

# **THE OSGUTHORPE FARM**

**Report on Team Investigations of  
Strategies for Preserving and Using  
The Osguthorpe Farm  
Park City, UT**

**National Trust for Historic Preservation  
Preservation Leadership Training Institute  
Park City, Utah  
June, 1997**

**PRESERVATION  
LEADERSHIP  
TRAINING**

**Park City, Utah  
June 21-28**

**Sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation**

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Utah Rural Development Council  
Park City Municipal Corporation  
US West Foundation**



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# The Team Project

In addition to classroom training, Preservation Leadership Training participants completed two team projects designed to provide the community of Park City with new ideas and strategies for historic preservation, while giving participants a chance to put their preservation skills to work on two important preservation issues.

The team projects focused on the Osguthorpe Farm, a city-owned open space property containing a significant historic farmstead; and the Burnis Watts property, a residential property located in a neighborhood undergoing transition from residential to commercial. The fifty participants were divided into two groups of five teams each. Each team was given a different assignment related to one of the two projects.

Through background materials provided to participants, interviews with public officials and on-site observations, the ten teams developed strategies for preserving and using the Osguthorpe Farm and Burnis Watts property and presented them at a videotaped public presentation at the Marsac Municipal Building in Park City on Friday, June 27, 1997.

## **The Issues**

The lack of a long-term plan for the site is not due to lack of interest. To the contrary, it is due to keen community interest and city concern about not destroying the value of the site by doing too much. The future of the Osguthorpe Farm has always generated extremely passionate, diverse, and strong feelings by Park City and Summit County residents who care deeply about this fragile site and the rural life it represents.

To many, The Farm represents the last vestige of Park City's agricultural past and because of this, public interest is consistently intense. Public input and planning for The Farm began as soon as Park City purchased it and many opportunities for formal public input about the essential character and future of the site followed. Each gave the public a chance to articulate what they feel is most essential to maintain community character in the face of unprecedented growth and development. Noteworthy opportunities for public input related to the Osguthorpe Farm have included: the Landmarks Symposium (1992), Trails Master Plan Update (1992), CommunityVision '93 (1993), development and adoption of the Entry Corridor Master Plan (1995), and General Plan Update (1993-1997).

In 1991, the city and Park City Chamber/Bureau sponsored a study by Cooper/Roberts Architects on the technical feasibility of reuse options including: 1) minimal improvements to retain the barn as a "cultural icon" without human occupation and 2) renovating the barn for Chamber/Bureau or other uses. Interim uses for the site have been cross country ski tracks on the meadow, and grazing. Early public input identified a full range of potential uses for The Farm, from no impact to low to high impact options. In the years since, public sentiment has grown for no or low impact use, limiting the range of reuse options that may be acceptable today. While the public is vitally interested in the site, the only steps most seem to agree on are to use the site as part of the local trails system and to do nothing.

While the community proceeds cautiously, time is not on the side of the Osguthorpe Farm. Each structure continues to face the threat of deterioration due to the elements, lack of investment in the physical structure and potential vandalism. There is little support for any use that is not a low impact option.

The Farm presents much more than an issue of historic building preservation. Decisions about the future of the Osguthorpe Farm require balancing the protection and enhancement of the site's historic, ecological, and scenic attributes. Historic preservationists and archaeologists recognize the historic significance of the buildings *and* site, The Farm's value as a cultural landscape and intact farm complex goes beyond the significance of a single, prominent building -- the barn.

# **TEAM PROJECTS**

## **Team #1**

# **"LEAVE THE BARN ALONE"**

## **The Farm Stabilization Plan**

by

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**Jane Beckwith, Utah**

**Lena Fowler, Arizona**

**Juli Polanco, California**

**Lynn Shaffer, Maine**

**Jay D. Vogt, South Dakota**

### **Introduction**

Recent development trends in the West are rapid and tend to create a "sameness" in our built environment. As such, many communities today have difficulty identifying something that tells you that you are "there." Park City(City)is distinctive with its diverse, strong visual images of ski slopes, historic downtown and the McPolin/Osguthorpe Farm (hereafter referred to as The Farm.)

Park City recognizes this site as an important visual and character defining feature, inviting all to enjoy its pleasures. Representatives of the community and citizens interviewed during the course of the Preservation Leadership Training (PLT) consistently expressed this sentiment. Artists' and photographers' impressions are sold in many shops and galleries. A painting by Jan Perkins illustrates this point (see attachment 2).

Information gathered during the week revealed that the community and visitors value the Farm. It is apparent that the buildings and natural resources have significant appeal for their positive visual impact year round.

Farm Team #1 studied the feasibility of the concept of "leaving the farm alone." In this scenario, the site and historic structures would simply be stabilized for retention as a cultural and visual icon, with minimal or no impact use.

Current public perception presumes that the temporary stabilization measures undertaken to date are sufficient to achieve this desire. This team believes, however, that additional stabilization will be necessary if this option is to be viable. The following proposal intends to provide additional data in order for the community and its leaders to make the most informed decision possible. (see map of farm complex -- attachment #1)

## **Recreational and Natural Resource Considerations**

As a key component to preserving the visual beauty and open space, the City should establish a policy on any impact on the pasture/meadow land. The natural resources of the farm property will be best served by a long-term strategy that balances current use, recreational cross-country skiing, and on-trail bicycling with flora and fauna. In order to maintain the lush visual appeal, the City needs to prevent soil erosion and fire damage which might result from over use.

Regulation of the open space is, of course, an important component to the success of this project. Should hundreds of bikers, hikers, and other recreational users utilize the meadow, the visual dynamics of the open space would be compromised.

## **Financial Considerations**

It is recommended that the City consult with an architect and structural engineer to determine the actual, present dollar cost to stabilize the Farm as described. If the City decides to undertake some of the stabilization work itself, the financial investment to complete the project will decrease.

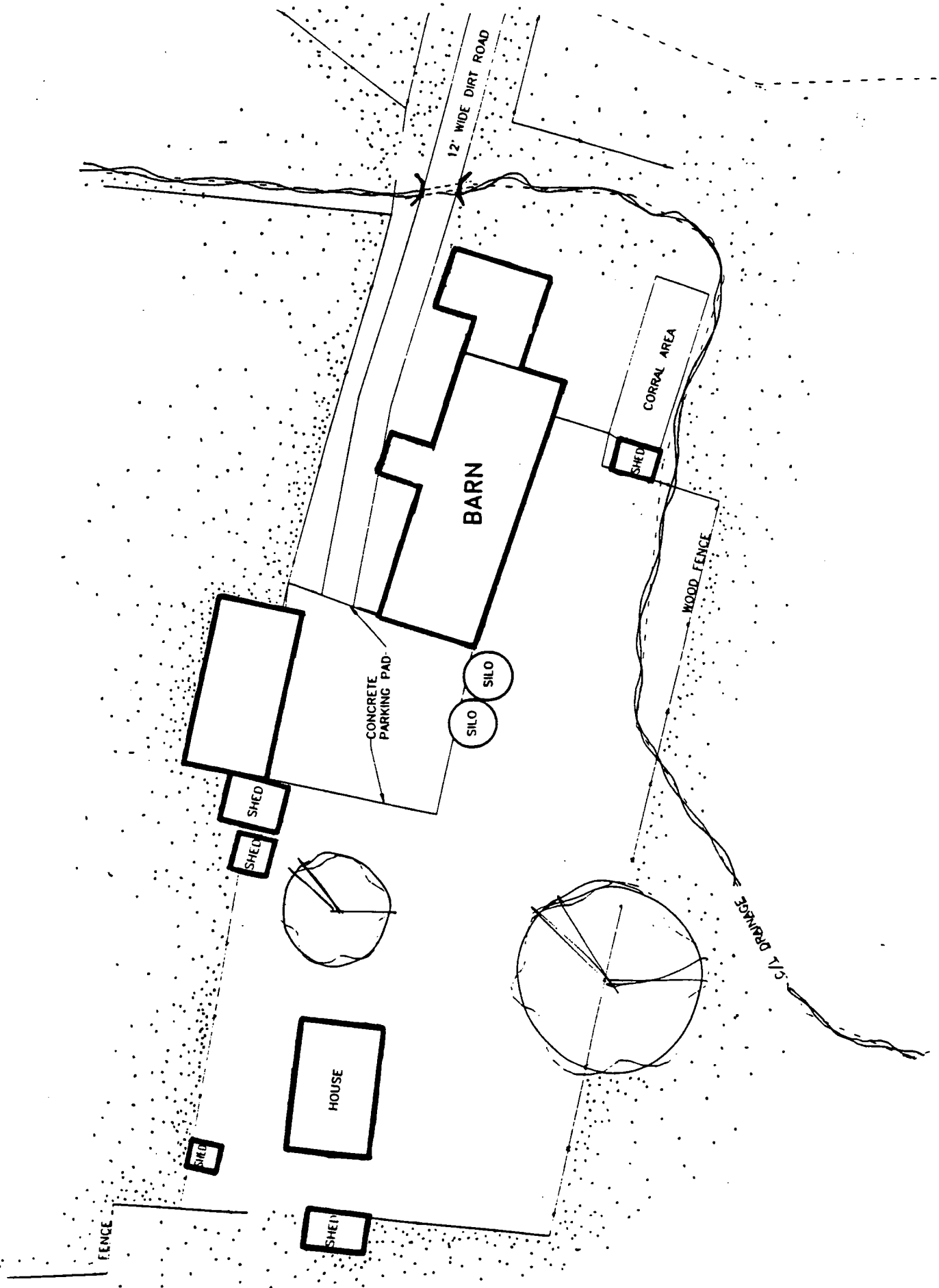
## **Maintenance Considerations**

Along with the stabilization of the buildings, maintenance of the property is key to long-term preservation of the Farm.

Maintenance of the roofs of all buildings will be needed to prevent leakage. Exterior paint maintenance will prevent weathering. Positive drainage away from the buildings should also be provided.

Control of the landscape immediately surrounding the buildings will reduce damage from animals and insects. Further maintenance measures as outlined in a land management plan should be undertaken. This also would include fire prevention and security measures.

Options for security range from increased lighting and fencing to an on-site caretaker or alarms. Exercising the caretaker option might require reconstruction of the McPolin farmhouse, thus increasing cost.



## **Team #2**

### **LOW IMPACT USES OF THE FARM**

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**Tamara Louden-Sundahl, Colorado**  
**Winnie DelliQuadri, Colorado**

#### **The Charge & Methods**

Team #2's charge was to summarize potential low intensity human occupation uses and to select a "best use" for the site. To summarize the potential low impact uses for the site, we reviewed multiple city and community planning documents, conducted interviews with city officials and community members, and conducted a focus group with community residents. Based on our compilation, analysis and evaluation of this information, we selected a "best use" (or in this case "best uses") for the site, which we will describe in detail.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

We defined low impact uses for the Farm to be occasional use by small numbers of people with very limited parking. A low impact use is one that is reversible. Additionally, while an isolated action may be low impact, ten low impact uses could add up to high impact. Knowing this, we tried to balance our recommendations so that the overall effect is minimal.

The criteria we used to evaluate each low impact option were those listed in the Park City Entry Corridor Master Plan. These criteria are:

- ✓ Visual Quality
- ✓ Historic Quality/Integrity
- ✓ Natural Environment
- ✓ Wildlife Habitat
- ✓ Water Quality
- ✓ Educational Opportunities
- ✓ Recreational Opportunities
- ✓ Future Options

**Picnicking:** Picnicking is allowed along the stream on DOW land. Picnic areas would have little to no impact on the visual quality, historic quality, and water quality at the Farm. And, if the picnic area were located in the farmstead, it would have little to no impact on the natural environment and wildlife habitat - in fact, it would contain this activity to a site that would best withstand the impact. In addition to high recreation opportunity and preservation of future options, there is a potential for educational opportunities. As such, this use would benefit the Farm.

#### Educational Options

**Site interpretation:** Signage around the Farm with information on historic overview, traditional farm practices, and information on archaeology would provide enormous education opportunities at the Farm. Visual quality, historic quality, natural environment, wildlife habitat, water quality, recreation opportunity, and future options would be preserved. We feel this is a good option for the farm.

**Art classes in and around the barn** on an occasional basis would have little to no effect on the visual quality, historic quality, natural environment, wildlife habitat and water quality. Further, this option would provide educational opportunities.

**Interpretive farm (living history) and museum:** These options would preserve the historic quality of the farm while providing abundant educational opportunities. There is a potential for adverse impact on the visual quality, recreational opportunities, natural environment, wildlife habitat and water quality given the numbers of people associated with such uses. Given these considerations, and the concentration of people at the farm buildings for such uses, we do not recommend these uses on an ongoing basis but feel they would work as special events.

#### Open Space Options

All open space options that involve preserving and protecting the Farm, its buildings and lands, as cultural, scenic, and natural landscapes have a positive impact on the visual quality, historic quality, natural environment, wildlife habitat, water quality and future option criteria. Further, open space and landscape options would provide potentials for educational opportunities and passive recreational opportunities in the future.

#### Special Events and Other Uses

**Special Events:** Occasional, small special events, such as cowboy poetry readings, living history weekends and barn dances, would have little or no negative impact on the majority of master plan criteria while offering potential educational and recreational opportunities. As such, small special events are recommended, so long as they are reviewed on a case by case basis. Large or continuous special events would negatively affect the visual quality and natural environment at the site and are not recommended.

### Recreation Components

1) Perimeter hiking/biking trails

Issues: Sensitivity to the site

It is this group's belief that the hiking/biking trail would be least intrusive if it followed the perimeter of the property (as the "temporary" trail is presently planned). A single connecting trail could give access to the farm buildings, allowing the majority of the hikers and bikers to view the farm without going directly through the farm building site.

2) Cross country ski touring trails

Use of the McPolin house as a touring center or warming hut needs further review. From the information gathered by the team it appears that the cross country ski program is working well with little impact. Some concerns have been expressed with regard to larger groups now being brought to the site for competitions, etc. We believe that it would be of value for the touring company and the City to evaluate the needs of both the touring company and the site before allowing any further expansion.

### Education Components

1) Nature loop (creek area) This would be a trail loop that was in the wetlands and creek area. While it would be accessible from the bike trail not everyone would choose to use it. Small interpretive signs would give the public information about the wildlife, habitat and conservation practices.

2) Information on the farm site, including signage on:

Historic and cultural overview

Farm history and practices

Historic archaeology - There are many historical archeological sites on the property. There is evidence of an earlier residence, a mill, a cistern, refuse deposits etc.. With signage and possibly a small "outdoor museum" exhibit the public could better understand the uses of the property prior to the mining industry in Park City. With better understanding of an area by the public there is generally more sentiment and effort to preserve an area.

3) Local art programs in and around the Barn

The barn has long been a magnet to artists. It could be wonderful to work with local art groups to coordinate weekend or day long art events at the barn. This would be limited numbers bussed to the site. There is also the possibility of having local schools sponsor small children's groups to the site.

### Small Special Events

In order to accommodate special event groups it would be necessary to establish criteria to evaluate each event. We would suggest off-site parking. Fairs or other high capacity events are probably not appropriate for this site.

Occasional and small

Uses accepted on a case by case basis

To truly understand all of the resources that the Farm offers, we recommend that the City conduct a site inventory of cultural resources at the Farm, including archaeology. This survey will be critical in the development of an overall Preservation Plan for the Farm. An overall plan will help provide a vision for the Farm and enhance communication and coordination in the use and management of the Farm. Nominating the Farm to the National Register of Historic Places and placing a conservation easement on the lands surrounding the farm will both recognize the significance of the Farm and its buildings and open space to the community, and will also help protect and preserve these resources for the future.

Finally, making one individual, a site manager, responsible for coordinating use, development, and maintenance of the site by multiple City departments and vendors, will ensure that the site is maintained and preserved in a manner that will retain its historic integrity, natural and cultural landscapes, and wildlife elements.

### **Possible Funding Opportunities**

This project comes with a price tag. In addition to committing Park City general funds and grant funds already received to rehabilitation work at the Farm, further funding options should be explored. Our proposed use for the Farm will generate some income from the site. Further funding can be derived through the formation of a “Friends of the Farm” organization to carry out public education and fundraising activities for the Farm. In addition, the following federal and state resources should be investigated to determine what funding opportunities exist for the Farm.

- Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancement funds
- Community Development Block Grant funds
- Certified Local Government planning grant funds
- National Trust planning grant funds
- Utah Economic Business Development funds

### **Conclusion**

The Farm is a wonderful resource. Park City has shown great vision as a community in taking the steps to preserve and protect the Farm for the community. We encourage planning efforts to view the Farm, with all of its buildings and the surrounding lands, as a whole.

In working on this project, we first started by looking at the Barn, then the Farm, then the farmstead and finally the landscape as a whole. Park City has a unique opportunity with the Farm. The site is important in its entirety. The relationships of the buildings to each other, the buildings to the landscape, and the landscape to the past, is the essence of this project. To separate these issues and deal with them individually is not only next to impossible, but would also deprive Park City of a unique historic resource. Thus it is our recommendation that any design review or action be considered in terms of the entire farmstead.

## **Team #3**

### **THE OSGUTHORPE/McPOLIN FARM AND THE 2002 WINTER OLYMPICS**

**Nicholas Powers, Nebraska  
Ree Mobley, Colorado  
Shalie Gasper, New Mexico  
Jane Jenkins, Texas  
Elizabeth Anderson, Hawaii**

#### **Introduction**

Team #3 was charged with answering the question: "Can the Winter Olympics leave a lasting legacy at the Osguthorpe Farm?"

The task involved the preparation and presentation of a theoretical plan for short-term use of the Osguthorpe Farm during the 2002 Winter Olympics. This plan addresses the following elements:

- How would the community react to a defined, short-term, yet potentially high impact use of the farm if they knew that it would be returned to them in better condition without the outlay of public funds?
- Could a balance be achieved between the potential impacts and the opportunities?;
- What short-term uses might be permitted?;
- What design and performance criteria would have to be in place before any short-term private use could be considered?
- What elements would a short-term use agreement with a private entity include and how would these protect the site?

#### **Background**

On February 9, 2002, athletes representing some 80 countries of the world will come together to commence the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. For two weeks, Utah will host the global athletic competition.

