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## CONVENING FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN SITES SHOWS THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

On a beautiful and clear winter evening in downtown Providence, Rhode Island, 45 preservationists representing African American sites from across the Northeast region gathered at Bravo Brasserie for a night of engagement. As workshop participants mingled with one another, there was a buzz of excitement and the formation of many new relationships.

Over the next two days, January 22-23rd, 24 representatives from African American sites from Maine to New Jersey convened at the historic Nightingale-Brown House on Brown University's campus to address the specific needs of African Americans historic places. The workshop, titled "The Business of Preservation," promoted strategies for encouraging a more business-minded approach in preservation stewardship. Not only was the educational content an important part of this program, but also the sense of community that was fostered has laid a solid foundation for future endeavors between the African American sites and the National Trust.

One attendee summed it up best, "It has been an opportunity to gain so much new knowledge and has provided a source of renewed enthusiasm." The workshop was a positive and inspiring experience for all involved, and couldn't have been done without the generous support of our partners, the John Nicholas Brown Center at Brown University and The 1772 Foundation.

Visit Preservation Nation to learn more about this workshop and to see the updated Saving African American Historic Places landing page with content including stories, profiles, videos, and the places that matter to all of us. <http://www.preservationnation.org/forum/african-american-historic-places/news/the-northeast-african-workshop.html>.



Participants from the African American sites convening gather for a group photo at the Nightingale-Brown House. Photo Credit: Max van Balgooy

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Throughout the month of February, the National Trust is honoring **Black History Month** with African American heritage in preservation and saving African American historic places and communities. Visit our website to learn more: <http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/diversity/african-american-heritage-in-preservation/>

# PRESIDENT OBAMA'S 2011 BUDGET REQUEST COULD ELIMINATE AND REDUCE IMPORTANT PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

Just last month this newsletter's cover story was a feature on 20 projects in the Northeast Region awarded Save America's Treasures grants in 2009, and told of the impact that National Trust grants and programs have had on these projects. On February 1st, President Obama released his Budget Request and we learned about the proposed termination and reduction to funding for critical historic preservation programs, including zeroed-out funding of the Save America's Treasures (SAT) program within the Historic Preservation Fund, and a reduction to the National Recreation and Preservation account by \$17 million, which includes the elimination of the Preserve America grants and a proposed 50% cut to National Heritage Areas.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is very concerned that these important programs, that preservationists have fought hard to create and fund, have taken such a big hit. We will be calling on all of you over the next few weeks to send the message to Congress that these programs are both effective and essential to national preservation efforts. And, to job creation and economic vitality of our communities. Please stay tuned to see how you can help in these efforts. To stay up-to-date, follow Patrick Lally's blog on Preservation Nation. Pat is the Congressional Affairs Director for the National Trust. You can find his blog here: <http://blogs.nationaltrust.org/preservationnation/?cat=93>.

## STORIES FROM THE FIELD

By Melissa Jest, Field Representative, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

When I stumbled on a Gothic revival style stone church in lower North Philadelphia, I imagined my first preservation victory as a field representative. I knew it would take time to rally the various neighbors and preservationists who would support the church's preservation and reuse, and to locate the owner of the property who had left the church open to vandals and rain. What I had not considered was that the quaint church would not have a chance.

The cornerstone reads "AME Zion Church" with a date of 1940. It looks to be much older than the cornerstone implies and seems to predate many of the surrounding buildings. The church rests at the corner of 19th and Poplar Streets, a fairly busy intersection active with foot and car traffic. When asked to tell more about the seemingly abandoned church, the neighborhood postman said the owner was planning to demolish the property to make room for condominiums. "When I saw you taking pictures, I thought they were ready to take her down," he added, motioning towards the digital camera in my hand.

I reported my find to my executive director John Gallery and to my contacts at Partners for Sacred Places, headquartered in Philadelphia. While sympathetic to the situation, Gallery and PSP executive director Bob Jaeger advised me that many other sacred places faced the same challenge - having owners who sought demolition. The postman's report was also confirmed by the president of the neighborhood association, Penelope Giles. Ms. Giles agreed that the church represented a time in the neighborhoods history, but she lamented that the owner's promise to build new housing construction may have put the group on the fence. Our discussion quickly turned from strategies to stay any demolition, to one of possible volunteers who might document the building for the record.

However, my unwitting discovery of this gutted stone church in lower North Philadelphia leads to a larger opportunity to designate a neighborhood established as William Penn's vineyard. My research into the church revealed that the surrounding neighborhood - Francisville - dates back to the founding of Pennsylvania. On a walking tour of the larger neighborhood, I found that it had lost many buildings to the city's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI). However, Francisville's historic core was relatively intact. North 19th Street is the western boundary of a triangular historic core that has been determined eligible for local register designation in 2003.

In 2006, Ms. Giles and her Francisville neighbors created a redevelopment plan for their blighted neighborhood. Fortunately, the plan recommended guidelines and designation for the historic core. I followed up with Ms. Giles who invited technical assistance. Due to the current economy, the church still stands. I can only hope any efforts to document and designate will have a positive overflow effect on this endangered sacred place and its owner.



Poplar Street AME Zion Church is one of two remaining historic AME Zion edifices left in Philadelphia.  
*Photo credit: Melissa Jest*

## 4 NORTHEAST COMMUNITIES NAMED 2010 DOZEN DISTINCTIVE DESTINATIONS

On February 3rd the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced the 2010 Dozen Distinctive Destination winners, four of which come from the Northeast Region. **Simsbury, CT, Provincetown, MA, Rockland, ME, and Chestnut Hill, PA**, are being honored for their work to preserve their built heritage and local culture while offering an authentic visitor experience. With dynamic downtowns, cultural diversity, attractive architecture, cultural landscapes and a strong commitment to historic preservation, sustainability and revitalization, these towns have taken forceful action to protect their character and sense of place. This year we focused on destinations that are working hard to foster a local green ethic by operating as sustainable communities.



Methodist Church in downtown Simsbury, CT.  
*Photo courtesy of Simsbury Main Street Partnership.*

New in 2010 is a public voting component to determine which of the 12 destinations nationwide will be the **2010 Fan Favorite**. Vote from February 3-28 for your favorite city or town on this year's list. The winner of the popular vote will be announced on March 1, 2010. Visit [www.PreservationNation.org/ddd](http://www.PreservationNation.org/ddd) for official rules, to learn more about this year's destinations, and to begin voting!

## UPCOMING DATES, DEADLINES AND EVENTS

### FEBRUARY

**February 16** is the **Economical Historic Home: Energy Efficiency Workshop for the Old House Owner** in Newport, R.I. and sponsored by Historic New England. The fully-restored Buliod-Perry House (c. 1750) in the heart of historic Newport is the setting for this workshop. Experts will present information and demonstrations on insulation, weatherizing the building envelope (walls, doors, roof, etc.), wood window repair and restoration, retrofitting for efficient heating systems, and tax credits and funding sources. For more information and to RSVP, visit: [www.newportrestoration.org](http://www.newportrestoration.org).

**February 26-28** is the **9th Annual Underground Railroad Conference 2010** on Gender, Class, Race and Ethnicity in Abolitionism, on the Underground Railroad, and in the Struggle. Hosted by Russell Sage College, Troy, NY, and organized by Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc., in Collaboration with Rensselaer County Historical Society. Follow this link for more information: <http://www.ugrworkshop.com/>.

### MARCH

**March 1** is the deadline for **Session proposal submissions for the National Preservation Conference** in Austin, Texas, October 27-30, 2010. Join us in shaping Preservation's newest frontiers—the Next American City, and the Next American Landscape. To get more information on the conference, its new format, and to propose a session through the online submission system visit: [www.PreservationNation.org/conference](http://www.PreservationNation.org/conference).

**March 6** is **Preservation in New York: The Next Generation Preservation Conference 2010** held by New York City's Historic Districts Council. For more information, visit: <http://www.hdc.org/Conference2010.htm>.

**March 1** is the deadline for nominations for the National Trust's **2010 National Preservation Awards**. Each year we celebrate the best of preservation by presenting National Preservation Awards to individuals and organizations whose contributions demonstrate excellence in historic preservation. For more information, visit: <http://www.preservationnation.org/take-action/awards/>

**March 9** is the deadline for grants to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency which is making \$2 million available in 2010 to reduce pollution at the local level through the **Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program**. CARE is a community-based program that works with county and local governments, tribes, non-profit organizations and universities to help the public understand and reduce toxic risks from numerous sources. For more information about the grants: <http://www.epa.gov/care/> or email Dennis O'Connor: [oconnor.dennis@epa.gov](mailto:oconnor.dennis@epa.gov).

# UPCOMING DATES, DEADLINES AND EVENTS

## MARCH (CON'T)

**March 18** is the **3rd Annual Statewide Smart Growth Conference "Old Challenges, New Opportunities"** in Hartford, CT hosted by 1000 FRIENDS of Connecticut. For more information, contact: [info@1000FRIENDS-ct.org](mailto:info@1000FRIENDS-ct.org).

**March 20-21** is the **Old House and Barn Expo** in Manchester, New Hampshire. The Expo is back by popular demand with something for everyone interested in old buildings and all that is involved in renovating and owning one. This year will have special emphasis on energy efficiency in older buildings and window preservation. For more information, contact: New Hampshire Preservation Alliance - (603) 224-2281 or [www.nhpreservation.org](http://www.nhpreservation.org).

## APRIL

**April 3** is the **Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia's Old House Fair**. If you are the owner of an older or historic home, or thinking of becoming one, make plans to attend the Fair which will feature 70+ exhibition booths of preservation professionals and vendors will offer hands-on demonstrations by specialty craftspeople. For more information, visit: <http://preservationalliance.com/events/oldhousefair/oldhousefair.php>.

**April 8-10** is the **8th Annual Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference** in Malvern, PA. The Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference is Pennsylvania's annual training, networking and inspirational event for those involved with private and public land conservation. Visit the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association's website for more information: <http://conserveland.org/conferences/2010>

**March 31** is the deadline for nominations for the **World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize** awarded biennially to an innovative architectural or design solution that has preserved or enhanced a Modern landmark or group of landmarks. The first of its kind, the award acknowledges the growing threats—neglect, deterioration, or even demolition—now facing significant works of Modernism, and recognizes the architects and designers who help ensure their rejuvenation and long-term survival. Its purpose is to raise public awareness of the influential role Modernism plays in our architectural heritage, and recognize Modern buildings as sustainable structures with vital futures. Visit the World Monuments Fund website for more nomination information: <http://www.wmf.org/content/call-nominations>.

**April 24** is **The Landmark Society of Western New York's 24th Annual Regional Preservation Conference "Saving the Past, Sustaining the Future: Preservation Strategies for Trying Times"**. If you work with, live in, or want to save a historic property, you won't want to miss this event in Palmyra, NY. For more information, visit: <http://www.landmarksociety.org/events/events.html?CA=9>.

**April 21** is the lecture **Architecture Through Urban Design** at the Boston Public Library, Raab Lecture Hall, Boston, MA. Sponsored by Boston Preservation Alliance, BSA president Lawrence A. Chan FAIA, shares observations on built environments enhanced and made more meaningful through urban design. For more information, visit: <http://www.bostonpreservation.org/future/index.htm>.

### NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION PARTNERS AND ADVISORS IN THE NORTHEAST REGION

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Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation; Maine Preservation; New Hampshire Preservation Alliance; Preservation Delaware; Preservation League of New York State; Preservation Massachusetts; Preservation New Jersey; Preservation Pennsylvania; Preserve Rhode Island; Preservation Trust of Vermont

#### Local Partners

CT: New Haven Preservation Trust ME: Greater Portland Landmarks MA: Boston Preservation Alliance, Historic Boston, Inc., Preservation Worcester, Waterfront Historic Area League (WHALE) NY: Landmark Society of Western New York, Municipal Art Society of New York, The New York Landmarks Conservancy, Preservation Buffalo Niagara PA: Lower Merion Conservancy, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia RI: Providence Preservation Society

#### Main Street Programs

Boston Main Streets (Boston, MA); Connecticut Main Street Center; Delaware Main Street Program; Main Street New Jersey; Maine Downtown Center; New Hampshire Main Street Center; Office of Community Development (PA); Pennsylvania Downtown Center; Vermont Downtown Program; Western Erie Canal Main Streets (NY)

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