

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item 97

TO: MPC Commissioners

FROM: Mark Donaldson, Executive Director

DATE: April 6, 2006

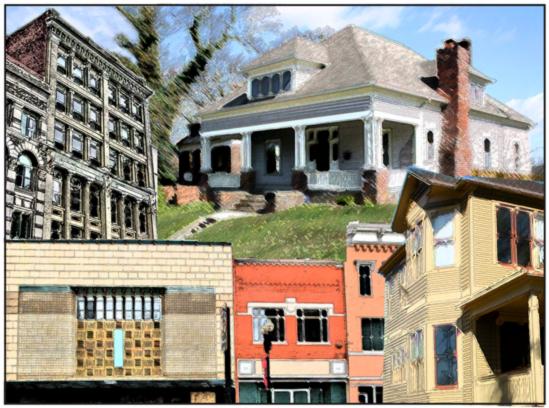
SUBJECT: HISTORIC PRESERVATION REPORT TO MAYOR HASLAM -

4-B-06-OB

Included on the April 13, 2006, MPC Agenda is the adoption of the *Mayor's Report on Historic Preservation, 2005*. The report is mandated by a City of Knoxville Charter provision that was adopted in 2002. The Charter amendment requires MPC to forward the report of the Mayor of Knoxville, who in turn is to make a report to the Knoxville City Council on the state of historic preservation.

I urge adoption of the report.

Preservation: 2005



A Report to Mayor Bill Haslam

Prepared by the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission April 2006

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Adopted by:

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Introduction

This report, Preservation 2005, is an annual report on the state of preservation in Knoxville, required by a 2002 amendment to Knoxville's Charter. It is reviewed and presented by the Metropolitan Planning Commission to Knoxville's Mayor, who in turn is to make a report to the Knoxville City Council on the state of preservation.

2005 was a positive year for historic preservation in Knoxville. Those positive advances showed most in the historic buildings of downtown and the historic neighborhoods of Knoxville's first suburbs that surround downtown. For the first time in recent memory, Knoxville's historic buildings and neighborhoods are attracting investment in record numbers, new residents are returning to the inner city, and rehabilitated houses and commercial buildings have seen an increase in value that equals or exceeds the price of new housing in other sections of the city and county. The success of neighborhood revitalization has begun to attract new construction to inner city areas. The importance of preservation in the life of the city is recognized by Mayor Haslam and the Knoxville City Council, as they involve preservationists in decision-making about policies and projects in the city.

Preservation Activities

From 1982 to 1985, MPC conducted an inventory of buildings and structures in the city, and in 1987, produced the first edition of *The Future of Our Past*, a preservation plan calling attention to historically and architecturally significant properties in Knoxville and Knox County. The plan was updated in 1994 in a second edition, also titled *The Future of Our Past*. The City Council has asked that the inventory be updated again, with a completion date in 2006.

Involvement in preservation has grown since 1982, resulting in the rehabilitation of many 19th and early 20th century buildings and neighborhoods throughout Knoxville. New and old residents of Mechanicsville banded together to create the city's first residential H-1 historic overlay in 1991; their efforts were followed by additional historic district

nominations. A list of properties drawn from *The Future of Our Past* and its update are included in "The Properties" section of this report, which notes properties that are listed under H-1 Historic Overlay, NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay and National Register of Historic Places, and suggests additional eligible properties.

Activities 2005

With Mayor Haslam's support, Knox Heritage organized the effort to save historically and architecturally significant buildings in the 500 block of Gay Street, including the S&W Cafeteria, while accommodating the construction of a new downtown cinema. Individuals from the Knoxville Historic Zoning Commission contributed many hours to its successful completion. With this and other activities, Knox Heritage continued to embellish its reputation as a strong ally of preservation in Knoxville.



The success of neil Gill area. In the

Other activities that supported preservation include the city's new home initiative in Fourth & Gill on the site of the old McCallie School. Various organizations held activities such as historic tours held in neighborhood districts, Preservation Week activities, and Knox Heritage's Summer Suppers program all increased Knoxvillians' interest in its rich architectural heritage. Knox Heritage continued its role as a developer of historic properties through its Vintage Homes Program. Two properties in Old North Knoxville were rehabilitated and sold. One of these buildings had been vacant for many years; it was rehabilitated and returned to single family housing. The second building, which had been divided into several apartments, all extremely deteriorated, also became a rehabilitated single family house. Knox Heritage has made it a practice to become involved in the rehabilitation of homes that have problems preventing their rehabilitation from being competitive in the private sector. The successful completion of both of these projects

involved assistance from many city departments, and returned long-standing problem buildings to the tax rolls, strengthening the neighborhood and spurring additional investment in adjacent buildings.

In 2005, the Knoxville Historic Zoning Commission reviewed 136 Certificates of Appropriateness, an increase of 15% over the preceding year's Certificate reviews. The Certificates that have been issued reflect an increasing interest in maintaining and rehabilitating historic buildings. Of the Certificates issued in 2005, 57% were issued for levels of work that involved major rehabilitation or new construction; the remaining 43% contemplated repair work that was fairly minor in nature or was maintenance of the affected buildings.

Hallmarks of the increased importance of historic preservation in 2005 include:

 Construction of new houses in historic districts or the areas adjacent to them;

- Rehabilitated historic housing that is competitive within the local real estate market; and
- Conversion of vacant space in downtown's historic buildings to living space and new retail.

Residential historic districts – Knoxville's suburbs of the early 20th and late 19th centuries – include very few vacant lots. The supply of houses available for purchase and in need of rehabilitation has continued to shrink. As a result, developers and home buyers have sought out the few vacant lots that do exist in Knoxville's residential historic districts in the past year, and 2005 has seen the construction of four new houses in Old North Knoxville and Fourth & Gill, with several additional new houses now being planned for those neighborhoods and for the Mechanicsville historic district.

As the vacant lots available in the established neighborhoods have been used, and as the desirability and marketability of historic districts has improved,



An example of Knox Heritage's Vintage Homes Program.



Work continues on infill housing in Old North Knoxville.



Two homes on Oklahoma Avenure are rehabilitated.

developers have turned to the areas adjacent to historic districts, where larger numbers of vacant lots exist. Construction has begun on new housing in these adjacent areas. That new construction has been consistent in design with buildings in the historic districts. This consistent design is a reflection of the developers' understanding that historic architecture and inner city locations are desirable to a growing percentage of buyers.

In 1996, in a study titled The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation, studies of sales prices of rehabilitated homes in two historic districts (Old North Knoxville and Fourth & Gill) were compared to sales prices for Knox County as a whole. That study noted that, while average sales prices for houses in those districts had been increasing annually, they still commanded only 70% of the average price for the county. The study noted that both of the neighborhoods were still revitalizing, and had not achieved the stability of some of the newer residential



The Park House in downtown Knoxville is being restored.

areas in Knox County. Comparable sales have not been analyzed in the intervening years, but for 2005, the typical revitalized home in Fourth & Gill or Old North Knoxville usually sold for \$90 - 120 per sq. ft. These prices reflect the continued stabilization of the historic areas, and their increasing desirability as residential areas.

Perhaps the most startling change in perception of historic areas is the continuing resurgence of condominium and apartment units in downtown Knoxville's formerly vacant commercial and warehouse buildings. In 2004, the number of downtown residential units was reported at over 200. In the March 2, 2006, issue of Metropulse, Barry Henderson, the author of "A Brick Ceiling" estimated that the number of residential units downtown numbered over 500 by the end of 2005. In 2005, the article recounted that 362 residential building permits had been issued for downtown and the areas immediately surrounding it; 95 of those permits were for new construction while 267 were for renovation or alteration.

Retail development of ground floor spaces and retail and office development on Market Square has kept pace with the continued increase of residential units. Several years ago, permanent business on Market Square numbered only five or six, with upper floors primarily vacant. That situation is almost completely reversed, with retail ground floor spaces and office and some residential uses occupying upper floors. Only a few buildings are now vacant. The same level of activity is present in Gay Street buildings in the 400 block, and rehabilitation of the

100 block of South Gay is almost complete. Single noteworthy examples of proposed rehabilitation include the Holston Bank Building at the corner of Gay and Clinch, the Burwell Building on the opposite corner, and the YMCA Building. Loft developers have also begun to consider buildings that are adjacent to downtown, mirroring the peripheral development going on adjacent to single family residential neighborhoods. Meetings are now being held to address the feasibility of design guidelines for downtown, in both the historically designated areas and those areas without designated buildings.



The restored Phoenix Building on Gay Street utilizes the mixed-use philosophy, having loft apartments on the upper floors, office space in the middle and a variety of retailers on the ground level.

Activities And Recommended Actions

Past conversations with groups and individuals active in preservation have resulted in a listing of actions they feel would be in addressing preservation concerns and additional properties they feel may be worthy of designation. Both are discussed below.

- Specific measures that have been recommended as beneficial to the preservation of historic building in downtown, historic neighborhoods and individual sites and structures include:
- 1) H-1 Historic Overlay zoning for historic downtown buildings; and
- 2) Design guidelines for areas of downtown that do not involve historic buildings.
- Historic neighborhoods could benefit from the following incentives:
- 1) Enforcement of city ordinances that prohibit parking on sidewalks, address problems with housing and building codes;
- 2) Additional street and sidewalk paving;
- 3) An amendment to the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance to recognize unique zones for residential areas that were developed in a pre-World War II form, even though buildings in the area may not be eligible for historic designation;
- 4) Outreach to realtors who market single family residential property as having "commercial potential;"
- 5) The use of property tax abatement to encourage rehabilitation of historic neighborhoods;
- 6) The use of street signs and distinctive entrances to promote neighborhood identity;

- 7) An increase in police patrols in residential areas, including facilitating the development of neighborhood watch programs;
- 8) Encouraging the development of strong neighborhood-based schools to strengthen and provide additional incentives for attracting families into historic, inner-city neighborhoods;
- An increase in staffing to strengthen MPC's National Register and historic overlay programs;
- 10) Utilize the "demolition by neglect" ordinance for individual structures in need of maintenance within historic neighborhoods.
- 11) Development of parks in older city neighborhoods.
- 12) Financial assistance to Knox Heritage as it proceeds with its Vintage Homes program.
- 13) Marketing and promotion programs to assist Knoxville's historic neighborhoods.
- 14) A unified public relations campaign that publicizes the progress made in preservation in Knoxville, with the strengths of historic neighborhoods and downtown residential conversions as a special emphasis.

Some progress has been made in each of these areas, as the administration works to strengthen Knoxville's residential neighborhoods.

 For several years, there have been indications of additional properties that should be designated.
 The list of neighborhoods and properties mentioned in the past and, more recently, includes:

106 and 109 Naueda Drive

Island Home Park

(H-1 Historic Overlay)

Old Westmoreland

(NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay)

Forest Hills

(NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay)

Kingston Pike

(H-1 Historic Overlay or NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay)

North Hills

(National Register of Historic Places and H-1 Historic Overlay)

East side of Broadway from Cecil to Washington Pike

Oakwood-Lincoln Park

(National Register of Historic Places and H-1 Historic Overlay)

Sequoyah Hills

(National Register of Historic Places and NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay)

Sherrod Road

(NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay)

Chilhowee Park

(National Register of Historic Places)

Southern Terminal & Warehouse National Register Historic District (H-1 Historic Overlay)

Gay Street National Register Historic District (H-1 Historic Overlay)

South Market National Register Historic District (H-1 Historic Overlay)

Fts. Dickerson, Higley and Stanley

(National Register of Historic Places listing, H-1 Historic Overlay for Higley and Stanley)

Extension of Emory Place National Register Historic District to include Broadway @ Central

(National Register and H-1 Historic Overlay)

Fountain City Downtown

(National Register and H-1 Historic Overlay)

Gibbs Road National Register of Historic Places District (H-1 Historic Overlay)

Adair Gardens National Register of Historic Places District (H-1 Historic Overlay)

Extension of Old North Knoxville H-1 Historic Overlay District

As noted earlier, the Knoxville City Council will include an update of the listing of potential historic sites as part of its work program in 2006; that update may result in requests for additional designations.

Summary Of Past Activities

Information about the status of preservation in Knoxville has been collected over the past five years. A summary of preservation concerns is listed below, together with the ways they were addressed.

- A concern over the lack of maintenance for individual properties in historic areas was addressed by the adoption of a "demolition by neglect" ordinance.
- Legislation has been adopted to prevent demolition of properties being considered for inclusion in NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation and H-1 Historic Overlays until the final decision about their designation.
- Reuse plans for schools that are not fully utilized as educational facilities has proceeded in some instances, but there is not a unified policy direction.
- While no one in the current administration
 has not been charged with preservation
 implementation, the consideration of
 preservation concerns has been incorporated in
 the city's decision-making process overall.
- A process for planning traffic calming measures for Knoxville's neighborhoods is underway.
- A design for street markers, to be used in designated historic neighborhoods, has been completed.
- Non-profit organizations like Habitat for Humanity and the Knox Housing Partnership are actively involved in producing new, appropriately designed housing or rehabilitating existing historic housing in historic neighborhoods.

- A street tree plan has been developed for Knoxville, including historic neighborhoods.
- Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places continue to be prepared for properties that area eligible; work is also continuing on H-1 Historic Overlay and NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation overlays.
- Knox Heritage has developed a speaker's bureau, a web page, a marker program, and walking and driving tours focused on historic areas.
 They have formed a neighborhood preservation council, and continue to present special events that focus on historic places and events in Knoxville.
- The East Tennessee Historical Center, with the development of new museum spaces and an expanded research facility, has enhanced its role as an invaluable resource for local residents.
- A program developed to assist in the rehabilitation of commercial buildings in the Broadway-Central area directly answers a request of prior annual preservation reports.

Legislative measures that could benefit historic preservation in Knoxville, and that have been recommended in the past, include

- Modification of the definition of "family" in the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance to prevent overcrowding, which is currently being discussed;
- Use of the One Year Plan to establish base zoning supportive of preservation;
- Establishing a "community schools" program, allowing for non-tradition educational programs for residents of surrounding neighborhoods;

Other programs recommended in the past that could assist in preserving buildings and strengthening historic neighborhoods include working with The University of Tennessee to protect university owned or impacted historic buildings and developing a parking permit system for Ft. Sanders and other neighborhoods developed before private automobiles and off-street parking were common.

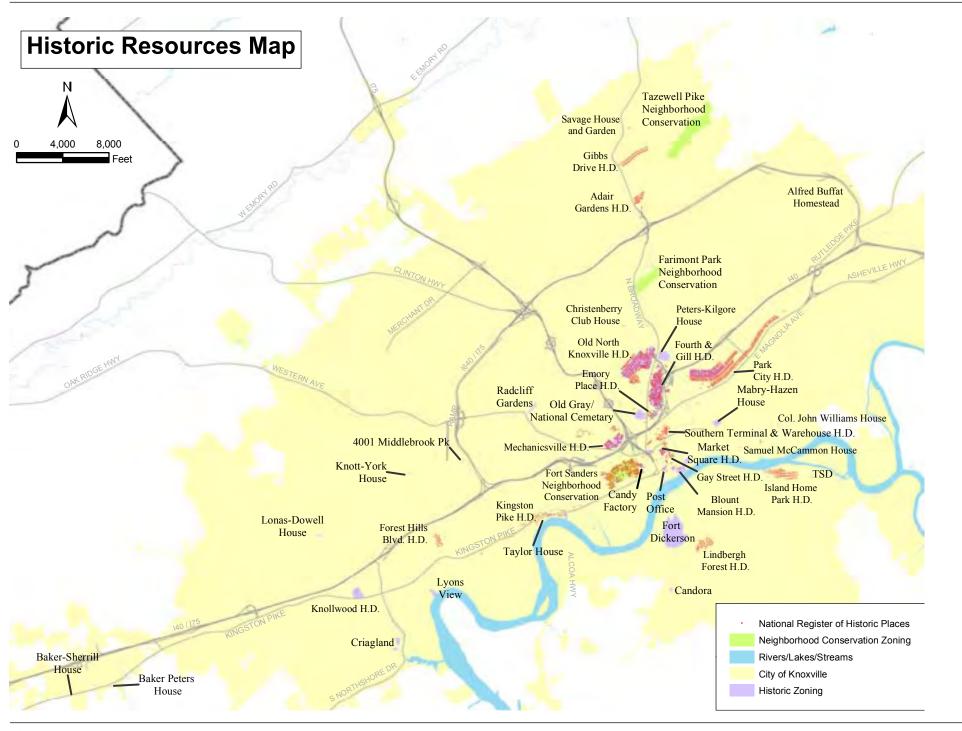
One outcome of prior preservation reports is the development of a program to assist in the rehabilitation of commercial buildlings in the Broadway-Central Avenue area.



The Properties

Property	Designated Locally	National Register Listed	Significance (1=High,3=Low)	Endangered (1=High,3=Low)	Type of Significance
Lyons View Historic District	Partial	No	1	1	History, Architecture
James Park House	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Col. John Williams House	No	Yes	1	1	History, Architecture
Williams-Richards House	No	No	1	1	History, Architecture
UT Campus-various buildings	No	No	1	1	History, Architecture
Lones-Dowell House	Yes	No	1	1	History, Architecture
Kennedy-Baker-Sherrill House	No	No	1	1	History, Architecture
Thomas Walker House, 645 Mars Hill	Demolished	Demolished			History, Architecture
Henley Street Bridge	Yes (H-1)	No	1	1	Architecture
Kingston Pike	No	Yes (Neyland to Cherokee Blvd.)	1	1	History, Architecture
Candoro Marble	Yes (H-1)	No	1	2	History, Architecture
St. John's Episcopal Church	No	No	1	2	History, Architecture
Immaculate Conception	No	No	1	2	History, Architecture
Island Home	No	Yes	1	2	Architecture
Market Square Historic District	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Hopecote	No	No	1	3	Architecture
Fountain City Downtown	No	No	1	3	History
First Presbyterian Church, Cemetery	No	Yes (cemetery only)	1	3	History
Gay Street Bridge	Yes (H-1)	No	1	3	Architecture
Mechanicsville	Yes	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Camp House/Greystone	No	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Old Post Office	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Craighead-Jackson House	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Southern Terminal District	Partial	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Old City Hall	Yes H-1	Yes	1	3	History, Architecture
Ft. Sanders Historic District	Yes (NC-1)	Yes	2	1	History, Architecture
Minvillas (5th Ave Motel)	Yes (H-1)	No	2	1	Architecture
Hill Avenue Historic District	Yes (H-1)	No	2	1	History, Architecture
Brownlow Elementary	Yes (H-1)	No	2	1	History, Architecture
South Market Historic District	No	Yes	2	2	History, Architecture
Tennessee School for the Deaf	No	Yes	2	2	History, Architecture
Holston Hills	No	No	2	2	History, Architecture
Morningside	No	No	2	2	History, Architecture
Areas bordering H-1s	No	Some	2	2	History, Architecture
Victorian Houses	Yes (H-1)	Yes	2	2	History, Architecture
Medical Arts Building	No	Yes	2	3	Architecture
Old Gray National	Yes	Yes	1	3	History
Civil War Forts	Yes (Dickerson only H-1)) No	1	1	History
Knollwood	Yes (H-1)	Yes	2	2	History, Architecture
Taylor House, 3128 Kingston Pike	Yes (H-1)	Yes	2	3	History, Architecture
Bleak House, 3148 Kingston Pike	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	2	History, Architecture

Property	Designated Locally	National Register Listed	Significance (1=High,3=Low)	Endangered (1=High,3=Low)	Type of Significance
North Hills	No	No	2	3	History, Architecture
First Baptist Church	No	Yes	2	3	History, Architecture
Sequoyah Elementary	No	No	2	3	Architecture
Racheff Gardens, Office	Yes (H-1)	Yes	2	3	History, Architecture
Christenberry Clubhouse	No	Yes	2	3	History, Architecture
Daniels House	No	Yes	2	3	Architecture
Oakwood-Lincoln Park	No	No	2	3	History, Architecture
Ft. Sanders W of 22	No	No	3	1	History, Architecture
Maplehurst	No	No	3	2	Architecture
Sevier Avenue Houses	No	No	3	2	Architecture
YWCA	No	No	3	2	History, Architecture
2921 Broadway	No	No	3	2	Architecture
Apartment/Broadway	No	No	3	2	Architecture
Lindburgh Forest	No	Yes	3	2	History, Architecture
Tazewell Pike	Yes (NC-1)	No	3	2	History, Architecture
Candy Factory	Yes (H-1)	No	3	3	History
General John Wilder House	No	Yes	3	3	History, Architecture
Forest Hills Blvd.	No	Yes	3	3	Architecture
Clinch Ave Viaduct	No	No	3	3	Architecture
Kendrick Place/Union Avenue	No	No	2	2	Architecture
Ft. Sanders Manor	Yes (H-1)	Yes	3	3	Architecture
Savage Gardens	No	Yes	3	3	History, Architecture
Adair Road	No	Yes	3	3	History, Architecture
Temple Beth-El Cemetery	Yes (H-1)	No	3	3	History
Dr. Joe Archer House	No	No	unknown	unknown	
Miller House	No	No	unknown	unknown	
Burwell Building/Tennessee Theater	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	Architecture, History
Millers Building	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	Architecture, History
Bijou Theater	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	Architecture, History
US Post Office	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	Architecture, History
Knox County Courthouse	Yes (H-1)	Yes	1	3	Architecture, History
Candy Factory	Yes (H-1)	No	2	3	History
Cansler Building, 1518 University	Yes (H-1)	No	1	2	History
Fairmont Park	Yes (NC-1)	No	2	3	Architecture, History
1517 Emoriland	Yes (H-1)	No	2	3	History
Craigglen, 1053 Craigland Court	Yes (H-1)	No	1	3	Architecture, History
Glen Craig, 6304 Westland	Yes (H-1)	No	1	3	Architecture, History
McIntyre-Roleau House, 3004 Kingston Pike	Yes (H-1)	Yes	2	3	Architecture
Knott-York House, 4810 Middlebrook Pike	Yes (H-1)	No	1	2	History, Architecture
Sequoyah Hills	No	No	1	1	Architecture
Westmoreland Hills	No	No	1	1	Architecture
Emory Place	No	Yes	1	2	History, Architecture
Baker-Sherrill House, 9320 Kingston Pike	No	No	1	1	Architecture



Appendix A: Designated Properties

