



Historic Preservation History Committee Meeting Agenda

18 May 2006, 7:00-8:30 pm, 242 South Lincoln Street

I. Introductions

- A. Attendees included Debbie Jones, Gertie Grant, Kathryn Smith, Deirdre Kieft, and Dave Burrell.

II. Committee

- A. WWPNA website (www.wwpna.org): The newly-designed site by Growing Ventures Solutions offers a "content management system" which makes it easy for providers to upload information and for users to subscribe to particular topics or threads of interest. Every Committee member and interested neighborhood resident is encouraged to join the site, as this will become our primary mode of communicating historical content. Be sure not only to log in but also subscribe to historical topics of interests. There are currently more than 80 postings on history news alone, including special areas for events, preservation concerns, area history, and projects. Please feel free to send in any information that you think might be of general interest, and I will be happy to place it on the site.
- B. Members: The WWPNA board wants to ensure that committees are at least accounted for, so that general member concerns can be allayed. As such, voting privileges will be granted based on both paid membership in WWPNA and attendance at meetings. Using this formula, there are currently 7 voting members: Debbie Jones, Gertie Grant, Ginny Gelbach, Kathryn Smith, Madeline Melichar, Rob Melichar, Deirdre Kieft, and Dave Burrell. Nearly a dozen others can achieve voting privileges for 2006-07 after attendance at just two consecutive meetings: Alan Cooper, Aleta Cass, Anita Martin, Brad Patton, Debbie Spooner, Diana Dale, James Stratis, Karen Hinkel, Merce Lea, and SueLynn Gustafson. Rest assured as well that voting privileges will be reconsidered regularly, so no active, eligible member will be without the ability to weigh in on our infrequent motions.
- C. Name: Because this committee is engaged in far more than just Historic Preservation (including basic education, historical events, and the like), more appropriate names were bandied about to represent this broader mission. In the end, Gertie made a motion to rename this committee the WWPNA "History Committee" (seconded by Dave Burrell) which passed 5-0.

III. Certified Homes

- A. Brief Description: "Honorary designation for folks to receive a listing and a bronze plaque identifying their 'Certified Historic Denver Home.'"

- B. Status: Historic Denver has issued 52 plaques, 12 of which are in WWPNA boundaries, making us nearly 25% of their market so far. Though the numbers are small, we've quadrupled the participation rate since the campaign began in September.
- C. Marketing: We are going to focus on the fourteen potential historic districts identified in Barbara Norgren's 2002 reconnaissance survey and history report. These districts contain approximately 700 homes, as can be seen on the web at <http://www.wwpna.org/general/is-your-home-a-potential-landmark>. Incorporating information from previous marketing efforts and published articles, Kathryn Smith will provide a flier text which she and Dave will amend, finalize, sign, and print. Copies will be brought to our next meeting for distribution, which Dave will help arrange using Anita's spreadsheet breakdown. Printing will cost roughly \$75; sending a followup letter thereafter would run to \$350.

IV. Oral History

- A. Brief Description: "Identify and interview at least 40 residents who have lived or worked in the neighborhood for more than 40 years"
- B. Scope: A major topic of conversation was the scope of the study. Some recommended expanding the participant pool to include the east side of the park, as the two are organically linked and more resources (personal and financial) might thus be effected. However, the consensus ultimately rested on limited to the environs of WWPNA in order to focus historical study on our seriously-understudied area.
- C. Sponsorship: Discussions with other oral history programs made sponsorship a primary concern, both to have a repository for the information and design an effective study plan. Ideas of applying for grants were discussed, but the potential length of time and necessary time commitment to scour all the remote possibilities suggested a potentially costly investment. To focus the interests, we decided upon three targets: Colorado Historical Society, National Trust, and Denver Public Library. Debbie Jones will approach the first two organizations, while Dave Burrell will touch base with library personnel. Significant concern was placed on the support of the WWPNA board in all of this, as we would regret any unspoken concerns about this type of fundraising and/or representation of our organizational interests.
- D. Participants: Have not been contacted. Debbie was concerned about what to tell them. We discussed letting them know the current status and plans to get started with interviews by the end of summer.
- E. Planning: In order to focus the efforts, the project plan first devised last September will be used as a baseline for determining step-by-step efforts in the ensuing months. Dave Burrell will create a draft for review, addition, and amendment, so that we can focus better from here on out.
- F. Resources: No decisions have been made in this regard, but will need to be decided shortly so that the process can begin.

V. Demolitions

A. Since this represents the most pressing issue in neighborhood preservation at the moment, a brief timeline was provided. However, all interested residents are encouraged to visit <http://www.wwpna.org/search/node/demolition> for a fuller review.

1. December 2005: Lowell Batchelder's office at 255 Washington was suddenly razed by Pfannenstien's Rockmount Capital Partners.
2. January 2006: City officials MacKenzie, Robb, and Parks offer a new demolition permitting process. Initial discussions seize upon a meaningful but semantic debate between the anti-preservationist "delay" (negative) and pro-preservationist "filter" (positive).
3. February/March 2006: A draft ordinance includes posting online, adjacent notice, and Council (but not the RNOs). Facing serious opposition by the development community, it is withdrawn from the March agenda of the Blueprint Denver committee for further review.
4. April 2006: A private meeting between about 30 stakeholders took place. Five "problems" were identified, including neighbor notification, emergencies, potential landmarks, timing for protection, and landmark status. INC representative Mike Henry noted that the city used to require 60 days prior notification, while developers asked for a privately-funded historic survey to preemptorily identify potential historic structures (pre-empting opportunity for neighbors to seek designation).
5. May 2006: Instead of "adjacent" properties, the term "adjoining" was used so as to require notification only of the two immediate neighbors (not across alley). The owners notice was not required to be written or given ten days before actual demolition. No public posting of the notice was suggested, and the staff would entirely control the process of deciding on designation. Other council members suggested increasing fees, providing a citywide survey, and certifying nonhistoric homes.

B. Next steps

1. The two sides of the demolition permitting process have been uncoupled: building code changes regarding neighbor notification will go forward to the City Council (with potential public comment only if people request it), while the other preservation-oriented concerns will be given further study.
2. WWPNA committee would like to continue this discussion online, with further information and a potential committee vote regarding the definitions of adjacency, notification recipients (Council, RNO, HD), notification process (physical, online), timeline (60 days? 10 days?), and staff control.
3. All residents are encouraged to provide their personal feedback on this crucial matter.

4. Update: The preservation component of this topic originally slated for the May 24 Blueprint Denver committee meeting was again postponed in hopes of gathering additional developer/preservationist input.

VI. Other projects

- A. A redesign is being proposed for Country Club Gardens. Details on William Norman Bowman's 1924 design, DLPC's guidelines, Oz Architecture's plans, and resident/architect Ron Mason's concerns can be found online.
- B. A city-wide Denver history forum is being pushed by Dave Burrell, with hopes for involvement and financial commitments for the creation of a true "historical community" in Denver. Please contact him with any questions or interest.
- C. City Ditch sesquicentennial (2007). Not discussed.

VII. What's New in History?

- A. St Frances de Sales centennial occurred in February 2006. See the "Then & Now" photos from the school online, complete with children playing in the street in the same poses as found nearly a hundred years ago (thanks to Dierdre Kieft).
- B. Interested in the cultural landscape and restoration plans for Washington Park? Kathryn Smith has provided the full version of this extensive and interesting document both outlining the park's history and identifying concerns for preservation. Now online, it's a must-read for every area resident.
- C. Report from Old House Renovation Exposition & Exchange (May 13): An interesting new event on the Denver historical scene, with the likelihood for reprise later this year or next.
- D. Report from National Trust talk, The Unfinished Agenda (May 16): Gertie Grant attended, and some details are available online.
- E. See the online report of the Mayan Theatre having been sold in April.
- F. "This Old House" is coming to Denver. If you have a question, feel free to contact them (again, via online article).
- G. Sherri Way has suggested a general board meeting focused on neighborhood building styles and general character, as presented by Jim Lindberg of the National Trust.
- H. Dave Burrell would like to invite Megan Eatherton of The Color People to an upcoming committee meeting to discuss historical use on & in area homes.

VIII. Events

- A. Park Hill Demolition and History Tour (May 20)
- B. Historic window & millwork restoration workshop (June 7)
- C. Light Rail History Tour (June 8)
- D. Maintenance of Historic Wooden Windows (July 26)
- E. Historically Sensitive Renovations in Congress Park (August 30)
- F. Maintenance of Brick and Masonry Buildings (September 27)
- G. Landscapes for Your Historic House (October 25)

IX. Closing Out

A. Thanks for coming!

B. Next meeting: under advisement...