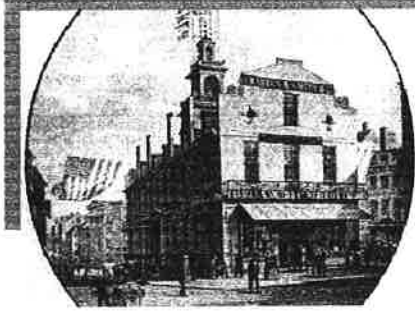


September  
2006



## SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST INC

979 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103

**Dedicated to Preserving Springfield's Architectural History**

### **LAW SUIT SETTLED Donoghue House Should Have Been Protected**

The Springfield Preservation Trusts legal action came to a conclusion with ruling from the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court on August 14, 2006. Our case was heard April 7, 2006 to resolve the issue of whether the properties of the Springfield Library and Museums Association and the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Springfield should be exempt from the Quadrangle Mattoon Street Historic District as set up in 1972, and whether any subsequent properties acquired by either group would also be exempt from the Historic District. At issue had been the demolition of the Donoghue House on Chestnut Street acquired by the Museum Association in 1984 and demolished in 2001 over the protest of the Trust. The Trust feared that the Museum Association or the Diocese could continue to acquire property and demolish or alter it, thus threatening the entire District. Also of concern was the belief by the Trust that exempting property by ownership was not the intent of the State law setting up Historic Districts.

**The MSJC ruled 4-3 in favor of the Trusts position that any acquisition by the Association or the Bishop after 1972 would not be exempt from the District and still be subject to all rules of the District.**

As a result, the Donoghue House should not have been given a 'Certificate of Non-applicability' by the Historical Commission and allowed to be demolished. The dissenting Judges agreed with the majority and went even further by agreeing with the Trust that the Library and Museums Association and the Bishop should never have been exempt from the ordinance that set up the District since their properties were physically included in the District.

This victory for the integrity of the Quadrangle Mattoon Street Historic District will protect buildings that have already been acquired by the Museum Association after 1972. These buildings, such as the Kilroy House on Chestnut Street, the land on Edwards Street where an Edward Street Apartments formerly stood, and the Verizon Building (future site of the new Springfield

History Museum), as well as any further purchases or gifts, will also be protected.

The court also ruled that the Trust could seek remedy for the demolition of the Donoghue House. Possible remedies will be discussed at the Trust Board meeting.

Once again the Trust has demonstrated our willingness to pursue in Court any issue that has significant impact on the Historic Built environment of Springfield. We continue to feel our architectural and cultural assets contribute significantly to the quality of life we all share and that they are worth protecting.

The Trust thanks all of its members and supporters who have generously contributed time and money to make this outcome possible. We also want to thank our talented and dedicated attorneys, Terry Scott Nagel and John Egnal, who managed this case all the way to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, for their tenacious skills and dedication in pursuing this case to its just conclusion. And finally, we thank Trust member Attorney Allen Agnitti for all his assistance.

### **Buckingham Street House to be Razed**

Efforts have failed to save a Colonial Revival mansion at 14-16 Buckingham Street in the McKnight Local Historic District. The Trust had worked closely with the City to promote sale of the tax-foreclosed property for only \$1,000. Trust-sponsored advertisements in the *Boston Globe*, *Hartford Courant*, and *Springfield Republican* helped generate interest at various open houses, but only one credible proposal was submitted by the due date of May 26. Although the City Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services agreed to provide \$150,000 towards the project, the prospective developer withdrew once refined rehabilitation costs exceeded a half million dollars.

Given previous unsuccessful attempts to sell the house for rehabilitation, the Office of Housing then petitioned the Springfield Historical Commission for a certificate of hardship to demolish the structure. The Commission reluctantly voted to grant permission at its August 17 meeting. Demolition is expected later this year.

### Summer Garden Party

The weather was perfect, the food and wine delicious, and the company was wonderful as over 50 guests gathered for the Summer Garden Party at the historic Wallace Mansion located on the MacDuffie School campus. Many thanks to board member Robert Holbrook for organizing this return to Springfield's Golden Age. Check out our new website, [www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org](http://www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org), and see the wonderful photographs taken during this event.

### Historic House Pictures

One of the features on our new website will include historic photographs of Springfield. You may be aware that every building and house in Springfield was photographed in 1939 as part of the WPA project. These wonderful photos are on file in the Building Department and citizens are welcome to look at them. We thought their availability should be expanded and Jesse Steele has taken on the project of scanning all the pictures, putting them on a CD, and posting them on our website. This project is just getting underway and Jesse is starting with the Historic Districts. Keep an eye out for this wonderful project.

### Contractor Suggestions

The Trust is continuing to put together a list of contractors that we could recommend to other people. As the experts in preservation, we often get asked for recommendations of contractors whose work is honest and good. This can range from good handymen to fine finish carpenters, plumbers and electricians. A big area of need is to identify contractors who have the ability and inclination to repair window ropes, re-glaze windows and do basic window repair. Inappropriate window replacement is often done due to a lack of contractors willing to repair. More money is made replacing windows so often that is presented as the only solution by contractors. If you have had a good experience and would like to share that information with others, please fill out the attached coupon and send it to us at 979 Main St, Spfld. MA 01103.

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Name of Contractor \_\_\_\_\_

Trade Specialty \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

### McKnight Renovation

Gary Lewis, a long time Trust member, is in the process of renovating a neighborhood eyesore near his home. Gary submitted a successful proposal to buy the long-neglected, tax-foreclosed house at 111 Ingersoll Grove. The Queen Anne style house had been covered with artificial siding, and its yard filled with haphazard sheds surrounded by an awkward wood fence. Gary has literally removed tons of debris stored in the house and sheds and has begun removing the siding. Take a drive by and see progress as this "ugly ducking" is turned into a "swan."

### Reminder

The annual Mattoon St Arts Festival is scheduled for September 9 and 10. Come visit the membership table for the Springfield Preservation Trust and support a wonderful local event.

**Monthly Meetings**  
Monthly meetings of the Springfield Preservation Trust are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., at the Mason Wright Retirement Center, 74 Walnut Street. All Trust members are welcome.

### Newsletter contributors:

- Jim Boone
- Bill Devlin
- Linda Langevin
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- Bob McCarroll
- Marilyn Sutin

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Name of Contractor \_\_\_\_\_

Trade Specialty \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_