

Historic Preservation Commission 2015/2016 Annual Report



Preservation and the Community

Average Assessed Values

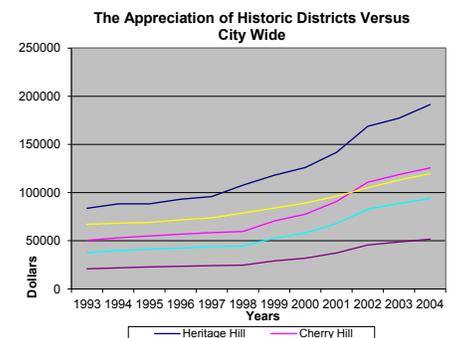


The financial benefits of Preservation have been well documented and touted across the country for several decades. Examples of preservation as an economic benefit and stabilizing tool abound in Grand Rapids, from the commercial warehouse district of Heartside to the residential district of Cherry Hill and more. These financial benefits to owners and community can be seen through higher property values and desirability of the neighborhoods by owners and investors. Many are familiar with the reports that have been written but few equate those to actual physical numbers and projects. To bring this discussion to a relatable and familiar level we will be utilizing more visuals within this report that encompass data and examples specifically from Grand Rapids.

The graph above illustrates the average assessed value for improved residential properties in the City of Grand Rapids and how they compare to those in the Heritage Hill Historic District. Over the past 13 years the average value of the historic structures has far exceeded that of improved properties located outside the historic district. It further illustrates that historic properties hold their value better and rebound quicker. The average improved neighborhood only saw an average growth of 6.91% while Heritage Hill experienced a 19.85% growth in the same amount of time.

The graph to the right illustrates the appreciation of property values in residential historic districts compared to city wide from 1993 to 2004.

Note that Heritage Hill has consistently held higher property values over the non-designated areas since before 1993. It also indicates that property values in the other historic districts began to increase dramatically over the next few years after designation. Fast forward 10+ years and one will find that Fairmount Square and Wealthy Street properties have exceeded the City average and that Wealthy Street is on the rise as one of the hottest real estate markets in the city.



The real estate market in the City is at an outstanding high with properties within the historic districts being among the hottest commodities. Properties are selling for record amounts and in a matter of hours and days. Within in the last couple of years there have been several homes to sell for prices well over \$400,000; 60 Lafayette NE & 339 College SE are both under contract, one for \$570,000 and the other for \$690,000. Properties that aren't even on the market, such as, Cherry Market, are receiving offers.



▲ **349 Robey Place SE** – This uninhabitable house was listed on March 9 and was sale pending by March 14 at a list price of \$35,000.

▶ **225 Henry SE** – This multi-unit was listed on February 18 and was sale pending by February 21 at a list price of \$167,000.



▲ **341 College SE** – Listed on March 3 and was sale pending the same day at a list price of \$229,800.



◀ **307 Union SE** – This single family house was listed on October 22 and was sale pending by October 27 at a list price of \$215,000.



Training and Education

Michigan Historic Preservation Network Session

Staff spoke at the Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) conference in May of 2015 in Midland Michigan. The MHPN Conference is a state-wide conference that is open to all interested attendees that wish to learn more about historic preservation. Staff spoke during a session involving eligibility, modern materials and modern architecture. The conference was very well attended and ran from Thursday through Saturday afternoon. The session was successful and as such MHPN has asked staff to return for another speaking engagement at the 2016 Conference in Detroit.



Commissioner Training

Each year staff organizes and leads a training workshop for the Grand Rapids Historic Preservation Commission. These training sessions are designed to update commissioners on new information, processes, legislation, resources and technology as well as address any concerns that may have arisen over the year. In

2015 the HPC experienced an usually large number of highly complex projects and inquiries and as such they held two training sessions for the entire body, at the request of the HPC. The first was a tour session with guest speaker Robbert McKay from the State Historic Preservation Office. During this session the group toured various types of neighborhoods including residential and commercial to discuss neighborhood context as well as infill standards.

The second session was the annual retreat held in November. During this session staff addressed issues commissioners had expressed interest in, such as, proper use of Notice to Proceed, Period of Significance, meeting procedures, and defensible decision making.



Hands-On Window Workshop

In April of 2016 the HPC in partnership with the City Planning Department, the Heritage Hill Association and Midtown Craftsman held its first ever hands-on workshop. This intensive level workshop offered attendees the opportunity to learn how to restore and windows by physically participating during this two day event. Participants:

- Removed window sashes
- Stripped paint with lead safe practices
- Removed and installed new glazing (learned how to replace broken glass)
- Repaired deteriorated wood elements with appropriate epoxy

HANDS-ON WINDOW WORKSHOP

WHEN
 May 5th, 5:30pm - 9pm
 MAY 6th, 8am—5pm

WHERE
 Sherman Street Church
 1000 Sherman St, Grand Rapids MI

INTENSIVE LEVEL HANDS-ON WINDOW REHABILITATION TRAINING - REMOVE & INSTALL SASHES; RE-ROPE SASHES; STRIP PAINT; REMOVE & INSTALL GLAZING; APPLYING EPOXY. TOOLS PROVIDED. PIZZA PROVIDED FRIDAY NIGHT.

CONTACT: HERITAGE HILL ASSOCIATION - HERITAGE@HERITAGEHILLWEB.ORG - 456-8950 OR RHONDA BAKER (CITY OF GR) - RBAKER@CITY.US - 456-3451

SAVE MONEY AND LEARN TO DO IT YOURSELF.

REGISTER
 \$75 (to Heritage Hill Association) To reserve a spot one must submit completed registration and waiver forms along with the \$75 to HHA.

20 PEOPLE
 This event will be capped at 20 attendees so get your registration in now!

SPONSORS
 Midtown Craftsman
 Heritage Window Rest.
 Sherman Street Church
 Heritage Hill Association
 City of Grand Rapids
 Planning Department/HPC

- Weatherized
- Re-roped sashes
- Re-installed sashes and trim

The event was so popular that it sold out within a couple of weeks with a waiting list should some drop out. The event went off without a hitch and received great reviews from the attendees with requests to hold more

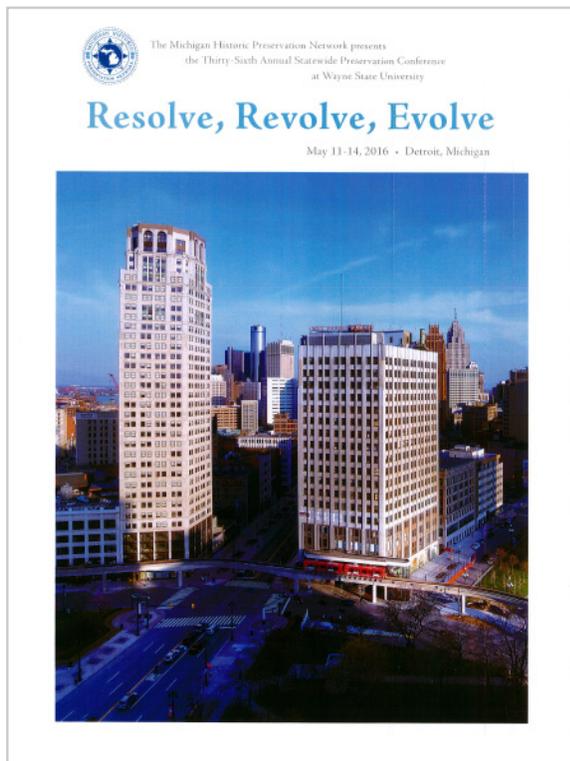
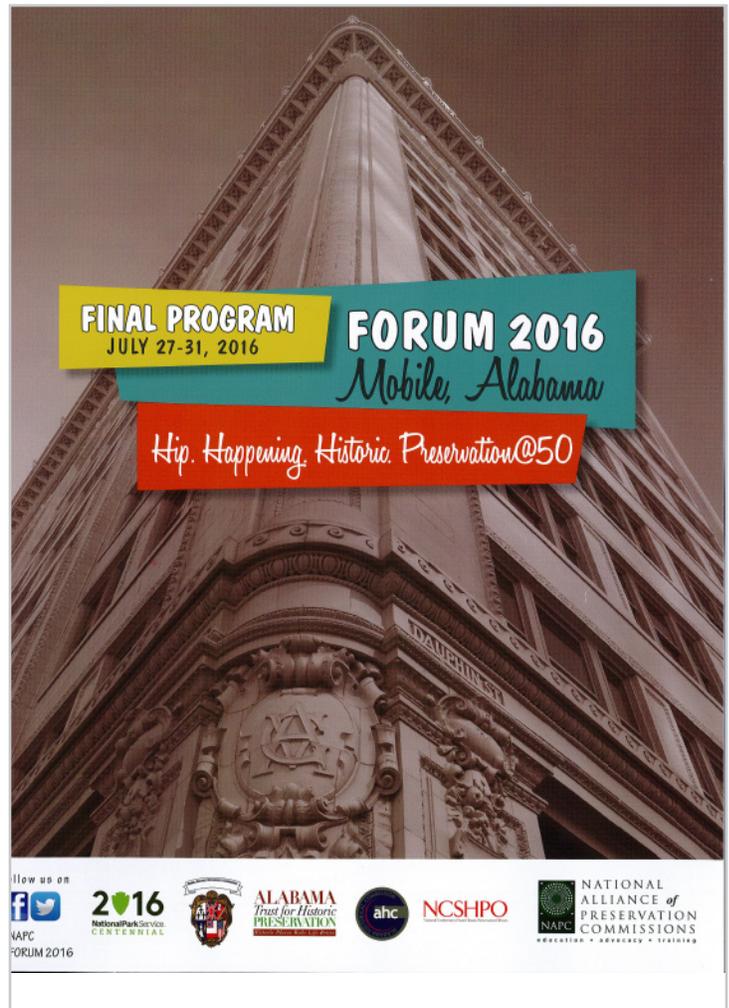
hands-on style workshops on various topics. In May of 2017 we will be holding our 2nd hands-on window workshops in a larger location with extra instructors as a reaction to requests by those unable to attend in 2016.



National Alliance for Preservation Commission & Michigan Historic Preservation Network

Staff was pleased and excited to speak at the 2016 National Alliance for Preservation Commissions (NAPC) Forum as well as the 2016 Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) conference.

The NAPC Forum is a bi-annual national conference geared towards Historic Preservation/District Commissions as well as government agencies and officials but is often also well attended by architects, planners, consultants and developers. Staff spoke at the Forum in Mobile Alabama during a session about public involvement as it related to our success with our process for Veterans and Memorial Parks. The session was very well attended with approximately 60 individuals on a Sunday morning.



36th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference

The MHPN Conference is an annual statewide conference held every May, in 2016 it was held in Detroit. The conference is open to all interested attendees that wish to learn more about historic preservation and related topics. Staff spoke at the 2016 Conference during a session about updating local historic district reports. The session was well attended and spurred a lively question and answer session.

Renovations and Restorations Abound!



232 Morris SE after



232 Morris SE before

Not to be overshadowed by the impressive amount of new projects in the various historic districts; projects that focused on renovation and restoration of historic structures also thrived. The number of applications being pulled for repairs and restoration of historic buildings is on the rise illustrating the care being given to our existing housing stock. All projects have had positive impacts on their neighborhoods, property values, and quality of life.



756 Wealthy SE before



756 Wealthy SE after



1106 Wealthy after



1106 Wealthy before



22 Lafayette NE after



22 Lafayette NE before



(left) 19 Lafayette NE after and
(below) 19 Lafayette NE before





925 Wealthy SE, before



925 Wealthy SE, after



1034 Wealthy SE, before



1034 Wealthy SE, after



521 Madison SE, after



521 Madison SE, before



701 Wealthy SE

Projects Completed!

From 2015 through 2016 we saw several new construction projects and rehabilitation projects come to fruition. Among these projects are five owner occupied new houses, one commercial addition, solar panel project, and a full house restoration with barn.



263 Charles SE



444 Union SE





336 Donald SE



338 Pleasant SE



337 Robey SE



341 Robey SE



Completed
Brewery Vivant
Solar Panel
Project



Completed
Brewery Vivant
Solar Panel
Project



1059 Wealthy SE



◀ Through efforts of the developers group, citizen involvement and the HPC a community friendly infill project was approved for the old McDonald's site on Wealthy. This project looks to add five new buildings to the site that encompass residential and commercial uses, thus revitalizing a large underutilized void in the streetscape.



12 Weston

▲ In 2015 we saw the demolition of two unsafe structures and approval for the erection of a multistory, mixed use building in the same location that will continue to define this important commercial corner and corridor.



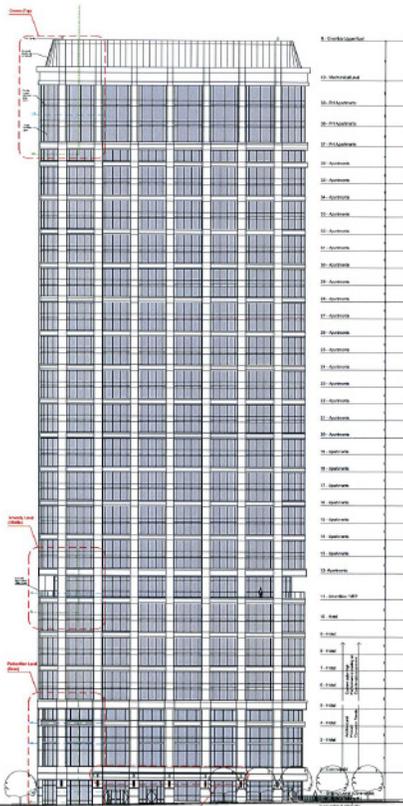
50 College SE

Coming soon, a new four story residential complex to be located on the site of the old Social Security Office building at 50 College SE. The site will include restoration of the two historic carriage houses for re-use as part of the complex amenities.

Coming Soon!

Additionally, community involvement, conversations and approvals were held and given for several projects, all of which have the potential to add significant life to currently unutilized land and buildings in all of the historic districts.

◀ The odd little pizza slice shaped lot between Fulton, Ionia and Louis was approved for new life. The existing parking was approved to be replaced with a 42 story mixed use building that incorporates the historic shape of the lot in its design and footprint.



10 Ionia NW



10 Ionia NW, detail

2015 HPC Award Winners

before



after



Residential Projects – Dennis Delano & Merritt Taylor – 230 Fountain NE

before



after



Residential Projects – Copper Hill Properties LLC – 262 Union SE

before



after



Group Projects – Westminster Presbyterian Church & Grand River Builders – 47 Jefferson SE

before



after



Commercial Projects – 616 Development – 16 Monroe Center NW

before



after



Commercial Projects
Northstone Mgmt LLC & Mariani Construction – 413 Eastern SE

before



after



Group Projects – Baker Lofts – 40 Logan SW

Special Recognition



Barry VanDyke



Kevin Doenier



John Leegwater

2016 HPC Award Winners



Residential Projects –
MLM Property LLC – 22-28 Lafayette NE



Residential Projects –
Andy & Ann Vidro – 19 Lafayette NE



Residential Projects –
Trang Vuong & Thach Le – 333 Fountain NE





Group Projects – GRPS & East Hills Council of Neighbors – 940 Baldwin SE



Commercial Projects – Matthew Smith – 1106 Wealthy SE



Commercial Projects – Innes Street LLC – 615-619 Lyon NE



Special Recognition – Heather Edwards



Commercial Projects – CWD Real Estate Investments – 40 Pearl NW



Special Recognition – Pleasant Park

The Purpose of the HPC

1. Stabilize and improve property values in Historic Districts.
2. Strengthen the local economy.
3. Safeguard the Heritage of the City of Grand Rapids by preserving Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks that reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history.
4. Foster civic beauty.

These purposes were successfully served during 2015 through 304 decisions and during 2016 through 286 decisions, made by staff and the Commission. These decisions preserved the integrity of the structures and district while at the same time enabling practical changes which allow for economic use of historic buildings. The significant amount of investment in improvement and renovation of many buildings in the historic districts speaks to the impact of historic preservation on economic development.

HPC News

- Staff continues to partner with neighborhood associations, Midtown Craftsman, GRAR and Heritage Window Restoration to create educational workshops and opportunities.
- Staff worked diligently alongside many others locally and across the State in efforts to eliminate or minimize legislative Bill 5232.
- HPC bid fair well to commissioner Michael Clark in 2015 as his family relocated out of state, he will be missed. We also said goodbye to six year HPC veteran David Maxam as he reached his term limits at the end of 2016.
- HPC welcomed Chris Reader and Michael DeMaagd-Rodriguez in 2015 and Mara Braspeninx in 2016; all three have been an asset to the Commission and have had a very active first year of service. Warm welcome to all!

Statistical Information

Approved Applications

- The ratio of approved applications remained high and steady reaching 96% in 2015 and an outstanding 97.9% in 2016. In 2015 the HPC and HP Staff approved 286 applications at their first hearing and in 2016 they approved 278. The total approved applications reached 291 out of 304 in 2015 and 280 out of 286 in 2016.

Applications Processed

- In the year 2015 the HPC and Staff reviewed a total of 304 applications and in 2016 they reviewed 286.

HPC Reviewed Applications Per Historic District

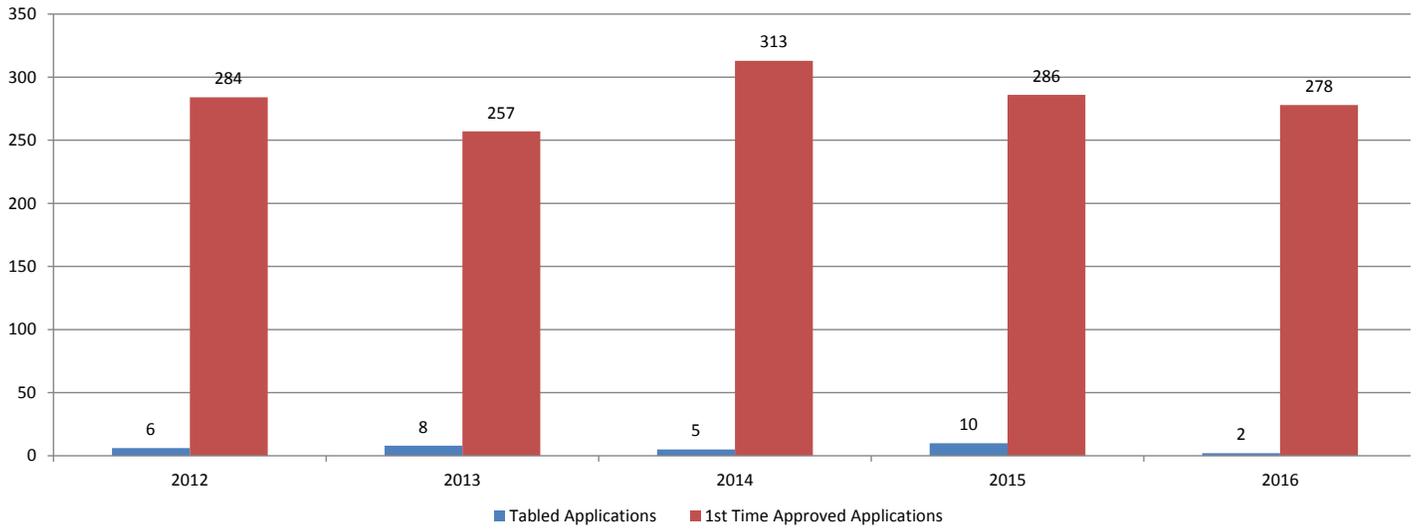
- Applications to the HPC from historic districts other than Heritage Hill held between 37% and 40% of the activity from 2015 through 2016.

Staff Approved Applications

- Staff-approved applications are those that receive instant consideration and approval. Applicants utilize the one-stop convenience of the Development Center for review.

- A total of 1144 applications have been approved by staff over the past five years; 237 in 2015 and 230 in 2016.

Customer Service Performance



Approved Applications Processed

