

MIDWEST OFFICE - HIGHLIGHTS

April 2007

SAVING HISTORIC PLACES

The town of **Arrow Rock**, Missouri (population 53), a National Historic Landmark and Missouri's first Dozen Distinctive Destinations winner (2006), has recently been threatened by a proposed agricultural development. In January 2007, Dennis Gessling applied to the Missouri DNR for permission to build and operate an industrial hog farm, or Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO). The CAFO would house 4,800 hogs just two miles west of Arrow Rock. Opponents of the Gessling CAFO cite concerns about air quality and odor, particularly their potential adverse effects on tourists participating in outdoor activities at Arrow Rock and other nearby historic sites. Concerns about water quality have also been raised.

In February of this year, a bill (HB909) was introduced in the Missouri state House of Representatives which would create a buffer zone around state parks and National Historic Landmark sites. Meanwhile, the *Missouri Farm and Food Preservation Act* (SB 364) was introduced in the state legislature. This bill, supported by Gov. Blunt, the Missouri Farm Bureau, and other powerful agribusiness interests, would prohibit local governments from regulating agricultural operations, thereby nullifying more than 30 local health and zoning ordinances that primarily target large hog farms. The bill has passed the Senate Agricultural Committee and will now be sent to the full chamber.



The Midwest Office sent a letter to Doyle Childers, Executive Director of Missouri DNR, in January, expressing the Trust's strong opposition to approval of the Gessling CAFO permit. At the request of Thomas B. Hall, President of Friends of Arrow Rock, Inc., Dick Moe has also written to Gov. Blunt asking for his support of legislation creating buffer zones around state parks and historic sites. As legislators negotiate SB 364, there is concern that HB 909 will be incorporated into that legislation in an attempt to appease the opposition. HB 909 is unlikely to be passed in its current form, so Dick has asked for Gov. Blunt's general support for protection of state parks and historic sites and appeals to his interest in culture and history.

Designed by architect Philip B. Maher, the **Farwell Building** at 664 North Michigan Avenue had functioned as the home of the Terra Museum of Art for nearly two decades. Its Art Deco and Classical Revival limestone façade was designated a Chicago landmark in 2004. Chicago-based Prism Development Co. and architect Lucien Lagrange worked with the City to develop an unfortunate proposal for a new 40-story luxury condominium tower on an undersized adjacent site, which would require the unstable and damaged limestone skin of the 11-story Farwell to be dismantled, repaired, and then reconstructed on a new building that would house office, retail, and 6 stories of parking for the condos. At a Jan. 11 meeting of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, the Midwest Office, Landmarks Illinois, and Preservation Chicago voiced their strong objections to the proposal, which would set a distressing precedent that would make it much easier to demolish local landmarks through facadism. Much to the surprise of everyone, the Commission voted 4-3 against the City's recommendation and Prism's plan.

Prism then revised their plans slightly, reducing the parking from six levels to four, and adding some minor aesthetic changes that would make the parking levels appear as office space from the street level. The deteriorated limestone skin still would be removed and stored while the building frame was demolished and the new condo tower constructed next door. The City once again supported the project, while preservation organizations and others opposed to the project came out in force to demand that the Commission uphold their previous decision. As expected, the Commissioners' resolve did not last. They voted 7-1 in favor of the proposal. In response to this inexplicable and unjustifiable reversal of the Farwell's fortunes, Landmarks Illinois and the MWO submitted a joint editorial to the Chicago Tribune decrying the City's willingness to destroy its renowned collection of architectural landmarks.

Chicago in February was the site of a national convening on the teardown issue that is destroying the character of historic neighborhoods across the country. The **Midwest Office**, in conjunction with the **Northeast Field Office** and **Mountains Plains Office**, hosted the retreat whose purpose was to bring together a small diverse group of people to share their knowledge and experience on teardowns and advise the National Trust as we shape our work and goals on this issue in the coming years. The outcomes were a three-year vision, strategies and next steps for the National Trust's continuing work on the teardown issue.

REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES



*Gaylord Building
Lockport, IL*

The **Lockport (IL) Tourism Council** has formed to promote the heritage resources of the downtown Lockport which is also the location of the Gaylord Building, a National Trust Site. The **Midwest Office** actively participated in the early formation of the Tourism Council and most recently, facilitated the development of the Council's 2007 Work Plan.

The Tourism Council will work to ensure that the City's Visitor Center resident in the Gaylord Building; the City's downtown plan addresses the tourism issues; the tours, brochures and other marketing tools are coordinated with the larger Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau; the opening hours of all museums in downtown are coordinated; and a visitor website is created and maintained.

ENGAGE THE PUBLIC

On March 7, **Mineral Point, Wisconsin** was named one of the National Trust's **2007 Dozen Distinctive Destinations**. Named for the abundant lead discovered there in 1828, Mineral Point is also home to the Wisconsin Field Office of the Trust. Mineral Point was selected from 63 destinations in 27 states that were nominated by individuals, preservation organizations and local communities.

Announcement of the award had to be kept top secret until the official press release on March 7. The DDD Planning committee planned day long series of events to celebrate the surprise announcement. Pointers were invited to a press conference and party where a "big surprise would be announced." Secrets in small towns can be hard to keep and rumors about the surprise announcement were abundant, was Oprah coming to town? Is it true the Broadway musical *CATS* was headed to Mineral Point? The "cat was let out of the bag" at a press conference held at the historic Mineral Point Opera House (1913). That evening the community celebrated the good news at a party at the Old Royal Inn, built in 1901. At the party, NTHP Program Officer Jeanne Lambin presented the award to Mayor Gregg Bennett who remarked, "the reason why we get this kind of award is because of you, the people of Mineral Point who work hard to make it what it is." Over 150 citizens turned out to celebrate the announcement. The city plans a series of celebrations in honor of its listing as one of the Trust's DDD's. Further information is available at www.mineralpoint.com.



Citizens of Mineral Point, WI, celebrate the town's selection as one of the National Trust's 2007 Dozen Distinctive Destinations.

LEAD THE PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

Last summer, the **Midwest Office** began to build partnerships with the American Planning Association and other affinity organizations around the teardown issue. The subject of the March APA monthly Audio/Web Conference, which draws over 1,000 APA members, was ***Maintaining Neighborhood Character***. The live broadcast addressed the issues of change and how neighborhoods are responding to teardowns and promoting viable, character-rich neighborhoods. The Midwest Office facilitated participation of Jim Lindberg of the **Mountains Plains Office** who was a featured speaker.

The National Trust Midwest Region staff attended the conference at the APA facility in Chicago and the members of the Chicago Suburban Alliance were also invited to participate. (The ***Chicago Suburban Alliance*** is a group of 90 representatives from 32 different communities in the Greater Chicagoland Area who have come together, without any advertising or promotion, to share

information with each other on how to manage the problem of loss of community character as a result of teardowns and infill development.)

In addition to the National Trust and the APA, the conference also was co-sponsored by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

FUNDING FOR PRESERVATION BY THE NATIONAL TRUST



Photo courtesy of City of Iowa City

Following a destructive tornado in April 2006, the MWO awarded the **City of Iowa City** and the **Friends of Historic Preservation** a Thorne Intervention Fund grant to help restore historic buildings and neighborhoods damaged by the storm. The award provided a seed fund to incentivize restoration using historically appropriate materials in compliance with preservation guidelines and was matched dollar-for-dollar by the Friends of Historic Preservation. The Historic Preservation Commission also secured the cooperation of a number of local businesses to provide discounts for historically appropriate substitute materials, including The Salvage Barn, operated by the Friends of Historic Preservation, which offered property owners free windows and doors for tornado repairs; and the State Historical Society of Iowa provided \$250,000 in emergency Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP) funds to assist homeowners with preservation-sensitive repairs.

As the one year anniversary of the tornado approaches, the recovery process is almost complete. Most of the houses on Iowa Avenue, Washington Street, and College Street have been restored, while work continues on a few structures. 934 Iowa Avenue was considered for demolition, but a new owner took great pride in restoring it. The historic front porch, integral to the house's character, was restored with the help of the Thorne Intervention Fund grant.

In March, the **Midwest Office** and the **Department of Development** secured a \$100,000 gift from Dr. Helen L. Luyben in memory of her grandfather Dr. Landes. The **Landes Fund** will provide grants to organizations across the state of Iowa, with a preference for those located in Mt. Ayr, to enable preservation of historic sites, buildings, structures and districts in jeopardy and empower local communities to plan and utilize their historic resources.