



Hartford Preservation Alliance

Preservation Week 2004

Preservation Week this year will be celebrated in Hartford from May 3rd until May 16th. The 2004 theme is "New Frontiers in Preservation." According to National Trust president Richard Moe, the theme calls on us "to identify and tackle the new and ongoing challenges we face and to redouble our efforts to ensure that our movement accurately reflects the vision, energy and diversity of America itself."

The highlight of the week will be the Fourth Annual Jeffery S. Czopor Preservation Week Awards, which honor the projects and people who have particularly contributed to preservation in Hartford during the last year. They are given in memory of Jeffery S. Czopor, an ardent urban preservationist and a founding member of HPA, who died in 2001. The awards ceremony, which the public is strongly encouraged to attend, will be held at 5 pm on Tuesday, May 11 at the South Congregational Church, 277 Main Street, in Hartford. Parking is available in the rear, with entry from John Street. Former State Historic Preservation Office Jack Shannahan will be presenting the awards. The church itself is an important historical building in Hartford, being one of the few remaining buildings downtown that were built before 1830.

Czopor Award honorees in 2003 included, among others, the Mutual Housing Association for the rehabilitation of Park Terrace, the Christian Activities Council for two renovations on Deerfield Avenue, the developer and architect of the renovated G. Fox & Co. building downtown, Karen O'Maxfield and Kevin Flood for their historic Hartford websites, and Elizabeth Normen for the creation of the Hog River Journal.

A calendar of Preservation Week events is included with this newsletter. Preservation Week is being coordinated by JoAnne Bauer.

For more information, contact JoAnne Bauer, 860-233-7852, makingfun@msn.com, or Stephanie Woodlock, 860-231-9822, swoodlock@hartfordpreservation.org.



The South Congregational Church on Main Street in Hartford will host the Fourth Annual Jeffery S. Czopor Preservation Week Awards.
Photo: Matt Blood

New Member-Based Advocacy Committee

In response to requests from members for opportunities to volunteer in support of preservation, HPA on March 29 held the first meeting of its new ABC Committee. "ABC" stands for "Advocacy for Buildings Committee," and the committee's function is allow the full membership of HPA to participate in building advocacy activities. It is being co-chaired on an interim basis by HPA board members Rafie Podolsky and Tony Matta.

The committee has identified two primary functions for the immediate future: (1) to provide quick responses to immediate threats to historic buildings, and especially to threatened demolition, and (2) to organize advocacy in support of the proposed Hartford preservation ordinance when it is submitted to the mayor and the City Council for consideration. 🌸

Anyone interested in being a member of the Committee should contact Rafie Podolsky, 860-232-7748, rpodolsky@hartfordpreservation.org or Tony Matta, 860-289-8177, tmatta@hartfordpreservation.org.

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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.

410 Asylum Litigation Settled

On March 23, the six-year-old litigation involving 410 Asylum Street (also known as the “Capitol Building”) ended with an agreement between HPA, the State of Connecticut, the City of Hartford, and Common Ground (which owns the building through an entity called “410 Asylum Street LLC”) that will result in long-term protection for the historic building. In conjunction with the agreement, the litigation has been withdrawn.

Under the settlement, Common Ground agrees that it will not demolish the building and that it will maintain it so as not to be subject to further deterioration. It also agrees to cooperate with HPA and share costs in obtaining a “local historic property” designation for the building under Section 7-147a of the Connecticut General Statutes. Local historic properties and districts are regulated by the City of Hartford’s Historic Properties Commission, which must approve any demolition and any change in the appearance of the building that is visible from a public way. The Commission presently has jurisdiction only over the city’s two “local historic districts” (Columbia Street. and Grandview Terrace) and its only “local historic property” (the Old State House).

Local historic property designation is a fairly complicated process that requires a formal study initiated by the Historic Properties Commission, followed by public hearings and the adoption of an ordinance by the City Council. HPA has already initiated that process by asking the Commission to authorize a formal study. If an ordinance is eventually adopted, 410 Asylum Street. will have regulatory protection that will continue, without regard to who owns the building. 🌸

For more information, contact Rafie Podolsky at 860-232-7748, rpodolsky@hartfordpreservation.org.



Entryway to 410 Asylum Street, also known as the Capitol Building.

Photo: Matt Blood

For their accounting assistance, HPA thanks:
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Certified Public Accountants
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(860) 432-3532

47 Sigourney Street

Relocation Plans



The building located at 47 Sigourney Street will be moved to its new home at 21 Ashley Street in July, 2004.
Photo: Matt Blood

The long-awaited move of 47 Sigourney Street to a new location at 21 Ashley Street is now targeted for July, 2004. Once relocated, the building will become a single-family house. If everything goes as planned, the move will represent a major collaborative success for the Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (NINA), the City of Hartford, the Asylum Hill NRZ and HPA.

The building, which is in the Imlay-Laurel Street National Register Historic District, is owned by Aetna, which intended to demolish it for parking. Because Hartford has a 90-day waiting period prior to any demolition (other than health and safety demolitions) – a Hartford ordinance which dates to 1977 after the creation of the Hartford Architecture Conservancy – the Hartford Preservation Alliance and the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Committee were able to learn of the demolition before it happened. Discussions with Aetna resulted in a new plan in which Aetna would donate the building to NINA, a coalition of major Asylum Hill institutions, which in turn would raise the funds to move the building. Because 47 Sigourney Street is the only historic building left in what was once a historic block – it sits in an Aetna parking lot – the new location is in some ways actually a better historic fit for the building than its location on Sigourney Street.

Under the leadership of Ken Johnson of NINA, the funding to move the building has come together. Commitments have been made by Aetna, NINA, the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and the State of Connecticut. It is expected that the building will be eligible for the State Historic Home Ownership Tax Credit, as well as city gap financing funds.

The relocation of 47 Sigourney Street is not, however, a single-building project. It is part of a larger program, led by NINA, to revitalize the Ashley/Sargeant Street area in Asylum Hill. Rehabilitation is also planned for 8 Ashley Street, 18 Ashley Street, 221 Garden Street, 227 Sargeant Street and 246 Sargeant Street, all of which will be sold by NINA for home ownership. Although applications are not yet available, NINA is accepting the names of interested potential purchasers, who may pre-register to receive an application form. 🌸

For more information about the Ashley/Sargeant St. project or in pre-registering to receive an application form, contact Ken Johnson of NINA at 860-244-9390, NINAKen@sbcglobal.net.

Hartford-New Britain Busway Plan

Moves Forward

by Jill Barrett

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) will be holding an Open House on Thursday, April 29, from 4:30 to 6 PM at Union Station on Union Place to present its recommendations for a final plan for land use immediately around the busway stations for the Hartford-New Britain busway. The busway is a proposed 10-mile rapid transit link between Hartford and New Britain that follows existing rail lines between the two cities.

The busway is expected to contribute to growth and preservation efforts around those stations. Six stations are planned in Hartford — at Union Station, Broad Street, Sigourney Street, Park Street in Parkville, New Park Avenue near Stop & Shop and Flatbush Avenue. The highest potential for preservation is at the Park Street station, where former industrial buildings are being eyed for the creation of a design district.

Busway station areas will be planned to encourage walking to and from the station and will include development opportunities for vibrant housing, office, and commercial activity, architectural detailing and facades, pedestrian amenities, and landscaping.

Parking for the April 29 meeting will be validated for the parking lot directly across from Union Station on Spruce Street. 🌸

For more information, visit www.ctbusway.com.

Thanks to Karen O'Maxfield

HPA wants to offer extra special thanks to Karen O'Maxfield of Studio O'Maxfield for her extraordinary design work on the HPA newsletter for the past two years. Since 2002, Karen has given hours and hours of her own time as a volunteer to do all layout, design, and typography for the newsletter, resulting, we believe, in a product of exceptional attractiveness. Thanks very much, Karen!

Renovations in Progress



Cathedral Lyceum

Photo: Matt Blood

The Cathedral Lyceum at 227 Lawrence Street in Frog Hollow was built in 1895 in the Renaissance Revival Style. Located not far from the State Capitol, it was originally constructed as a cultural and leisure center for an Irish group associated with Saint Joseph's Cathedral. Since then, it has seen several other uses, including a brief period in which it was owned by a company that made boxes. Most recently, it was headquarters for Hartford Areas Rally Together (HART), a neighborhood organizing group. The building was given a new lease on life when it was purchased by the Melville Charitable Trust. Renovations are currently underway.

Despite its long and somewhat checkered history, the Cathedral Lyceum retains many original features. The half of the first floor that once served as a gym is two stories high. The renovation retains the high ceilings and the decorative exposed truss system supporting the third floor. On the third floor is the original auditorium, which retains its stage and two loges. In introducing new materials and reconfiguring space, the developers attempted to complement the building's original features. New moldings are in the original style, windows fit the original frames and the exterior appears virtually unchanged.

When completed, the Cathedral Lyceum will be home to the Partnership for Strong Communities, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and Betty Gallo & Company. The building will also have a resource center on the third floor, an auditorium that can hold 150 people and two conference rooms on the first floor. The conference rooms and resource center are intended be available for use by other non-profit groups in the area. ✿

Vines Come Down

As Interest Rises on Capewell

The Capewell Horse Nail Company factory on Charter Oak Avenue has been abuzz with activity recently as overgrown vines, dead trees and debris are removed to make way for 92 condominium units at the 6.3 acre complex. John Reveruzzi's plan to convert the century-old factory into a mixture of one-, two- and three-bedroom units has raised a steady stream of inquiry from an array of interested people.

The Capewell Manufacturing Company vacated the 1903 factory and administrative building in the early 1980s, but the buildings have been anything but empty. For twenty years the buildings have housed a steady stream of squatters, animals, drug dealers and vandals. In 2001, the most architecturally stunning building on the complex, the administration building, suffered a devastating fire that destroyed the roof. A building permit was pulled the first week in March and trusses have been ordered. Mr. Reveruzzi hopes to start work on that building by late spring, to stabilize it and to get it closed to the elements. "The building wouldn't last another six months in its current condition," said Mr. Reveruzzi.

A total financing package has yet to come together, although all the appropriate agencies have been extremely supportive of the project, according to Mr. Reveruzzi. If he is successful at putting together a financing package similar to the package used on the Mortson/Putnam Heights project, units will be offered in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 range, making them available to a variety of income levels.

In May, Mr. Reveruzzi hopes to start pre-marketing the 92 units, which range in size from 700 square feet to 1939 square feet. Current plans call for nine one-bedroom units, 61 two-bedroom units, and 22 three-bedroom units. ✿

For more information, contact Lynn Ferrari,
860-403-5046, lferrari@hartfordpreservation.org.



View of former Capewell Horse Nail Company administration building on Governor Street, showing fire-damaged roof.

— Photo: Matt Blood

A Very Special Thank You to Advest

Since HPA was created in 1997, Advest has been printing its newsletter at no charge. What was once a four-page black-and-white paper has on occasion grown to as many as ten pages, and Advest has graciously printed the most recent newsletters in color, thereby allowing us to showcase many of the beautiful historic buildings of Hartford.

HPA is very grateful to Advest for its generosity and commitment in helping to spread information about the preservation movement in Hartford. Thank you, Advest, for your very special contribution!



Hartford Preservation Alliance

"Seeking to revitalize Hartford and its neighborhoods through the preservation and rehabilitation of Hartford's unique cultural heritage."

P.O. Box 230272, 90 State House Square, Hartford, CT 06123-0272

The Hartford Preservation Alliance is Hartford's voice for the preservation of the city's unique turn-of-the-century architectural heritage. HPA can have a major impact in Hartford, however, only if it speaks for a large number of people who share its vision of the city. We very much hope that you will join us in supporting this important work by becoming a member of HPA.

Sincerely,

Matt Blood
President

Membership Application

Please return this membership application along with your dues, payable to the Hartford Preservation Alliance, to:

Hartford Preservation Alliance
c/o The Parisky Group
30 Arbor Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Membership dues schedule	
Student	\$15
Individual	\$25
Household	\$40
Preservation Friend	\$100
Preservation Ally	\$150
Preservation Advocate	\$250
Preservation Patron	\$500
Benefactor	\$1,000

Name

Street Address

City State Zip Code -

Home Phone () Work Phone () Ext.

FAX No. EMail

Occupation Employer

I would like to be an HPA participant in the following activities (check all that apply):

- Advocacy for preservation of specific endangered buildings
- Surveying of buildings and National Register applications
- Public policy advocacy
- Fundraising
- Membership expansion and recruitment of volunteers
- Public relations, newsletter and website
- Walking tours, forums and community education
- Outreach to Hartford neighborhood revitalization committees and other neighborhood groups
- Technical assistance and recruitment of professionals
- Development of financial resources for rehabilitation
- Salvage and recycling of architectural materials from demolished buildings
- Other (please specify):

Holiday Party Held at Nathaniel Shipman House

About 75 HPA members and friends gathered on December 12, 2003, for a holiday party at the home of HPA board member Lynn Ferrari, who lives in the historic Nathaniel Shipman House on Charter Oak Place. Those who attended the celebration had an opportunity to see not only a beautiful old mansion but also a fine example of adaptive reuse. The building, which was built in 1865, was converted in the 1980's into several condominiums. The exterior of the building, halls, stairs, and many of the rooms retain the original period features. However, much of the third floor has been converted to a large open living area that accommodated with ease the holiday party crowd.

The Hartford Preservation Alliance had many reasons to be in a festive mood at the end of 2003. The listing of the Allen-Lincoln District on the National Register of Historic Places was completed, and work on the North Downtown Historic District, which includes a number of important buildings including the former Board of Education Building, was begun. HPA president Matt Blood led a well-attended walking tour of Frog Hollow, the first HPA-sponsored walking tour in several years. Organizationally, four new members were added to the HPA Board – Ray Cassella, Lynn Ferrari, Melonae McClean and Tony Matta – and HPA membership expanded.

The year 2003 was also a year in which preservation gained significant traction in Hartford. The *Hartford Courant* led the way with a regular series of articles on "Place." The City of Hartford started work on a preservation



The 1865 Nathaniel Shipman house, site of HPA's 2003 holiday party.
Photo: Matt Blood

ordinance. There were a number of building rehabs and conversions, including Walter Wicks' conversion of the old fire department facility at 36 John Street into an art studio. With the rebuilding of Mortson Street in Frog Hollow now complete, Phase II of the project – the rebuilding of Putnam Heights – has begun. HPA will continue to work hard in 2004, partnering with other preservation-minded individuals, organizations and city government. If you are not yet a member, please consider supporting the effort to make this year the best ever for preservation in Hartford by completing the membership form provided in this issue. Then, join us at next year's holiday party. ❁

Do you work for a company that participates in the United Way?

If so, you can now designate HPA as a recipient of your contributions, even if HPA does not appear on the checklist of eligible organizations. Here's how:

In Part 4 of the Employee Pledge Form, choose "How My Pledge is Directed"

Under the "Specific Care" column fill in the following lines:

Other Agency Name: **Hartford Preservation Alliance**

Address: **P.O. Box 230272, Hartford, CT 06123-0272**

Amount: **The amount you would like to allocate from your pledge to HPA**

Task Force Drafts City Preservation Ordinance

A task force which is advisory to Lee Erdmann, Hartford's Chief Operating Officer, is completing the draft of a preservation ordinance which, if adopted, will provide significant protection to historic neighborhoods throughout the city. The ordinance is based on the preservation ordinance in Portland, Maine, although it is simpler and not as far-reaching. At its core, the ordinance will extend to National and State Register districts the kind of architectural protection which presently is available only in areas which have been specially created as "local historic districts."

In particular, it will give the Historic Properties Commission the power to prevent demolition of buildings in historic districts and to require that new construction in the district and exterior alterations visible from the street be compatible with the historic character of the district. Its authority will apply, however, only to those alterations for which a building permit is required.

The task force includes representatives of the Historic Properties Commission, the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, the Neighborhoods of Hartford, Inc., the Hartford Economic Development Commission, the city's Planning Department and its division of Licenses and Inspections, and others. HPA is represented on the task force by Rafie Podolsky.

As this newsletter goes to press, a subcommittee of the task force has completed a full draft of an ordinance and has submitted it for review by the full task force. If endorsed by the task force and the Chief Operating Officer, it will go to the mayor and, it is hoped, will be introduced by him as a proposed ordinance. Adoption can come only after a public hearing and review by a Council committee. Once the proposal reaches the City Council, HPA members will be urged to make their support known to Council members. ❁

For more information, contact Rafie Podolsky,
860-232-7748,

Alternatives to Demolition of Second North District School

The City of Hartford is actively considering alternatives to the demolition of the vacant Board of Education Building at 249 High St., which has been targeted as the site for a new police/fire administrative complex. The monumental structure, built in 1891 as the Second North District School, is one of the few nineteenth century schools surviving in Hartford.

A committee led by former Hartford fire chief John Stewart is exploring incorporating the building into the project. A structural engineer has already been through the building.



Detail of the former Board of Education Building.
Photo: Matt Blood

The City's original plan had been for demolition, but a growing community recognition of the historic nature of the building has given the City second thoughts. The Second North District School is one several historic buildings that anchors the new North Downtown Historic District, which was nominated for the National Register in February by the State Historic Preservation Board in response to an application by HPA. Formal approval by the National Park Service is expected by mid-May. ✿

For more information,
contact Matt Blood, 860-246-1067,
mblood@hartfordpreservation.org.

Join Us

For the fourth Annual
**Jeffery S. Czopor
Preservation Week
Awards**

Tuesday, May 11, 2004
5:00 pm
South Congregational Church
277 Main St., Hartford

*Parking available in the rear
from John St.*

Sponsored by
Friends of Preservation Week
and
the Hartford Preservation
Alliance

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