



SARASOTA ALLIANCE
FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends of Historic Preservation,

Happy fall and I hope your summer has been a pleasant one. Our summer as board members of the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation has been busy! Underway are plans for our fall activities including opening the historic Van Wezel estate to the public, a holiday tour of Bok Tower and a Best of the Best Homes Tour in March of 2019 that will celebrate over two decades of historic homes in Sarasota. The tour will feature diverse homes in various neighborhoods that tell the stories of early Sarasotans, some of whom faced adversity and challenges.

With the uptick in development in the Sarasota area threats to historic buildings have increased as well. The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation's Historic Preservation Committee has been very active advocating for improvements to the City's historic preservation code, testifying successfully on behalf of saving a stately waterfront home on Bayshore Road named "Etowah" and advocating for the County's purchase of water front land in the Vamo area that contains two historic homes. Yet the list of preservation issues only continues to grow! Our historic neighborhoods are threatened by insensitive infill development and the ongoing threat of sea level rise is entering historic preservation conversations in ways that often do not balance the needs of historic preservation against

those of redevelopment.

A recent case in point being the community debate about the challenges of preserving the original Selby Library now part of The Bay project and slated for demolition. We need your help. If you are interested in donating to this cause or serving on this committee, please contact the Alliance at www.historicsarasota.org or 1-800 753-6061.

From time to time we at your Alliance are notified of an historic home that is so threatened that it must be moved to be preserved. Moving an historic home is a preservationist's last resort because of the accompanying loss of historic fabric and the negative effect of removing a house from its historic site not to speak of the expense and complexity of planning a move. However, despite this we recognize that relocating a historic home is preferable to its demolition from both the perspective of environmental sustainability and historic preservation. If you are interested in being notified when a historic home comes available for relocation, please contact the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation.

With Kind regards, Lorrie Muldowney



With a strong show of support, including several members of the Alliance for Historic Preservation in attendance, the City Commission voted 3-2 in favor of approving Phase 1 of The Bay development plan which includes the demolition of the Selby Public Library/G-Wiz building. Working together with many preservation organizations in Sarasota, the Preservation Committee will continue to pursue a full preservation analysis of the building to provide information about the best way to repurpose the structure, proactively addressing the issues of rising sea levels and financial feasibility.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

Within this challenge lies an incredible opportunity for Sarasota to help create the narrative of Florida's unique coastal historic and modern preservation dilemmas. If you would like to participate in the discussions about the future of the Selby Library/G-Wiz building, please email sahp.mailbox@gmail.com or call the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation at 1-800-753-6061.

A TIMELINE OF SARASOTA'S SELBY LIBRARY

Article by: Larry Kelleher

Images Courtesy of Sarasota County Historical Resources



Sarasota's first library was started in 1907 using \$40 donated by the Sarasota Town Improvement Society. It was located in the Gillespie Block Building on the southwest corner of Main Street and Pineapple Avenue. It consisted of a single room with collections that were donated by the town's first mayor, John Hamilton Gillespie.

In 1913, the Woman's Club assumed operations. The small library was moved to their clubhouse building, today's Florida Studio Theater, where it remained from 1915 to 1931.



The Sarasota School Board then donated a wing in the original Sarasota High School building on Main Street when more space was needed to accommodate the growing collections.

In 1940, the city was asked to take over control of the library. As a result, The Chidsey Library on the Tamiami Trail was constructed in 1941, named in honor of the Chidsey family for their generous financial support for the first purpose-built public library. It originally was 3,000 square feet and had a collection size of 18,000 volumes.



In 1976, a new larger library was built on Boulevard of the Arts adjacent to the bay. This library was named the Selby Public Library in honor of the William G. and Marie Selby Foundation whose donated funds made the new library possible. The 31,000-square foot building opened debt-free in 1976 with room for 200,000 books and 70 parking

spaces. At that time, there were 30,206 cardholders for this one location! Many of us who grew up in Sarasota first used the Chidsey Library and were happy to later have a larger facility complete with a view of the bay, and integration with the surrounding landscape. The screened porches afforded patrons a beautiful spot to enjoy a book while taking in the view. There was also finally room for many children's programs, a young adult section, and activities that could not be held in the cramped Chidsey. Eventually, the Selby Library outgrew itself with rising demands due to increased population and inadequate parking.



These images illustrate some of the different views of the architecturally significant building, before it was turned into the G-Wiz Museum. The porches were either removed or covered over to accommodate a different purpose, therefore eliminating the connection to nature and reducing its design impact.





By 1998, the city's main library had outgrown the bay front location and finally settled on a central location near Five Points. The county now has ten libraries throughout the county.

SAVE THIS HOUSE!

1647 Siesta Dr, Sarasota, FL 34239



The new owner has plans to complete new construction on this lot in the very near future. This 1926 Spanish Mission style home is being offered for relocation. If an offer to move the home is not received by the end of October, this sweet little structure will be demolished! While the home has been found to be ineligible for Local and National designation, many of its original features still exist. Once moved to a new site and restored, the beautiful hardwood floors, plank molding, brick fireplace and built-ins can

be enjoyed for centuries to come.

For more information, please contact: Michael Wyckoff, (941) 955-5500
mike@wyckofflawfirm.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS

We are working to create a series of exciting events for the upcoming 2018-2019 season. We'll be sure to send you plenty of advanced notice about what's happening as we put the final details in place for these exciting events.

December 2018 – “Get on The Bus” Bok Tower Bus Trip – We'll manage the details, you just have to 'get on the bus' as we head north to Bok Tower Gardens for their famous annual Christmas celebration.

Christmas at Bok Tower Gardens is an annual celebration for all ages and one of the best times of year to visit. Events and festivities take place daily November 24 through January 7 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The ever-popular Holiday Home Tour at Pinewood Estate is the highlight of Bok Tower Gardens' season of holiday-themed events, and the Christmas fun doesn't stop there.

Date and time to be determined. We'll let you know in plenty of time to make your reservation.

Walking Tour of the Historic Kenwood Neighborhood in St. Petersburg In partnership with *Preserve the 'Burg*, (St. Petersburg Preservation, Inc.), we will host an informal gathering of friends of the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation.

Enjoy an entertaining and educational stroll through one of the country's premier bungalow neighborhoods, Historic Kenwood in St. Petersburg, Florida led by residents who love to talk about their special neighborhood. The tour may include a peek inside one of the neighborhood's restored bungalows.

Dates and time to be determined. We'll let you know in plenty of time to make your reservation.

Private Home Tour / Showing – The Van Wezel Estate

Join us in late fall for an exciting look inside the historic Lido Key home formerly owned by Lewis and Eugenia Van Wezel. The Mediterranean Revival style estate was the first house constructed on Lido Key as a year-round family residence and has historic significance as part of the earliest development of the island. Join us for a tour, lecture and light refreshments as we step into this important time in the history of Sarasota.

November 2018. Date and time to be determined. We'll let you know in plenty of time to make your reservation.

Private Tour / Showing – The restored Sarasota Court House

Join us in January as we get a very personal inside guided tour of the newly restored Sarasota Court House.

A source of civic pride since it was designed by Dwight James Baum a few years after Sarasota County was formed in 1921 on land donated by Charles and Edith Ringling. Over its 91-year history, the building was named among the most beautiful courthouses in America and added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Dates and time to be determined. We'll let you know in plenty of time to make your reservation.

2019 Annual Historic Homes Tour

Now in its 29th year, the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation Annual Homes Tour is a perennial favorite and the 'granddaddy' of historic homes tours in the area. The 2019 event will be our best ever as we showcase the 'Best of the Best' from our 28 year history of advocacy and the celebration of preservation of historic architecture in the Sarasota area.

Dates and time to be determined. Look for more information about this mid-March 2019 event.

We are always looking for volunteer support for our educational programming and events. If you'd be interested in knowing more about how you can volunteer with SAHP, please contact us at 800-753-6061 or by email at sahp.mailbox@gmail.com.

THE HAWKINS COURT PROJECT

Article by: Ruthmary Williams, *Corresponding & Recording Secretary*



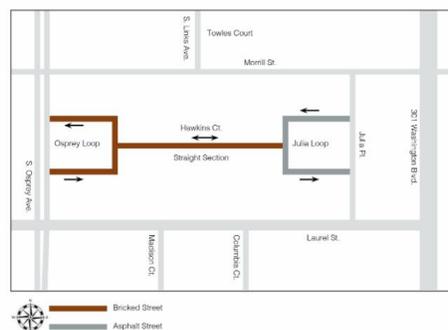
Hawkins Court, located in the historic Laurel Park Neighborhood, is one of only two brick streets remaining in the neighborhood; Owen Burns and McAlpin Paving Company laid the bricks. Old insurance maps show the first houses were constructed in 1923. The brick roadbed is deteriorating due to several issues. When Verizon installed underground cable, the company tore up and discarded a three-foot wide section of brick and did not properly repair the section, which resulted in some of the remaining bricks shifting. Tree roots have pushed sections of the road up, making the street uneven. There is no evidence that Hawkins Court has had any maintenance in its 95 years.

Alice Sundstrom, president of the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association, spoke with SAHP's board on July 18 about the Hawkins Court Project which has two

phases.

She presented the history of Hawkins Court, provided photographs of the current street condition, and answered questions proffered by board members. Phase 1 consists of new curbs and laying new bricks on a concrete base along the straight section of Hawkins Court. There are not enough of the original bricks to complete this part of the project; however, these bricks will be stored to be used in some way in Phase 2. Doug Jeffcoat, Director of the city's Public Works Department, estimates the cost of Phase 1 at \$245,000. Mrs. Sundstrom asked the board for its support of Phase 1 and to show its support by writing letters to the city manager and city commissioners, urging them to vote yes to include the \$245,000 expense in the 2018-2019 city budget.

The SAHP board voted unanimously to support Phase 1 of the Hawkins Court Project. The board also agreed to stay in touch with the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association and offered several ideas and advice to Mrs. Sundstrom concerning Phase 2.



JOIN IN THE MOVEMENT! Are you passionate about historic buildings? Does the tear-down mentality of the Gulf Coast make you cringe? The Historic Preservation Committee is looking for members like you to join in the good fight to save what's left of Sarasota's legacy. Board membership is not necessary for committee membership. Please

NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT: VAMO

AND ITS IMPORTANCE AS A VITAL PART OF SARASOTA'S HISTORY

Article by: Joyce Waterbury



In 1924, two real estate developers, Mr. A. A. Wren and Mrs. Bessie Gibson, enthralled with the beauty of this area, began the neighborhood's development by naming it Vamo in honor of their home states of Virginia (VA) and Missouri (MO).

Vamo is located seven and one-quarter miles south of the city of Sarasota and adjoins the Potter Palmer Home Estate, which now forms the southern boundary of Vamo. Shown above is the development's first structure: a two-

story, 1900 structure at 1710 Vamo Dr. which correlates in date and description to the Vamo Lodge, which with its dance hall, was the focal point of Sarasota's social life.

The adjacent 1925 Mediterranean Revival home, at 1720 Vamo Drive, reflects the original architectural vision for the neighborhood. Sarasota County is currently pursuing the acquisition of these properties, in the hopes of creating a passive park. This will not only improve the quality of life in this community, but also protect it from overdevelopment, the loss of its history, and maintain its charm and character.



Members of the Preservation Committee attended a public workshop held in the neighborhood and issued a letter in support of the acquisition and will continue to work with the County in their efforts to advocate for the preservation of our important historic resources.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. CLIFFORD SMITH: GETTING PROACTIVE IN PRESERVATION

Article by: Erin DiFazio

Dr. Clifford Smith, RPA, is the Senior Planner for the City of Sarasota. A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to pick his brain about the best ways for concerned citizens to really get involved in turning the tide on historic preservation.

In your opinion, what is the most important thing people in Sarasota can do to preserve the buildings and character that they love?

I think historic preservation exists because of grass roots support by the local population. If they care about historic preservation, their elected officials will care about historic preservation. That's the bottom line. If they are active to show their support when historic preservation issues come before the City Commission, they will understand that this is important to the citizens of the City of Sarasota. At the next City Commission meeting there is a budget amendment going through to allocate the funds from the demolition fund to completely resurvey the city of Sarasota for its historic resources. [Update: the budget amendment was approved by the city commission!] Right now on the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) we have about 3500 structures; with this survey we anticipate adding an additional 7000. That will bring us up to about 10000 historic structures—[those] that meet the 50 year rule or the 45 year rule for Sarasota School of Architecture. Once you know what you have, you start with the first basic ingredients of how do you preserve them. We have section 4.824 of the zoning code which is a Florida Master Site File stay on demolition, so in order for somebody to demolish a structure that is listed on the FMSF, it has to go through historic review.

At the last meeting of the City Commission we were approved to do seven zoning text amendments to incentivize and strengthen historic preservation, and we are hoping to get

community support for these new zoning text amendments. This is a critical thing. When we are asking for more authority under the zoning code to preserve and protect and incentivize historic preservation, if the community comes forward and says 'oh absolutely this is important to pass these zoning text amendments,' then that gives the political will to the Commission to pass those zoning text amendments. The most important thing people can do is learn about what we are doing in historic preservation and come out and show their support.

The public is welcome to attend the Historic Preservation Board meetings, on the second Tuesday of every month at 3pm in Commission Chambers, the agenda is posted in advance on Granicus.

You are on the Review Board for the National Register, what leads most people to seek out National Designation? Does that differ from the motivation behind local designation?

The National Register of Historic Places has great significance and honor associated with it. People that have really nice historic buildings want the national recognition that their historic structure meets that criteria. When we talk about Sarasota, we talk about the Opera House or the Federal Building, the Municipal Auditorium or the Chidsey Library. These are the really significant buildings to the City. Beyond just individual buildings, you have historic districts [which are] very good for advertising. Both National and Local Historic Designation offer incentives— exemption from the 50%+ rule for FEMA, specific building and fire codes, because Sarasota is a certified local government. Plus we offer some additional incentives locally through our zoning code.

What has been the biggest challenge you have faced in your efforts toward preservation for the city?

Well historic preservation is always a balancing act, quite frankly, between new development and historic preservation. On the Florida Master Site File we are going to have 10000 structures, and they are not all significant. Unless there is something extremely unique about a particular house, (eligible for Local or National Designation, significant because of the way it is built, the materials or the architect or contractor) you wouldn't want to stop a demolition to build new on that site.

Would you say that this is where the importance of having districts comes in? I think what a lot of people are seeing and are frustrated by is that when one of those little houses does come down, a big behemoth goes up and it completely changes the scale and character of their neighborhood.

Again this is that balance between historic preservation and allowing people to develop their property because they want to build a new house. Looking at it as an individual unit, it is simple. Within a historic district, you really have to get the locals involved in that neighborhood to help the developer choose a design that is going to be compatible. We don't have that power currently in the zoning code. The neighbors know more about what's going on in a neighborhood than anybody else and they know the developers that are coming in. The Laurel Park Neighborhood Association, for example, they are very active and they do affect change.

Again, that grass roots interest by the people that live there is more important than anything else. We can only do what is allowed in our zoning code. The City has a Comprehensive Plan, with a Historic Preservation chapter, which is the policy document that says 'thou shalt do this.' We make those ideas into actionable items through the zoning code. The grassroots support to allows us to gain that authority through the zoning code to implement the policies that matter to the people.

If you want to be proactive in historic preservation, the biggest thing is to come forward in support of historic preservation initiatives that you believe are the right thing to do because that is what is really lacking.

A NEW BOARD MEMBER: THE SARASOTA ALLIANCE FOR HISTORIC

PRESERVATION WELCOMES TONY SOUZA



The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation would like to welcome our newest Board Member, Tony Souza. Already very active in the preservation community, Mr. Souza is the current Chairman of the Sarasota County Historic Preservation Board. A Sales Agent with Premier Sotheby's International Realty, Mr. Souza has served the architectural community of Sarasota in many roles. We are excited to have his support on the Historic Preservation Committee as we tackle some of the challenging issues Sarasota currently faces.

Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation, Inc.
800-753-6061 | sahp.mailbox@gmail.com | www.historicsarasota.org

STAY CONNECTED

