



SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST, INC

74 Walnut Street, Springfield, MA 01105
Telephone Number – 413-747-0656

www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org

Dedicated to Preserving Springfield's Architectural History

October 2011

Massachusetts Most Endangered Historic Resources

Over the summer, Preservation Massachusetts (PM) selected the cities and towns in Western Massachusetts devastated by the June 1st tornado to be the focus of this year's Massachusetts Most Endangered Historic Resources list. These communities were solicited by PM to submit nominations for most endangered historic resources. The Springfield Preservation Trust Board of Directors, after some discussion, chose four historic resources to nominate from Springfield. It was felt that these resources could benefit from being placed on the list by bringing more attention, recognition and progress toward preservation.

The four nominations SPT submitted included the Howard Street Armory (South End Community Center), Howard Street School (the old Zanetti School), the Six Corners Neighborhood, and the Junior Officer's House



on the grounds of Springfield Technical Community College (STCC). While the Junior Officer's House was not damaged by the tornado, it has continued to fall into disrepair and placement on the list will hopefully spark the State to redevelop the building as they have with so many other buildings on the STCC campus.

The two Howard Street properties saw very significant damage as the tornado ripped through the area. The Armory's Drill Shed lost its' roof and then was pulled down after the city felt it was too structurally compromised. The School, while mostly intact, lost much



of its' parapet, a section of wall collapsed, and there was heavy water damage due to the sprinkler system running for a time. Both these buildings have played an important role in the South End community for generations. The Armory has played host to community gatherings and events for generations.



The School has taught the children of the neighborhood up until it closed recently. With the recent lost of the St. Joseph's Parish buildings right next door, there is even more need to save historic buildings like these, which make the area unique and tell the story of the neighborhood.

The Six Corners Neighborhood was truly devastated by the June 1st tornado, and the troubles are exasperated by years of disinvestment in the historic neighborhood. The lack of prosperity and interest in the neighborhood has made for a perfect storm for losing historic properties by neglect or demolition and for insensitive remodels. If there is anything positive that can come out of the destruction left by the tornado, SPT hopes to see rebuilding a stronger neighborhood, using the historic resources as an asset to attract good homeowners and businesses to one of Springfield's most historic neighborhoods.



Along with the most endangered list focusing on Western Massachusetts properties, PM is partnering with SPT and a number of other local preservation groups to hold an event in Springfield called 'Believe in Preservation'. The event will be an inspirational evening recognizing the historic properties damaged by the June 1st tornadoes and the dedicated citizens working to preserve and restore their communities. 'Believe in Preservation' will feature the public presentation of the 2011 Massachusetts Most Endangered Historic Resources list, an annual program that brings more attention, recognition and movement toward preservation success. This year is dedicated to historic properties damaged by the tornadoes in western Massachusetts communities.

The evening will also feature Preservation Massachusetts' 2nd Annual Community Spirit Awards, honoring local groups who have demonstrated extreme dedication to the preservation of their community in the wake of this summer's natural disasters. The 'Believe in Preservation' event will be on Thursday, November 10, beginning at 6:00 at the Basketball Hall of Fame. There

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will be Hors d' Oeuvres and a cash bar from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m., the program will run from 7:00 - 7:45 p.m. SPT invites you to attend this free event to help support the preservation efforts in Springfield and the surrounding communities affected by the June 1st tornado. For more information on Preservation Massachusetts visit www.preservationmass.org. Call 617-723-3383 with questions about the event or to RSVP.

McKnight Twilight Tour

A McKnight Twilight Tour is being planned for Sunday, October 23 between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Featured will be grand Victorian era homes at 1090 and 1135 Worthington Street, 28 Ingersoll Grove, and 179 Clarendon Street. Two more houses are being sought at press time.



Tickets can be purchased for \$15 in advance at www.SpringfieldPreservationTrust.org; Flowers Flowers, 758 Sumner Avenue; and The Flower Box, 596 Carew Street. Tickets are \$20 if purchased on the day of the tour (from 3:45 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.) on Ingersoll Grove, just off Worthington Street. SPT members receive a discount.

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2011 Summer Garden Party Fund Raiser

More than 65 people attended the summer fund raiser on August 21 at 2 Glen Road, an 1899 Shingle Style




house with quarter acre garden in historic McKnight. The event benefited our renovation of the Female Seminary at 77 Maple Street, one of the oldest buildings remaining in the city. Afternoon showers - which turned the garden party with access to the elegant house into a house and porch party with access to the garden - failed to dampen the good time had by all.



Special thanks go to David Hall for opening his beautiful home, Pride Gas and

Convenience Stores for donating the wine, board member Michael Rheault for entertaining on the piano, board member Bob Holbrook for coordinating the event, and board members Trudy Fernandes and Denise Mocchia for soliciting items for the raffle.

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Save the Date – 77 Maple Street Clean Up

SPT will hold a cleanup day at 77 Maple Street on **Saturday, November 5th from 9AM to 3PM**. Volunteers will help move out unusable construction debris, yard waste and other materials to get the property cleaned up. To receive additional information and a reminder closer to the date, sign up for the e-newsletter at the SPT homepage at www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org.

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Mattoon Arts Festival

The SPT participated in the 39th Mattoon Arts Festival on September 10 & 11. Visitors to the SPT booth learned about the ongoing restoration of 77 Maple Street and upcoming SPT events. Thanks to Diane Fisher & Wil Stebbins for coordinating volunteers.



Update on 77 Maple Street

The house's **Structural Issues** are gradually being addressed. This Summer, the "South Main Wall" work was completed, and a final report went to MHC (Massachusetts Historical Commission); after a walk-through, MHC paid SPT the amount of its grant.

CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) money was also forwarded, upon completion of a walk-through and suitable paperwork. A related story in this issue gives some background on what it was that needed fixing in the South Main Wall, and how the fixing was done.

This completed the "imminent" items on our structural-issues list; there are a couple of items yet to be addressed, but they can wait a bit to be fixed.

Other matters:

1. As the South Main Wall work was being done, the Window Restoration was also underway, completing 12 windows and parts of one more. Scope included lead paint abatement. The windows are re-primed and painted, re-hung with new ropes / chains, hardware, etc., and are a delight to operate. The giant windows in front have unequal sash, with the larger lower one opening-up into a slot in the brick wall above. These "step-outs" were the access to the former front porch, on both levels. Peter Hamm

(Historic Preservation Associates) of Wales, MA, was the General Contractor.

2. Construction Documents (Sheet A-11) are done for the Exterior Trim, and Painting. Availability of our vetted Contractors might be an issue for getting the work done this season.
3. For the Exterior Painting ("quick 1-coat") and the Windows, we needed a determination of historic paint colors. This was done by Greg Farmer (Agricola Corporation), of Chicopee. The "body" of the building will be a golden-mustard color, which seems to have been its color from the mid-19th century until the 1970s. The windows are a dark green; this is a very handsome combination. The high Trim was probably an off-white; that's next to be analyzed.
4. The tornadoes did not damage 77, as previously reported.
5. After that, the "hits kept comin' ", but, we still lucked out. The earthquake on August 23rd caused no observed damage. Jane and I were sitting on 77's steps when it happened. Then, 4 days later, Hurricane/ Tropical Storm Irene tiptoed around us, causing extensive damage South of here and North of here, but, 77 was not disturbed. Damage from a plague of locusts would probably depend on weight of insects per cubic foot of air, wind speed, and which particular species of locusts is involved.



Structural Notes. 77 Maple St. – South Main Wall

So, why did the South Wall of the Main building need fixing? The reason for repair was that it was leaning out a bit overhead, and pushed-in at grade. The Main building's walls are 12" thick, which equals 3 **wythes** ("thicknesses") of brick at 4" each. It was by far the most out-of-line wall on the tall Main building, according to my simple measurements. It was "bellied-out" as much as 2

½" or so at the 2nd floor; that was addressed with the cabling work included in Phase 1, done 2 years ago. The wall was "grabbed in-place"; trying to pull it back would cause far more problems than stabilizing it. Meanwhile, at grade, it was pushed-in as much as 2 ½", for a net offset of more than 1 wythe of brick. This was probably caused by freeze-thaw cycles; the wall's Southerly exposure would have caused more extreme cycling in the soil between mid-day and overnight temperatures in the Winters, than would have occurred at the rest of the building. The affected height of wall (about 6 feet) was removed, and rebuilt to its original position.

How the work was done:

1. Excavate along exterior of wall.
2. Number the redstone blocks at the foundation, provide temporary support as they're removed. Make small additional openings for temporary supports to be "threaded-through".
3. Building-moving Contractor provides full support of wall, with an amazing network of wood cribbing, steel girders, and smaller steel beams running through the wall about 1 foot or so apart.
4. Remove rest of masonry, from about 3 ½ feet below grade to 2 feet above grade. The entire South wall now sits on the temporary supports.
5. Add a concrete foundation wall over the exterior of the existing redstone-rubble wall. This is outside the face of the building, so its top is sloped, and it is tied-together to the existing interior concrete backer wall.
6. Rebuild the masonry, with some contemporary steel reinforcing, around the temporary supports.
7. Extract the supports in stages, complete the masonry.
8. Apply dampproofing, backfill.

It's a great relief to have this done! It looks great, and is nice and stout. Kirk Stephens (Stephens Construction), of Belchertown, was the General Contractor. To make things a bit more interesting, our "local" building mover, Hicks, retired several years ago. So, all such work is done by out-of-staters, or not done at all. Kirk, by the way, was also the G.C. for our Phase 1 work, 2 years ago.

Advertising

If you are interested in advertising, the cost is \$35 per issue for a business card size ad. Contact jimboone@hotmail.com if you would like to join the group of advertisers that support the Trust and want to have our members as customers.

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.

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