



## SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2015

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*image above is of  
Union House  
on Main & Bliss Streets*

## SUPPORTERS

Michael Noonan



David & Virginia Neill



Kathleen B. Pellegrino  
413-746-2121  
kpellegrino@

### Casino Update

MGM surprised everyone by announcing that it would not build its 25-story hotel behind the United Electric Building at 73 State Street but instead would build a 6-story hotel with the same number of rooms along Main Street where its housing component was to go. SPT has written the MA Gaming Commission regarding two preservation issues raised by these changes.



Previous renderings had shown the 4-story Union House façade in front of a new structure of similar height. Now the proposed hotel will rise two additional floor above the façade, possibly further compromising Union House.

The ornate lobby of the United Electric Building could not remain in place because it stood where the 25-story hotel elevators were planned and MGM said they could not be moved. Now that the hotel has been moved, the issue of the lobby remaining in place should be reconsidered.

On a pleasant note, the planned apartments have been shifted off-site to make room for the hotel along Main Street. MGM and the City announced that 30 of the promised units will be in the Fire & Marine Building (aka the former School Department) at 195 State Street. This building had been transferred in 2011 to a developer for conversion to housing but the developer never performed.

### Possibility of a Historic District in Colony Hill

The SHC will meet with owners in the Colony Hills area to explore interest in creating a local historic district (LHD) to protect that small suburban neighborhood south of Forest Park. About one third of Colony Hills is in Springfield while the remainder is in Longmeadow. The area was built primarily with large Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival houses between the World Wars. The SHC was approached several years ago by a few owners interested in LHD status and filed a Preliminary Study Report with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, which

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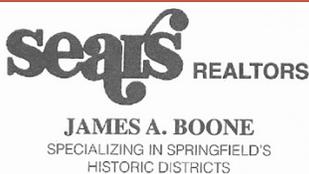
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ultimately recommended moving forward with the designation. If property owners support the concept, the SHC will send a Final Study Report to the City Council.

### Willys-Overland Building

The Willys-Overland Local Historic District was created by a 12-1 vote of the City Council on July 20. The only dissenting vote was Councilor Timothy Rooke. The exterior of the 4-story industrial building at 151-155 Chestnut Street now cannot be altered without approval of the Springfield Historical Commission. [Click here for more information.](#)



### 'City of Homes' 2016 Calendar Makes Debut at Mattoon Street Festival

SPT released its 'City of Homes' 2016 Calendar at the Mattoon Street Arts Festival recently on September 12 and 13, 2015. Building upon the success of last year's efforts, the 2016 calendar, which features the historical homes of Springfield, was found to be a great way to promote local preservation, education, and advocacy efforts, while at the same time showcasing the magnificent character the city has to offer.



According to Tim Cummings, SPT Calendar Committee Chair, "Each month highlights an architectural style represented in Springfield and features a great photograph of a property representative of that style." "This year, we included photos of the homes in the different seasons of the year which added a huge logistical dimension to the project", he adds, "this calendar was literally a year in the making." The Calendar Committee, comprised of Marilyn Sutin and Denise Moccia, really had to get out there months ahead of the photographers in order for the progression of the calendar to look as seamless as possible." Cummings continues, "Another great innovation at Mattoon was the use of the new SPT display stand. It really stood out and helped to draw a lot of attention to the organization. It was a real conversation starter!"

The SPT City of Homes Calendar is available for purchase on-line by [clicking here](#) as well as at Flowers, Flowers and the Gilded Lily Florist, and other local retail establishments during the holidays. Be sure to check out the website for the latest details on locations as to where the calendar can be found. The SPT "City of Homes" 2016 Calendar is on sale for \$15 now through the end of the year. All proceeds support the historic preservation and advocacy work of the Trust in Springfield.

### Preservation Conference in Worcester

Along with Several other Springfield Preservation Trust members, Mike Stevens attended the Massachusetts Historic Preservation Conference in Worcester on August 14. The conference was organized by Preservation Massachusetts and hosted by Preservation Worcester and the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University. The keynote address on the topic of resiliency was given by Ted Landmark, former president of the Boston Architectural College and former

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Please include:

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Send information to  
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## SPT Board Meetings

SPT members are welcome to attend

**when**  
First Wednesday  
of each month  
6PM

**where**  
Mason Wright  
Retirement Center  
74 Walnut Street

## Credits

**Newsletter  
contributors:**  
Tim Cummings  
Bob McCarroll  
Ben Murphy

dean of the Massachusetts College of Art. The theme of resiliency was continued in 60 plus sessions throughout the day at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy's downtown Worcester branch and on 6 guided tours of Worcester neighborhoods.

Mike attended a panel discussion on "When should you hire a professional?" which included Springfield architect, Stephen Jablonski. After a box lunch at the Pharmacy College, he participated in a tour of the Worcester Canal district, an industrial area with a new sense of purpose and later went on a tour of the Crown Hill neighborhood. This is an early 19th century area with predominately Greek revival architecture that is Worcester's newest local historic district.

The conference concluded with socializing and music by a jazz trio back at Mechanics Hall -- and the acoustics are brilliant. The Preservation Conference is a great opportunity to meet other professionals and citizens of other communities in the commonwealth who share our interests. With the proper planning and sponsorship, Springfield could be a great site to host this event in the future.

## "Voices from the Grave" Tour

SPT hosted our third annual tour of Oak Grove Cemetery on October 18, a nippy autumn afternoon with even a few snowflakes. Docent-led groups visited the graves of several "residents," where costumed interpreters spoke about that person. Hour-long walking tours departed every fifteen minutes from the hillside winter crypt between 3:00 pm and 4:00 pm. Seasonal refreshments were served.



Featured were industrialist Daniel Wesson (Don Courtemanche), developer John McKnight (Jim Boone), businessman Theodore Haynes (Guy McInain), political wife Alice Reed Kaynor (Kathleen Pellegrino), and educators Jacob and Elizabeth Bowne (Mike & Liz Stevens).

## Summer Garden Fundraiser

This past August, attendees of the SPT Summer Fundraiser spent a delightful late summer day at the lovely home and gardens of Anne & Daryl deVillier in historic Atwater Park. The event was a great way for the Springfield preservation community to network and mingle in a beautiful setting. Members and friends enjoyed the wonderful hospitality of the deVillier family and delicious hors d'oeuvres provided by Al Dente Catering. Funds raised help support the Trust's work to promote and advocate for Springfield's historic places.

## At Home in Mason Square Architecture, History, Style and Influence

On Thursday, October 22, the Mason Square Library hosted a presentation about Mason Square's architecture and history. Former Winchester Square resident Charles Clark discussed his collection of photographs depicting the many iterations of State Street throughout the last century.

Springfield Preservation Trust board member Bob McCarroll

Michael Stevens  
Marilyn Sutin

**Photography:**

Denise Moccia  
Gregory Murphy  
Marilyn Sutin

Marilyn Sutin, **Editor**

talked about the residential architecture in the neighborhoods surrounding Mason Square including McKnight, which has many homes of local and national significance.

A display of past SPT preservation award winner from the McKnight neighborhood will be at the library throughout the month of October.

Springfield Preservation Trust  
[info@springfieldpreservation.org](mailto:info@springfieldpreservation.org)