

Cruising the Commonwealth
Boston
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Nixon Peabody, LLP

Jim Igoe, Welcome and Introductions
CTC thus far -
Next steps
Similar challenges, regional specifics

EK - what is CTC and what will we do with the info
Also PM program, etc.

Circuit Riders -
Stacia Caplanson - what the CR's do and what the position is.
SC- we work collaboratively as a team - one of the benefits
Preservation 411 vs 911

JG- we really try to see ourselves a conduit for resources
In awe of all the great work that is going on in all of these communities

JWI- introduce CS from the MHC
CS has attended a number of our meetings which feels is very helpful for him and the MHC. Great having him around with us

CS- great immediate help with the preservation plan that is required by the NPS - also like the partnerships and outreach being done statewide by other organizations. Focus is working with local historical commissions, going on around the state from the local historic commission perspective.

JWI- one of the issues going in, as a statewide organization, not large but packed, but we felt compelled to do this. We are challenged geographically but we wanted to reach out and do some connection with our partners, we work with a lot of people statewide, and we think face to face meetings and opportunities are far more valuable to us.

Introductions
Richard Pien- rector of Trinity - Councilor ward 5 Boston

How communities move forward

Historic Newton - resource for people in the city for people who want to preserve their homes. Want to hear a larger conversation, how to connect people with different resources out there

Boxboro historical society - raising funds to preserve a historic farm house

JWI- the way this was set up, was that we would be taking lots of notes...
having had prior stops, we've seen and learned a lot as the discussion proceeds, the conversation is organic, this is open and we want to throw out a softball:

What is your biggest challenge with preservation facing your community now.

Suellen Idylson - client issues, they get their historic tax credits piece meal - throw that out. Right people are here so...

JWI- we have heard it at other stops.

SI- other states allots the amount, developers know what they must work with, developers know....

JWI- issue we hear, we do therapy, developers from Athol, hanging on, there is an annual Cap and way more development request that the \$50 million.... (quantify the request for credits)

People in western part of states, geographic distribution, a concern for some but what we see the balance is pretty good. We write letters and have. A sense of who the developer is and where the project is. One of the things we try to do is have a lobbyist and increase the cap. Last increase was in 2006, (poll need from 2006 vs 2016). Sen. Chandler effort to increase, tax revenues were off and there were no movement. A nonstarter... second year of a two-year session. Who knows.

GG- talk to PM a lot, wonder if it is time for a step back on the MHRTC in terms of a broader look in terms of benchmarking, other states who are doing HTC better than us and we know there is a challenge sat the state house, shift the argument, well where are options and other states, optics and take a bigger picture approach - strategy hasn't been doing much. Mentioned in Boston, willing to help do lobbying, collectively. And the FHTC is a whole other issue. Reexamination of the credit, internally among the preservation community, have a bigger discussion and see if you want to peruse this or not. Larger question

JWI- state legislature, collectively, likes the MHRTC. Problem that we have is that they have not really embraced it and gone to the mats for it. They like it in their community, but it's hard to sustain that fire like when there is an issue in their district.

The NHTP (GG said) what other credit programs in other states are doing and how something similar can benefit the program in MA.

CS- Jump in

CS_ can't offer insight, don't work with MHRTC's, there is nothing I can say. It is an issue to discuss, much larger issue in terms of how additional tax credits can be allocated, there is a cap, an issue of spreading it geographically or giving more money on specific projects. Either way, people won't be happy with the result.

JWI- great to have CS at this meeting, he can bring this info back to MHC to people who work with MHRTC at MHC. We are hearing this all over the commonwealth, it is a larger issue a (big can of worms)

Boxboro- town owned farmhouse, part of a preserved farm, falling apart, 1784 - historic society needs to demonstrate public support \$100,000 in two years. 14 mos in, \$70,000. Challenge, mass mailing last October, got a 10% response... (HUGE) who was giving, it was the boomer and older cohorts. How to reach the younger people in town. Move in for the school system no real investment in history of town, or homes that are being lost. In town 27 years, the age of the oldest house has gotten younger, (sad), our campaign to raise the money, the town has to bear most of the burden, got CPA funds to do design studies, and given some money to a survey so far. If the preservation project doesn't proceed, the funds will go to the farm. Quite confident we will make our goal - how to engage people in the history of their town, the community, just part of the landscape that we want to preserve....

JWI-How to engage the younger people

EK- the community feel, preservation as a tool - education of the next generation of preservationists, and also how to connect and talk "preservation" with the general public.

JG- the tool of social media, to really hook in people, where they are looking at it... posting tags,... you can generate a lot of interest in it

SC- a lot of high schools have community service, they may be able to assist with student work and help - put out pictures from inside, give people a reason to support, an open house, so people can get inside and that is always a great benefit,

JG- plug for conference - creative fundraising session with JG and SC

And Dorchester Historical Society

EK- look to others and see what is working, successful models.

GG- successful with social media, does require time and energy. You have to be thoughtful and images are key to make them more successful. A huge tool and growing and has replaced a lot of things.

The traditional media, press releases are fine, most are more likely to respond to a tweet, or email. Build relationship with local reporters is huge.

Boxboro- media challenges

GG- traditional media, think of things to do of interest

SC- using local cable access and NPR - not all supporters are on social media

Newton - walking tours in warm weather months, that have an architecture theme, gets people out, just about any walking tour on a Sunday afternoon can get 30-40 people. People can get engaged, you ask people to learn and do.

Early mid-20th buildings vulnerable with teardowns?

Newton- pressure is so intense, all buildings. Some buildings are protected from teardowns, controversial, create a lot of regulations, not always a slam dunk, but these people are mindful and want to pay attention to what is there. Also interest from realtors selling an historic house, history angle. Historic house can be a selling point to.

Intersection of preservation, business and development.

Anything inside the 128 belt is at risk.

Cape has teardown issues too.

Newton - get a lot of individual homeowners contacting them to research their home. Have archives, they can come in and see prior owners, and have a house marker program, and put a plaque up. Gotten so many requests they have a sheaf of information online so if people want to research their house they can, (use MACRIS a lot) they have an annual house tour, a fundraiser but way to celebrate historic homes and to see what people have done. Generates a lot of interest and shows creative solutions, how do they adapt a 19th century interior to make a 21st century livable. Provide resources for people to be able to research and find info, try to educate and not just have it be "come take the tour"

JG- good job reaching two constituencies

1.) historic homeowners

2.) realtors - on the front lines of the transactions and conveying the properties. Realtor came to the session in Barnstable and tries to give people good info on what they will be buying. Everything is colonial in 1800; s... difficult to give the best info on historic houses.

Some places have education sessions for realtors, - certification and credits - many want to do the right thing, if we could get them to talk less about gleaming hardwood floors... etc.

Boxboro- problem with selling older homes, older homes, early mid-19th century farmhouse. Most sitting on market - people see them as a maintenance issue, people are not interested - down the line as a problem.

Misconception - there is a lot, you can't make changes to historic houses, problems with local districts, etc. 90% of commissions want to work with a historic homeowner, preservation end of things will lock you into not being able to change it.

Reporter from Globe - reuses for historic buildings - assumed there would be a hatred for new uses... this keeps the building in use and living. A need for more education about that, more flexibility and ideas then you may realize, reach out to the next generation

JG- there is a sense we are not flexible, but most preservationist are very flexible

GG- part of preservation is economic viability in the long term, part of this points to the biggie issue - message that preservation is not just the landmarks, it is the character, piece by piece, challenge, still struggling with tools to deal with this... how to preserve character... why to keep it rather than tear it down.

Boston - demo delay and changing mindsets, can we make it more effective - changes about making positive progress to make demo delay on a box people check to wait out, but make it a proactive effort,. Re latest o real estate value, pressure and - everyone around the country is sealing with the same issues

LK- even concord has a hard time protecting buildings that are not landmarks - development and real estate values in this area are nuts, incentive to help private homeowners - working with the house is an advantage and a good tool..

JWI- interesting form the geography in MA - very sophisticated, other parts -real estate values are less and we see just as many issues.

CS- education has been coming up at these meetings, education is what I have been talking about as a key part to preservation. CS- we need to do encouraging untested - different tack. example - UMass Boston campuses, a piece of public art sculpture put in, when it got put it, pushback from campus about "monstrosity" and the art profession said, "the famous sculptor and significance of piece" If you learn about it, you'll appreciate it... sounds like us.

CS- little piece. important. UMass Amherst - didn't have an appreciation of midcentury arch - casual walking tour. then I found more of an appreciation.

Still drive by sculptor, what can the art history profession do differently, and take those back to the preservationists...

How can we sound different,

GG- the Boston City Hall - piece by piece... getting bodies there... how to engage people....

JG - photographic essay on people's workspace in the BCH

EL- doing small things can help, making it interactive... how to humanize it...

Coffee shop in in BCH -

GG- making a difference

Shift the discussion and the perception..... how can we do this
"Are you Relevant?" - that book

Boxboro - artist sponsored to do an oil of the house, then sell the prints...

Arts, music and local brewery and food - that will get the younger people there... and engage the children. kids contest

Food Trucks

GG- young advisors board for preservation - libations for preservation - more social and brand name awareness

MO - good luck with trivia nights - sponsor (harpoon, Sam Adams) donate beer, staff creates trivia questions,

gets a good turn out from the millennial crowd. With the millennial crowd, there is an issue that is seen in the museum field, which relates to preservation - studies have been done that they tend to be interested more in social issues and environment than history museums or old buildings. Partner with an organization in town that works on social issues or land trusts, or environmental work...

Millennial easier to reach than Gen X-ers--- the arts and the event will attract a younger crowd- a puzzle

GG- HBI and the FCE farm, urban farming, etc.

BB- farming on the farm - community supported agriculture very popular

SC- something to provide a service to young families...

LK - farm in Newton

MO- kids garden, lots of raised beds, scout groups or even families rent to grow veg.

LK- archaeologist - historic properties and farmlands and bringing students out to the area... benefits to all. - brought a lot of awareness

JWI- people are intrigued about archeology. OCH and the Plymouth dig for UMass

GG- message about archeology - what can be left? It helps reinforce the message that we don't know and a lot of history that is alive, connect the stories of the larger built environment, reinforces the connection and important events.

JG- a lot of quick and dirty crappy rehabs of buildings - 3 decker, redone with not great materials sell for a lot of money - a lot of homeowners but also smaller developers- building by building picking away at the historic character of this neighborhood... piece by piece deterioration....

Painful to watch with the people that want to do the right thing - they see it as meetings the market - people want the historic but not the work. seeing this a lot in neighborhoods.

LK- one thing helpful for property owners - lots of questions, where can I find people to fix the windows and fix trim and railings - hard to find people who know what they are doing - to have a resource that is a huge help. Education - people get pulled into I'll put in the most energy efficient windows - not much info on how. Much more green it is to keep and repair.

JWI- this has come up at every session, windows are always one -

SC- we do have a preservation directory, also in Boston, NBSS - carpentry program, great resource -

LK- lists of people with the preservation skills....

EL- other resource is HNE - homeownership category of membership...

Resources and connections to people

Boston Building Materials Co-Op - training on how to restore historic windows....

JG- Windows

EK - resources and connecting people to the "lists"

GG - windows - energy studies -- get the Marvin Guy to come and publicly support the repair before replace -

JWI- how to teach people to do it themselves

EK - the old house and barn fair

GG- BPA old house fair -

JG- vendors and exhibitors - material suppliers, demonstrations and sessions

JWI- Springfield College - the tornado that went through W. Mass-

CS- regional conference - not just homeowners and sessions for local advocates. Really low budget regional conferences that can draw in many different groups to attend - look to free or nearly free

CS- the Home Doctor program - two-day workshop... they will evaluate and go to properties.... diagnosing the issues and plan and specific issues.

CS- a lot of time we need the trade people, but we also need just someone who can come in as the expert that says, "no you don't need this yet", nice to have more people to do window work, but a Building doctor program, how to diagnose and help plans and price out... (Ohio has the program) just an expert, giving other options.

JWI- idea and need for wanting to continue networking better and keep the conversation going, what we are seeing at a lot of community's is that you can become very insular with your concerns, and talking to your neighboring town may not have been thought of to talk to. CS initiatives a WM coalition with PM and MHC and regional planners.

CS- described WMHCC - 3 meetings a year or so, speaker sessions, trying to determine what speakers people want to see. Partnership with regional planning agencies is helpful

Regional conferences - beyond just historic commissions... statewide homeowners as a constituency statewide, no one is targeting them, regional conference marketed to a lot of people, newspaper, and chance to bring some people together... to bring in lots of different people, models around the country. Maybe CPA is a good model to look.

CS- statewide conference is annual and lasts for 4 days. - targeted homeowner sessions and technical property assistance... contractors, etc.

GG_ private homeowner fairs, Old House Journal, restoration and renovation conference (??) - can we tie into what people are doing already?

EK- outreach and education coordinator role for regional conference

JG- elephant in the room, CPA and its implementation -

GG_ CPA - lots of round and round about how the CPC will be formed and advocacy group that worked together is working with council on how it will be implemented, lot depends on CPC- how does the preservation community support the effort to increase the match ,

JWI- worries in other communities that the match will be very low because of the Boston piece. Interesting to see how it will shake out.

GG- worried about economy- larger structural issues
- lobby to support the statewide coalition for the match. Impact on other people, etc.

GG - Acton lawsuit -

GG_ is there a way to help establish a grant program with CPA to assist historic homeowners?

JG- reviving historic homeowner programs - with CPA funding... figure a way to model for other communities -

JWI- historic homeowner tax credits, etc. can this be revisited? Frustrating and discouraging - looking to fix some of these things.

How can PM better serve you?

use PM as a resource when they get questions - if they want more research, etc. Refer to PM.

Yes please use PM as a resource and clearinghouse

SC-a lot of calls about Barns, short list of barn providers, happy to send information via email to anyone who has a need for particular information, packet of info from NTHP on benefits of pressings "(not should or need to)

Newton- speakers and lecture series? - do we have speakers... geared for homeowners...

CS- speakers - what is the resources out there that show people that historic resources are really interesting and exciting and generates interest.

Inspiring website for preservation... old house FAQ- generate interest in historic preservation... statewide level interest ...

Style guide -

Architectural style guide just for Massachusetts -

Statewide - website section on bridges in Massachusetts – different types of bridges (does this exist?)

Historic cemeteries - cultural resources

Don't try to pigeon hole arch styles.. but give a sense.

Buffalo has an interesting website - interesting images

(Intern project??). Captivating and image heavy...

also talk about how things change over time...

HGTV's some of this old house, style guides... looking for ideas,

CS- reaching out to new homeowners, local level more likely - send a note with house history, etc.

CS- MACRIS hits - working on functionality