



Main Street! Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

DECEMBER 2012 • COMMUNITY HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION • P.O. BOX 12276, AUSTIN, TX 78711 • 512.463.6092

Spotlight on Georgetown

(Population approx. 47,400)

Georgetown many reasons to celebrate this season, not the least of which is 30 years of successful downtown revitalization efforts that have transformed this one neglected downtown into a thriving, vibrant economic, social and cultural center. Now branding, marketing and holiday programs that promise to “light up” downtown Georgetown are covered in this issue of Main Street Matters.

The 30th Anniversary Georgetown proudly celebrated 30 years of downtown revitalization on Nov. 14. The newly-branded Most Beautiful Town Square in Texas branding effort touts the city of Georgetown’s and Georgetown Main Street’s many years of hard work towards the revitalization of the historic downtown. Along the way,

Georgetown Main Street and historic downtown have been recognized many times with awards such as: 1997

Great American Main Street award; 2002 Best Downtown Marketing Program by the Texas Downtown Association (TDA); 2003 Renee Hanson, Main Street Hero recognized by the National Main Street Center; 2004 Preserve America designated city; 2006 Best Promotional Event (Red Poppy Festival) by TDA;

2006 Local artists created downtown mural “Discover Georgetown All Over Again”; 2007 Best Marketing Program (co-winner) by the Texas Downtown Association; 2009 First Lady’s Texas Treasures Award from, the THC; and, 2012 co-winner of the Best Promotional Event (Georgetown Swirl) from the TDA. In 2003, local resident, Renee Hanson, was recognized by the National Main Street Center as a national Main Street Hero. Many



Historic downtown square in Georgetown



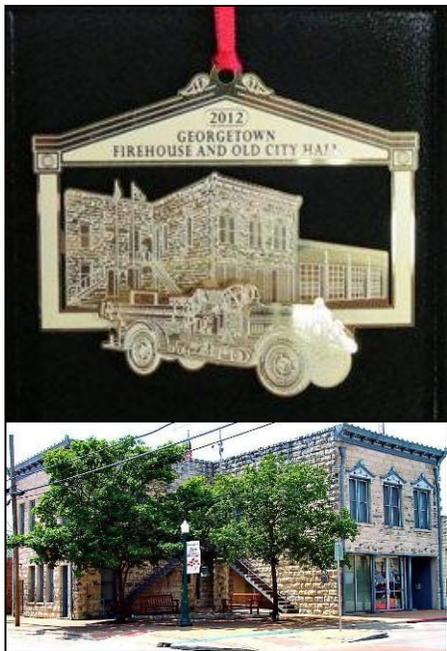
Georgetown Main Street (GMS) celebrates 30 years as a Texas Main Street city. Pictured from left are: Linda McCalla, first GMS Manager, Shelly Hargrove, GMS Manager, Sarah Blankenship, Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) staff, Julian Read, husband of Texas Main Street founder Anice Read, Janie Headrick, former TMSP staff, Debra Farst, State Coordinator, TMSP, Dick Ryan, former TMSP Architect and Allison Ryan (wife), and Terry Colley, Deputy Executive Director. THC

downtown businesses and local volunteers have contributed to all of these successes throughout the years.

Greatly contributing to the success of historic downtown is the restored historic neoclassical revival style Williamson County Courthouse, circa 1910. The beautiful courthouse was rededicated after restoration through the Texas Courthouse Preservation Program of the THC in December of 2007. This restoration won the best restoration award in 2008 from the Texas Downtown Association.

Main Street Holiday Ornament

The historic firehouse, featured on the 2012 holiday ornament, is currently undergoing rehabilitation. The building was constructed in 1892 as the mayor's office, city council chambers, city jail, fire department, and the Georgetown Water Co. In 1984 it became a Regis-



Georgetown Main Street Program's 2012 collectible holiday ornament features the historic fires station, soon to be the Georgetown Art Center.



With a \$30,000 matching grant from the city and \$30,000 private/non-profit funds, the Light up the Square project lit 34 red-oak trees around the square.

tered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL). The two-story building will be converted into an arts center (with city offices on the second floor) that will provide art classes such as painting and drawing for the community as well as a gallery space to display local art. The plans to change the storefront, while still repairing and retaining all the historic wood windows and pressed metal, were approved last month by Georgetown's Historic and Architectural Review Commission. As an RTHL, the modifications also had to be also approved by the THC's division of Architecture. The one-story building with four garage door bays was an addition built adjacent to the historic fire station in 1971. This portion of the building will be converted into a restaurant. Simultaneously, the sidewalk in front of the buildings in this block are being widened to allow greater capacity for outdoor seating.

Light Up the Square Holiday Lighting Campaign

The "Light Up the Square" holiday lighting campaign was the brain-

child of Main Street advisory board member (and original Georgetown Main Street manager) Linda McCalla last year when she suggested professionally lighting the 30-year-old red oak trees around the square during the holiday season. With a \$15,000 matching grant from city council, the Main Street advisory board raised \$15,000 in private/nonprofit sector funds in a month and a half to light 24 oak trees. The project was so successful and attracted positive comments from numerous locals and visitors that city council allocated \$30,000 in the 2012 budget if the Main Street advisory board was up for the challenge of matching another \$30,000 with private sector funds. They were, and now 34 oak trees around the square and one block off the Square were turned on with the courthouse lights at the annual Lighting of the square event on Friday, November 23 in conjunction with Williamson County to help officially launch the holiday season in Georgetown.

Multiple city departments participated in a downtown team and pooled their advertising dollars to launch the first cooperative interdepartmental advertising Happy Holidays campaign. This effort also supported Shop Small Business Saturday with the Shop Small logo incorporated into cooperative business ads.

New Marketing Campaign

The “Most Beautiful Town Square in Texas” is downtown Georgetown’s new marketing campaign. The City of Georgetown unveiled the new brand for the Georgetown Square at the beginning of 2012 at one of Georgetown

Main Street’s quarterly ‘Breakfast Bites’ meetings. A new brand strategy for Georgetown came as a recommendation from a market study report on the downtown district by local agency IF Marketing & Advertising as a way to effectively promote downtown Georgetown

and reach consumers. The idea of the “Most Beautiful Town Square” brand was soon born when a downtown Georgetown property owner from California said he had traveled to numerous cities across the nation and Europe, and he thought Georgetown had the most beautiful town square he’d seen.

Happy Holidays Advertising Campaign

The City of Georgetown recently organized a downtown team made up of staff members from several city departments including Main Street, the Convention & Visitors Bureau, Public Communications, Economic Development, and the Public Library/Arts & Culture. This downtown team decided to pool advertising dollars and launch the first cooperative interdepartmental advertising campaign. The group agreed that a strong picture is worth a thousand words, so professional photos taken from last year’s lighting of the corner oak trees on the square would be the main focus of the Happy Holiday advertising campaign. First, a billboard was designed to go up on the well-traveled I-35 at Yager Lane to target the commuters to and from the North Austin, Round Rock and Georgetown area. Secondly, Duratran signs in the Round Rock Premium Outlet’s food court area as well as on a directory sign were reserved to focus on shoppers from throughout the Central Texas region. Print ads in popular regional, statewide, and local venues like *Austin Monthly*, *Texas Monthly*, *Texas Highways*, and the local City Lights movie theater were purchased. Finally, a Shop Small Business Saturday cooperative ad on the back cover quickly filled up by downtown businesses for the local



Holiday billboard targeting Austin/Round rock commuters

Focus on Georgetown magazine's November issue. It helped raise more awareness of the shop local date, as well as a December cooperative ad due to the popularity.

Future Brand Projects

Future projects are planned to further market the most beautiful town square logo including quarterly updates to the Round Rock Premium Outlet signs and new downtown light pole banners that show photos of actual downtown Georgetown property, business owners, and employees. With Grape Creek Vineyards, Thunder-Cloud Subs, the Georgetown Art Center, and a corner park opening by March of 2013, we hope visitors will plan to attend March 2 on our most beautiful town square to sip, savor, shop and swirl around the square at the award-winning Georgetown Swirl. Cheers to the holidays!

Thanks to Shelly Hargrove, Georgetown Main Street Manager, for providing this article.

MAIN STREET AROUND THE STATE

Elgin

Elgin celebrated the 25th anniversary of its Hogeye Festival, the ma-

street festival has grown to encompass an eight block area in the downtown district. Sponsorships this year were at an all-time high and included major corporate sponsors Southside Market and Barbeque, HEB Grocery, and Munday Chevrolet. New in-kind sponsors such as Run-Tex helped welcome folks to Elgin and the festival. A partnership with Meyer's Elgin Sausage, the Elgin Chamber, Main Street and KEYE television resulted in outstanding television coverage for the week prior to the festival. Festival chair Forest Dennis and Co-chair Keith Joesel worked hard throughout the year to capture the anniversary moment. Limited edition, commemorative souvenirs were created including a hand silk-screened festival poster. October 27 was a great day with record-breaking crowds, music on three stages, handmade arts and crafts, piglet plaza children's activities, Lone Star Car Club Car Show, Gordon Swenson BBQ Pork Cook-Off, In a Pig's Eye Dart Contest, the crowning of King Hog or Queen Sowpreme, Lindsay Kay Wing Children's costume pet parade, a carnival, Hogalicious Desert Contest, Cow Patty Bingo, the Pearls Before Swine Art Show and great food! The estimate for this

major fundraiser for the Elgin Main Street program. Elgin went whole hog this year with a silver anniversary celebration of the Hogeye Festival, a time for warm hearts and hot guts. The

25th anniversary festival fundraiser for Elgin Main Street is \$24,000.

In December, Elgin will also have its FestiviTrees, which will include trees displayed in local Elgin businesses that are decorated with or created from recycled materials. Votes for the people's choice for best tree will go into a drawing at the end of December for prizes. See City of Elgin's Facebook page for a complete list of trees.

New Braunfels

The City Council in New Braunfels passed the establishment of a downtown historic district in May. This was celebrated with the unveiling of street signs with this designation in late October.

Winnsboro

R.H. McCrary Hardware Store received the Texas Treasure Business Award from the THC for 100 years in business. The Main Street Board held a presentation and reception in November at the depot and many community members attended. Mayor Carolyn Jones presented the THC award and the recognition from Governor Perry to the owners, Robert and Shirley Watters. Shirley Watters was the leading force to get Winnsboro into the Main Street Program.

Also, Winnsboro will be featured in the January 2013 issue of *Texas Highways* Magazine. Randy Mallory, writer for the magazine, was in town during the 3rd Friday Art Walk in September visiting with downtown businesses and gathering info for the article. Watch for the January article.

Vernon

In November, the Vernon Main Street promotion committee established a co-op ad opportunity for several local businesses to pool their money to buy an advertisement in a publication of their

choice. Under this initial purchase, 10 local business people contributed a total of \$480 to buy three half-page ads in *Antiquing Texas*, which is a specialized industry newspaper distributed in antique stores throughout the state. The Vernon Main Street Program also supported this effort by contributing another \$240. By collaborating together, each of these merchants may buy a half-page ad in which they are mentioned by name, every month for the next three months, and their cost will be only \$16 per month. The hope is that this can be a model for other collaborative advertising efforts in the future.



Did you know...

that there are 87,265 total listings in the National Register of Historic Places? 1,052 properties were listed in Fiscal Year 2011, which represent more than 1.4 million individual resources. In addition to the honor associated with having your property listed in the National Register, this recognition is generally the first step for receiving preservation funding from state and local governments. Also, owners may be eligible for tax credits that can help offset the costs of rehabilitation.



Historical Marker Database

Ever wonder what that historical marker that you just zoomed past on the highway was about? Or, have you been on vacation strolling through a historic Main Street city and wonder if there are any historical markers nearby? Search for the

Historical Marker Database app for smart phones. The Historical Marker Database also has a great website at www.hmdb.org

EVENTS

If you would like one of your Main Street events posted here, email jill.robinson@thc.state.tx.us at least three weeks ahead of the month in which you want the posting.

Dec. 1, Elgin

Holiday by the Tracks includes visits with Santa Claus, food, activities for the kids, store specials throughout downtown, fresh produce, and unique artist creations at the gazebo. Official pictures with Santa help raise money for the Friends of Elgin Parks. Live music and entertainment throughout the day at the Gazebo will conclude with a Live Nativity produced by St. Peter's Lutheran Church. Elgin is also home to two Christmas tree farms ready for tree picking during Holiday by the Tracks. The Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Board, and City of Elgin Parks & Community Development Department organize Holiday by the Tracks as a community celebration of the holidays. Times are 10 a.m.–4 p.m., see www.elgintx.com/holiday.asp. At dusk, there will be a holiday lighted parade sponsored by the Elgin Volunteer Fire Department and will include Santa waving from an antique fire truck.

Dec. 1, Ferris

Enjoy Christmas on the Square on Saturday in historic downtown. Taste the delicacies, take photos with Santa, and enjoy the holiday music, hay rides, food contests, and live and silent auctions. There will be a free movie after dark in the pavilion. See http://cityofferris.org/index/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=38&extmode=view&extid=576

Dec. 1, Palestine

Use ghost hunting tools including EVPs, black lights, digital photo and video, EMF detector, and pre-recorded video surveillance ghost monitoring to find the ghosts of Christmas past in this holiday hunt at the historic jail. This same evening, attend the holiday parade and tree lighting in historic downtown. See

www.visitpalestine.com/events.htm

Dec. 1, Rockwall

Old Town Christmas Market

The Old Town Christmas Market is an open-air art market offering complimentary warm beverages, holiday music, art, homemade goods, and crafts from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Market is located across the street from the courthouse hosted in conjunction with the 42nd annual Kiwanis Holiday parade. See

<http://mainstreet.rockwall.com/events.asp>

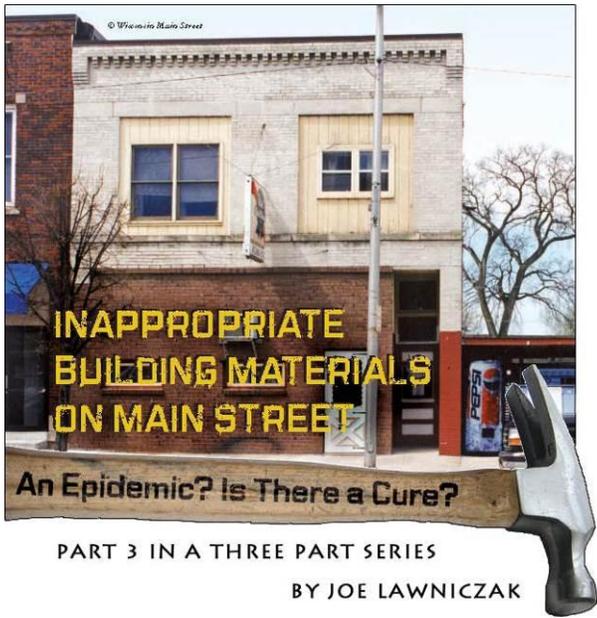
Dec. 6, Levelland

Visit Santa, enjoy local school choir performances, participate in the Miss Merry Christmas Pageant (fundraiser for downtown improvements), view the Festival of Trees (which involves a canned food drive for the local food bank), and enjoy the lighted parade all at Christmas on the Square from 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Dec. 6, New Braunfels

Wassailfest began in 1992 as a way for downtown merchants to thank customers for their patronage and to highlight the beauty of downtown New Braunfels during the holiday season. Sample free wassail through the streets of downtown while local merchants compete to win prizes. Live music, beautiful holiday lights, a variety of foods, and delicious wassail. See

www.downtownnewbraunfels.com



PART 3 IN A THREE PART SERIES

BY JOE LAWNICZAK

FOCUS ON MAIN STREET DESIGN

The following article, Part 3 in a three part series, is reprinted with permission. See the October issue for Part 1 and the November issue for Part 2.

Are All Substitute Materials Inappropriate?

Now that we've discussed some of the common inappropriate materials used on Main Street, it is only fair to discuss a few materials available today that may be considered equal substitutes to the original, if used correctly.

Fiber-Cement Siding

Probably the most talked-about product today is fiber-cement siding, commonly known as Hardi-Plank, MaxiPlank, and Cemplank, among other trade names. Fiber-cement siding was first developed by James Hardie Industries in Australia more than 100 years ago. The company discovered the process for its construction while researching building materials that could withstand the wear and tear associated with extreme climates.

Fiber-cement siding is extremely strong and resistant to fires, insects,

and rot. In the past, it consisted of cement and asbestos. Today, however, wood or paper fibers are used in place of asbestos.

Fiber-cement siding comes in three common textures: fake wood grain, smooth, or stucco. It is generally recommended that the smooth texture be used as it best replicates the look of wood. The siding's typical thickness is about five-sixteenths of an inch, making it very strong and rigid. The

pieces range in width from 6 to 12 inches and are installed in much the same way as wood siding. With this range of widths, it is easy to replicate the reveal width of the original wood siding. Corner boards and trim are also installed in a similar fashion to wood.

Fiber-cement siding differs from vinyl siding in a number of ways. First of all, it is often used to *replace* deteriorated wood siding, not merely to conceal it. This type of siding does need to be painted, but it absorbs paint in an enduring way. Peeling and chipping are rare if the paint is applied properly. In most cases, fiber-cement siding costs less than top-quality vinyl siding, but since it needs to be painted, the

final cost will usually be a little more than vinyl. The difference in quality and durability, however, is extraordinary.

In some cases, fiber-cement siding is used only to replace the bottom few rows of wood siding and/or trim where rotting or insect infestation is more prevalent. Once painted, and as long as the widths and the texture are the same, it is difficult to tell the difference between the original wood and the fiber-cement siding.

Molded Millwork

Another common and often appropriate substitute material is molded millwork, which goes by the trade names of Fypon, Hopper, and Chemcrest, among others. These molded millwork elements are made of high-density polymers such as polyurethane or polystyrene foam. These materials can be used on the exterior of buildings as well as on the interior. On the outside, they are commonly used to replace missing or deteriorated cornices, brackets, window hoods, etc. Molded millwork is typically factory coated with an acrylic base coat. After installation, the millwork should always be painted with a high-quality exterior coating. Because it is made essentially of foam, molded millwork should not be used on areas of the building where insect infestation is common, such as at or near grade. Molded mill-



Due to extreme deterioration, the original wood siding on this building was replaced with fiber-cement siding. Note that the original trim pattern and siding width were replicated properly.

work is lighter than wood, stone, or metal, so it is used quite often in seismic areas. Repairs can usually be made with wood filler and adhesives.

Most molded millwork manufacturers have a seemingly endless selection of shapes and profiles, and most will do custom shapes based on detailed working drawings. It is generally recommended that any molded millwork replacement be custom designed to replicate the original feature unless an identical standard shape can be found. And most importantly, molded millwork should only be used as a replacement for elements that are either missing or are deteriorated beyond repair.

The “Tools”

So how can a community ensure that building rehabilitations are done appropriately or at least dis-

courage inappropriate ones? The first step is education. One of the best tools is a set of design guidelines. Creating guidelines that address proper restoration techniques, local architectural styles, local permit procedures, local history, pertinent contact information, etc., is a key step in helping building owners do the right thing. It is also important to remember that regardless of their talents, not all contractors, carpenters, or even building inspectors have experience with historic buildings. Design guidelines should be a one-stop resource for each of these entities.

For design guidelines to be truly effective, they need to be binding in some way. Incorporating them into a historic preservation ordinance is one way. Through this mechanism, all proposed building improvements within a designated area must follow the guidelines and pass

design review before a permit is issued. Another way is to tie the guidelines to local financial incentives so that only those projects that follow the guidelines and pass design review can take advantage of these incentives.

Local financial incentives act as a “carrot” to encourage proper restoration. They help offset the additional costs of proper restoration versus subpar alterations. Some commonly used incentives are loan pools and grant programs. Loan pools are typically used for facade renovations and signs, but some are expanded to include maintenance, code compliance, interior renovations, or structural repairs. Typically, several local banks pool money to be earmarked for the program. Often there is a per-project cap of anywhere between \$25,000 to \$100,000. Rates are typically set at either a percentage of or a number

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historical significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service – Preservation Brief # 8 (*Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings*)
<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service – Preservation Brief # 16 (*The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors*)
<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

National Park Service, *Illustrated Guide to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/>
Also available from the National Trust Main Street Center at www.mainstreet.org

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) website:
<http://www.achp.gov/economic-statewide.html>

of points below prime, e.g. 75 percent of, or 2 points below.

Grant programs are often considered a better incentive than low-interest loans. Typically these are 50-50 matching grants used for facade renovations and/or signage. They range from \$500 to \$10,000 or more per project, depending on the community. The money for these programs often comes from various fund-raising efforts, block grant funds, private foundations, etc. Many donors prefer to have their money used for programs that will produce positive physical improvements. Again, only those projects that follow the guidelines and pass design review should be issued these incentives.

There has been much discussion of design review. This is often the last step in ensuring proper restoration. Thus, the make-up of a design review board is extremely important. It should include people who have an understanding of historic preservation, architecture and design.

No matter how you look at it, the decisions made by a design review board affect what a person can or cannot do to his or her personal property. There is a fine line between being too lenient and too stringent. If the board is too lenient, it can jeopardize the historic integrity of the buildings. Too stringent, and it can become a negative step in the permit process and drive businesses, developers, or investors away. Members must be diplomatic and willing to compromise when appropriate, yet stand firm when needed.

The Need for Guidelines

In addition to local preservation tools, there are state and federal programs available that can encourage the restoration and reuse of



**For design guidelines
to be truly effective,
they need to be binding
in some way.**



historic buildings. Some of these programs are designed to ensure that these restorations are done correctly. The most common are the historic rehabilitation tax credits available nationwide. For tax credit information, contact your state historical society.* These tax credits have generated economic activity and investment while at the same time making sure that projects adhere to the federal design guidelines contained in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. While other state and federal programs generate economic activity, most do nothing to hold the rehabilitation work to any standards. As a result, projects that receive these funds are frequently permitted to perform inappropriate alterations. This is a big problem for Main Street.

In one state for example, an upper-floor housing rehabilitation project utilized the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's HOME Rental Rehab dollars.

While the building was not a certified historic structure, it was located in the heart of a historic Main Street district. Because it was not technically historic, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards did not apply. As a result, the owners were allowed to remove the historic windows, infill most of the opening, and install undersized vinyl windows. This is not an isolated incident. Across the country, many statewide energy programs provide

grants to remove and replace historic windows. Many brownfield programs promote demolition, and the list goes on. Those of us involved in Main Street need to advocate for the enforcement of design standards on all state and federally funded projects that involve any buildings, regardless of age or historic status. Even a non-historic building that undergoes inappropriate alterations can have a negative effect on our districts, and public dollars should not be contributing to this downward slide.

With ongoing education, local financial incentives, and historic preservation tools, building owners who want to do the right thing will have the know-how and resources to do it right. And with dedication and determination from Main Street programs, hopefully the others will follow suit.

Thanks to Joe Lanniczak, the Design Specialist for Wisconsin Main Street for providing this article. In his more than 10 years with the program, he has worked with countless building owners throughout Wisconsin in planning for the restoration of their historic buildings. Prior to this he was an active volunteer for On-Broadway, Inc., a Main Street district in Green Bay, from 1995 to 2001. Also, thanks to Audrey Holt, Texas Main Street project design assistant, for obtaining the correct permissions and reformatting the article for this newsletter.

Article reprinted with permission. Originally printed in in the November 2006 issue of Main Street News, (currently known as Main Street Now), the monthly journal of the National Trust Main Street Center.

*In Texas, the THC is the contact for information about tax credits.

Help Write the Story of Downtown's Future

By Mary Jo Filip, Main Street Program Director

I read a little story that went something like this:

A man was often asked by visitors what the people from his town were like. He would in turn ask them what the people from their town were like. Some would complain but others would speak warmly of the people and place they were from. He would then tell them that they would probably find the same was true in this town.

What's the message being given about our downtown? Are we speaking warmly about each of the stores? Are we talking up that there are locally-owned shops with merchandise unique only to their location? Are we saying that downtown has 20 retail stores ranging from family-owned businesses that have been around for decades to new boutiques and shops that are the dream of our local entrepreneurs? Getting this message out is very important.

Earlier this month I was asked to speak at a club meeting. I told all present the most important thing they could do to support the revitalization of downtown Seguin was to shop there. I then repeated that message and I offer it to you, too: ***The most important thing you can do to support the revitalization of downtown Seguin is to shop here!***

I feel confident that if you'll shop downtown you'll be pleasantly surprised at all that is available. Recently, as I was making the short four-block walk to work from my house, I realized that almost everything I was wearing had been purchased in locally owned retail shops in and around downtown Seguin.

My shoes were from Vogue. My top was from Queenie & Company. I had a headband for my hair from Sheek by J. I recalled that recent shower gifts for friends came from Gift & Gourmet and Paisley Patch, and greeting cards from Blessings Christian Gift Store. I had purchased a dog leash and treats and had the dog groomed at Thunderpaws, and and my most recent mattress purchase was from Starcke Furniture Company. For fun, I like to pop into The Cranny and Paperback Ranch to see what might be on the resale rack and appreciate the enthusiasm of the owner of You're So Crafty who participates in many downtown activities. My clothes get cleaned at the business located across the street from my office, and Keepers had a hand in helping to decorate the offices I share with the Seguin Economic Development Corporation.

There are other shops open or soon to open in downtown Seguin including items for sale at the Heritage Museum and Seguin Oakwood Art League, Off the Hook, and Sister Suzie's. Service businesses like chiropractic care, massage therapy, and hair styling abound downtown and often sell gift items, gift certificates, and products related to their business.

Speaking warmly about the stores in downtown Seguin is easy for me. The more challenging part is convincing new people to discover what downtown Seguin has to offer. If you already enjoy shopping at a favorite store downtown, then take a few extra minutes and go into a shop you haven't been in yet. If you haven't been in a downtown store then please plan an outing with a friend and check it out. There's now enough retail activity that you can meander through downtown and shop store-to-store. Central Park offers a terrific place to take a break with a better fountain, trees, and benches than any mall has to offer!

So please speak warmly about downtown Seguin. Talk up each shop located here as well as the other locally owned shops in our community. When you do this, you will help create the future we want: a vibrant thriving downtown that is a source of pride for Seguin.

Published in the Sept. 30, 2012 of the *Seguin Gazette*. Article reprinted with permission of the author.

Calendar of Events

- **Jan. 29–30, 2013, Llano**
New manager training prior to the beginning of Winter Training for all managers. New manager training will last all day Jan. 29 through noon Jan. 30.
 - **Jan. 30 (after noon)–Feb. 1, 2013 (noon), Llano**
Winter Main Street training for all Texas Main Street managers
 - **Apr. 14–16, 2013, New Orleans** National Main Streets Conference, theme: *Main Street and the Cultural Economy*
 - **June 4–5, 2013, LaGrange**
New manager training prior to the beginning of Summer training for all managers. New manager training will last all day June 4 through noon June 5
 - **June 5 (after noon)–June 7, 2013 (noon), LaGrange**
Summer Main Street training for all Texas Main Street managers
-

Websites of Interest

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: www.achp.gov
African American Heritage Preservation Foundation: www.aahpfdn.org
(The) Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation: www.ahlp.org
(The) American Institute of Architects: www.aia.org
American Planning Association: www.planning.org
American Society of Landscape Architects: www.asla.org
(The) Cultural Landscape Foundation: www.tclf.org
(The) Handbook of Texas Online: www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online
Keep Texas Beautiful: www.ktb.org
League of Historic American Theatres: www.lhat.org
National Main Street Center: www.preservationnation.org/main-street
National Park Service: www.nps.gov
National Trust for Historic Preservation: www.preservationnation.org
Partners for Sacred Places: www.sacredplaces.org
Preservation Easement Trust: www.preservationeasement.org
PreservationDirectory.com: www.preservationdirectory.com
Preservation Texas: www.preservationtexas.org
Project for Public Spaces: www.pps.org
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy: www.railstotrails.org
Scenic America: www.scenic.org
Texas Department of Agriculture: www.TexasAgriculture.gov
Texas Commission on the Arts: www.arts.state.tx.us
Texas Downtown Association: www.texasdowntown.org
Texas Folklife Resources: www.texasfolklife.org
Texas Historical Commission: www.thc.state.tx.us
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: www.tpwd.state.tx.us
Texas Rural Leadership Program: www.trlp.org
Texas State Preservation Board: www.tspb.state.tx.us
Urban Land Institute: www.uli.org

Texas Main Street Program
Texas Historical Commission
P. O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711-2276, 512.463.6092, Fax 512.463.5862



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories