



Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation, Inc.

October 2007

Chris Wenzel
President

Don Smally
Vice President

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Ex Officio Director
Cliff Smith

Sarasota Alliance
For Historic Preservation, Inc.
P. O. Box 1754
Sarasota, FL 34230
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President's Message - Chris Wenzel



As we head into the winter months, I am happy to report a summer of ambitious activity and some exciting news. For decades historic preservation has enjoyed the advocacy of preservationists as buildings and districts become endangered yet there has been no formal legal protection for our prized historic properties. In the face of growth and development, testimony before the City Commission has been our strongest suit against the wrecking ball. One by one, we have watched in vain as landmarks of our past have been replaced with new buildings. In some cases, land has simply been cleared so that an historic structure might not encumber the future value and sale of the property. There has been very little to slow or stop the progression. In most cases, weak preservation oriented zoning and development codes have allowed planners to overlook the importance and relevance of our historic properties.

Over the years, advocates have pushed successfully for all the elements, which would be needed to address historic preservation in a proactive legal manner. Several years ago, an historic preservation chapter was included in the City Comprehensive Plan recognizing our resource value. A comprehensive survey of historic properties was recently completed as a planning tool and identification of the numerous historic (archeological included) structures in our city. The current survey represents five years of continual work.

Early this summer, the City Commission was presented with the opportunity to examine and amend the current zoning code to include a formal role for historic preservation in the planning process. A zoning code text amendment was presented by the Alliance, through the direction of the Historic Preservation Board, to be included in the cycle and process of zoning code revisions. This is a very large step and culminates years of work by the Alliance and other advocacy groups. We urge the support of the amendment suggestions! Thanks to everyone who contributed to the process, worked on the presentations, and continue to speak up for our historic identity.



Sarasota Reading Festival

The Sarasota Reading Festival is celebrating its 10th annual free, daylong celebration of the joys of reading. It will be held from **9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, November 3, 2007 at Five Points Park in downtown Sarasota.**

More than 75 author readings and panel discussions, children's events and performances are planned for this 10th anniversary reading festival. Among participating authors will be award-winning CNN anchor **Lou Dobbs**, actor and comedian **Gene Wilder** and best-selling novelist **Barbara Taylor Bradford**.

As always, the Alliance will host a booth and needs volunteers to greet visitors, inform them about our organization, solicit memberships, and sell books and other items of historical interest. Our short shifts enable volunteers to enjoy the rest of the event. If you would like to help, please leave a message at 953-8727, and our volunteer coordinator, Kathy, will return your call.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation is pleased to announce that its Annual Holiday Party will be held at the **SUMMERHOUSE**, the beloved Siesta Key restaurant designed by Carl Abbott and preserved by Snavelly Development.

DECEMBER 1, 2007
6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
1600 Summerhouse Lane
(Formally 6106 Midnight Pass Road)

RSVP by November 24 - 953-8727 OR MGG476@aol.com

During the 2007 Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Conference, the Summerhouse was recognized as an important example of the Sarasota School of Architecture. It was designated a historic building by Sarasota County in 2006. Don't miss the opportunity to attend an event in this historic place.

This event is open to current Alliance members, lapsed Alliance members who renew their memberships, and those who purchase a Florida Trust membership for \$35.

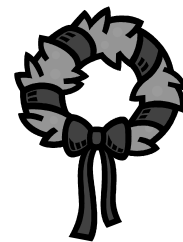
Our speaker will be a member of the Snavelly Development staff who will share with us the challenges of complying with required changes to the structure while retaining its character.

In lieu of the usual potluck format, refreshments will be provided by the Alliance and a contribution of \$5.00 per person will be collected at the door.

RESERVE EARLY...Attendance is limited to 100.



Thank you Snavelly Development



SARASOTA ALLIANCE FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING APRIL 12, 2007
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SARASOTA COUNTY, 2635 FRUITVILLE ROAD

The meeting was called to order by President Chris Wenzel at 6:45 PM. He welcomed the members and thanked everyone for their attendance. He spoke briefly about the Alliance's 2006-7 Major Accomplishments. The 17th Annual Historic Homes Tour was our most successful tour yet. It received good press coverage on television as well as in newspapers and magazines. Our revolving fund successfully moved a cottage and a barn from a property on Siesta Key that will be developed. We helped document a horse barn in the way of progress. We participated in Art's Day, the Reading Festival, and attended Preservation Day in Tallahassee.

Chris thanked members for their involvement, and asked them to please volunteer to support our causes this coming year.

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD NOMINEES AND ELECTION

Chris introduced the four nominated new board members: Scottie Holliday, David Baber, Megan Leitner and Rachel McCall. In addition, existing board members Chris Wenzel, Kafi Benz, Don Smally, Kittie Kelly, and Jesse White were nominated to serve a second term. He thanked members whose terms are over for all their hard work. Leaving the board are Lorrie Muldowney, David Jennings and Jeff LaHurd.

Chris asked for nominations from the floor. Being none, he asked for a motion to accept the slate, as presented. The slate was unanimously approved.

FEATURE PRESENTATION

Chris then introduced Jeff LaHurd, who gave an entertaining photo show and talk about Sarasota in the 1920s.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Martha Horton, Secretary

Our Local Historic Districts

In Sarasota there still remain collections of buildings that embody our local history in a way that is more powerful than their individual presence would suppose. In the 1930's the National Register of Historic Places recognized the existence of these special places by identifying and defining historic districts. These districts derive their importance from being a unified entity, even though they are often composed of a wide variety of resources. In a historic district, along with the buildings; created principally to shelter human activity, there may be structures; usually made for other purposes, and objects; which are primarily artistic in nature. The layout of the streetscapes, including the sidewalks, curbs, and street paving materials, such as brick or cobblestones contribute to the historic fabric of a district. All of these elements contribute to the historic significance of the district.

Sarasota has several small historic districts, above is an early photo of the Burns Court historic district taken while it was under construction in 1924. Located along Pineapple Avenue south of Ringling Boulevard, Burns Court was the city of Sarasota's first National Register Historic District. It was nominated in 1984 for its significance in the area of community planning and its association with prominent developer Owen Burns and architect Thomas Reed Martin.

The Burns Court Subdivision is comprised of fifteen residences, nine shared garages, and a surrounding wall. Burns Court was the first Sarasota development to be designed and planned as a cooperative subdivision. Shared elements include driveways, and front and rear yards. Each dwelling measures approximately 26 x 40 feet and is sited on a lot approximately 42 x 90 feet. Although relatively small, the buildings appear monumental in scale through the architects skillful massing of their front facades, false parapet roofs to create the illusion of increased height, and the addition of strong vertical accents such as massive exterior chimneys. Sited to maximize air circulation all four sides of each residence can be opened to the breeze with multiple windows and doors. The bungalows' thick walls, high ceilings, open porches, and French windows also help keep the residences cool. Their successful climatic design was part of the 1928 advertising campaign for the subdivision.



Since the nomination of Burns Court the Overtown historic district has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places as well as Central Cocoanut. Both are located north of downtown Sarasota along Central Avenue. The Overtown district represents Sarasota's first African American community and is comprised of structures dating from 1913 to 1951. Although not developed under a unified plan as was Burns Court, Overtown still stands as a cohesive collection of buildings that embody our local history. Significant in the area of African American ethnic heritage, community planning and development, and architecture, the National Register status provides recognition for this areas important contribution to our local history.

Central Cocoanut takes its name from its two axial north south roads. The district contains 280 buildings, 196 of which contribute to the historic character. Frame Vernacular, Masonry Vernacular, Craftsman Bungalow, Mission, and Mediterranean Revival style homes comprise the district which was nominated for its significance in the areas of architecture and community planning.

The Laurel Park Historic District is a small, residential neighborhood located south of downtown Sarasota, named for one of its east-west thoroughfares, Laurel Street. Comprised of approximately 50 acres of land; Laurel Park is one of the first residential neighborhoods to develop in the City of Sarasota. Many of its streets and a handful of its homes were constructed by the time Sarasota County was created in 1921. Sarasota's first Mayor, John Hamilton Gillespie made his home in Laurel Park before 1910. The district temporarily became the county seat in 1926. Much of the neighborhood was developed during the Florida land boom by Owen Burns, who brought brick-paved streets to Laurel Park and throughout much of downtown Sarasota.

Our Local Historic Districts...continued

Eighty percent of the 338 buildings contribute to the historic district. Other contributing elements to this historic district are the brick streetscapes, for which the city and neighborhood association are adopting a preservation and restoration plan. A beautiful mixture of single- and multi-family structures represent a wide variety of architectural styles including Frame Vernacular, Masonry Vernacular, Craftsman Bungalow, Mission Revival, Colonial Revival, and Mediterranean Revival, which was nominated for its significance in the areas of architecture and community planning.

Most recently there has been a proposal to create a National Register Historic District for the downtown core along parts of Main Street, Pineapple Avenue and Palm Avenue. The City Commission has authorized funding for the project and shortly a consultant will be hired to begin work.

All of these districts contribute to Downtown Sarasota's unique identify in a way no single building can. Rather it is the collection of these buildings, structures and objects and their relationship to one another that makes them so special.

Deborah Dart, President of the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association and Suzy Hagglund member contributed to this article that was written by Lorrie Muldowney, Sarasota County's Historic Preservation Specialist.

Siesta Drive Apartment House Demolition

Research did not return much information about this old landmark apartment building. Recently demolished, the Siesta Drive property remains somewhat anonymous. The construction detailing is unique combining two wood frame wings to a central core building of clay masonry tile. The wing elements were finished in pecky Cyprus and the central core of heavily mottled stucco. A mission parapet crowned the central entrance with an interior staircase front and rear. The structure held eight apartments. Behind the building, a utility barn of wood frame featured overhead track rolling doors.



Fond Farewells...

With regret, we advise that **Ann Shank**, Historian with the Sarasota County History Center, retired from her position in September. Her knowledge of Sarasota is legendary, and her ability to share that knowledge unparalleled. She will be greatly missed by the many that depended on her expertise. We wish her a Happy Retirement in Virginia, filled with joy and contentment.

Mark Smith, the county archivist since 1994 will also be missed. Mark managed the historical collection and did everything from accepting donations, to working with volunteers on processing the collections, to handling the considerable task of hurricane evacuations. Mark has relocated to Columbia, South Carolina where he will serve as an archivist with the State.



Needless to say, volunteers are needed at the History Center. If you have an interest in volunteering, please call the Sarasota County Call Center at 861-5000.



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P. O. Box 1754 Sarasota, FL 34230

Dear Alliance Member:

We have a great list of upcoming events listed in this newsletter, and we know that you'll want to be a part of each and every one of them.

If you haven't already mailed in your dues payment, please take this opportunity to drop your membership check in the mail today! If you've already paid your dues, we thank you.

If you are receiving printed copies of your newsletter, and you have an email address, please forward the email address to Kim Noyes at kimberlynoyes@comcast.net (Subject: ALLIANCE) and you'll begin receiving your newsletters and notices of special events at top speed!

**Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation, Inc.
2007-2008 Membership Dues**

Name: _____

Amount Paid: _____

- \$20.00 Individual
- \$30.00 Family
- \$50.00 Non-Profit or Donor
- \$100.00 Sustaining
- \$200.00 Corporate

If you would like to volunteer for tours, membership drives or mailings, please let us know – we'd love to have you!

Thank you

Results of Listing In the National Register

Listing in the National Register honors the property by recognizing its importance to its community, State, or the Nation.

Federal Agencies, whose projects affect a listed property, must give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on the property.

Owners of listed properties may be able to obtain Federal historic preservation funding, when funds are available. In addition, Federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation and other provisions may apply.

Owners of private property listed in the National Register have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them, or even to maintain them, if they choose not to do so. Owners can do anything they wish with their property provided that no Federal license, permit, or funding is involved.

Above Quote From:
The National Register of Historic Places
Brochure published by the National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Do you have an email address? If you are receiving a printed copy of this newsletter and have an email address, we'd like to put you on our advance notice list! Please send your email address to Kim Noyes at kimberlynoyes@comcast.net (Subject: ALLIANCE)

Mark Your Calendars 2007-2008 Events

Sarasota Reading Festival

November 3

Volunteer for our booth!

Holiday Party

December 1

Summerhouse Restaurant

Join us and celebrate our history!

Arts Day

January 11 - 13

Volunteer to enjoy this enhanced event

Historic Homes Tour

March 2

Volunteer to work in one of the homes

Annual Members Meeting

April 10

Election and Social

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