

MICHIGAN PLANNER



American Planning Association
Michigan Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association

THE CHANGING ROLE OF ELECTED, APPOINTED AND PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS

By Cynthia Winland, AICP, PCP, MAP Board Member

Why are planners and planning functions routinely on the top of the list of services to cut? Why is garbage collection, fire protection and waste water treatment subject to modifications to become more efficient but recognized as essential? The obvious answer is that the physical safety of residents will suffer without measures to protect health and property. Once that is achieved, *what else is important?* How are planners integral to the functions that are important?

“The new role of planners is creating intentional community transformations based on two basic principles: 1.) learn what is important to a community and 2.) implement it.”

Thomas Campanella in his article “Jane Jacobs and Death and Life of American Planning” says that planners need “a disciplinary identity, professional authority and visionary capacity” or put another way, “have neither the prestige nor street cred to effect real change.” Once again, how are planners *integral to the functions* that are important?

Suzanne Schulz, the Planning Director in Grand Rapids, recently summarized the answer to this question during a budget session with the City Council. She described the new role of planners as creating intentional community transformation based on two basic principles: 1.) Learn what is important to a community and 2.) Implement it. Planners are the research and development department; elected officials can move forward effectively and efficiently with a planner’s assistance.

Learning what is important requires engaging the community so that the functions of planning are related to the relevant things that people need and want. It is a planner’s role to

motivate and educate a community, to identify how and what is needed to add value to life beyond the basics of safety, shelter and food. This is not news, so why it is being reported as such?” Most people do not know what planners do and more importantly what they *can* do. Thus is the need for disciplinary identity.

Planners are perceived as technicians; often technicians of rules, forms, processes and drudgery (a commonly used adjective for zoning). While the technical/structural/procedural path from concept to construction is necessary, the public generally does not care about the mechanics. It’s a planner’s job to make zoning, variances, permits and other day to day functions fast, fair and predictable, and then, move on to more important things. Your ordinances and policies may need to be re-crafted to achieve this with: more options for administrative approvals; more decision matrices for commissions; by streamlining the number of meetings and the amount of time from submission to approval; and by combining or eliminating functions or other actions from the long list of benefits that can be achieved from a thorough and ruthless audit of your procedures.

Encourage people to think differently. This requires educating the organization and the public about what planners do, and *don’t* do, but more pivotal, what is possible. The planner’s role is to integrate his/her skills into the broader conversation of

This could be your last issue!!

If you have not renewed your MAP Membership, this will be your last *Michigan Planner*. Check with your decision makers to continue your valuable membership.

Continued on page 11

Year in Review: Appreciating the Past and Looking Forward



Things are busier than ever here at the MAP office in downtown Ann Arbor as our fiscal year ending June 30, 2011 comes to a close. We've been on the road and out and about across the state – conducting workshops and conferences, developing and nurturing partnerships, and adding a planning perspective to important initiatives that connect our profession to other disciplines like health, economic development, transportation, housing, natural resource protection, community design, engineering, and more.

As we reflect on all we've accomplished this year - thanks to the help and **expertise** of so many of our members and other stakeholders in this sometimes puzzling, often frustrating, and always rewarding world of planning we live in – we feel that together we have made a difference, even in these unsettling times. The **financial contributions** of foundations, state agencies, and private companies whose philosophies, policies and programs so often complement our mission simply cannot be underestimated. We also owe a debt to local governments who continue to support our work through **membership** investments for their elected and appointed decision making bodies, and to professional planners who recognize the **value of a connection** to their professional association. We are honored that so many organizations and individuals trust the Michigan Association of Planning to advocate for quality community planning, and serve as a voice for planning in Michigan.

The MAP Board of Directors also had its work cut out for it this year as it balanced the MAP budget in light of diminishing resources. It advanced land use policy for transportation, food systems planning, and social equity that will result in sustainable, livable places. At their annual retreat in January 2011 they framed a strategic vision for better defining and expanding the roles of planners in these uncertain times. The board engaged in outreach efforts - or "linking" as we call it under MAP's Policy Governance model of organizational management under which the board operates – to planners, local officials, and government and state agency leaders to help frame our policy direction. The MAP Board learned from Lansing policy experts who addressed your MAP elected leaders in March and April about the potential impacts of the Snyder administration's plans for local government, and we are preparing policy and programmatic responses from what we are learning. Look for new initiatives to be unveiled at the **2011 Planning Michigan Conference in Grand Rapids from October 19 to 21 at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel.**

We know that local government had a very tough year. We know you are challenged to find the resources to effectively plan for the future, protect existing programs and personnel, and envision with new eyes ways to improve our communities, to make them sustainable, vital, and livable. A tough task, no doubt. MAP is exploring how we can help you respond to these stressors in ways that help your community achieve those quality of life indicators that will serve your residents, attract new businesses, and realize the potential to be a quality place. Thank you for joining us in the coming year.

Andrea Brown, AICP
Executive Director

MAP BOARD MEMBERS

Steve Robinson, President
Versa Development
steve@versacos.com

Charlotte Burckhardt, AICP, PCP,
Vice President
Oakland County Community and
Economic Development
burckhardtco@oakgov.com

Mark F. Miller, AICP, PCP
Secretary/Treasurer
City of Troy
MillerMF@troymi.gov

Sharlan Douglas, APR
Douglas Communications Group LLC
sdouglas@douglasgroup.biz

Eric Dueweke
University of Michigan
ericdue@umich.edu

Jeff Hagan
Eastern U.P. Reg. Planning and
Development Comm.
jshagan@eup-planning.org

Paul Montagno, AICP
Pittsfield Charter Township
montagnop@pittsfieldtwp.org

Megan Olds
Grand Traverse Regional
Land Conservancy
molds@grtlc.org

Cynthia Winland, AICP, PCP
Crescent Consulting
crescentdr@chartermi.net

Jim Schafer, AICP, Professional
Development Officer
City of Madison Heights
jimschafer@madison-heights.org

David Scurto, AICP, PCP,
Immediate Past President
Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.
dscurto@cwaplan.com

MAP STAFF

Andrea Brown, AICP, Executive Director
abrown@planningmi.org

Amy Miller Jordan, Director of Education
ajordan@planningmi.org

Sherrie Howard, Director of Operations
showard@planningmi.org

Lauren Carlson, Planning Project Manager
lcarlson@planningmi.org

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Historic Preservation and Michigan Communities

Historic preservation has come a long way since its early days of small but vocal contingents fighting to save a building or even a neighborhood. Today, historic preservation has a strong, national voice, bolstered by state and federal law, a State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in every state, and nonprofit organizations that assist in advocacy and preservation initiatives. In 2009, Michigan's SHPO joined the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to further the agency's mission of building a strong and vibrant state by investing in people and places. We are proud to contribute to this issue of the *Michigan Planner* to share with you how preservation of the built environment shapes a community's character and identity, creates a sense of place, ensures a sustainable future, and is a powerful economic force.

Martha MacFarlane-Faes,
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer



Royal Oak's former B & C Grocery was rehabilitated and now houses a variety of restaurants.



The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a division of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), works with communities, individuals, developers and nonprofits to create a sense of place by identifying, evaluating and designating, and reinvesting in historic resources. The SHPO administers the National Register of Historic Places program in Michigan, the

Michigan Lighthouse Assistance program, which is funded through the sale of the Save Our Lights license plate, and incentive programs that include pass-through grants available to certified local governments and federal tax credits. The SHPO also works with state and federal agencies to carry out responsibilities mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act. For more information about the SHPO call 517-373-1630, email preservation@michigan.gov, or visit www.michigan.gov/shpo; MSHDA call 517-373-8370, or visit www.michigan.gov/mshda.



The Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) is pleased to partner with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and its State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on this issue of the Michigan Planner magazine. MAP recognizes the value of historic preservation in a community's placemaking efforts, and the role of preservation as an economic development tool. Adding value to the place and prosperity benefits of historic preservation, it too contributes to building green and sustainable communities. The connection between planning and preservation is clear: Together they contribute to the creation of authentic and livable communities.

Preservation and Place

By Martha MacFarlane-Faes, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In order to attract and retain the talent to grow a 21st century knowledge economy, places must look and feel special. Knowledge workers can work anywhere. Michigan cities aren't competing with each other for this talent—they are competing with Chicago, Seattle, and Atlanta. In fact, we are competing globally. Transportation and entertainment options are important factors in enhancing quality of life and attracting talent to a location. Yet these features don't necessarily set one place apart from another. Authenticity and uniqueness make places stand out with what we call a *sense of place*. Communities must invest in placemaking in order to grow a knowledge economy. Preservationists can help.

Preservationists have long known that the built environment affects our sense of space, place, and shapes our daily lives. What we really mean when we say we want to create an appealing sense of place is that we want to elicit a *positive emotional response* to that location, neighborhood, community, or region. We want people to like, even *love*, being there—or they simply won't want to stay. People have a different emotional response to being stuck in traffic versus strolling along a lovely tree-lined path and here's why: roads and traffic don't serve people, they serve vehicles. Any attempt to create a sense of place has to give utmost attention to the human element. To create a sense of place, *the place must serve people*. While people shop at big-box stores and strip malls, these places, with their big parking lots and devotion to inventory and cars, don't connect with humans on any meaningful level.

Can we build new on a more human scale? The planning community has reconnected with this question through the New Urbanism movement and form-based codes in community planning. These builders, developers, architects and planners have begun to take their cues from historic resources. Historic buildings were designed for mixed uses and set closer to streets. Neighborhoods were more walkable, with businesses, services, parks and schools in close proximity to housing. We are seeing new infill construction in downtowns that incorporate these features.

Historic preservation differs from new urbanist development in important ways, however. First, the buildings and infrastructure are already there, just waiting for rehabilitation. Second, historic buildings contribute distinctiveness and authenticity to a community. In a word, they create the *soul* of a community. Older buildings were built on site, piece-by-piece.

As such, even the tiniest dwelling has unique, interesting features and craftsmanship that are largely lost among today's mass-produced structures. Historic buildings were built primarily of traditional, natural materials that have developed a patina over time, connecting us to our collective past. Historic buildings offer individual character, history, and memory. These are places with longstanding connections to their communities.

Places with high concentrations of historic resources offer a higher quality of life for all who live in and visit them. In her renowned work, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs notes that "Cities need old buildings so badly that it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them." She praised their combination of affordable rents, matchless character, and central location as the foundation for innovation, famously stating that "Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings. New ideas must use old buildings." Downtown Grand Rapids and Midtown in Detroit, for example, have been transformed by the rehabilitation of their historic buildings. In fact, look around Michigan and around the country: historic preservation is the key element that gives communities large and small a true sense of place.

Martha MacFarlane-Faes is the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for the State of Michigan and directs the SHPO's Cultural Resource Management and Planning Section. She received her degrees from Wellesley College and the University of Chicago and has over twenty years of experience in architecture, community development, and historic preservation.



The historic Regent Theater and its surrounding neighborhood imbue downtown Allegan with character and a strong sense of place.

| Photo by Vicki Knuckles.

Preservation, Place, and Economics

By Ellen Thackery, Southeast Michigan Field Representative

Michigan Historic Preservation Network and the National Trust for Historic Preservation

Rehabilitating older buildings—adapting them for new purposes—helps local economies. As a matter of fact, rehabilitation is one of the highest job-generating economic development options available, according to Donovan Rypkema's *The Economics of Historic Preservation* (1994, updated 2005).



The rehabilitation of the Monroe Avenue Water Filtration Plant in Grand Rapids represents direct investment of \$8 million, indirect investment of \$9.2 million, a total economic impact of \$17.2 million, and the creation of 199 jobs. | Photo provided by DeVries Companies.

A study of the economic impacts of historic preservation in Michigan, *Investing in Michigan's Future: The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation*, is available at www.mhpn.org. According to the researchers, "Across the country, the number of jobs created through rehabilitation compares very favorably with the number of jobs created through new construction. A new

construction project can expect to spend about 50 percent in labor and 50 percent in materials. In contrast, some rehabilitation projects may spend up to 70 percent in labor costs—labor that is most often hired locally, which helps to keep these dollars within the community."

In terms of job creation, rehabilitation not only outperforms new construction, but many other industries as well. Dollar for dollar, rehabilitation generates more jobs than computer

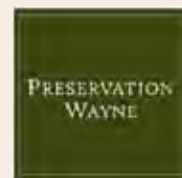
and data processing, trucking, and several different kinds of manufacturing. Building rehabilitation activities were second only to hospitals in terms of job creation according to the Michigan study.

In Michigan, owners of income producing historic properties can access federal rehabilitation tax credits to help rehabilitate historic buildings. The data collected through this program gives us a way to measure investment into these rehabilitations and the jobs and other economic activity created by these investments. A 2010 report published by Rutgers University found that rehabilitations between 1978 and 2010 that used the federal rehabilitation tax credit created 2 million jobs nationwide. Between 1999 and 2010, owners of contributing buildings in local historic districts had access to state rehabilitation tax credits as well. Based on analysis from the Michigan Historic Preservation Network of data provided by the State Historic Preservation Office, the Michigan rehabilitation tax credit leveraged \$1.46 billion in direct rehabilitation activity and created 36,000 jobs between 1999 and 2010. Rehabilitating buildings not only creates jobs—it positively impacts the local economy in other ways.

Beyond construction jobs, preservation benefits the community through new businesses; private investment and tourism; increased property values; enhanced quality of life and community pride; increased property and sales taxes; and diluted pockets of deterioration and poverty. Historic preservation is an economic development strategy that reinforces a community's unique sense of place, identity, and quality of life.

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The Need to Integrate Historic Preservation into Master Plans

By Norman Tyler, AICP

Professor, Urban and Regional Planning Program,
Eastern Michigan University

Forty-five years have passed since the National Historic Preservation Act defined historic preservation as a tool of community planning. This 1966 law established the National Register of Historic Places, the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and state historic preservation offices. Local governments were given the biggest opportunity and responsibility—the establishment of historic districts regulated by local historic district commissions. Since then, thousands of communities have established historic districts. The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions estimates that there are now more than 2,400 regulated historic districts in the United States. Their procedures are well established and their power to protect historic properties against inappropriate changes has been confirmed in the courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

However, consideration of historic and archaeological resources in community planning has not been adopted by planners, and historic preservation remains ancillary to the creation and administration of master plans. Some planners refer to historic districts as “overlay zones” since they are officially designated and regulated areas, but are not integrated with either master plan or zoning documents. When local preservationists are asked if their community has a historic preservation plan, they may say yes, but their concept of a plan typically consists of a survey and documentation of historic resources. One problem is that preservationists take a damage control approach, rather than a pro-active planning approach and the preservation plan has little to do with a community’s broadly based master plan. Michigan law neither requires nor encourages preservation plans as part of community master plans; consequently, the two types of plans are rarely integrated.

For any community with a recognized historic district, preservation should be an integral and required section of a community’s master plan. The American Planning Association’s Planning Advisory Service Report 450, *Preparing a Historic Preservation Plan*, lists ten components of a historic preservation plan:

1. a statement of the community’s preservation goals
2. definitions of a community’s historic character

3. a summary of past preservation efforts
4. a survey of historic resources or an outline of the type of survey that should be conducted
5. an explanation of the legal basis for protecting historic resources
6. a statement relating historic preservation to other local land-use and growth management tools
7. an assessment of the public sector’s responsibilities toward historic resources
8. an outline of the incentives available to help preserve the community’s historic resources
9. an explanation of how historic preservation relates to the educational system
10. a precise statement of goals and policies.

It is important for all communities, urban and rural, to recognize the value of preserving their physical heritage through historic preservation, which can provide economic and social benefits and give residents a sense of place. This can best be accomplished by incorporating preservation as an integral part of a community’s master plan.

Statewide Historic Preservation Plan

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), as part of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), is in the process of developing the next statewide five-year historic preservation plan. The SHPO will hold a series of public workshops around the state this summer to identify historic preservation goals and objectives; critical issues, threats, and opportunities facing the state’s historic resources; and priorities for the evaluation, treatment and registration of historic resources. An on-line historic preservation questionnaire will be made available at www.michigan.gov/shpo in early summer 2011. The draft plan will be submitted to the National Park Service in March 2012 for final approval. Your participation in the historic preservation planning process is important to us.

Please contact Amy Arnold at arnolda@michigan.gov or 517-335-2729 with comments or input.

Michigan Main Street

By Kelly Larson, Main Street Architect,
State Historic Preservation Office

In 2003, the *Michigan Main Street (MMS)* program was created to assist communities in revitalizing their downtowns and traditional commercial neighborhood districts through a comprehensive, volunteer- and community-driven strategy that encourages economic development through historic preservation. The strategy, known as the Main Street Four-Point Approach®, was developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and over the past thirty years has become recognized as one of the most successful downtown revitalization strategies across the country.

The Main Street Four-Point Approach® centers around the idea that downtown revitalization cannot happen by focusing on a singular goal, such as business recruitment or marketing. Instead, long-term and sustainable revitalization can only happen when there is a holistic approach focusing on four areas:

- Design
- Economic Restructuring
- Promotion
- Organization

The MMS program assists local communities in creating and sustaining their own local Main Street programs. Before a community starts a local program, in the Associate Level, MMS provides communities with a basic understanding of the Main Street Four-Point Approach® and helps them answer fundamental questions such as: who will serve as the host organization (i.e. DDA, PSD, nonprofit, etc), how will the program be funded, what will be the program's boundaries, and what will be the relationship between other entities such as the local government and/or a chamber of commerce.

Once communities have decided to adopt the Main Street approach, the community establishes an organizational structure that consists of a governing board of directors, four standing committees (design, economic restructuring, promotion, organization), and a full-time program director. This kind of structure helps to involve local stakeholders and volunteers by building consensus and cooperation while also clearly defining each other's responsibilities. With this structure, a community is considered at the *Selected Level*, and they have opportunities for more advanced trainings and services. After five years at the *Selected Level*, a community may graduate to the *Master Level*, and has access to continued advanced trainings and services.

The "Main Street" Difference

About 20 years or so ago, the traditional commercial district known as "North Lansing" or "Old Town" was a scary place that most people avoided. Crime was high and buildings were boarded up and deteriorating. That changed in the 1990s when a few dedicated and hard working people realized that nobody else was going to come in and fix Old Town so they were going to have to do it themselves. In 1996 the Old Town Commercial Association (OTCA) adopted the Main Street Four-Point Approach® and began using historic preservation as one of their key economic development tools. A strong volunteer force started painting buildings, cleaning-up streets and parks and organizing new festivals to bring people into the district. Today, crime rates are among the lowest in the city and vacancy rates are less than 10 percent. Old Town is now filled with shops, art galleries, festivals, and residents.

For information on Old Town, visit www.iloveoldtown.org or call 517-485-4283.



Concerned residents and business owners used the Michigan Main Street Program to transform Old Town Lansing into a vibrant section of the capital city. | **Photos courtesy of Old Town Commercial Association [before] and Kelly Larson [after].**

Currently, there are 16 Michigan Main Street communities that have successfully adopted the approach and use it as a framework for their own local Main Street programs.

If you are interested in additional information on the Michigan Main Street program, including how to apply for the program or to have an MMS staff member speak with your community, please call 517-241-1737, e-mail info@michiganmainstreetcenter.org, or visit <http://www.michiganmainstreetcenter.com/Program.aspx>.

Why Preservation is Green

By Martha MacFarlane-Faes; with Mollie Douglas and Jessica Claire Williams, Weatherization Assistance Program

The preservation of historic buildings is both sustainable and environmentally responsible development. Preservation generates less waste and uses fewer natural resources. It promotes the reuse of existing buildings and retains the embodied energy of a property: the sum total of energy that has gone into a building's materials (such as dense, old-growth wood), transportation of those materials, and construction. In addition, the design of older buildings actually achieves energy efficiency through the design and placement of features such as porches, doors and windows, and attics. These features play a vital role in the indoor environmental quality of the building.

Energy efficiency, sustainability and "green" practices have become popular. However, not everything that is commonly called "green" is really sustainable, appropriate for historic properties, or even good for the environment. Adding insulation or new ventilation systems and replacing windows often impacts how an older building functions as a holistic system. For example, adding insulation in wall cavities will improve energy efficiency, but these same insulation materials will cause problems with moisture or breathability in the wall cavity, resulting in mold and moisture damage. This same insulation is often impossible to remove or reinforce when insulation efficiency values decrease over time.

It is also important to remember that synthetic materials, such as insulation, vinyl siding and vinyl windows, require a laborious and toxic manufacturing process which is just plain bad for the environment. Moreover, vinyl cannot be maintained like wood, which is an organic and sustainable product able to be rehabilitated. Vinyl window sashes must be replaced entirely when a window component fails.

Some of these so-called "green" measures could therefore do more harm than good to a historic property and to our environment. Historic preservation is important to incorporate into our long-term planning for a more sustainable future.



Rehabilitated existing wood windows are energy efficient and sustainable. | Photo by Sharon Ferraro

Building a Future with Historic Places

Founded in 1981, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network is the largest membership organization in the state dedicated to recognizing and preserving Michigan's rich cultural and architectural heritage. The MHPN advocates for preservation policy and educates the public and public officials about the value of historic buildings and the economic impact of historic preservation. In addition, the network offers numerous training programs, including practical building trades courses and workshops and, public programs for communities. In 2009 and 2010 the MHPN conducted award-winning window rehabilitation workshops in Kalamazoo and Lansing that trained 75 contractors and homeowners. An instructional video is available by contacting the MHPN. info@mhpn.org.

Michigan Modern

By Amy Arnold, Preservation Planner
State Historic Preservation Office



Built in 1964, the Kirk Center at Olivet College, designed by Meathe, Kessler and Associates, exhibits the clean lines, glass walls, and lack of decoration inherent in Modern buildings.

| Photo by Amy Arnold.

It has been more than a decade now since we entered a new century. It is time to reassess how we view Michigan's history and what makes a resource historic.

According to the National Park Service, a building or structure must be over 50 years old to qualify as historically significant—that would mean a building constructed before 1962.

Some will find that hard to digest, but consider that the period following World War II was one of the most significant in Michigan's history. It was a time of unprecedented wealth and growth when the Cranbrook Academy of Art trained world-class designers like Charles and Ray Eames, and when the style of the 1950s and 1960s was defined, worldwide, by Michigan architects Eero Saarinen and Minoru Yamasaki, and by Michigan corporations like the Herman Miller Furniture Company and General Motors.

To assist communities in understanding their modern resources, the State Historic Preservation Office has teamed with the firm Lord, Aeck and Sargent of Ann Arbor, on the *Michigan Modern* project to develop a historic context for Modern architecture. *Michigan Modern* will document the designers and architects that worked in the state between 1940 and 1970. The project, which will run through 2012, will also result in an inventory of Michigan's Modern buildings, oral histories of architects and designers from the period, and the nomination of 10 buildings to the National Register of Historic Places. A main outcome of the project will be the development of a Web site geared toward architectural tourism in an effort to attract a new market of young, creative workers and international tourists to Michigan.

Michigan Modern has been made possible by a grant from Preserve America and support from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, the Finlandia Foundation, and the Detroit Area Art Deco Society.

Visit our interim Web site at www.michiganmodern.org for more information.

Strange Bedfellows: Right-sizing and Historic Preservation

By Brenna Moloney, Preservation Specialist
Michigan Historic Preservation Network and the
National Trust for Historic Preservation

In planning, the term "right-sizing" refers to a process of bringing a city's infrastructure and housing stock in line with declining population trends. It is largely agreed that right-sizing, as a planning approach, is a community's rational response to the productive collapse of the Middle-American city. Politicians, government officials, business owners, and bright-eyed bloggers assure us that right-sizing is good because it represents an effort to impose order on a chaotic process that will lift our languishing rust-belt cities from economic despair. Whether this promise will bear fruit remains to be seen. However, as Michigan communities begin to integrate right-sizing into their master plans and ordinances, it will become increasingly important to question the effects of shrinking on a city's historic resources.

Implicit in the determination to right-size a city is the acceptance of the loss of a portion of that city's built environment. It is incumbent on whoever is charged with organizing and implementing right-sizing to determine what is valuable and what has the likeliest potential for future use. This determination of value will have an economic component, but a structure's historic and cultural value should also be considered because cultural value is tied, by a thousand threads, to the economic resilience of a community over the long term.

The conditions of each area targeted for shrinking should be methodically evaluated by a preservation professional familiar with National Register of Historic Places criteria and the local historic district ordinances, lest important historic resources be overlooked or demolished.

As the approach to right-sizing develops and becomes more systematic, preservationists must assert their role as stewards of the built environment in order to mitigate the impact of right-sizing. This means undertaking aggressive documentation efforts, insisting on and educating community stakeholders about mothballing (as opposed to demolition), familiarizing oneself with federal and state lead abatement requirements, and acting as a bridge to resources for those in decision-making positions. By these means, and not by intransigence alone, can the process of right-sizing integrate a community's history into its vision for the future.

2011 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation

MSHDA Executive Director Gary Heidel and State Historic Preservation Officer Brian Conway presented the 2011 Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation on May 4, 2011, in the State Capitol Rotunda.

This year's recipients are:

- **Chris and Abbey Green** for the rehabilitation of 811 Portland, Calumet
- **The Traverse City Community, the City of Traverse City, the Charter Township of Garfield, Grand Traverse County, and the Minervini Group** for the preservation of the Northern Michigan Asylum (Traverse City Regional Psychiatric Hospital), Traverse City
- **Dixie and Charley Riley and the Museum of Paleontology - University of Michigan** for the excavation and study of the Riley Mammoth Site, Saranac
- **Christman Capital Development Company, Accident Fund Holdings, Inc., HOK, and Quinn Evans Architects** for the rehabilitation of the Ottawa Street Power Station, Lansing
- **The Woda Group, LLC, PCI Design Group, Inc. and Cornerstone Architects** for the rehabilitation of Durand High School, Durand
- **Richard Karp, Kevin Prater, and Kraemer Design Group, PLC** for the rehabilitation of the Durant Hotel, Flint

For additional information about the Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation go to: www.michigan.gov/shpo.



The rehabilitation of 811 Portland in Calumet (right) and the Ottawa Street Power Station in Lansing (above) were among six projects recognized with Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation. | Photos courtesy of Chris and Abbey Green (811 Portland) and Accident Fund (Ottawa)

Continued from page 1

THE CHANGING ROLE OF ELECTED, APPOINTED AND PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS, continued

planning and show how to move an idea into reality. This is proving professional authority.

What is important to the community? Just ask them. Engaging and educating the community will help identify what is important to them and how to make it happen. This highly optimistic statement is a brave thing to say in the face of budget cuts, loss of revenue from local and state sources and the list of other painful but necessary changes that are happening in communities. Yet, people are willing to invest time, energy and money in things that are important to them. Help people identify what is important to make their community livable and sustainable in economic, environmental and social ways.

Implement what is important. Make yourself valuable to the process, which is the second point. This role is both internal to your organization and external in the larger community. Planners have strong organizational, facilitation, mediation, written and oral skills. A command of relevant law, tenacity and humor should also go without saying, but stepping into a new role will require a new way of thinking about the job. ***In The Planner as Urban Designer: Reforming Planning Education***, Alex Krieger describes planners being content to be “mere absorbers of public opinion... waiting for consensus to build.” Looking forward, and turning away from this passive characterization, how can a planner synthesize public opinion and public needs into consensus? This is having visionary capacity.

Money talks when venturing to be realistic while succumbing to being cliché. Direct your work, day to day or otherwise,

to achieve a definitive product with measurable results. Put your efforts toward projects that save money or improve efficiency in a quantifiable way, even if politically it appears it will not or cannot happen. Having a vision that can be defended with monetary savings gains professional authority.

The City of Grand Rapids has shown quantifiable outcomes that demonstrate improved performance measures such as timeliness in reviews, and more qualitative outcomes such as positive customer response and trust. Other significant benefits have been the rise of community champions and willingness to explore potentially challenging projects.

Soon there will be financial benefits at the state level to consolidate services, regionalize governments or eliminate the unnecessary through decreases in state revenue sharing and incentive funding. Federally, cooperation and consolidation are already the entry tickets to apply for many sources of funding.

Planning is not just zoning, nor is it the focus or impetus of what makes a community work. Having a vision for the future and “making it happen” creates the quality of life that extends beyond the very basics of safety, shelter and food. ***Planners need to define their identity, earn authority and share their vision.***



Cindy Winland, AICP, PCP, is the owner of Crescent Consulting, a 15 year old firm based in Midland, Michigan. The firm focuses on all aspects of community and resort planning, specializing on concise, easy to use zoning ordinances, master planning, teaching and training. Visit www.crescentplanning.com for more information.

Calling Cards, a directory of firms offering professional services, appears in every issue of the *Michigan Planner*. Firms listed pay a fee for this service which helps defray the cost of publication. This does not constitute an endorsement of any firm by the Michigan Association of Planning.

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Calendar of Events and Important Dates

Check the MAP Web site at www.planningmi.org for event details.

June 5-7, 2011

Center for Community Progress
Land Bank Conference
Motor City Casino Hotel, Detroit
<http://www.communityprogress.net>

June 6-7, 2011

Designing Healthy Livable
Communities: The Power of Partnerships
The Lansing Center, Lansing
<https://www.regonline.com/2011dhlconference>

June 16, 2011

Advanced Training for Elected and
Appointed Officials
Eberhard Center, Grand Rapids
<http://www.planningmi.org/conference.asp>

October 19-21, 2011

Planning Michigan 2011 Annual Conference
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids
<http://www.planningmi.org/conference.asp>

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715 N. Cedar Street, Suite 2, Lansing MI 48906-5275
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