

Preservation Piedmont
P.O. Box 2803
Charlottesville, VA 22902

www.preservationpiedmont.org

Newsletter- Fall 2010



preservationpiedmont

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PRESERVATION PIEDMONT'S 2010 FALL TOUR

Please join us this October for Preservation Piedmont's annual Fall Tour and Open House!

This year we feature a variety of homes and structures in the North Downtown neighborhood for our Open House Tour. On Saturday, October 9th, from 1-5pm, nine homes and sites will be open for touring. Historic homes such as the Shaffrey House on Park Street will be open, along with one of the top floor apartments of the Altamont Circle Apartment building, the Mediterranean Revival house on East High Street, and a contemporary chicken coop designed by Will Grimm at 526 N 1st Street.



On Sunday, October 10, from 2-5pm, Preservation Piedmont will host a guided walking tour of the Fry's Spring neighborhood, primarily focusing on the area around Jefferson Park Circle and JPA Extended. The Sunday walking tour, led by a longtime Jefferson Park Circle resident, will examine the development of one of Charlottesville's first suburbs and the eclectic houses built in this area in the early 20th century. Following the walking tour, Preservation Piedmont will host our Annual Meeting in the Garden Room of the Fry's Spring Beach Club. Refreshments and light fare will be served.

Tickets are \$20 for Saturday and \$15 for Sunday. Tickets can be purchased beginning September 15th at Greenberry's (Barracks Road), The New Dominion Bookshop on the Downtown Mall, or on the day of the event (504 North 1st Street on Saturday and the Fry's Spring Beach Club Garden Room on Sunday). A \$5 discount is available to students, residents in the North Downtown and Fry's Spring neighborhoods, and members of Preservation Piedmont. Just present your mailed invitation upon purchasing the ticket to receive your discount.

Parking for Saturday's Open House Tour is available at the Market Street parking garage (regular fees apply) or the County Office Building at 401 McIntire Road. Make 504 North 1st Street your first stop so you can pick up a detailed map and information on the neighborhood and houses.

Parking for Sunday's Walking Tour is available at the Fry's Spring Beach Club. The tour will begin promptly at 2pm and depart from the Beach Club entrance. The annual meeting will begin promptly at 5pm. Please visit www.preservationpiedmont.org for more information.



DOCUMENTATION: RIVERDALE

In early May, Lydia Brandt, Emilie Johnson, Edward Lay and Derek Wheeler gathered to document 1328 Riverdale Drive. The house has been vacant for some time. Unable to reuse the building, the owners applied to the Board of Architectural Review for a demolition permit in 2009. Because the house is one of Charlottesville's Individually Protected Properties (IPP), the owners are required to put the house on the market for one year to attempt to sell the property to a potential buyer interested in renovation. If no buyer comes forward, which no one has, then the property owner can demolish the building by-right.

The house sits on a wooded lot near the corner of High Street and the 250 Bypass, facing the Rivanna River. The lot was originally part of the Locust Grove plantation. The earliest record dates to 1837, revealing a sale of 54 acres plus improvements from Elizabeth Wells, the daughter of Thomas W. Lewis of Locust Grove, to William W. Dawson. The earliest known structure on the lot was a 1½-story vernacular cottage, which may have dated from the middle of the 19th century. The current house was actually an addition to the cottage. The buildings shared a fireplace; the external end chimney on the mid-19th century building served one of the front rooms in the new addition. The "scar" of the earlier cottage remains visible on the back of the present-day house.

The current house is a two-story brick I-house, one room deep with a central hallway. The Greek-Colonial Revival building was built in 1912 for Minnie M. Barnes. The

three-bay house features a double height portico with concrete columns that have restrained Doric capitals and tall block piers. Set on a foundation of rock-faced concrete block and constructed from concrete bricks, the house also has concrete quoins.

Aldretus Wilton Ward, a well-known local horse trainer, bought the property in 1917. His heirs sold the house to the Funk family in 1948. After leaving private hands, the house and several later additions housed a social services center.

Riverdale's quirky vernacular interpretation of high-style architectural forms is unusual in Charlottesville. We hope a buyer steps forward before we lose this gem of a house. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at preservationpiedmont.org.



DOCUMENTATION: 1106 CARLTON AVENUE

Habitat for Humanity has plans to demolish the residence at 1106 Carlton Avenue. So, on August 14 a group of volunteers, including Preservation Piedmont members, documented it.

The Charlottesville Wood Manufacturing Company owned the property in 1904 and by 1916 H. E. Young had purchased and consolidated it with surrounding properties purchased from private owners. Young operated a tannin extraction company whose home base was York County, Pennsylvania. The residence and the neighboring brick building at 1102 Carlton Avenue might date as early as 1916, and both are illustrated on the 1920 Sanborn map of Charlottesville. It is possible that the residence housed the company's manager or another employee, and the brick building served as a company office.

The Tudor style half-timbering found at 1106 Carlton is rarely found in Charlottesville and the house seems to be in good condition. Interestingly, Habitat has indicated a desire to recreate some of the detailing in the new building

they plan to construct on the site. The neighboring building at 1102 Carlton, an equally unusual example of brick Jacobethan architecture in the city, has been abandoned and boarded-up for some time, but there are apparently no plans to demolish it at present. 1106 Carlton is not listed as an IPP (Individually Protected Property) in the city, while 1102 Carlton is protected.



PRESERVATION WEEK 2010 – NEXT STEPS

The exhibit “More Than Just Bricks” was the centerpiece of this year’s preservation week. Focusing on the history of the Downtown Mall, the exhibit explored the historical context, design intent, spatial organization, and future of preservation for the space designed by Lawrence Halprin, one of the most important 20th century American landscape architects. The exhibit was on display in the CCDC on the Downtown Mall from April 2 – May 31, 2010.

Several community outreach events were coordinated with the exhibit, which drew together people interested in the history of the city’s most prominent public space. Gallery talks and lectures drew crowds of over 100 people while more intimate tours and “Take Part Walking Scores” based on Halprin’s design process drew crowds from 15-40.

Panel discussions brought together community leaders to address the history and future of The Mall. An April 13 panel consisting of three of the 1973 City Council members, Francis Fife, Charles Barbour, and George Gilliam, gave the councilors an opportunity to reflect on the success of their achievement in making The Mall a reality. They also addressed concerns that, as the city’s “living room,” The Mall needs to be more socially inclusive. Increasing available affordable housing and providing essential services were the primary means expressed for achieving an expanded social vision for The Mall.

Various panels also touched on ongoing debates about the preservation of The Mall as a historic landscape. During a May 19 discussion, professionals and academics gathered to address preservation issues that face cultural landscapes. The group debated whether, after the recent renovation, The Mall retains enough historic integrity for a National Register nomination. Mary Hughes, Landscape Architect at UVa, pointed out that historic landscapes, unlike historic buildings, are by nature always changing, which makes material authenticity less important than spatial arrangement.

Another pressing issue that arose was that of tree replacement. This will become critical as the original 1970s

willow oaks reach the end of their lifespan. The community must decide what is important about the trees on The Mall. If the shade-providing canopy is most important, then the trees need to be replaced gradually. However, if the grouping of trees in bosques is most important, then each individual bosque should be replaced in its entirety, so it continues to function as one part of a rhythmic grouping of like objects. Hughes noted that the trees are well-maintained and monitored, so the city has plenty of time to make a decision on how to replace them when the time comes.

The Mall is one of dozens of historic landscapes in the area, including McIntire Park, that face preservation battles in the near future. While the preservation of historic structures has been prevalent in the Charlottesville area for many years, landscape preservation is a relatively new field with different concerns that need to be understood and addressed. Issues that surfaced during Preservation Week’s panel discussions bring our community a step closer to understanding how to protect and manage our numerous significant cultural landscapes.

Many contributed to making this event a success, including UVA students and faculty, led by Elizabeth Meyer, the staff of the CCDC, and Preservation Piedmont board members.

As this project comes to a close, participants are working to archive research materials they have gathered and make them accessible to the public. They hope to have photographs, drawings, oral histories, films, and key documents from Halprin’s office available at the Small Special Collections Library at UVa and the Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society. Several articles and a book about the Halprin firm’s design of The Mall and larger planning framework for Downtown Charlottesville will be published next year.

This article was written by Sarita M. Herman, UVa MA Architectural History graduate 2010.

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE ALBEMARLE CHARLOTTESVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY (ACHS)

Calling all volunteers! The ACHS has undertaken several large-scale projects in recent months, including a reorganization of a large room full of archives and private collections that have been donated to the Society over the years. The Society’s goal is to make the information and images in these collections easily accessible for researchers. Other projects include exhibition development, specifically for the upcoming Civil War Sesquicentennial and the Charlottesville 250th anniversary. The Society needs our help! Please contact either Preservation Piedmont at preservationpiedmont.org or Emma Earnst, Administrative Assistant of the ACHS, at admin@albemarlehistory.org if you or someone you know would like to volunteer with the ACHS.



CHARLOTTESVILLE'S FIRST CONSERVATION DISTRICT: AN UPDATE

In 2007, the Martha Jefferson Neighborhood Association, with support from Preservation Piedmont and the City of Charlottesville, initiated an architectural survey that resulted in an area with over 100 buildings being added to both the state and national registers of historic places. The neighborhood then began working to become the City of Charlottesville's first Conservation District.

Ellen Wagner, Martha Jefferson Neighborhood Association President said, "After a great deal of discussion over several months, including a series of block meetings to inform the neighbors about this new zoning tool, all of the affected neighbors in the Martha Jefferson neighborhood were polled to determine if there was interest in designation as a Conservation District. Nearly 70% of the responses were in favor of moving forward with our application. The neighborhood association is very pleased that the BAR voted to support the application. With the attention to stewardship that this designation will promote, we think this is one of the best ways to honor the past while embracing the future of this neighborhood."

On September 14, in a joint session of the Planning Commission and City Council, one of two public hearings

on the matter will be held. If approved, the zoning change will be finalized.

The neighborhood asks anyone interested in supporting this application to please contact City Council (970-3113) and the Planning Commission (970-3182).



*834 Locust Avenue, Charlottesville
South Elevation*