



Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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Spotlight on Mineola

(Population approx. 4,515)

In 1989, Mineola became a designated Texas Main Street City. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Main Street Center established an award for cities earning the honor of “Nationally Accredited Main Street City” beginning in 1999. By meeting certain criteria, Mineola has earned this honor 12 of 15 years since the program began. Since its designation, Mineola Main Street has developed a strong, focused historic downtown district, with more than \$13 million dollars of investment made by private and public funds in the central business district. The Main Street Advisory Board’s mission has been to use historic preservation as a method of restoring a positive image to downtown, while creating economic growth for the community. A noteworthy accomplishment in 2013 was to have its downtown become a National Register Commercial Historic District.

Main Street is the heart and soul of the community, and with the city, merchants, and the community’s strong commitment to revitalizing the historic homes and downtown area, Mineola continues to establish



Historic downtown Mineola (photo credit: Brian Cluff)

itself as a tourist destination. The Main Street Board, under the supervision of the city, continues to make successful strides in historic preservation, economic vitality in downtown, and a concentrated marketing program that will foster continued growth in our community. The Mineola Main Street program is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished when the city, community, and numerous volunteers work together to create and carry out a common vision.

Mineola was established in 1873 with the arrival of the Texas and Pacific Railway and the International and Great Northern Railroad. Its townsite layout and development was strongly

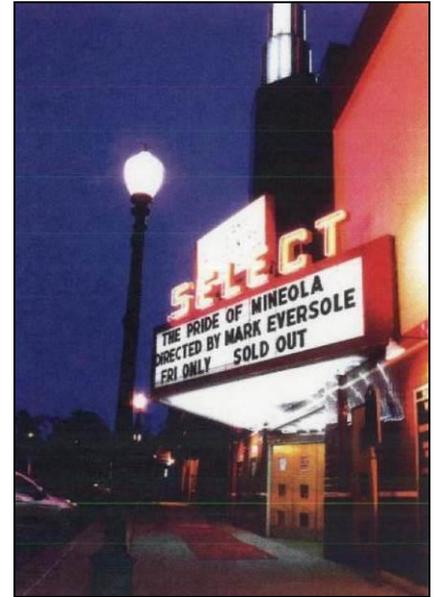
influenced by the railroad tracks. By the 1880s, the regional economy was based largely on agriculture, particularly cotton as a cash crop for area farmers. In 1994, Mineola was the first community to receive funding for a downtown sidewalk project in Texas from a Texas Department of Transportation enhancement grant. In 1996, Amtrak Texas Eagle declared Mineola as a designated station stop and the Gazebo Pavilion project was completed in 1997. From the beginning, the Mineola Main Street Board and its volunteers were devoted to revitalizing the district. In 2009, the Main Street Board re-evaluated their incentive grants, giving historic property owners a \$1,000 matching grant. This year they have added grant money for property

owners who will take their buildings back to the original facade.

As mentioned previously, one of the Mineola Main Street goals was to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, which was accomplished on April 16, 2013. The potential of a historic district was first identified in the 1998 historic resource survey, and confirmed in a survey conducted in 2009. Mineola applied for and received a \$20,000 grant from the Meredith Foundation to cover the cost of the National Register District application. The boundaries for the Mineola downtown historic district include blocks that reflect the retail core of Mineola as well as post-World War

II development. Most of the buildings within the district date between 1885 and 1960, with the majority of them dating from 1900 to 1930.

Brick is the primary building material within the district regardless of style. The majority of the properties are one- and two-story commercial buildings of brick construction—other property types include service stations, civic and institutional buildings, historic markers and signs, transportation properties including a railroad depot, and brick streets. The district is composed of 88 properties (83 buildings, 1 structure, and 4 objects) of which 58 are contributing and 30 are noncontributing.



Sold out *Pride of Mineola* documentary about the historic Select Theater

Listing in the National Register affords properties a measure of protection from the possible impact of federally funded projects, as well as access to technical expertise and grant funds to facilitate restoration and preservation. Income-producing properties are also eligible for federal tax benefits for sympathetic rehabilitation work. This designation has indeed been a proud accomplishment for historic downtown Mineola.

Downtown is vibrant with storefronts full, ongoing building rehabilitations, and Music on the Street musicians who volunteer their time and talent every Saturday in downtown. History is always at the forefront with the Mineola Historical Museum located in the historic post office in the heart of downtown. In September 2012, the Beckham Hotel was purchased and is being restored to its original grandeur. The empty space on South Johnson Street where the roof collapsed is now filled with a two-story building, retail downstairs, and apartment upstairs.



Mineola's Facebook presence touts Main Street and National Register District (top) along with Music on the Streets every Saturday in downtown (bottom).

The owners purchased brick from the old bank building that was demolished in Palestine, Texas. The local jewelers purchased a building on West Broad and renovated the space. The downtown historic district has only one unoccupied space at street level.

Plans have been presented to the Landmark Commission (established in 1995) for loft apartments upstairs over the Poppers Gourmet Popcorn Store. Helping to fund some of these projects is the Mineola Main Street Amtrak Wine Fest, the major fundraiser for downtown projects and incentive grants. The very successful event celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. This unique fundraiser includes a round-trip railroad ride from Mineola to Fort Worth and back on Amtrak's Texas Eagle, food, and tastings of Texas wines.

The Select Theater, in the heart of downtown, is one of the oldest continuously operating movie theaters in the state. This year the Mineola Historical Museum, Main Street, Mineola Tourism, and the Meredith Foundation partnered to create and show "The Pride of Mineola," a documentary film sharing the 93-year history of the theater. The film told the story of the theater through the eyes of 40 patrons. Local preservationists Barbara Musgraves and Sharon Chamblee were integral in preserving the historic theater and in funding the film's director.

For 24 years the Mineola Main Street Advisory Board has used the National Main Street Four-Point Approach™ to bring a dying town back from the brink. It has taken dedicated city officials, volunteers, Main Street managers, strong partnerships, and citizens working together to revitalize and restore the historic district. Hundreds of

people worked thousands of hours proving the National Four-Point Approach™ to revitalizing our downtown works and works well.

Thanks to Lynda Rauscher, Mineola Main Street Manager, for providing this article.

FOCUS ON MAIN STREET DESIGN Sustainability and Historic Preservation, Part 2

Historic buildings possess many existing energy-efficient characteristics that should first be examined before implementing any new energy conservation measures. From the National Park Service and the U.S. Department of the Interior's Preservation Brief 3: Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings, "Buildings are more than the sum of their individual components. The design, materials, type of construction, size, shape, site orientation, surrounding landscape, and climate all play a part in how buildings perform. The key is to understand and identify the existing energy-efficient aspects of the historic building and how they function, as well as to understand and identify the character-defining features to ensure they are preserved." The inherently energy-efficient qualities of historic buildings include (but are not limited to):

Location
Historic buildings are typically centrally located. This increases walkability, utilizes existing infrastructure, and

preserves green space.

Windows, courtyards and light wells

These were historically limited to only those necessary to provide natural ventilation and light, which in today's world helps reduce dependence on energy consumption. Any time the mechanical heating and air conditioning equipment can be turned off and the windows opened for ventilation, energy will be saved.

Relevant to our hot climate, windows were often shaded with features such as roof overhangs, porches, balconies, canopies, awnings, shade trees, interior or exterior shutters, venetian blinds, shades, and curtains to reduce heat gain through the windows. In addition, many historic buildings were designed with the living spaces on the second floor to catch breezes and to escape the radiant heat from the earth's surface. This differs from the approach in many modern buildings where the percentage of windows in a wall can be nearly 100 percent. Windows, historic or not, are poor insulators when compared to walls.



Historic buildings are typically centrally located which preserves green space and promotes walkability.

In addition, most new buildings are not designed for ventilation. Therefore, historic buildings, where the ratio of glass to wall is often less than 20 percent, are better energy conservers than most new buildings.

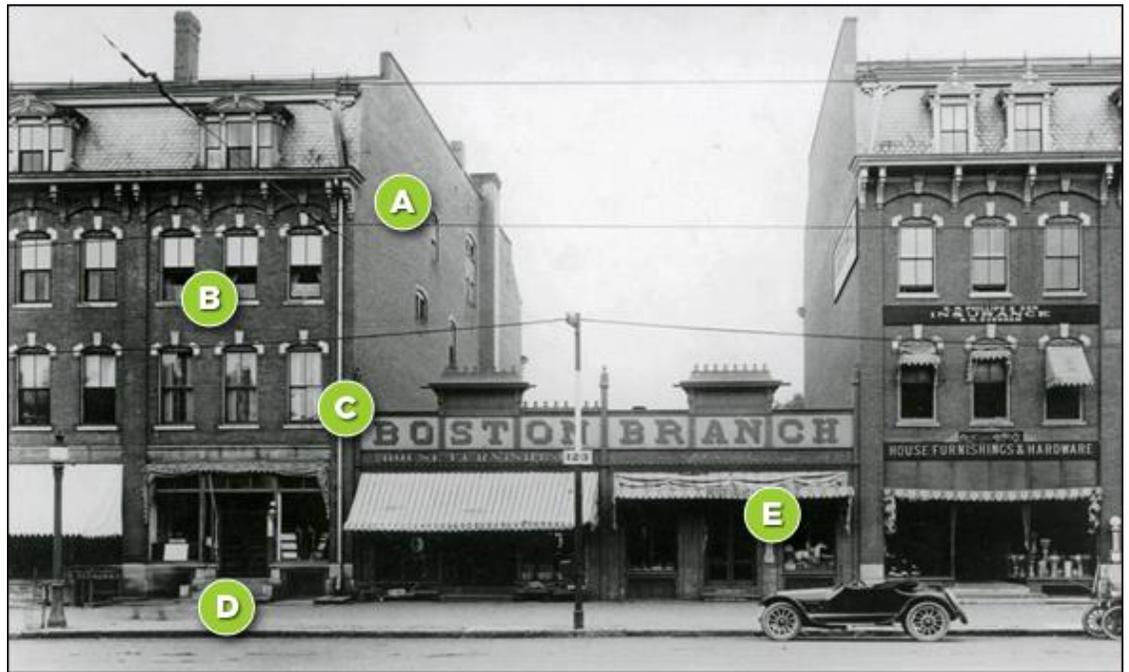
Walls

Thick masonry walls typical of many historic buildings have inherent thermal characteristics that keep the buildings cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. Walls with substantial mass have the advantage of high thermal inertia, which reduces the rate of heat transfer through the wall. This is the reason many older buildings feel cool in the summer without air conditioning.

Floor plans and site orientation

Historically, the floor plan was usually designed to respond to the local climate. Wide, central halls, tall ceilings and large porches were all situated to take advantage of prevailing breezes to maximize air circulation. Often trees were planted to the south to provide summer shade and maximize sun in winter.

Good preservation practice is often synonymous with sustainability. Sometimes all that is needed to make your historic building more green is to undo inappropriate alterations that have, over the years, reduced its energy efficiency. In most cases undoing such alterations is relatively simple and inexpensive.



A: Thick brick walls have greater thermal mass to reduce the amount of energy needed for heating and cooling.

B: Many large, operable windows used for natural light and ventilation.

C: Shared party walls conserve heat by reducing the surface area exposed to extreme temperatures.

D: Compact downtowns with wide sidewalks and streetlights are walkable. Mixed-use upper stories reduce the need for cars.

E: Retractable awnings used for storefronts and upper floors help regulate solar gain and loss and provide shade from the hot summer sun.

Source: National Trust for Historic Preservation, www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/buildings/weatherization/historically-useful-main-street.html#.UmVoAggo7L8

Such alterations include removing a suspended ceiling, uncovering transom windows, and restoring a storefront to its original configuration.

When attempting to reduce energy expenditures, there are two broad courses of action. Passive measures assure that a building and its existing components function as efficiently as possible without the necessity of making alterations or adding new materials. This is a more DIY (Do It Yourself) approach that requires little special skill and usually costs very little money. Preservation retrofitting includes altering the building by making appropriate weatherization measures to improve thermal performance. For these measures it

is highly recommended to bring in professionals with preservation expertise. Undertaking passive measures and preservation retrofitting could result in a 50 percent decrease in energy expenditures in historic buildings.

Passive measures of increasing energy efficiency should be done first as they are particularly appropriate for historic buildings because they do not necessitate building alterations. Passive climate control measures include: lowering the thermostat in winter and raising it in summer; installing programmable thermostats; controlling the temperature only in those rooms actually being used; establishing climate zones with separate controls; using operable

windows, shutters, awnings and vents as originally intended to control interior environment and for ventilation; and using a ceiling fan so that the thermostat can be kept at a higher temperature. If you have a whole-house attic fan, use it. Basic maintenance of existing units can also increase efficiency, such as having mechanical equipment serviced regularly, and cleaning radiators and forced air registers to ensure proper operation. Electricity can be further reduced by lowering the level of illumination through the number of lights (maximize natural light) and investigating higher efficiency lighting types that can be used in existing fixtures, such as fluorescent bulbs. Simply monitoring occupant behavior in regards to energy use, such as turning lights and HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) off when the building/room is not in use, will help to further increase efficiency. These passive measures can save as much as 30 percent of the energy used in a building, all with no major expense or alterations. Passive measures make energy sense, common sense, and preservation sense.

In the December Design topic, specific preservation retrofitting measures will be discussed. Be sure to attend the session Energy Efficiency and Historic Preservation at this year's Texas Downtown Association Conference November 5–8, 2013 in Bastrop.

Thanks to Audrey Holt, former Project Design Assistant for the Texas Main Street Program, for providing this article.

NEWS

Fundraising Tips

Fundraising can be a struggle for Main Street programs when the list of prospects remains unchanged.

Many Main Street programs end up calling on the same businesses year after year, many of whom are already giving all that they can. So how does a Main Street program increase its budget if it relies on these same businesses?

It's difficult but here are some tips and a sample fundraising letter that will help guide you on how to reach new businesses that are not located in downtown or within the city. Read more about how to expand your funding network in the National Main Street Story of the Week:

www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-news/story-of-the-week/2013/fundraising-tips-identifying.html#.UnATGKgo7L8

Texas Historical Commission (THC) Turns 60

On Nov. 17, 2013, the Texas Historical Commission turns 60! Leading up to that momentous occasion, milestones, historical photos, and reminiscences will be shared each day as part of the THC's "60 Years in 60 Days" campaign. Follow along on Facebook or Twitter. #THC60th

Main Street Now and Main Street Weekly

The quarterly National Main Street Journal *Main Street Now* has gone completely digital. The online magazine will still provide the same quality information, resources, strategies and tools that Main Streets across the country need to manage a successful revitalization effort. Access the Fall 2013 issue at www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-now/2013/fall2013/#.UnAUAKgo7L9

Another product of the national center is the digital *Main Street*

Weekly. Texas managers are encouraged to email their noteworthy projects and activities that would interest a national audience to *Main Street Weekly* by contacting Rachel Bowdon at rbowdon@savingplaces.org.

Small Business Saturday



Saturday, November 30 is Small Business Saturday®—a day to celebrate and support small businesses and all they do for local communities. Main Street districts can help small businesses on the busiest shopping weekend of the year by promoting shopping at local retailers. Local businesses can also join in the promotion, see www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba_initiatives/small_business_saturday_2013, get free marketing materials at www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/Shop-Small/, and “Like” Small Business Saturday on Facebook.

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.

Nov. 9, Grand Saline

Grand Saline Main Street Program will present the fifth annual Great American Peanut Butter (PB) Festival in historic downtown. Events will include pictures taken with Buddy McNutty, Peanuttiest pet contest, PB recipe contest, a PB pancake breakfast, PB parade, and PB&J sandwich eating contest. This

year, the festival will attempt to break the world record for the longest PB&J sandwich. See www.greatamericanpeanutbutterfestival.com/#!



Nov. 9, Henderson

The tradition of ribbon cane syrup making will be commemorated at the Annual Heritage Syrup Festival from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Experienced syrup makers operate the museum's antique mule-powered equipment to produce "old fashioned" cane syrup on the Depot Museum grounds. From the museum, the festivities spread six blocks to Heritage Square, which is located in the National Register Historic District. Call 866.650.5529 or see www.hendersontx.us/index.aspx?NID=14

Nov. 21–24, New Braunfels

Experience the German Christmas shopping market,

Weihnachtsmarkt, featuring unique gift items and antiques from distinctive merchants and artisans. The location will be the New Braunfels Civic Center and the market will benefit the Sophienburg Museum and Archives. See www.sophienburg.com.

Nov. 29, Georgetown

The holiday season is kicked off in historic downtown the Friday after Thanksgiving at 5:30 p.m. Along with the annual lighting of the Square, there will be a sing along with the Austin Carolers, cookies and hot chocolate. The courthouse and downtown square will be transformed into a holiday wonderland. See <https://visit.georgetown.org/lighting-of-the-square-2/>

CONFERENCES/ WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS Texas Downtown Association (TDA)/Texas Main Street Annual Downtown Revitalization Conference

Registration is now open for the TDA/Texas Main Street annual conference in Bastrop **Nov. 5–8.**

Keynote speaker for the conference will be Gary Linder, president and CEO of PeopleFund, which provides access to capital, education, and resources to build healthy small businesses. Conference session topics will include Bringing Locals Downtown; Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings; Culinary Districts (field session); Downtown Open Spaces; TIFs, BIDS & more; Successful Alley Projects, and more. The conference will conclude on Friday with local tours. See www.texasdowntown.org.

Calendar of Events

- **Nov. 5–8, 2013, Bastrop**
Texas Downtown Development and Revitalization Conference (annual conference of the Texas Downtown Association/Texas Main Street Program), see www.texasdowntown.org
- **Jan. 28–31, 2014, Seguin**
Texas Main Street New Manager Training (Jan. 28–29) and 2014 Professional Development Series (Jan. 29–31)
- **May 18–21, 2014, Detroit, MI**
National Main Street Conference, theme: Works in Progress
- **June 10–13, 2014, Lufkin**
Texas Main Street New Manager Training (June 10–11) and 2014 Professional Development Series (June 11–13)

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

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories