eddie Perez, has adopted a pioneering historic preservation ordinance." The ordinance has to be "proven successful" prior to the conclusion of a 3-year sunset provision that was attached to it which requires reenactment of the ordinance in order to keep it in effect.

The Department of Development Services-Planning Division, and its director, John Palmieri, play a key role as we move forward. Mr. Palmieri stated that there should be "an appreciation for the technical and financial assistance that is provided to the not-for-profit and for-profit development community who purchase and restore blighted and vacant property. Upon examining the assistance we provide to organizations like Northside Institute Neighborhood Alliance (NINA) and Christian Activities Counsel (CAC), you would quickly discover that we do a great deal to help underwrite projects that result in preservation and redevelopment. These facts are born out through a quote Mayor Perez made about the fact that 'the City of Hartford is proud to have played a vital role in 9 of the 14 award winning projects' that received HPA's 2007 Preservation Awards in May. We have also been active in conveying tax delinquent and city-owned property to community

based organizations whose principle purpose is to restore and rehabilitate sub-standard properties." The Development Services offices also serve those who have applied for a demolition or building permit on a listed historic property at Licenses and Inspections. A system of resources including Historic Guidelines and staff are well prepared to help the building owner to understand all of the implications of the preservation ordinance. Mr. Palmieri went on to say, "There, of course, will be times when we are confronted with public health and safety issues that move us toward the demolition option. But, we are always fully cognizant of the issues and impacts that need to be fully considered before the demolition option is exercised." The Department also offers a concise brochure that outlines the ordinance.

Continued on Page 10

Inside This Issue:

From the Office	2	Save the Dates	4	Gap Funding	5
Old State House	2	Supporting HPA	4	2007 HPA Preservation Awards . . .	6
A Grandfather's Contribution	3	New Board Members	5	Repairing Windows	10

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Mission Statement

The mission of the
Hartford Preservation Alliance
is to preserve and revitalize

Hartford's unique architectural heritage
and neighborhood character.

From the Office

by Laura Knott-Twine, Executive Director



We Are in the Running for 2011!

The 2011 National Trust for Historic Preservation National Conference goes out to bid much in the same way as the Olympics do when seeking a site for their National Preservation Conference. The two finalists are Hartford, CT and Buffalo, NY! In August the National Trust reviewers will come to the city for a final site visit and then make their decision. The event will take place in the fall of 2011 and will draw between 2,500 and 3,000 people from across the country.

Why has Hartford been selected as a finalist? What the National Trust has recognized is that Hartford has over 4,000 buildings that are on Registers of Historic Places and there are 36 Local, State and National Historic Districts and other individually listed buildings. It has a strong preservation community that includes Hartford Preservation Alliance, private citizens, developers and city officials. It has one of the few Historic Preservation Ordinances in place in the US.

Hartford is a city alive with architectural treasures, history dating to the 1600s and an active arts population. It is also the home to over 121,000 residents, some living in majestic old mansions in Hartford's Asylum Hill, West and South ends and others still occupying the housing stock that has been home to the working class for over a hundred and fifty years. Hartford is a human sized city where one can view buildings that span American history. It contains buildings of almost every American architectural style and period. Home to over 25 racial groups and also multi-generational immigrant families of many nations from the Jamaicans to the Puerto Ricans to the Lithuanians; it is a living microcosm of America. Within the city's boundaries are two extant mill villages. Coltsville, home to Samuel Colt's gun factory, worker housing and church remain and then there is Parkville, where one of America's first automobile factories opened and built the Pope Automobile. Today, technology specialists, corporate workers and artists are living and working in the old factories and housing stock has now been reclaimed to serve today's residents. Resting right on Main Street in the heart of downtown are some of Hartford's oldest residents residing in the Ancient Burying Ground. The founders of this great city have living relatives, 12 generations later, who still live and work in the city today. What the visitor finds in Hartford is the continuity of American history from the early 1600s to the present.

Many people have served on a Steering Committee to make this happen. HPA's Lee G. Kuckro, board member, Laura Knott-Twine, Executive Director and Tomas J. Nenortas, Historic Resources Advisor have been active. HPA, the CT Trust for Historic Preservation and Hartford city planning consultant, Toni Gold, wrote the narrative application to the National Trust. HPA and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation would co-host this major national event.

If you doubt for a moment that there is "nothing to see" please take a "virtual" tour of Hartford at <http://hartford.omaxfield.com/> and visit HPA's website at www.hartfordpreservation.org.

The Old State House

One of the most important steps in preserving any building is to keep it active and occupied. To think of the Old State House closed and unused tears at the heart of the history and preservation movement in the city of Hartford and the State of Connecticut. Not only because scarce public resources have been recently invested in the museum and it is easier to preserve a well-utilized building, but mostly because this building is a state and nationally significant site and is part of the legacy of every Connecticut citizen.

The Hartford Preservation Alliance's most urgent call is for the State of Connecticut and perhaps the federal government to preserve and protect this most precious historic asset. Many have stepped forward and invested in the future of Hartford. Community and civic organizations, city departments, developers, business leaders and home owners all have a stake in maintaining the Old State House.

How might everyone in the state contribute to this Connecticut landmark? The most equitable way would be through our state budget. We ask that the legislature and the Governor dedicate the appropriate resources in this legislative session and in perpetuity so that this building can move into the future while preserving the past.

A Grandfather's Contribution to Hartford's Unique Architectural Landscape

In the "small world" department, I was in the process of selling off my postcard collection on the Internet when I found myself in contact with Tomas J. Nenortas, HPA's Historic Resources Advisor. In reviewing the contents of an old Hartford postcard, the discussions led to Tomas' work in volunteering with the restoration efforts at the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Hartford. I mentioned that my grandfather, John J. McMahon (1875-1958), was an architect that was involved in the early planning of Holy Trinity and that I was in possession of some early architectural drawings related to the original basement church. The result of that chance discussion was illustrated in the last issue of the HPA's newsletter (Winter 2007) where Tomas and I are pictured on the front steps at Holy Trinity.

But Holy Trinity was not the only structure that John J. McMahon planned in the City of Hartford. By my last count, McMahon was the principal or associate architect of record for at least 40 buildings in Hartford during a career that spanned 65 years, from 1893 to 1958. So it's not surprising that he left such a mark on the streetscape of the city of Hartford.

"The Colonel," as he was known due to his rank with the Connecticut National Guard, was born in Hartford in 1875 and lived his whole life here. He was born on Talcott Street and attended St. Patrick's School (where he shared a double desk with John F. Callahan who was to become pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle parish in West Hartford and for whom Colonel McMahon designed the church, school and rectory). McMahon left St. Patrick's in 1890, only a few months before his grammar school graduation, to take a job as an errand boy at a Hartford clothing store. Three years later he was taken in by architect Frederick Royal Comstock as a student apprentice and worked in both Hartford and New York City, until interrupted in 1898 for service in the Spanish-American War. The most notable project he worked on under Comstock was the 1899 Second Church of Christ Scientist at 68th Street and Central Park West in New York City.

From 1900 to 1911 he was associate architect in the Hartford firm of John J. Dwyer. His major Hartford projects during his tenure with Dwyer and McMahon include: St. Augustine's Church in Barry Square; St. Michael's Church on Capen Street; the House of Good Shepherd on Sisson Avenue; St. Elizabeth's House on Wethersfield Avenue; the first administration building at St. Francis Hospital on Collins Street; and the Elk's Club Lodge on Prospect Street.

In 1911 he teamed up with Frank Warren Whiton who was a draftsman in the firm of Dwyer and McMahon and worked, along with McMahon, on the plans for the Mount St. Joseph's Academy in West Hartford. The firm of Whiton & McMahon was in business from 1911 to 1932 when it dissolved due to the economic depression.

Hartford designs by McMahon during the Whiton & McMahon era include: City of Hartford Fire Station #3 on Front Street; Pope Park and Front Street Bath Houses; the Alfred E. Burr School on Wethersfield Avenue; St. Peter's School on Main Street; Holy Trinity Church (basement) on Capitol Avenue; Washington Street School additions; Connecticut National Guard

HPA Summer Appeal

The Hartford Preservation Alliance is launching the second part of our Annual Appeal program called the "HPA Summer Appeal." HPA's members and donors are an integral part of sustaining our organization. Funding an organization has many parts and they are all interconnected. We are thankful for the support HPA has received to carry out its mission of historic preservation and retainment of Hartford's unique neighborhood character. Here is how you can help. You will be receiving an invitation to give in your mailbox soon. Please consider a donation to the HPA Summer Appeal.



Geer's Hartford City Directory, 1916.

Stable (unknown location); City of Hartford Public Market on Connecticut Boulevard; Clarkin Field (later known as Bulkeley Stadium) on George Street; Hartford Fire Department Machine Shop on John Street; Henry C. Dwight School additions on Wethersfield Avenue; New Park Avenue School; Kinsella School (now the Betances School) on Charter Oak Avenue; the City of Hartford Water Department Building on Homestead Avenue; Hudson Street (Wadsworth Street) School additions; St. Peter's Church towers on Main Street; the James H. Naylor School on Franklin Avenue; the Corning Building at Main and Asylum Streets; the Cornelius Moylan School on Hillside Avenue; Wilson Street (McDonough) School additions; St. Luke's basement Church on Eaton Street; St. Augustine's Rectory on Campfield Avenue; St. Augustine School on Clifford Street and St. Augustine Church side-aisle additions.

During the last part of his career McMahon worked on his own except for about a year in the 1940's when he partnered with architect Russell Hills. Hartford works by McMahon from 1932 to 1958 include: St. Justin Church on Blue Hills Avenue; St. Augustine "Prize Houses" (fundraiser raffle) on Gilman Street and Campfield Avenue; St. Lawrence O'Toole Church (with Russell Hills) on New Britain Avenue; St. Maurice Convent at St. Francis Hospital on Ashley Street; St. Justin School on Blue Hills Avenue; St. Michael Ukrainian Church (basement) on Wethersfield Avenue; and St. Luke's Rectory on Bolton Street.

The original drawings for many of these designs and the multitude of projects he planned outside of the city limits of Hartford, are included in his architectural archives that are in the process of being inventoried and donated to the Connecticut Historical Society.

In addition to his military service and architectural career, McMahon also served in a civic capacity by being elected to the Hartford Board of Alderman in 1924 and 1926.

John J. McMahon died in 1958 at the age of 83 leaving behind an indelible imprint on the structural landscape of Hartford and beyond.

Joseph P. McMahon is the Director of Court Facilities for the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch and is the grandson of architect John J. McMahon.

Save the Dates!

Photography Exhibit

Coltsville National Historic Landmark Forum

Congressman John Larson and the Coltsville Ad Hoc Committee – of which HPA is a member – will host a public forum to discuss the application for Coltsville to be named a National Historic Landmark. The event will take place in the Coltsville neighborhood on August 8th 2007, from 5 to 7 p.m. Please check the local newspaper, HPA website or, in August, call the HPA office 860.570.033 for the event location.

Hartford Bike Tour

On September 8, 2007, HPA – along with approximately 40 other sponsors – will offer a bike tour of Hartford. Options being offered are 10 or 25 mile loops. Highlighted will be Hartford's historic neighborhoods and attractions.

Hartford Public Library will be opening their newly built "Hartford History Room" this fall and Hartford Preservation Alliance has been invited to mount the opening exhibit. The exhibit called, "Honoring those who Preserve Hartford's Historic Assets." will be approximately 25 large format, full color photographs of the 2006 and 2007 HPA Preservation Awardees. An opening reception will be held on September 27, 2007 at 6:30 PM. There will be two presentations: "Hartford Historic Building Survey" and Preston Maynard, Connecticut liaison to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, will speak on "Local Preservation and the National Scene." Light refreshments will be offered and the event is free.

Supporting HPA

Every source of income is vital to carry on the work of our mission to work to preserve and revitalize Hartford's unique architectural heritage and neighborhood character. The Hartford Preservation Alliance is financed in part by the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Surdna Foundation and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, in cooperation with the Connecticut Humanities Council.

Continued support is an ongoing quest for all nonprofits. HPA is proud that funders continue to have confidence in our work.

Recently, we received both a grant and recognition from the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCC&T) who presented us a "Historic Preservation Community Partnership Recognition" certificate in recognition of the partnership established between HPA and CCC&T. Along with this recognition came the awarding of a \$75,000 Basic Operating Support Grant. HPA deeply appreciates the support coming from foundations, organizations, businesses, members and people interested in protecting Hartford's historic assets.

HPA's New Board Members

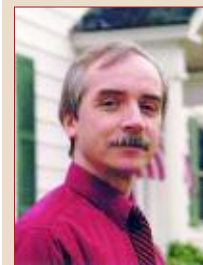
Chief Charles A. Teale, Sr., a Hartford native and Chief of the Hartford Fire Department has a long and deep understanding of Hartford's history. Chief Teale is recognized for his community service despite the demands of his job in addition to being a devoted husband and father. His community service includes: President of the Phoenix Society, Toastmaster International, producer of a community access TV program and currently serves on the board of trustees



for the Boy's & Girls Club of Greater Hartford. Chief Teale has done extensive research on the history of the fire department in Hartford.

He appreciates the opportunity to share his experiences and be a positive influence to people of all ages. Charles Teale brings a unique perspective and will be a great asset to HPA.

Valerio Giadone brings years of diversified architectural design experience to the Hartford Preservation Alliance. Mr. Giadone provided architectural design for the renovation of an existing carriage house structure to an 80-seat black box theater for the Hartford Children's Theater. He is the owner of the 1890 "Victorian Lady" brick house that was moved from Sigourney to Ashley Street in 2004. The



restored home was featured on *HGTV's Restore America* series. Mr. Giadone is also a member of several architectural firms and has had the opportunity to work in municipal and state projects in Connecticut and New York. The diverse projects include: the Military Leadership Academy for the Connecticut National Guard, the Brooklyn Public Library and renovation of New York City parks to name only a few of his professional accomplishments. Mr. Giadone's expertise will help HPA's future efforts in protecting endangered structures.

Richard Ott was born in St. Louis, MO and studied interior design in college. His professional career started in residential design, then commercial retail and eventually the interior design department for an architectural firm in St. Louis. He began his own design company and relocated his business to Hartford in the mid 90s. Mr. Ott and a business partner opened Design Source Connecticut in 2005 which is a Showroom "to the trade" for interior designers and architects. Richard Ott's first home in St. Louis was a 1905 3-story brick residence located in a historic district in St. Louis. This was the beginning of his love of rehabilitation and restoration. He is a member of the Parkville Business Association and has become an active member and advocate for neighborhood revitalization. HPA is fortunate to have Mr. Ott as a talented and passionate board member.



Gap Funding

The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation awarded two gap fund loans in Hartford as part of the Trust's new Historic Building Finance Fund (HBFF). The home at 34 Ashley Street received \$16,000. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this house is located in the Asylum Hill neighborhood. Loan funds will be used by the homeowner to make repairs to the porch, facade, roof & chimney. Other funding secured for the project includes a \$30,000 loan from The Neighborhoods of Hartford, Inc. Funding for 246 Sargeant Street, called "The Castle" by its neighbors, is a vacant residential structure that will be rehabilitated by the nonprofit



34 Ashley Street Photo: Brad Schide

developer Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (NINA) into two units, one for a homeowner and the other for rent by the owner. The \$437,000 renovation of this National Register property also uses the state's Historic Homes Tax Credits as one of its funding sources.

A pilot program, HBFF is funded through the Community Investment Act. The CT Trust is using \$100,000 of its annual \$200,000 CIA allocation for the program, which provides gap funding for historic rehabilitation projects. For more information call Brad Schide at (860) 463-0193 or bschidellc@aol.com.



246 Sargeant St. Photo: Brad Schide

From "Connecticut Preservation News," May/June 2007

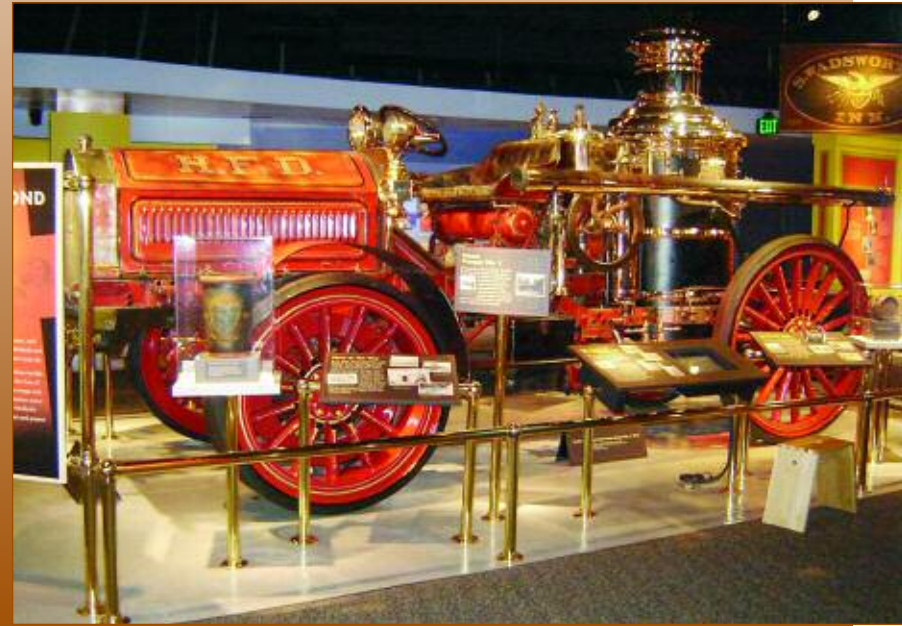
Membership Dues		Join the Hartford Preservation Alliance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15	Name:	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25	Street:	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Household	\$40	City:	<input type="text"/> State: <input type="text"/> Zip: <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation Friend	\$100	Telephone:	<input type="text"/> Email: <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation Ally	\$150	Mail to: Hartford Preservation Alliance, 56 Arbor Street, Suite 406, Hartford, CT 06106	
<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation Advocate	\$250	All contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation Patron	\$500		
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1,000		

Community education: The "History is All Around Us" permanent exhibit at the Old State House

Connecticut Historical Society

The Connecticut Historical Society's creative new exhibit, called "History is All Around Us," opened in September 2006. Located in the lower level of the Old State House, this permanent exhibit is full of stories about Hartford's past and present. It is a colorful and hands-on exploration of how history is part of all of our everyday lives and is meant to interest both children and adults. As the Hartford Courant noted, "No child who descends the staircase into the panoramic gallery...will leave with the notion that history is boring." The exhibit includes family histories, photographs, artifacts and much more, including a 1912 fire engine and a 30-foot-long sign from G. Fox. It creatively uses touch-screen, sound stick, audio and video technologies to make Hartford's history come alive to visitors of every age.

Photo: Connecticut Historical Society



2007 Hartford Preservation Awards

Photos: Laura Stone (except where noted)

**Building rehabilitation: Brick Hollow,
Braun Investments, LLC**

No Hartford neighborhood is as characterized by the "Perfect Six" style as is Frog Hollow. For decades, the Perfect Sixes on the west side of Zion Street between Park and Ward Streets, built in 1905, were desirable housing for factory workers, many of whom could walk to work at the manufacturing companies in Frog Hollow and Parkville. After World War II, however, as the factories closed, the housing declined. The buildings were rehabilitated in the early 1980s, but within 20 years they were again vacant and abandoned. In 2000, Curt von Braun, a recent New England transplant from Texas, took on the task for reviving these buildings. His project, named "Brick Hollow" by von Braun because of the brick buildings, involved the rehabilitation of ten buildings, required numerous funding sources, and took six years to complete. The restored buildings now provide 50 units of low and moderate income rental housing. Opened in December 2006, all ten are now fully leased.



**Building rehabilitation:
663 Broad Street**

John S. Rogers

663 Broad Street, built in 1911, is one of the most extraordinary buildings in Hartford. A three-story brick structure in Frog Hollow, it is only 13 feet wide, almost surely the smallest apartment building in the city. From at least the 1920s until the early 1950s, its first floor was a storefront that at various times housed a grocery store, a shoe repair shop and a restaurant. When John Rogers saw the building in 2005, it was owned by the city and had been vacant for many years. John is an architect who had been living in Southbury but working for the Department of Corrections in Wethersfield. Acting as his own architect, he created three one-bedroom apartments, one on each floor. He used the state historic homeownership tax credit to help cover some of the costs. By October 2006, the project was complete; and he moved into the second floor apartment, where he now lives. The building is fully rented.



Neighborhood revitalization, building rehabilitation and in-fill: The HOPE VI in-fill and rehabilitation of the former Dutch Point housing project

The Community Builders, Inc. (TCB), the Coalition to Strengthen the Sheldon/Charter Oak Neighborhood (CSS/CON) and the Hartford Housing Authority

The 67-year-old barracks-style Dutch Point public housing project, built in 1940, has now been replaced with Phase 1 of a three-phase development that is transforming the Sheldon/Charter Oak neighborhood and that stands as a testament to what hard work, creativity and collaboration can produce. This phase of the project, which consists of 73 rental units, includes six new buildings on the site of the old Dutch Point project, three new in-fill buildings on Norwich Street adjacent to the old project area, the rehabilitation of six existing buildings on Norwich and Lisbon Streets, and the creation of two new city streets. The active involvement of CSS/CON and the selection of TCB as developer helped produce a design that is urban, rather than suburban, in nature. Full of life and color, the buildings blend gables, porches and windows in a Victorian-like architectural style. In addition, by integrating the on-site development with the rehabilitation and in-fill of nearby buildings, this area now is part of the existing neighborhood and not separate from it.



Building rehabilitation: 25-27 and 31-33 Lewis Street

Trumbull on the Park, LLC and Herbert S. Newman and Partners P.C.

The mid 19th and early 20th century two-story buildings on Lewis Street are rare survivors of residential-scale architecture in downtown Hartford. The distinguished Italianates at 25 Lewis Street and 27 Lewis Street, mirror images of each other, were built in the 1850s by Lewis Rowell, a local joiner. The building next door at 31-33 Lewis Street, built in 1928, is a refined example of the Georgian Revival style. The three buildings were renovated as part of Trumbull Centre, which includes Trumbull on the Park, a nine-story apartment building facing Trumbull Street, with which the Lewis Street buildings are back-to-back. They had been emptied a number of years ago in anticipation of an earlier project on the site but remained vacant and in disrepair when that project fell through. They have now been converted into 12 apartments. The preservation of their brick facades has reinvigorated Lewis Street while maintaining its intimate scale.



Continued on next page

Building restoration: 183-185 Oxford Street

Christian and Kate Winkley

Christian Winkley, a contractor and builder, came to Hartford in the 1990s to go to law school, and in the process discovered the West End. In 1999 he bought the 1908 three-family building at 183-185 Oxford Street and moved into the first floor apartment. Working on one side of the house at a time, it took Christian and his wife Kate seven years to complete the entire project. The work included replacing asbestos shingling with new clapboard, reconstructing the front porch and replicating columns and similar details from the original house design. The Winkley's construction company, which specializes in old house restorations, is now known as Oxford Builders because of its connection to Oxford Street. Oxford Builders has bought and renovated four other three-family houses in the West End, including three on their own block, thereby rejuvenating not only their own house but their neighborhood as well.



**In-fill construction: Zion Street Mutual Housing
Mutual Housing Association of Greater Hartford (MHAGC)**

Mutual housing is a type of housing, similar to a cooperative, in which the building is owned by an association, of which the residents are the members. Since the late 1980s, MHAGC has been active in converting vacant and deteriorated buildings in Hartford into affordable housing. Its best known work is the restoration of the many Perfect Sixes which border the eastern edge of Pope Park in Frog Hollow. Back-to-back with a portion of these buildings was a row of Perfect Sixes rising up the Zion Street hill between Ward and Summit Streets. By the time that Mutual Housing could acquire them, three had already been demolished and the deterioration of the rest was severe. Working with architect Paul Bailey of New Haven, Mutual Housing designed as replacement housing a single, rowhouse-like brick building articulated in a way that makes it appear to be four Perfect Sixes. The new structure echoes the feel of the Perfect Sixes, respects the rise of the Zion Street Hill, and blends exceptionally well into the historic character of the neighborhood.



Adaptive reuse: Society for Savings building

Michael McEveney and John P. Duffy

The Society for Savings building at 31 Pratt Street, with its 40-foot high ceiling and monumental columns, is one of the most spectacular interior spaces in the city. The core of the present building dates to 1893. In 1926 and 1927, the main banking floor was redesigned in a classical Renaissance Revival style, and the magnificent ceiling was embellished with gold leaf, ornamental plaster work and murals. The building was closed in the mid-1990s and sat vacant until Mike McEveney and John P. Duffy reopened the space in 2006 as Joe Black's restaurant. Their renovation was done with great consideration for the historic nature of the property. The main hall became a ballroom. An overlooking balcony was constructed so that it could be removed in the future. The old bank vaults, fireplaces and chandeliers were retained, and a new mural depicting historic Hartford was added in a side room. The renovation has brought new life to one of Hartford's most historic buildings.



**Building rehabilitation and adaptive reuse:
Colt Factory South Armory**

Colt Gateway, LLC

Colt Gateway is in the midst of a massive rehabilitation and conversion of ten buildings in the historic Colt factory complex on Huyshope and Van Dyke Avenues in the Sheldon/Charter Oak neighborhood south of downtown. When completed, the South, East and North Armories will have 262 apartments, while the rest of the complex will be commercial. The South Armory is the first of the three armories to open. It is a 200,000 square foot six-story reinforced concrete structure that was built in 1916 as Colt's facilities were expanded during World War I. It continued to be used for arms production into the 1980s. Eventually Holdings for America, the parent company of Colt Gateway, took control of the property; and in 2005 the full-scale rehabilitation of the South Armory began. The project has modernized the building while retaining its historic exterior industrial appearance. The top four floors will become apartments, with 12- to 14-foot high ceilings and open ductwork, while the two bottom floors will be retail and commercial space.



Building rehabilitation: 164 Babcock Street

Atera Enterprises, LLC

Before taking on 164 Babcock Street, Atera Enterprises had rehabilitated five other buildings in the city, all of which it operated as rentals. 164 Babcock Street, however, is the first building to which Atera president Pamela Melusky has applied her new comprehensive homeownership program, which she calls "Turning the Key." This six-family brick building in Frog Hollow was built in 1897. Atera rehabbed the building and converted it to six three-bedroom condominiums. It advertised the units as rentals, however, thereby drawing applicants looking to rent rather than to buy; but it qualified them for the apartments financially as if they were potential buyers. It then offered each of the accepted in-coming tenants the option of renting-to-own the unit. This option included credit planning, mortgage education, purchase assistance and homeownership instruction and education. Five of the initial six tenants took the purchase option; and by the end of 2007 all five of them will be first-time homeowners.



**Building rehabilitation and reconstruction:
Noah Webster School**

**Hartford Board of Education
School Building Committee**

The Tudor Revival Noah Webster School on Cone Street in the West End is one of the city's most unusual school buildings. Built around 1900, it is faced in stone on the first floor, with stucco and half-timbering on the second and third floors. Buildings were added to the campus in 1907 and 1931, but by the early 1990s the school had become outdated and too small and its demolition was a possibility. Neighborhood opposition to demolition was immediate and vocal; and the design eventually developed by DuBose Associates keeps the old while successfully blending in the new. The three existing buildings were renovated and a new three-story building was constructed to link the original Cone Street building to the old gymnasium building. The new building uses brown-and-cream-colored brickwork to emulate the stucco and wood half-timbering pattern of the original school, and the new entrance on Whitney Street is a proportional replica, in glass and steel, of the original Cone Street entrance. The south wall of the original building is actually incorporated into the library.



Continued on page 11

Windows: Repair Rather Than Replace or Replace with Like Kind

One feature of Hartford's historic buildings and homes that will be affected by the Hartford Preservation Ordinance will be all of the windows that can be seen from the street. While this is the rule we must follow, we want to put forward that historic preservation on all sides of your home will add to its beauty and property value. Homeowner, Lynelle H. wrote:



Photo: Bi-glass Systems Inc.

"This year I looked closely at the process involved in renovating our older home and continued to explore the dynamic relationship between people and the built environment. As always, the project took on a life of its own as I explored elements of historic preservation, the science of building, the aesthetics and nature of mathematical patterns in architecture, and our intimate expectations of the place we choose to call home. Historic windows add much to the character of a house. Before you decide to replace them with double paned, vinyl windows, consider that the old windows and weights and pulleys, can usually be fixed and insulation can be added to stop the drafts. Old windows with good storm windows are more energy efficient than the newer replacement windows.

Always view your house as a whole. All of the materials that make up the structure and finish details of your house interact with each other, so make informed decisions when you need to do repairs."

One can find lots of helpful information on repairing windows on the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior's web site www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief09.htm. They write, "Much of the technical section presents repair techniques as an instructional guide for the do-it-yourselfer. The information will be useful, however, for the architect, contractor, or developer on large-scale projects. It presents a methodology for approaching the evaluation and repair of existing windows, and considerations for replacement, from which the professional can develop alternatives and specify appropriate materials and procedures." When one goes to Hartford's Department of Development Services, Planning Division at 250 Constitution Plaza to apply for a building permit for window projects, the department will also give you instruction sheets from *Historic Preservation Guideline Tear Away Sheet – Windows* to help you or you can log on to www.hartford.gov/development/planning/docs/hist_tearsheet_windows.pdf. You may also call the Hartford Preservation Alliance if you have questions. ❀

Strong Partners *Continued from Page 1*

Rebecca Parkin, senior planner in the city's planning division reported that since December 12, 2006, 178 applications have been sought and of those 160 were approved, 2 were denied and the rest are pending. Ms. Parkin says that many applicants now come to Planning for Historic Review consultations or to have administrative sign-off fast tracked. HPA has also seen an increase of individuals requesting technical assistance to help them through the process and to find appropriate resources for their projects. Additionally, over 340 local contractors received a letter, addresses of historic properties and an application from the planning department helping them to understand the new ordinance. The partner groups will be offering a workshop for contractors in the winter. In 2008 HPA is planning to offer a certificate program for those contractors who attend a comprehensive 2-evening course on the Preservation Ordinance and an orientation to the resources available including Historic Tax Credits, easements, possible gap funding and other guides.

When people come to a decision on what course that they want to take, they will either get approval from the planning division staff or they will be asked to present their ideas to the Historic Preservation Commission, whose members we listed in our last newsletter (Winter 2007). There are two new members that have been appointed; they are: Sarah Galvan and Michael O'Connell. The role of the mayoral and council appointed members of the Historic Properties/Preservation Commission is to act as the official stewards of the city of Hartford's 4,000 plus historic assets using generally accepted design guidelines.

Another organization in the Hartford Preservation Ordinance partnership is Hartford 2000 (H2K.) They describe themselves as, "Hartford 2000 is the coalition of Hartford's fourteen Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Committees and the City of Hartford who come together to share ideas, resources and information and to work cooperatively to revitalize Hartford's neighborhoods. The mission of Hartford 2000 is 'to strengthen the individual and collective power of the NRZ's and to serve as an advocate for neighborhood issues.'" One of those issues is the fact that numerous homes and buildings that are in their zones fall under the HPO. H2K participates in workshops and informational meetings that lead to better understanding of the rules and regulations of the HPO.

Hartford Preservation Alliance staff and board of directors are committed to helping owners succeed in taking care of their historic buildings and homes. We have numerous resources to point you in the right direction. We plan on offering workshops and programs that will make the work of preservation enjoyable and profitable for all the city's residents. If you have questions, no matter where you are in the planning process, please call us for help. We invite you to read all the articles on the preservation ordinance on line at www.hartfordpreservation.org/news.html. Finally, we invite you all to participate in the partnership by continuing to support historic preservation and those who contribute to saving our important community assets. ❀

The Historic Districts map, Historic Preservation Guidelines, list of addresses covered by the ordinance as well as Application for Historic Review form is provided by the City of Hartford at the following website: www.hartford.gov/Development/planning/pln-historic-ordinance.htm

HPA Awards *Continued from page 9*

Community activism: The Kenyon Street website

Carolyn West

In 1973, Carolyn West bought the Charles Atkins House at 65 Kenyon Street in the West End. Her block – the first one north of Farmington Avenue – was built between 1890 and 1904, and features fine old historic houses in a variety of Victorian styles, many of them designed by William H. Scoville, one of Hartford's most prolific residential architects of the period. Carolyn fell in love with both the house and the neighborhood and in 2006 was inspired to create a community website as a way for people to see the block through her eyes. The website highlights the 32 houses on the block, with photos and historical information. It promotes community activities, such as a tree planting project, garden walks and tag sales. You can even purchase a series of note cards, designed by Carolyn, that feature the lovely houses and gardens of on her block. Visit the web site at www.kenyonstreethartford.org.



Community education: Cemetery preservation and revitalization

Ruth Shapleigh-Brown

Ruth Shapleigh-Brown is Executive Director of the nonprofit Connecticut Gravestone Network, founded in 1995. Its mission is to educate the public on the historical importance of old graveyards and cemeteries and to promote and preserve the artistic contributions of gravestone carvers. Ms. Brown is recognized regionally and



Photo: Tomas J. Nenortas

nationally for her expertise and advocacy in saving old burial grounds. Her projects include the clean-up of the Old South Burying Ground on Maple Avenue in Hartford. She has also conducted numerous educational walking tours for the public. She is on the board of Cedar Hill Cemetery and is a consultant to the Ancient Burying Ground at Main and Gold Streets in Hartford, where she helps with programs and outreach. Over the years, her important work has elevated and enhanced the study of genealogy, has enabled countless descendants to identify long-lost family members and has helped preserve our cemetery heritage.

Porch revitalization: 47 Ashley Street

Helder Mira, Tara Parrish and
Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance



In November 2006, Helder Mira and Tara Parrish bought the 1891 red brick house at 47 Ashley Street in Asylum Hill. The house had been substantially restored by the Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (NINA), a coalition of six major Asylum Hill institutions – The Hartford, Aetna, ING, Mass Mutual, St. Francis Hospital and Webster Bank – as part of a larger program to promote the revitalization of Asylum Hill, with a particular focus on Ashley and Sargeant Streets. The

owners completed the restoration work. The rebuilding of the porch, combined with the historically appropriate color scheme of greens and brick red chosen by the owners and the removal of years of overgrown shrubs, showcases the entire building and enlivens the Ashley streetscape.

Hartford Preservation Alliance special achievement award Lifetime commitment to historic and architectural preservation

Lee Kuckro

Lee Kuckro has for more than three decades been a leader of the preservation movement in Wethersfield, Hartford, and the State of Connecticut as a whole. He was a member of the Wethersfield Historic District Commission from 1970 until 1990, including 14 years as its chairperson. From there he joined the board of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, serving as chairman from 1998 until 2002. In 2006 he took on his present position of president of the Antiquarian & Landmarks Society. Lee had long been active in the Hartford Architecture Conservancy. In 1997, after the Conservancy's collapse, he was one of the founders of the Hartford Preservation Alliance and became its first president, and he remains an active board member. In its early days, the Alliance met in Lee's former office at Advest. Lee's dedication to historic preservation is extraordinary. He has left his mark everywhere he has gone. Hartford, Wethersfield and indeed the entire state of Connecticut are the better as a result.





Then



&

Now

This 21 Sherman Street house is now the home of Mark Fisher and Luciano Valles. It is featured in "Victorian Hartford Revisited," a second book authored by HPA's Tomas J. Nenortas.



Photo: Tomas J. Nenortas

Lost Hartford



Photo: Tomas J. Nenortas Collection

*Can you identify the location of this home? Send your answer to lktwine@hartfordpreservation.org. If it is drawn from the correct entries, you will receive a copy of **Victorian Hartford Revisited**. If you have an image, especially a mystery photo, you would like to share and/or donate to the HPA archives, please contact us.*



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