STATE HOMEOWNER TAX CREDIT PASSES HOUSE; FOCUS TURNS TO SENATE

Pennsylvania is poised to join the growing list of states with legislation that encourages the rehabilitation of historic homes through state tax incentives. Sponsored by Rep. Thomas Tangretti (D-Westmoreland) and Rep. David Argall (R-Schuylkill), the Historic Home & Neighborhood Preservation Bill (HB948) and Historic Homesite Local Regulation & Tax Assessment Act (HB949) passed the House of Representatives this spring by a 196-0 vote. The bills now move to the state senate for consideration.

For Pennsylvania’s cities and towns, this legislation could stimulate a revival of declining, older neighborhoods, provide an alternative to sprawl, and leverage significant private investment by offering incentives to purchase and rehabilitate homes in National Register-listed and locally designated historic districts.

“This legislation is an invaluable tool for rebuilding urban neighborhoods. It helps level the playing field between cities and suburbs, making home ownership in historic urban neighborhoods a good investment for families and individuals of all income levels,” said Patricia Wilson Aden of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.

Representative Argall views these incentives as a companion to the recently passed Downtown Location Law. “This measure will encourage home ownership in our older communities. Like the new Downtown Location Law which encourages the state to locate offices in downtown areas, the homeowner tax credit legislation will further demonstrate Pennsylvania’s commitment to our older communities, both large and small.”

Representative Tangretti is optimistic that the bills will be considered by the Senate this fall. “There seems to be a growing understanding of the wonderful possibilities these incentives would give Pennsylvania communities, as they have in other states,” he said.

For an overview of the provisions of HB 948 and HB 949, see page 3.

NATIONAL TRUST JOINS PRESERVATION PA IN NAMING DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH TO ENDANGERED LIST

Valley Forge and Historic Schools Also Make National List

On Monday June 26, Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and David Taylor, president of Preservation Pennsylvania, met in downtown Pittsburgh to announce the 2000 National Trust list of “America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places”.

The downtown area of Pittsburgh known as “Fifth and Forbes”, which was featured in Preservation Pennsylvania’s 1999 endangered list, is included because a proposed large-scale commercial development threatens a multi-block area of the historic structures and neighborhood businesses.

“Pittsburgh is proposing to take a giant step backward with one of the most misguided revitalization proposals to appear anywhere in the country in the last thirty years,” said Moe in his remarks announcing the list. “Instead of saving and reusing the historic buildings that represent the best hope for sustainable downtown rebirth, the plan developed by Urban Retail Properties would destroy 75 of them - and displace more than 100 locally-owned businesses in the process. This concept recalls the worst excesses of urban renewal, an approach to redevelopment that was discredited long ago.”

continued on page 3
LEGISLATIVE REPORT

STATE

Historic Home & Neighborhood Preservation Bill (HB 948) & Historic Homesite Local Regulation and Tax Assessment Act (HB 949)  See pages 1 and 3

Downtown Location Law

Signed by the governor on June 22, the law encourages state agencies to locate office facilities in downtown areas. Rep. David Argall (R-Schuylkill) sponsored the legislation.

Municipalities Planning Code Amendments (HB14 and SB300)

Senator Gerlach's SB 300 and Representative Steil's HB14 were signed by the governor on June 22. As described in the recent newsletter of 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, SB300, which also incorporates components of HB13, encourages consistency between local plans and ordinances and county plans; enhances the ability to plan and zone to protect natural and heritage resources; provides a funding priority to municipalities that adopt consistent plans; and establishes guidelines for traditional neighborhood developments.

HB 14 gives counties and municipalities the authority to enter into intergovernmental cooperative agreements for the purpose of developing and implementing regional comprehensive plans. These plans may designate multi-municipal growth areas, future growth reserve areas, and rural resource areas; target public infrastructure growth areas; and provide for all uses over the region of the plan.

FEDERAL

Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA)

CARA would fully fund the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) at $150 million per year for the next 15 years. Funding will come from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas revenues. The $150 million will provide matching grants for states, tribes, and certified local governments, as well as funding for the American Battlefield Protection Program. HPF funding is used by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to, among other programs, administer the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. Full and permanent funding of the HPF will boost rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings and encourage alternatives to sprawl.

CARA passed the House in May and has passed out of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Although it has strong support, there is also strong opposition which is threatening a filibuster. Support from both Pennsylvania senators is critical to passage of this important legislation before Congress adjourns.

Religious Land Use & Institutionalized Persons Act (HR 1691)

The latest version of the Religious Liberty Protection Act has passed both houses of Congress, with the President expected to sign at any time. Now called the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), the legislation restricts the application of land use controls (including historic preservation ordinances) in cases...continued on page 3

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MISSION

Preservation Pennsylvania, through creative partnerships, targeted educational and advocacy programs, advisory assistance, and special projects, assists Pennsylvania communities to protect and utilize the historic resources they want to preserve for the future.
NOW'S A GOOD TIME TO CALL YOUR SENATOR

Don't uncork the champagne or call your restoration contractor just yet. The Historic Home & Neighborhood Preservation Bill (known around here as HB 948) is still a Senate vote and a Governor's signature away from being law.

While the fact that the House of Representatives passed the bill by unanimous vote is something to celebrate, the bill still has to pass the Senate during a fall session that might last less than ten days. In addition, HB 948 is a tax bill and the last tax bill of the session. As such, it is likely to attract amendments that have little if anything to do with the substance of the bill. These add-ons could effectively kill any chances of the bill passing during this session.

You can help move the bill through the Senate. Call or write your State Senator and let him or her know that you feel the bill is important and that it should be passed during this session. You should also encourage the Senator to support efforts to minimize any additional amendments.

It should be a very easy call to make. Unlike other preservation and land use issues on which we have worked this session, HB 948 doesn't have any identifiable opponents. Everyone with whom we have met regarding the bill sees its value as a tool to preserve the architecture and viability of the state's older communities. How often do preservationists and builders agree on a piece of preservation-related legislation? This is one of those times.

Please make the call. If you need a name, number, or encouragement give us a call. We'll put the champagne on ice.

Patrick A. Foltz, Executive Director

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED HISTORIC HOMEOWNER STATE TAX CREDIT LEGISLATION

Provisions of HB 948
Owners of historic homesites who agree to covenant with the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) and use the property as their primary residence for at least five years will:

• qualify for a 20% credit on personal income tax for rehabilitation costs that exceed $1,000. The cumulative credit shall not exceed $6,000.
• qualify for an exemption from sales and use tax if the rehabilitation costs of the project exceed $1,000.

An owner who sells a historic homesite to a purchaser who covenants with the PHMC and agrees to use the property as their principal residence for at least five years will qualify for:

• exemption from state's portion of realty transfer tax
• exemption from capital gains tax

Provisions of HB 949
For historic homesite owners who meet the criteria and conditions of HB 948, a municipality may choose to:

• waive fee for construction permit or zoning variance or exception for rehabilitation work; and/or
• delay reassessment of the historic homesite for two years after completion of rehabilitation

What qualifies as a historic homesite?
Properties eligible for the program must meet the following criteria:

• have been in existence for at least 50 years
• be occupied by owner as principal residence
• if partially leased, be subdivided into no more than 4 units, one of which must be primary residence of owner
• be designated historic:
  by federal or state government, individually or as part of historic district; or
  by local government under Act 167 of 1961; or
  under Section 14-2007 of the Philadelphia City Code (Historic Preservation Ordinance); or
  under Title 11 of the Pittsburgh City Code Chapter 1 Section 3

National Trust...continued from page 1

David Taylor joined Moe in calling for a reexamination of Pittsburgh's approach to revitalization. "We urge the city to consider seriously the other economically viable alternatives which have been offered, approaches which would capitalize on the historic architecture of the area, and would develop new and exciting retail and entertainment venues while at the same time supporting local ownership and minimizing the commitment of monumental taxpayer expenditures," he said. Recognizing that there are differing viewpoints on how best to revitalize the city, Taylor called for an open discussion embracing broad community involvement. "As decisions are made which will determine the destiny of downtown Pittsburgh for the beginning of the twenty-first century, let us assure that compromise, caution, conversation, and conservation become the guiding principles."

Strong media coverage of this issue continues, and as alternatives are explored, the mayor's presentation of his revitalization plan to city council is not anticipated until later this fall.

Also included on the 2000 National Trust list are Valley Forge, an area under unrelenting pressures from residential and commercial sprawl, and a theme listing of schools nationwide, which includes New Castle High School, also listed by Preservation Pennsylvania in 2000 Pennsylvania At Risk.

Legislative...continued from page 2

where they "impose a substantial burden on a person's religious exercise" unless the government can demonstrate that the burden furthers a "compelling governmental interest." RLUIPA takes the place of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1997 after the Boerne, TX decision. The National Trust for Historic Preservation was able to insert legislative history language in RLUIPA, which does not change the legislation but further describes the intent. It is hoped that this language will mitigate wide spread use of RLUIPA.
Bureau for Historic Preservation, Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

PRESERVATION PLAN TAKES SHAPE AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2000 Historic Preservation and Heritage Partnerships Conference in Reading this past April focused on developing priorities for implementing The Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Plan, completed in December 1999. Two plenary sessions and three “pivotal issue” discussion sessions - based on the three critical issues identified in the Preservation Plan - were dedicated to advancing the implementation of the plan.

In each of the three “pivotal issues” sessions, facilitator Elizabeth Waters led animated group discussions that culminated in consensus on four top priorities, outlined below, to achieve the goals of the Plan.

**Pivotal Issue #1**
Building Better Communities

Recognizing that fragmentation of local government in Pennsylvania is a major obstacle to revitalizing communities, participants stressed the need to develop local leadership that understands the need for inter-governmental cooperation, and to pass new laws, such as the recently passed amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code and the Downtown Location Law (see page 2) and the pending homeowner tax credits (see page 1).

**Priorities:**
- Get more local historic and archaeological resources inventoried, protected, and integrated into planning and zoning.
- Strengthen local/regional planning legislation at the state level.
- Complete/disseminate studies on the economics of preservation.
- Develop a technical assistance outreach program to get more help into the field.

**Pivotal Issue #2**
State Level Leadership

Participants identified ways in which state agencies and organizations can lead in promoting preservation planning, compliance with federal and state preservation laws, and increased funding for historic preservation. The need for state and federal agencies to work more closely with local government, the need for greater collaboration among all state agencies, and the need for increased funding for preservation projects were cited as critical.

**Priorities:**
- Seek sustainable funding for bricks and mortar projects building on the success of the Keystone Grants Program.
- Promote increased federal and state tax credits for preservation.
- Work to guide state infrastructure spending into existing cities and towns.
- Strengthen all aspects of the preservation network.

**Pivotal Issue #3**
Education

Educating citizens of all ages on the value of preservation and the importance of heritage is key to the success of the Preservation Plan. The need for creativity and more effective use of the media were viewed as areas preservationists should pursue.

**Priorities:**
- Work to get preservation into K-12 school curriculum.
- Develop an educational outreach campaign directed at public officials.
- Develop a statewide multi-media campaign to get the preservation message out.
- Establish a leadership institute for historic preservation.

**Implementing the Priorities**

Since the April conference, the Bureau for Historic Preservation and Preservation Pennsylvania have held ongoing discussions on implementing specific recommendations. To date, we can point to a number of achievements on which we can continue to build:

The recent passage of changes to the Municipalities Planning code represents an important step in strengthening local/regional planning legislation at the state level.

State homeowner tax credit legislation was passed by the House and will be considered by the Senate in the fall.

Planning for the preservation leadership institute, to be launched later this year, has been a priority for both the PHMC and Preservation Pennsylvania.

The Bureau for Historic Preservation and Preservation Pennsylvania continue to welcome comments and suggestions on implementing the Preservation Plan. The Plan is an evolving blueprint for the Commonwealth in our goal to preserve and protect our heritage. Questions, comments, and requests for copies of the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Plan should be directed to: Bureau for Historic Preservation, PO Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1026; 717-783-8946.

**PHMC GRANT WORKSHOPS**

A series of day-long workshops focusing on PHMC grants available to municipal governments and nonprofit organizations for preservation, planning and public history will be held this fall at the following locations:

- September 18: Discovery Square, Erie
- October 2: John Heinz Regional History Center, Pittsburgh
- October 18: Independence Seaport Museum, Philadelphia
- October 23: Steamtown National Historic Site, Scranton
- November 2: Pennsylvania State Capitol Building, Harrisburg

To register, call Rhonda Newton at the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations, 717-787-1902, or email her at rhonda@pmfms.org. More information on PHMC grant programs is available at www.artsnet.org/phmc
The annual awards for excellence in historic preservation were presented by Preservation Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on April 12, 2000 at the Lincoln Plaza Hotel in Reading.

Thomas Hylton (second from left) accepts F. Otto Haas Award from Janet Klein, chairman of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, David Taylor, president of Preservation Pennsylvania (right), and William B. Churchman III (left), co-sponsor of this year's award.

F. Otto Haas Award

Pennsylvania’s highest preservation honor was presented this year to Thomas Hylton, author of Save Our Land, Save Our Towns: A Plan for Pennsylvania. Since the book’s publication in 1995, Hylton has travelled extensively throughout Pennsylvania and across the nation speaking on the subject of responsible land use. His involvement in the creation of 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania and, most recently, the release of a television documentary based on his book have helped broaden public understanding of the relationship between land use and livable communities.

The Haas Award honors philanthropist and civic leader F. Otto Haas (1915-1994), a founding director of Preservation Pennsylvania and active supporter of historic preservation at the national, state, and local levels.

Award sponsored by Dr. and Mrs. Henry A. Jordan, William B. Churchman III, and The Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust, Inc.

Communications Award: GreenWorks for Pennsylvania. Produced by the Environmental Fund for Pennsylvania with support from the Department of Environmental Protection, GreenWorks is a monthly television program that showcases individuals, businesses, communities, and government bodies with innovative approaches to preserving and protecting Pennsylvania’s environment and historic communities.

Stewardship Award: Warriors Mark Bridge Enhancement Project, Huntingdon County. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation was recognized for the context-sensitive design of a replacement bridge in the Huntingdon Furnace Historic District, a 19th century charcoal iron-making village. Award sponsored by Heberling Associates, Incorporated.

Construction Awards

Public/Institutional Award: Irvine Auditorium, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Designed by Horace Trumbauer and built in 1926, the auditorium recently un-

continued on page 7

Greene County Government Complex, recipient of Government Initiative Award.
IN THE NEWS

PLACES

On September 9-10 the Lebanon County Historical Society and the Friends of the Union Canal will celebrate the restoration of the north portal of the Union Canal Tunnel, Lebanon. Boats will once again be able to travel through the tunnel, the oldest existing transportation tunnel in the U.S. The Union Canal, which was originally proposed by William Penn, was constructed in various phases and by various companies between 1792 and 1828 to link the Schuylkill and Susquehanna Rivers. The tunnel was built between 1825 and 1827 and was in use until 1885. It was designated a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark in 1970, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, and became a National Historic Landmark in 1994.

PEOPLE

Jane L.S. Davidson of Chester County was honored as an outstanding woman in historic preservation at the third national Women in Historic Preservation Conference held in Washington, D.C. in May. Davidson was one of four women honored this year.

Sam Friedman, formerly with the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, is the new main street manager in Hatboro. Friedman, who coordinated the Alliance’s successful Old House Fair, will focus his organizational and special event skills in downtown Hatboro, which joined the state’s Main Street program in 1994.

PUBLICATIONS

Pennsylvania Architecture: The Historic American Buildings Survey with catalog entries 1933-1990, by Deborah Stephens Burns and Richard J. Webster, with Candace Reed Stern, 2000. 645 pages; $65 softcover; $85 hardcover; plus $3.50 shipping and 6% sales tax for PA residents. Available from Pennsylvania Heritage Society, PO Box 11466, Harrisburg 17108-1466; 800-747-7790. With over 1600 entries, this long-awaited publication includes detailed measured drawings, photographs, and written descriptions of buildings representing three hundred years of Pennsylvania’s architectural heritage.

The First 300: The Amazing and Rich History of Lower Merion. Published by the Lower Merion Historical Society, this 284-page, copiously illustrated volume is the culmination of a three-year volunteer community project to chronicle the history of the Philadelphia Main Line communities of Lower Merion and Narberth. Rich with stories of both places and people, this book is a model of how to document a community’s heritage and make local history come alive for the reader. To order call 800-782-3833, order # ISBN 0-7881-8500-4, cost $39.95 plus shipping and handling.

Preserving Cultural Landscapes In America. Edited by Arnold R. Alanen and Robert Z. Melnick. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. 250 pages. Essays, including one by Franklin and Marshall professor and state preservation board member David Schuyler, address considerations and issues related to the preservation of cultural landscapes such as urban parks, rural areas, and urban ethnic neighborhoods.

Two recent publications from the National Trust for Historic Preservation: “How to Organize a Preservation Development Charrette” (Order #2138) by Jennifer Goodman, is a how-to for planning and implementing a process to find reuse solutions for threatened historic properties: “Board Development for Non-profit Preservation Organizations” (Order #2140) by Marc Smiley, provides advice for building an effective board of directors. Cost of each is $6 ($4.50 for National Trust Forum members). To order call 202-588-6296 or online at www.nthpbooks.org


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Keystone Society members contribute a minimum of $2,500 annually to Preservation Pennsylvania

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Pennsylvania Heritage Club members contribute $1,000 annually to Preservation Pennsylvania

For more information on becoming a member of the Keystone Society or Pennsylvania Heritage Club, contact Preservation Pennsylvania
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Awards...continued from page 5

Left, Fountain Hill, Doylestown. Exterior view roofline and chimneys. Photo: Barry Halkin.


Mercer has undergone repairs, conservation of the building's concrete envelope and structure, and modernization of mechanical systems under the direction of John Miler Architects.

Special Historic Properties Award: Walnut Street Bridge, Hellertown, Northampton County. Built in 1861 by the Beckel Iron Foundry, Sand Island, Bethlehem, and believed to be the only extant high truss span built by the company, the bridge has been reconstructed in a park adjacent to its original location crossing the Saucon Creek.

Neighborhood Revitalization Award: Marlton Avenue Apartments, Philadelphia. Located in West Philadelphia's Parkside Historic District, the six individual three-story row houses, built in the late 1890s, were rehabilitated into affordable housing for individuals with AIDS and HIV. The project, directed by Campbell Thomas and Company Architects, utilized low-income and rehabilitation investment tax credits. Award sponsored by Sovereign Bank.

Archaeology Award: PennDOT Site 36P16, State Route 11/15. Under contract to PennDOT, KCI Technologies excavated this stratified site, which has had continuous human habitation since the last ice age. Excavations were conducted prior to road widening along this central Pennsylvania north-south corridor.


**CALENDAR**

August-October 29 Images of Blair County Railroad Photography by William Rau. Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, Altoona.

September 18 Lebanon County Historical Society annual dinner with presentation on Henry William Stiegel by James Dibert, professor at Harrisburg Area Community College. Campbellestown Volunteer Fire Co. Social Hall. $16 per person. LCHS, 924 Cumberland St., Lebanon 17042; 717-272-1473.

October 2-13 Landmark Survivors. Traveling exhibit of Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. Conservation Consultants, Inc., 64 South 14th St., South Side, Pittsburgh.

October 3 Historic Religious Properties Seminar and Grant Awards, Pittsburgh. 8 a.m.-12:00. First Lutheran Church, 615 Grant St. Cost $20. Reservations by Sept. 26 to Pittsburgh History & Landmarks, 1 Station Sq., Suite 450, Pittsburgh 15219.


October 14 Historic Fallsington Day, Fallsington, Bucks County. 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Festival of colonial life. Adults, $6; seniors, $5; children 3-12, $3. Contact: 215-295-6567.


October 27-29 Victorian Architecture and Its Preservation conference. Franklin, Venango County. Contact: Oil Heritage Region, PO Box 128, Oil City, PA 16301; 1-800-483-6264, ext. 17; oilheritage@usachoice.net

October 31-November 5 National Trust for Historic Preservation annual conference. Los Angeles, California. Contact: 800-944-6847, www.nationaltrust.org


November 13-15 4th Annual International Preservation Trades Workshop and Trade Show, Pennsylvania Farm Show Arena, Harrisburg. Contact: Preservation Trades Network, 703-406-8319; info@ptn.org; www.ipnw.org

November 17-18 AIA (American Institute of Architects) Pennsylvania Annual Meeting & Statewide Leadership Conference, 717-236-4055; aiapadc@ptd.net

November 18 Historic Religious Properties Workshop. Jim Thorpe. CLG accredited program open to all. Registration $35 includes lunch. Contact: Episcopal Parish of St. Mark & St. John, 570-325-2241 or mail check to St. Mark’s Church, 21 Race St., Jim Thorpe 18229-2003.


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2001 Pennsylvania Historic Preservation & Heritage Partnerships Conference

**Routes of Heritage**

May 9-11, 2001

Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor Mountain View Inn, Greensburg Contact: Preservation Pennsylvania, 717-234-2310; PPA@preservationpa.org; www.preservationpa.org