

SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION TRUST

NEWSLETTER

* Winter, 1981-82 *

BANK BACKS TRUST'S EFFORTS TO MARKET BAY STREET PROPERTY

Springfield Preservation County. The bank has Trust's efforts to sell the offered a 12% mortgage for rehabilitated home at 173 a period of five years to a Bay Street have been given qualified potential buyer. a significant boost by the Said Jim Boone, VP Old Colony Bank of Hampden Restoration, "The high qual-

ity of workmanship in the rehabbing of 173 Bay Street, plus a belief in the goals of historic preservation, have led to this offer.

"We are now confident of a quick sale for this house, because we are offering a superiod resoration at an unbelievably good mortgage rate in today's difficult real estate market." Continued P. 2, Col. 1

TRUST MOUNTS EFFORT TO INAUGERATE RESOURCE LIBRARY

SPT plans to offer a needed service to the restoration and preservation minded public by creating a Resource Library. At the January 6th meeting, SPT

Directors approved an initial budget of \$2,127. for office equipment and supplies, books on restoration, historic house painting, architectural detail, and authentic interior decoration.

FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE FOR BUCKINGHAM STREET

All systems are "go" for the latest restoration project of the SPT, the dilapidated and vandalized two family house at 134 Buckingham Street.

Jim Boone reported to the Board on January 6th that the City of Springfield has signed a contract awarding the SPT \$25,000 in Community Development Continued on P.3 Col.2

A vertical file of back issues of "The Old House Journal" and catalogs of hard to find renovators supplies is also projected.

Laurence Wallace, VP Development, and Jim Boone, VP Restoration, were named to a committee to seek financial support for the project from Springfield's business community.

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SPT PUBLISHES FIRST PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE

SPT has printed 4000 copies of an illustrated pamphlet setting forth the work and goals of the Trust, entitled "Can this house be saved?"

A copy is included with this newsletter mailing to all Trust members. Please note our new mailing address: 1111 Main Street, Spfld.01103

BANK BACKS TRUST-- Continued

The vacant and vandalized house at 173 Bay Street was purchased by the SPT in late 1980 and rehabilitated in 1981. A seven room Victorian, the house contains a new gas hot air heating system, new wiring a new roof, new lawn and plantings, new kitchen and new ceilings.

The house is for sale at \$31,900 through Sears Real Estate and the Greater Springfield Board of Realtors Multiple Listing Service.

When Bay Street has been sold, it is anticipated that about \$25,000. will be returned to the SPT revolving fund for further restoration projects, bringing the 1982 total of the fund to \$55,000.

RESOURCE LIBRARY - Continued

The completely rebuilt fireplace has a new flue, and interior rooms have been painted off-white.

Space to house the Resource Library has been offered by Attorney Anthony Ravosa at 3 Elm Street, a restored building fronting on Court Square.

The Resource Library would serve as a center for development of a group of resoration and architectural experts who would serve as leaders of eventually planned workshops, and who would provide specific information and technical assistance for resoration projects.

The exterior has been restored and repainted in Victorian style. Other authentic restored features include refinished natural woodwork, a stained glass window, porches and stairs rebuilt, and an antique fireplace mantel.

In the beginning the Library is expected to be open one afternoon a week, manned by volunteers.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership Chairman, Faye Dixon, announces that the following are new members of the SPT:

Maggie Wynne, Dennis O'Connor, Roland and Judy Tetrault, Roger and Cathy Lavalley, Pat Cox, Paul and Ann Haggerty Jacobs, and Ann Burke.

The Board of Directors extends a warm welcome to these new members.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

- Student \$5
- Patron \$25
- Individual \$15
- Supporting \$50
- Family \$20
- Benefactor \$100

Any suggestions, comments and ideas?
Do you have special areas of interest?
.....
.....

Mail your check to: Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc.
7 Stockbridge Street, Springfield, MA 01103



INDIAN MOTOCYCLE BUILDING WINS REPRIEVE

Thanks to an intervention by the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Indian Motorcycle Building at Winchester Square has received a reprieve from the wrecker's ball.

Mayor Theodore E. Dimauro was notified in September that the Advisory Council had withheld approval of the City's request to demolish the building which was taken by the city in 1981 in lieu of unpaid taxes.

Advisory Council review of demolition plans is necessary because the building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Such a review is a prerequisite for obtaining Federal funds for road construction on the site of a demolished National Register Landmark.

It was the opinion of the Advisory Council, following a public hearing on July 23rd, that the City had made an insufficient effort to market the building.

Mayor Dimauro and State Representative Raymond A. Jordan jointly announced on January 5 the formation of a Blue Ribbon Commission to find a developer for the vacant and fire-damaged building.

Represented on the Commission are the five neighborhood Councils which border on Winchester Square the Upper State Street Community Development Corpora-

tion, Upper State Street Small Businesses, Digital Equipment Corporation, American International College, Springfield Institution for Savings and the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce.

Chairing the Commission is Paul R. Mason, City Councillor and a resident of the McKnight Historic District.



At the public hearing in July, Dave Sanborn, VP for Advocacy, and Hilton Abbott for the Advocacy Committee presented the position of the Springfield Preservation Trust. They argued

funds for rehabilitation purposes. An initial request for funds for the Buckingham Street house, amounting to \$17,000, has been placed with the city.

The damaged roof has been sealed, repairs to the foundation have been undertaken, and contracts for the extensive repairs will be signed with the various subcontractors by mid-February, reports Don Campion, Clerk of the Works, for the Buckingham project. Don projects a late spring market date for the house.

Plans and detailed drawings have been completed

that the building could be saved and marketed if a developer could be found who would create the proper mix of retail and light industrial uses, while retaining the historic architectural values. SPT's proposal was that the building be mothballed for a two year period, while awaiting an upturn in the economic climate.

The City's proposal is to demolish the building and to reroute State Street traffic through its present site.

Announcement that the Advisory Council had withheld approval of the demolition plans roused a storm of controversy in the local media, mainly favoring demolition. In response to this

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BUCKINGHAM STREET -- Continued from p. 1

by Peter Zorzi, AIA, architect for the project.

Said, Don Campion, "When completed, this restoration will really change the appearance of a very important corner in the McKnight Historic District, the corner of Buckingham and Bay Streets."

The house at 134 Buckingham Street was originally a single family dwelling. The SPT sought and received a zoning variance to convert it into a two family house, with each apartment containing six rooms.

TRUST'S FALL FOLIAGE TOUR AN EXHILERATING EVENT

The SPT's annual Fall Foliage and House Tour materialized into an event with the emphasis on houses for the 23 intrepid day trippers who boarded the Peter Pan bus on October 12. This was due to the weather, misty, drizzly and cool, which reduced the foliage viewing to a lackluster experience.

The three houses in the Berkshires selected for viewing more than made up for the weather's inclemency, however. Each in its own way was a preservationist's delight.

The William Cullen Bryant House in Cummington is unique. Here is the classic story of the country boy who went to the city, made good, and returned to purchase the simple old homestead in which he was raised.

Indian -- Continued

adverse comment, Hilton Abbott stated:

"The Indian Motorcycle building in Winchester Square should not be razed.

"Buildings with National Register Status provide substantial tax incentives. The Motorcycle complex in particular can provide a multimillion dollar tax credit.

"Winchester Square is a depressing place for many of us. But it was not always so, and does not need to remain so.

"With cooperation, conciliation and city-wide support, the Square will become what it should be."

To this he added a grand Victorian house, in keeping with his status as a rich man and a world famous literary figure. The original house was retained as the servants' quarters.

The house is entirely furnished with artifacts used by the Bryant family, and the great editor's study remains as he left it.

Less fortunate in memorabilia is the Herman Melville House in Pittsfield. Now recognized as a literary giant, Melville was unappreciated in his lifetime and died a poor man. His possessions were scattered.

The house, contrarily, is far more of a natural beauty than the Bryant house. An ample colonial, the house once served as a stagecoach stop on the Albany turnpike. Still existing is the taproom with a welcoming blaze warming the travellers in the magnificent stone fireplace. A pair of unusual curved built-in settles flare cosily out from the fireplace wall.

ALL MEMBERS INVITED TO BOARD MEETINGS

All SPT members are welcome to attend meetings of the Board of Directors, which take place in the Community Room (downstairs) in the Forest Park Branch Library, corner of Belmont Avenue and Oakland Streets. Schedule for the next three months is:

All at 7:30 PM
Wednesday, February 3
Wednesday, March 3
Wednesday, April 7

Melville's writing table remains in the upstairs room where he labored over "Moby Dick", drawing inspiration from the view of towering Mount Greylock. The porch added by the author and from which he composed "The Piazza Tales" still remains. Most of the house is furnished with articles appropriate to the period when the Melville family lived there.

The Mission House in Stockbridge is a restorationist's delight. Built in 1739 as a residence for John Sergeant, missionary to the Indians of Stockbridge, it had become totally neglected by 1928. Restoration began then and is still going on, as a museum room of weaving implements is being added in the attic.

The Mission House is architecturally distinguished with twin chimneys offset behind the ridge line and a graceful Connecticut door balancing the facade.

A surprising number of original possessions have been reassembled, including John Sergeant's 1713 "Great Bible", his wife's pewter dinner service, and their four poster bed. A museum of artifacts of the Stockbridge Indians has been created in a barn to the rear of Mission House, and an original herb and "salat" garden is also on the property.

Despite the chill and drizzle, good cheer abounded on the bus. Tour members agreed that they had enjoyed a truly memorable preservationist experience.