

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Texas Statewide Preservation Plan Advisory Council Meeting

November 19, 2009; 10am – 2pm

Legislative Conference Center, Capitol Extension, Room E2.002A
Austin, Texas

Present:

Amy Hammons, Andres Tijerina, Brad Patterson, Catherine Sak, Chris Dyer, Derek Satchell, Doug Boyd, Frowisa Brooker-Drew, Jim Bob McMillan, Jim Bruseth, Jonathan Poston, Josh Lasserre, Karla Vining, Krista Schreiner Gebbia, Lisa Hembry, Margaret Hoogstra, Michael Holleran, Pat Mercado-Allinger, Ruth Ann Rugg, Stan Graves, Steve Kline, Steve Tomka, Toni Turner, Tracey Silverman

I. Introductions

- “What do you see as the most important benefit of preserving our state’s historic and cultural resources?”
 - Sense of place and identity
 - There’s an existing ethic and set of values already in Texas that we can link historic preservation too
 - Reality of taking care of places that is inherent to historic preservation = direct contribution to sustainability practices
 - Instilling pride of place and being a Texan – real stories and real places
 - Rich historic places that give all Texans ownership in the state
 - Museum and history communities are connected and we will be best served to coordinate
 - Sense of identity – true to yourself/community that leverages economic benefits; defining who we are not only as Texans but as Americans
 - Attachment and centering to past and those who came before us
 - Intangible cultural benefit; quality of life and environment
 - Preserving sense of place in communities
 - Sense of pride you feel when saving a place, and helping others save places
 - “Necessity” of preservation – we lose a bit of our identity when we lose a place
 - Engagement and diversity
 - Jobs for the THC staff! Archeological resources hold 95% of our history – written records only account for about 5%
 - Turning eyesores into pride – the vital role of historic preservation in rural communities history and economy
 - Vital tool for economic development; Preservation about change and meeting new needs
 - Importance of diversity and grounding us as we ask the question – where are we going?
 - Gives us a first-hand exposure to history; historic buildings speak for themselves
 - Provides an important “orientation” for our culture, communities, etc. True as a value, but also true quantitatively and we need to translate this and educate people in this regard
 - Important to ask ourselves – historic preservation is a benefit to whom? And what kind of benefits are we talking about? Need to find voices to sell this message to broad public and make preservation relevant
 - Identity and attachment to places and people
 - Keeping our stories alive
 - Places and our connection to them hold deep-rooted memories for us
 - Strengthens a city’s fabric and livability
 - Strong connection between historic preservation and a vibrant arts community
 - Preservation helps property values; educational value

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II. Why and how are we planning?

- SWP Purpose/Goals
 - o NPS Requirements
 - Statewide focus – a plan for and about the resources
 - Address full range of historic/cultural resources
 - Address broad trends – economic, social, political, legal, environmental, etc.
 - Coordinate w/ other statewide plans
 - Implementation focused
 - o THC's Goals
 - Bring diverse partners and perspectives together
 - Develop realistic and achievable goals
 - Format of the plan to be application and resource-based
 - On-line format
 - Implementation focused
- Discuss process calendar - Are there any opportunities to enhance this planning process?
 - o Ten-year horizon
 - o How do we encourage other organizations to buy-in and follow plan? Incentives? Grants? Advisory Council buy-in?
- Purpose and role of Advisory Council (comments in italics added by Advisory Council)
 - o Guide plan's development
 - o Perspective, knowledge and experience
 - o Get the word out – connections
 - o *Keep the goals realistic – attached to a budget, staff and resources*
 - o *Focus on making this a “different kind of plan”*
 - o *Best practices for different types of stakeholders and levels of experience*
 - o *Intent of “larger” effort going on*
 - o *Focus on decision makers*
 - o *Help cultivate buy-in for the plan*
 - o *Connection with advocacy and legislature*

III. Focused Conversation

- Looking at all the information and ideas we just covered about the new statewide plan, what words or phrases jump out at you?
 - o Locally-based; understandable and useable; realistic goals; goals that are linked to decision makers; diversity; economic development; benefits; partners; resources; identifying cultural resources;
- What are you excited about?
 - o Collaborate; link to past successes; learn from past mistakes; excited to hear what people have to say, change and enhance Advisory Council ideas; have a strategy at the local level; web-based interactive plan, but concerned about what this might leave out; making a plan accessible to communities that may have not used plan previously; community-based plan available to broader audience; new partners; need-specific: whatever role, individual will be able to find their niche or interest; realistic, but also allowing visionary and ambitious ideas

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- What concerns you?
 - o Actively engaging new audiences; careful about being too comfortable with our proposal; be able to measure success and have measurable success; engage new partners; discuss ways to engage new partners; CHCs distribute ideas w/in community organizations; offer ideas within plan to other orgs; economic challenges of the day, competing with existing social needs (health and human services); cutting funding to historic preservation during these economic times; economic times also is an opportunity; marry existing tools for historic preservation and promote during this economic trend; how to help people use their historic resources to build capacity; foreseeable challenges to consider – 5 legislative sessions in 10 year plan; involve youth, generate new membership and get message to them; funding available for historic preservation available? \$ to keep buildings from deteriorating; incentives outside of box at local level and promote to legislators; dealing with “why even try;” how to accurately predict costs of doing projects in plan?; THC Atlas not used to optimum – link these entries to other information resources; Atlas is out of date but tremendous tool; concerned about people – we’re preaching to the choir and there is a large constituency out there who are actively interested in history that we can tap, need to pursue ethnic diversity in beginning of planning process and build credibility with diverse people of TX; importance and relevance of history on a personal level – this will be required in order to attach individual to the plan; ethnic diversity is opportunity to broaden the preservation experience for everyone
- What impressions do you have (if any) from the last statewide plan?
 - o Good focus on cultural resource identification and education emphasis; more inclusive emphasis needed; intent of last plan to not end up on the shelf – how do we avoid this?; THC internal confusion on how to use to the plan; success story of Fellow’s Program coming from plan; too general and not enough direction for stakeholders; importance of having examples as part of plan – for different types of stakeholder, rural, urban, etc.; not user-friendly and hard to find the entry point; how to relate back to NPS and what they offer us?; problem of a “static” plan and no inherent flexibility; lack of specific, measurable goals; no focus on implementation, especially at local level; internal plans stemming from SWP; ambiguity of whose plan it is and how to execute that message;
- Thinking about other plans you’ve either participated in creating, or used, what made the great ones great? What made the unsuccessful ones...unsuccessful?
 - o Emphasis on inclusive, welcoming input from communities; City of Austin best practice – “Create Austin;” keep moving parts moving – new audiences joining and contributing and continually adding to it; use new technologies, social media to engage and keep everyone up-to-date; value of plan as identity piece for THC and preservation orgs; written by the people for the people about the people; seek input from existing plans and their success
- How can we reach out and engage new audiences in historic preservation?
 - o School and school boards; new immigrant populations (Asian); how do we story tell and tailor programs to be relevant/attractive to diverse audiences
 - o People AND organizations – Preservation Link in Dallas, for example
 - o But what do want to engage them with?
 - o Necessity of preservation as draw for conversation – developing the benefit to them and buy in
 - o Broaden the “tool kit”
 - o People are out there working – e.g. groups working to name post offices and streets – we need to connect with them and start developing a relationship
 - o People can be a facet of this plan in terms of who and how to engage
 - o Allow user to ID themselves within the context of the plan
 - o Recruit spokespeople within communities to spread message

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IV. “What is going on now or on the horizon that we want to address with this plan?”

Authenticity	Relevance	Image	Identities/ Demographics	Sustainability	Information Access	Legal Framework
More urban living	More relevant interpretation of historic sites	THC not on public radar	Development: 10 million more Texans	Integrate preservation and sustainability	Quality of and access to information	Legal issues: Bldg codes; property rights; etc
Sprawl no longer desirable	Address historic homeowner issues	Enhance credibility of THC	Aging population	Strengthen connection between green/sustainable building and preservation	Interactive web media and user participation	Political influence and schisms
Sprawl impacting preservation	Build new preservation audiences	Build THC’s preservation PR	Boomers coming home	Articulate: preservation is sustainability	Impact of modern technology – physical, social and cultural	Decision makers prefer economic development
Globalization results in homogenous architecture	Research: knowledge-based best practices		Engaging new audiences	Community education about historic preservation	Atlas: more and better content; improved user interface	Navigating political realities
Desire for authentic neighborhoods	Use genealogy to link people to places		Value shifts among generations	Make preservation dynamic	Mandate public outreach in CRM	Implementation and enforcement of preservation ordinances (esp. demo)
Awareness of modernist resources	Educate teachers in historic preservation		Non-traditional families	Recession/bad economy	Reach public through technology	
Failing historic infrastructure	Focus on significant dates and celebrate		Changing demographics	Start with small projects	Build preservation community	

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	your history				with technology	
	Reach out to younger and multi-cultural audiences		Multiple identities; multiple histories; underrepresented histories	Budget limitations = slowed progress	Build online preservation resource guide	
	Make history relevant to next generation				Everyone gets a voice with technology	
	Tie cultural resources with lesson plans and curriculum					

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