

# The Preservationist

Newsletter of the Springfield  
Preservation Trust

Fall, 2004 • 979 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103-2111 • 413-747-0656

## Russ Seelig Receives Campion Award

The Donald Campion Award for outstanding contribution to Historic Preservation was presented to Russ Seelig at the May 3 awards ceremony. The award was presented by Mayor Ryan, a long time friend of Russ's and a supporter of Historic Preservation in Springfield. The award, named after long time preservationist and Trust member Donald Campion, is presented by the Trust to recognize a long-term commitment to the restoration and preservation of our historic built environment.

Russ has a life long commitment to the City of Springfield, has been active in the Forest Park Civic Association and is one of the founders and leaders of Concerned Citizens of Springfield, which has spearheaded much restoration work in the Forest Park neighborhood. Russ's most recent contribution to the City has been his volunteering as the head of the Code Enforcement Department for the City. Russ's selfless involvement in bettering our City, earns him the appreciation and recognition of the Trust and the citizens of Springfield.

## Annual Awards

Every year, the Springfield Preservation Trust recognizes outstanding achievement in Historic Preservation in the City. This year's ceremony was held in the Center Court of Center Square downtown. Surrounded by a comprehensive and attractive display of photographs of the award winners from this year and past years, as well as information and photos showing preservation issues in the city, the ceremony recognized.....See page 4

More publications of SPT

- Guide to Residential Architecture in Springfield
- "Homes of the City" video

**Welcome,  
New  
Members!**

We are not-for-profit, and  
100% volunteer

Upcoming, October 24, 4-7 pm  
McKNIGHT TWILIGHT TOUR

See inside for description,  
meeting place and  
ticket information.....Page 2

## *Garden Party Pleasures....*

### GALA GARDEN PARTY

Forty SPT members and friends gathered on July 24 for a Gala Garden Party held at the McKnight District home of long-time SPT supporter David Hall. His large Shingle style house was built for Mary McKnight, widow of developer John McKnight, in 1899 and was designed by the architect G. Wood Taylor, husband of her niece. The grand and elegant house sits on an acre of land, one of the largest lots in the neighborhood.

After touring the house, folks were treated to a wide variety of hors d'oeuvres and refreshments in the garden. The event raised more than \$800 for SPT. Special thanks go to our host, David Hall, and Board members Linda Langevin and Bob Holbrook, who helped coordinate the evening.



*Newsletter editor: Diana M. Henry*

Thanks to our wonderful contributors. Please send your story ideas, comments and short articles for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue to: Springfield Preservation Trust, 979 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103-2111, or call 413-736-6414.

## McKnight Twilight Tour

10/24



On Sunday, October 24, between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., several homes, all within easy walking distance, will be open to visitors.

These include the Besse Mansion, one of the largest homes in the McKnight district. Formerly a nursing home, it is being restored as a single-family home. Also open will be a recently renovated 1920's Tudor Revival home, a cozy 1940's home designed by the noted architect Barry Wills, and an 1890's Victorian home recently recognized by the SPT for outstanding exterior renovation.

Admission is \$15. Tickets can be purchased in advance in mid-October at: Flowers Flowers, 758 Sumner Avenue; the Flower Box, 596 Carew Street and Pat Parker & Sons, 1516 Allen Street. Tickets can be purchased on the day of the tour from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. along Ingersoll Grove.

For further information, please call Bob McCarroll at 736-0629.  
Thank you, homeowners!

# Get Involved with .... Springfield's Historical Commission *by Jim Boone*

The Springfield Historical Commission meets the first Thursday of the month at City Hall on the second floor. There is a lot of important issues discussed at these meetings, and applications are reviewed for work to be done to houses in the Historic Districts. These decisions impact the quality of restoration work that is done in our historic neighborhoods. The Trust always has a representative in the audience to contribute to the public hearing segment of application reviews and occasionally answer questions posed by the Chair on issues of work being done or referral to local experts or trades people.

When there are issues on the agenda that affect your neighborhood or the City, it is important to attend the meeting and take advantage of the public hearing portion of every application review. The Commission places a lot of weight on the opinions and feelings of the citizens in the Historic Districts who speak out.

You can receive the monthly agenda of the Commission meetings. Call the Planning Department at 787-6020 and request to be placed on the mailing list.

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Information also available at [www.springfieldplanning.org](http://www.springfieldplanning.org)

## Our Historic Districts



- McKnight
- Quadrangle-Mattoon
- Lower Maple
- Ridgewood
- Maple-Hill
- Forest Park Heights

Springfield's Planning Dept. can provide guidelines, maps and a street list of properties located in these historic districts.

Contact Planning Dept. and Phil Dromey at 787-6020.  
[www.springfieldplanning.org](http://www.springfieldplanning.org)

### Helping Restore Springfield's Architectural Environment Preservation Trust Membership

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

General Membership: \$30  
Patron: \$60 Sponsor: \$125  
Benefactor: \$200

All members receive discounts to Trust events. **Patrons** receive one coupon for a complimentary tour ticket. **Sponsors** receive two coupons. **Benefactors** receive two coupons plus a copy of *Homes of the City* video produced by the Springfield Preservation Trust. Contributions are tax-deductible to the amount allowed by law. Please make check payable and mail to:  
Springfield Preservation Trust  
979 Main Street  
Springfield, MA 01103-2111

## **A Demolition Delay Ordinance for Springfield ?**

Over 80 cities and towns in MA, including Holyoke, Agawam, Amherst and Easthampton, now have a demolition delay ordinance. Generally, in a city with a demolition delay bylaw, a property owner requesting a demolition permit from the Building Department must first receive approval from the Historical Commission which can impose a delay.

While a demolition delay bylaw, alone, cannot prevent all demolitions, it allows alternatives to be considered in order to protect historically significant resources in a community. There are many success stories in Massachusetts where a better solution was found.

Most demolition delay ordinances in Massachusetts are for six months. However, the Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages communities to pursue a 12 month demolition delay period as this is far more effective than 6 months. Demolition delay ordinances should be passed as general ordinances, not zoning bylaws.

The Springfield Preservation Trust hopes to see our city adopt a similar provision in the near future.

\* \* \*

.....Selected information from the Massachusetts Historical Commission provided by Allen Agnitti, Member of the Board of Directors, SPT. A longer version of this article is available on request.

Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc.  
979 Main Street  
Springfield, MA 01103-2111

## **Annual Awards**

....The ceremony recognized categories of work including the total restoration of a seriously deteriorated house on Amherst Street, new construction in an appropriate style on Cornell Street, and the replacement of the slate roof of Trinity Church with a new slate roof. Awards were also given for Stewardship, which is recognition for those who always have taken care of their properties so they have not ever needed to be fully restored. Baystate Hospital was recognized for their care of the original Springfield Hospital facing Chestnut Street, as was the wonderful Story Book style house on Alden Street. Mayor Ryan, who presented the prestigious Donald Campion Award for Outstanding Achievement in Historic Preservation, addressed a large crowd of award recipients. Refreshments and common preservation goals were shared under the lights of Channel 22, which featured the event on the evening news.

---Sarah Murray---

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