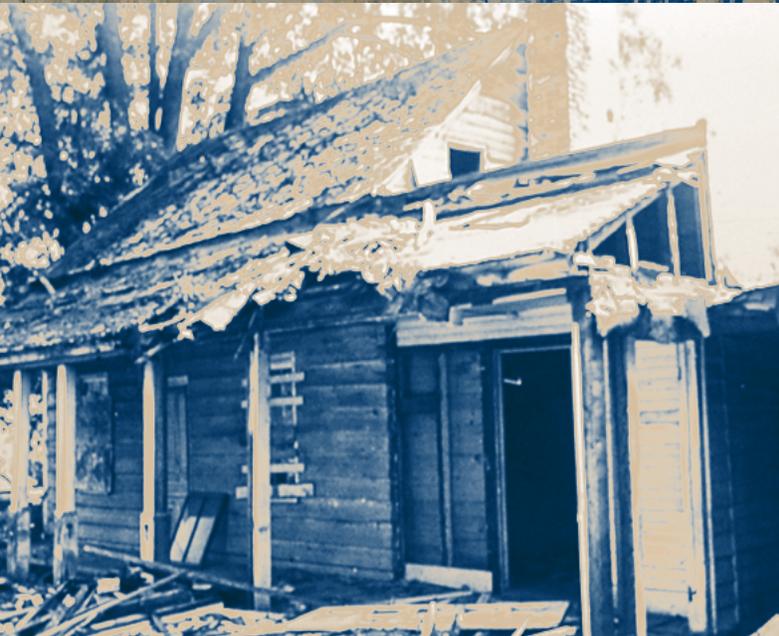


**Make Your Dream A Reality:**



**A Community Group Guide to a  
Historic Preservation Project**



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## Photographs

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# Make Your Dream A Reality: A Community Group Guide to a Historic Preservation Project

*Dreams reflect current and future unsolved problems and rehearse their possible solutions.* — Alfred Adler

Many successful building rehabilitation projects begin with no more than a dream — a vision of what a building once meant to the community and what it can mean again. With much hard work and determination the dream of returning a historic building to a productive member of the community can come true. Like most attainable dreams, success does not come overnight. Rehabilitating a building requires restraint and a dedication to doing it right.

The guidance found in this booklet is intended to provide a path to your dream's reality. In it, you will find critical steps that will help ensure your project's success. This booklet provides guidance on organizational and public relations issues, when to include and how to use professional services, determining the use(s) for your building, fundraising, and tips for conducting historical research. Tailor the following steps to the needs of your rehabilitation project. It may not be necessary to complete all of them.

## **Organize**

Form a tight core group of interested citizens who are passionate, committed,

and have a vision for what the building can become for the community. These should be people willing to volunteer their labor, materials and money. From this core group other groups may be established in the future to serve more specific needs as the project progresses. This core group will share the responsibility for seeing the project to completion, so be sure to gather the right personalities for the purpose. People to consider including in the core group are

- ◆ The current owner(s) of the property
- ◆ Leaders of the local historical society or similar organization
- ◆ The mayor or other city/county official
- ◆ Ministers
- ◆ Business people
- ◆ Local school officials, and
- ◆ Someone with a public relations background

Most importantly, the people serving in this group should have a passion and vision for saving the building.

This core group is tasked with developing a general mission statement. The mission statement explains the organization's vision to both those inside and outside the group. It is a guide for

determining the group's goals and should be referenced when making major decisions about the course of the project. The mission statement, while written, is not set in stone. As the group evolves so should the mission statement. It can be a few sentences long or include the goals and vision for the group as well. For a discussion on whether and how to establish the organization as a nonprofit refer to the "Seek Nonprofit Status" section found on page 10.

### **For More Information**

McGhee, Mary. "Guidelines for Developing a Mission Statement and Bylaws." See Appendix A; also available online at [www.casagordita.com/bylaws.htm](http://www.casagordita.com/bylaws.htm).

Appendix A also includes examples of mission statements from various organizations.

## ***Identify Immediate Threats to the Building***

Determine if there are any immediate threats to the building. These may include demolition, neglect, or vandalism. If the building is slated for demolition due to impending development, contact a local government official and the State Historic Preservation Office to learn if there is any local or federal protection.

Neglect can lead to deterioration of the building as a result of the loss of structural integrity. It is just as serious a threat as demolition. Without proper maintenance, a building will inevitably fall. If your building

is dilapidated or uninhabitable, consult with a historic architect or preservation professional to determine what preventative measures can be taken to stabilize the building and retard deterioration while allowing time to decide on a use for the building and to raise funds for the completion of the project. The most critical need is to stop water from penetrating the building. Taking the time now can save money and heartache in the future.

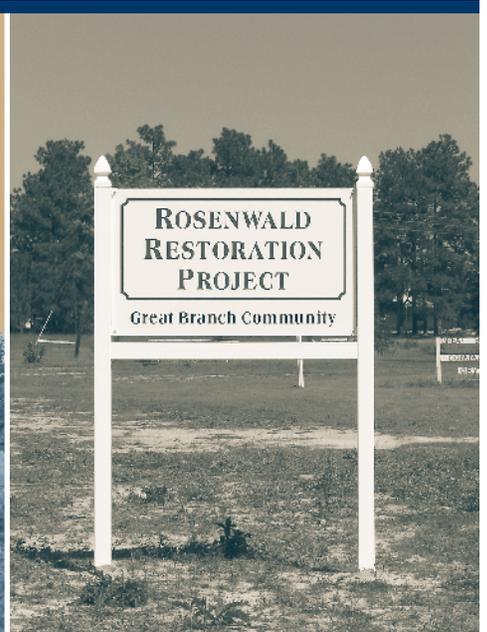
Securing the building may also ward off vandals. The more activity that is seen around the building the less opportunity there is for vandals to attack. Establishing a group of volunteers who will patrol the property regularly may also be a necessary step.

### **For More Information**

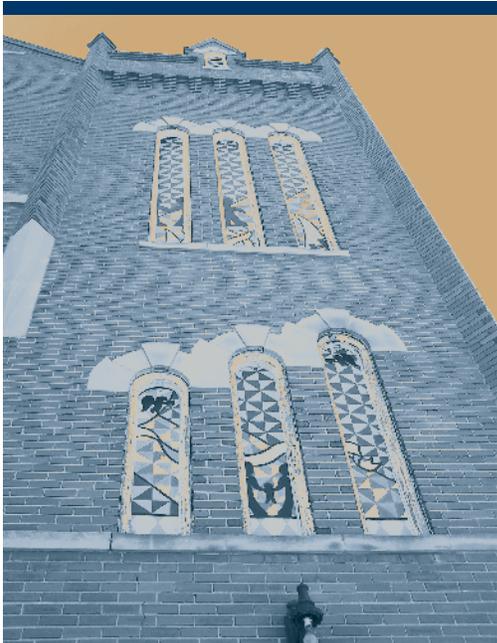
The South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office can be reached at 803-896-6178 or you can learn more about its services and programs at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/histrcpl.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/histrcpl.htm).

Park, Sharon, AIA. *Preservation Brief #31: Mothballing Historic Buildings*. National Park Service, 1993. Available on the National Park Service website at [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief31.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief31.htm) or contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 803-896-6178 to request a copy.

*The Crisis Handbook*. Preservation Pennsylvania, 1990. This is a free downloadable handbook available at <http://preservationpa.org/resources/crisis/index.php> or to receive a print copy call 717-234-2310.



**In addition to erecting a sign along Highway 4 that indicates rehabilitation of the Great Branch Teachers' Home is taking place, the Great Branch Community Center "mothballed" the building by covering all openings with plywood sheets.**



**The Renaissance Foundation in Columbia is working to restore the Bethel AME Church building as the Renaissance Foundation Cultural Arts Center. While the stained glass windows are being repaired, the Foundation engaged students in the creation of murals to serve as temporary replacements.**

## Determine Ownership/ Acquire the Property

If you do not own the building, you will need to find out who legally owns it and the surrounding property. If you do not know the current owner but have an address you can find out the person's name and mailing address at your Tax Assessors' Office.

Ideally, the owner will agree to donate the property or sell it to your organization for a reasonable price. If the owner is not interested in preserving the building or selling the property, your challenge will be to convince the person of the value of rehabilitating the building to them and the community. Include the owner in initial discussions about possible uses for the building.

If the owner remains unwilling, your only option may be to make a record of the building with photographs, floor plans, and historical information. Give copies of this information to local libraries, archives, and historical organizations where it will be available to researchers after the building is gone.

Sometimes an organization is faced with an owner who will not sell the property, but will give the building to the group if they will move it off the property. This may be the only way to save a historic building that is being allowed to deteriorate or is threatened with demolition. Proceed with caution, however, and carefully consider the following before committing to move the building:

- ◆ Is it feasible and practical to move the building? For example, a brick building will be harder to move than a frame one and a building in good condition will be easier to move than one in poor condition.

- ◆ Where will you move the building? Will you need to purchase property? Is the new site near the present location of the building? Will the new setting be similar to its historic setting?
- ◆ What will the costs be for preparing the building for the move, moving it, and re-establishing it on a new site?
- ◆ Finally, be aware that the building will inevitably suffer loss to its historic character if it is moved. It will no longer be in its historic setting, and relocation requires the dismantling of chimneys and foundations.

### A Word of Caution

If the building is already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, then there are specific steps to take in the moving process for the building to REMAIN listed in the National Register.

### For More Information

Curtis, John Obed. *Moving Historic Buildings*. National Park Service, 1975; reprinted 1991 by W. Patram for the International Association of Structural Movers. Send order and payment of \$10.00 to the Publications Department, IASM, PO Box 2637, Lexington, SC 29071-2637.

National Trust Resource Center. "Information Sheet #6: Moving Historic Buildings." Visit the National Trust website at [www.nationaltrust.org/help/downloads/Moving\\_Historic\\_Structures.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/help/downloads/Moving_Historic_Structures.pdf).

"Moving Historic Buildings: Factors to Consider." S.C. Department of Archives and History, 2007. See Appendix B.

## Research the History of the Building

Begin to collect a storehouse of information and resources that will allow you to determine and interpret the building's importance within the community.

### Interviews

Your best source of information about the building is likely to be the people who have been most directly associated with it or their descendants. Identify these people and schedule interviews with them. Ask them questions about the building itself (When was it built? Who was the builder or architect? What changes have been made?), but also ask questions that will lead to stories about the people who lived, worked, worshiped, or used the building. These stories can help the history of the building come alive as you seek to build support for its preservation.

### A Word of Advice

Before scheduling your interviews, become familiar with the basic principles for collecting and recording oral histories. Identifying people to interview, preparing for the interviews, asking the right questions, and recording the information appropriately will be critical to your success.

### For More Information

To learn more about how to properly record, archive and obtain permissions for oral histories, consult *Fundamentals of Oral History*, a Texas Historical Commission online publication available at [www.thc.state.tx.us/oralhistory/ohdefault.html](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/oralhistory/ohdefault.html).

The Nearby History Series is a six-volume publication that helps amateur historians unfamiliar with the wealth of local history resources pursue the larger how and why questions. This series is available from Alta Mira Press at [www.altamirapress.com/](http://www.altamirapress.com/) or by calling 800-462-6420.



**Persons you interview may also have old photographs or papers that will provide information about the building and the people associated with it. Make copies of these records and label them carefully.**  
*Photograph: A.W. Chandler and family, ca. 1910, courtesy of Andrew Chandler.*

## *Written Records and Photographs*

The county courthouse, local libraries, historical societies, and archives may include sources of historical information about the building. For example, deeds and wills at the courthouse will help you trace the ownership of the building; libraries may have town and county histories; and historical societies or archives may have records such as old newspapers and city directories, family or church histories, and photographs. The latter are particularly unique as historical documents because photographs graphically detail changes over time and can identify lost features your organization may want to recreate in the finished rehabilitation.

### **Records at the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office**

The South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office has photographs, architectural descriptions, and historical information on thousands of historic buildings. The Statewide Survey of Historic Properties may include information about your building or it may be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Both of these record groups are housed at the South Carolina Archives and History Center, 8301 Parklane Road, Columbia. An index to the Survey records is available at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpsurvey/countylist.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpsurvey/countylist.htm). National Register records are available online at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/hphistpropinfo](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hphistpropinfo). For more questions or information, contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 803-896-6178.

### **For More Information**

*Preservation Hotline #8: Tracing the History of Your Historic Building*. S.C. Department of Archives and History, 2007. See Appendix C; also available online at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/htln08.pdf](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/htln08.pdf) or by calling 803-896-6178.

*Researching Historic Properties: Internet Resources*. Visit the S.C. Department of Archives and History website at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpresearchres.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpresearchres.htm).

South Carolina Local Historical Organizations Directory 2007. Visit the S.C. Department of Archives and History website at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/historgs/county1.html](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/historgs/county1.html) or call 803-896-6178 for a particular county inquiry.

### *Summary of the Building's Historical Importance*

After completing your research, summarize the information you have acquired. The summary should describe the history of the building and why it is important to the community. This will help you create compelling brochures, press releases, and other means for building community support and fundraising as the project progresses.

### *Seek Official Designation*

You may want to pursue nominating the building to the National Register of Historic Places if it is not already listed. The National Register is a list of properties significant in our past that is maintained in Washington, D.C. by the National Park Service. In South Carolina the State Historic Preservation Office of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History manages the nomination process.

The first step is to determine if the building meets the requirements for listing in the National Register. The State Historic Preservation Office has a Preliminary Information Form (PIF) you can complete to get the Office's opinion on whether the building meets the requirements. The PIF is available on the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office's website at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/PIFFORM.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/PIFFORM.htm), or you can contact the Office at 803-896-6178 to request a copy.

The National Register nomination form is one that can be completed by anyone, but often people feel it is a daunting task. This is when undergraduate and graduate students can be of assistance. Colleges and universities are greatly underutilized resources. Within the history, public history, African American studies, and historic preservation departments are professors searching for worthy real-world projects in which to involve their students. When seeking help from departments, describe how working on the project can be mutually beneficial. While not all services will be provided free, volunteer and paid student internships are an effective and efficient way of accomplishing some of your organization's goals.

The State Historic Preservation Office also maintains a list of professional consultants who are qualified to prepare National Register nominations. Visit [www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpconsultants.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpconsultants.htm) or call 803-896-6178 to obtain a copy.

**Note:** If your building is not eligible for the National Register, do not be discouraged. This does not mean that the building does not have value in your community. It simply means that it does not meet the requirements for this particular federal program.

## Requirements for the National Register of Historic Places

To be eligible for the National Register a building must:

- ◆ Be at least 50 years old unless it is of exceptional importance
- ◆ Possess importance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture at the local, state, or national level
- ◆ Maintain its historic "integrity." This means the building retains its basic historic appearance and materials.

Whether or not the property is eligible for the National Register, you may also want to explore participation in other recognition programs. The State Historical Marker program is one such option. These markers are placed alongside public roads to indicate the site of a significant event or property. The markers provide a brief description of the site and its historical significance. While there is a cost associated with a marker, it is a great public educational and marketing tool. You may also want to investigate whether your town offers local designation and determine if the building meets those requirements.



**Community members and supporters gather for a marker unveiling dedicated to Capt. Samuel Earle (Oconee County).**

## For More Information

Visit the S.C. Department of Archives and History website at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/natlregs.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/natlregs.htm) to learn more about the National Register of Historic Places program or for more about the State Historical Marker program visit [www.state.sc.us/scdah/historic.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/historic.htm).

S.C. Department of Archives and History. *The National Register of Historic Places*. See Appendix D.

*Preservation Hotline #1: How to Nominate a South Carolina Property to the National Register of Historic Places*. S.C. Department of Archives and History, 2007. See Appendix D; also available online at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/htln01.pdf](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/htln01.pdf).

S.C. Department of Archives and History. *The State Historical Marker Program*. See Appendix D.

## Identify Your Target Audience

Once the building is secure, begin to identify your target audience. This group is composed of people already encountered through your historical research and also those you want to excite about becoming involved in the project. Learn and understand their key values and relate to them using these values as a basis.

Also form alliances with others who may not have as direct a connection with your building, such as a local neighborhood association, city and county officials, preservation professionals and advocates, local and county historical organizations, local utility companies and large businesses in the area. How to generate interest from these groups is discussed later in the “Build Community Support” section on page 12.

## Here are some examples of building types and related audiences:

- ◆ Schools: alumni, faculty and staff
- ◆ Homes: former residents and their descendents, neighbors
- ◆ Churches: clergy and members (current and past), neighbors
- ◆ Retail establishments: past owners and clientele

## For More Information

National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Historic Schools: A Roadmap For Saving Your School*. This online publication provides a wonderful overview of how to save a building. The “Understand the Perspective of the Educator and the Community” and “Organize Stakeholders” sections provide an in-depth discussion of how to identify and gain the interest of your target audience. Available online at [www.nationaltrust.org/issues/downloads/school\\_study\\_roadmap.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/issues/downloads/school_study_roadmap.pdf).

## Determine a Use for the Building

If the building is vacant, you will need to find a new use to justify the expense and time that will be involved in its rehabilitation. A new use should be

- ◆ **Sustainable.** The use needs to meet a community need and be economically viable. For example, does the community need a senior citizens center, a library, or a community meeting space? You will also need to determine if you can continue to fund the expenses associated with that potential use.
- ◆ **Compatible with the historic building.** You do not want to damage or destroy the historic character that makes the building special. For example, adapting a historic school building to a Head Start center would require minimal alterations,

but adapting the same building for use as a theater would require major changes to the floor plan.

The organization should generate some ideas for new, sustainable uses for the building, but those will be difficult to implement without broader support. Gathering input from community members for potential uses is highly recommended. This will not only generate ideas, but also help generate future support for the project. Methods for gathering input range from editorial letters requesting information to community meetings in which current and projected images of the building can be used to illustrate the possibilities and what needs to be done.

A more formal method that identifies community interest as well as potential sustainable uses and organizational partners is the feasibility study. While it is an expense, it is a step that can be supported by grant funding. There are advantages to a formal feasibility study. The amount and variety of information received is invaluable. As it is conducted by an outside source, interviewees often feel they can give more honest answers than when interviewed by a neighbor. Likely results are

- ◆ A better understanding of your core supporters and what others need to know to become supporters
- ◆ A financial estimate of community support for the project. This may determine how the organization proceeds with the project (i.e. phased or all at one time) or if there is enough community support to proceed at this time. If it is the latter, more may need to be done publicly to make the case for the building's rehabilitation.
- ◆ Knowledge of specific community needs that currently are not being met and the building could serve, and



**The Dr. Charles E. Murray Historical Foundation of Greeleyville is planning the rehabilitation of the McCollum-Murray House. The nearest library is 13 miles from the town and students have no place to go for homework help and access to the internet. The restored McCollum-Murray House will provide internet access and other resources for students after school and for senior citizens. Artifacts associated with Dr. Murray, a prominent African American educator, will also be displayed in the house. Photograph courtesy of Gertrude Williams.**

- ◆ Identification of potential donors/partners and grants available of which the core group may not have been aware. Whatever method you choose, ask and encourage feedback and invite others to join in the efforts to save the building. For this discussion you may also want to include city and county officials. In some cases, community needs correspond to city and county needs as well. Partnering with them may make the project more financially feasible.

## A Word of Caution

Be mindful that while a museum may seem to be a great new use, it is extremely difficult to fund and maintain. Artifacts must be properly stored, preserved, and archived, requiring climate control systems and staff. As more and more community museums are created, the funding for these nonprofits becomes increasingly competitive. Without an endowment or wealthy benefactor, it will be difficult to keep the doors open.

## For More Information

National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Feasibility Assessment Manual for Reusing Historic Buildings*. The cost for this 108-page publication is \$40.00. You can order a copy through the National Trust's website at [www.preservationbooks.org](http://www.preservationbooks.org) or by calling 202-588-6296.

## Seek Nonprofit Status

The majority of grants and loans for rehabilitation projects are available only to nonprofit organizations or public agencies. Ideally, your organization already has 501(c)3 status, but if not, it might be more advantageous to partner with an established nonprofit such as a local historical organization or a local government because achieving 501(c)3 status is a time-consuming and laborious process. The South Carolina Association of Nonprofit Organizations suggests five alternatives to starting a nonprofit:

- ◆ **Study the list of nonprofits already active in the same area.** Join their efforts as a volunteer, board member or even staff.
- ◆ **Analyze the list of nonprofits already active in the same area, identify the three most compatible with your ideas and meet them to explore creating a special project or initiative — and negotiate your involvement.**
- ◆ **Explore the list of national organizations in the area of your interest.** See if a local

chapter is needed in your geographic area.

- ◆ **If your effort will be quite local and small, consider forming an unincorporated association or club.** Have meetings and activities but skip the reporting requirement (an option for groups with an annual budget of under \$25,000).
- ◆ **If you are considering creation of a group to finance activities or needs of others (scholarships, family emergency funds for a specific population, etc.) explore sponsorship of the fund by the community foundation or other organization.**

But if it is still more advantageous to form a nonprofit, formalize it by establishing board and committee roles. At a minimum, formal offices should be a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Recruit a diverse group of people to fill the positions. As a part of this formalization process, establish an organizational mission, goals, and bylaws. Also, establish appropriate committees as necessary. Some examples are fundraising, research, and membership recruitment. It may also be important to create a communications/public relations committee and have that committee chair be someone who has a communications background or experience in public advocacy.

With this framework in place, the first action is to determine the goals of the organization and project. These goals will be based upon the end use(s) of the building, the number of staff and volunteers available, the amount of time needed to accomplish the goals, the cost, the historical material that has been gathered, and your organization's ability to maintain the building once the rehabilitation is completed.

## For More Information

Visit the South Carolina Association of Nonprofit Organizations (SCANPO) website at [www.scanpo.org](http://www.scanpo.org) or contact SCANPO at 800-438-8508. The online resource center includes FAQ's and some free downloads.

*Starting a Nonprofit: With information about Board of Directors, Questions and Answers and Links to Internet Resources* is a free downloadable guide offered by SCANPO. It can be accessed at <http://scanpo.org/pdf/Starting%20a%20Nonprofit.pdf>.

Visit the Internal Revenue Service website at [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf) or call the IRS at 877-829-5500 for nonprofit concerns or questions.

McGhee, Mary. "Guidelines for Developing a Mission Statement and Bylaws." See Appendix A; also available online at [www.casagordita.com/bylaws.htm](http://www.casagordita.com/bylaws.htm).

Visit Board Source at [www.boardsource.org/](http://www.boardsource.org/) for more information on board development. They provide training sessions, workshops, and an annual conference. You can also contact them by calling 202-452-06262 or 877-892-6273.

## Solicit Support From Public Officials

A civic-minded image is of great importance to local, county, and state elected officials. Their support can be of immense value as an endorsement of the need for the project. They may be able to direct your organization to sources of funding or other assistance.

In the best of circumstances, someone within your organization already has a good relationship with an official, but in the case that this is not true and a personal introduction is not possible, an introductory letter should be written to the official. In the initial letter, NEVER request funding.

## The letter to the official should be no longer than one page and include:

- ◆ The name of the building and its address or locational information
  - ◆ The name of the organization and a brief statement of its mission
  - ◆ A brief history of the building and why it continues to be of importance to the community
  - ◆ A brief statement of why the rehabilitation of the building is important to the community and therefore the official (i.e. what service/ need the rehabilitated building will fill in the community and why it is a good project to sponsor)
  - ◆ A brief statement of what has been done so far. Use this as an opportunity to display the personal and community investment in the project.
  - ◆ A request to meet in person to discuss in more detail the vision for the rehabilitated building and how the project will progress over the next year, five years, etc.
- For a sample letter, see Appendix E.

The official needs to see your organization's passion for the building and how that is reflected in the community support and organization. The formal meeting allows for this "feeling out." Be proactive in this process. Allow a week before calling the official to ensure they received the letter and to request a time to meet. Be sure to send a "thank you" note after the meeting in appreciation of the consideration of the organization's request for participation. Cultivate this relationship by providing the official with personalized status reports on your organization's progress.

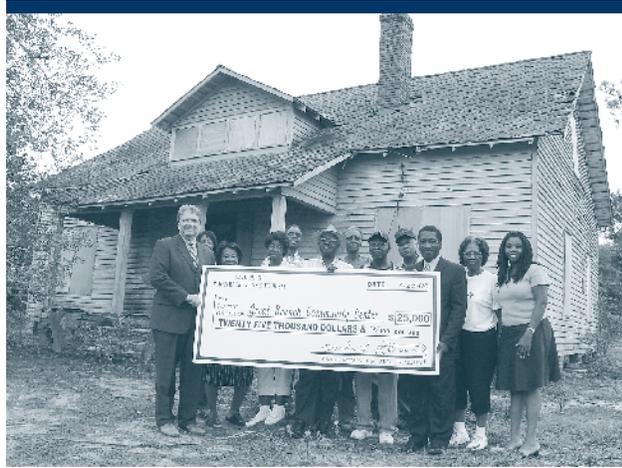
## ***Build Community Support***

A good communications campaign will educate, excite, and update the community on the progress of the project. It serves to cultivate volunteers and create a fundraising base. The campaign should be centered on a clear and concise statement of the organization's mission, goals, and the benefits of your project to the community. Some basic strategies to employ in building community support are good media and public relations, the use of interactive media and positive personal interactions.

### ***Media and Public Relations***

The most important strategy to an effective communications campaign is a positive media relationship. There should be one person from within the communications committee whose responsibility it is to develop a media list for press releases and to provide facts and information to the media while working within media deadlines. A good media relations program involves publicly thanking the media for their support, recognizing their efforts, and inviting them to meetings.

Incorporating the community early in the project is key. The earlier the "buy-in" from the public the more likely the project will be a success. An efficient and inexpensive way of creating dialogue about and generating support for the project is to submit an editorial letter to the local newspaper that includes the goals of the organization, a brief history of the building's importance to the community and a concise reasoning for the building's preservation. In this letter or a subsequent letter you may want to solicit information and materials for use in documenting and interpreting the history of the building. Use editorial letters to highlight new partnerships and to inform the community on the progress being made. Press releases are also an effective way to



**Assembled for a presentation of a \$25,000 check from the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism for the restoration of the Great Branch Teachers' Home are, front row from left, Sen. Brad Hutto; Barbara Johnson; Eartha Ameker; Frank Young, chairman of steering committee; Jervey Kennerly, president of the Great Branch Community Center; Rep. Jerry Govan; back row from left, Rosa Kennerly, grant coordinator; Ben Blume; Ruth Waller; James Johnson; Ivory Young and Leah Brown, African American Programs Coordinator, S.C. Department of Archives and History. Photograph is courtesy of the The Times and Democrat.**

inform the public of fundraising events and other activities of the organization.

### ***Use of Interactive Media***

Another avenue for creating awareness about the project is to develop a website. If you are partnering with the city or county, there are often ways to establish a page within their website. Your website does not have to be complicated or flashy but it must provide people with information about the organization and provide a reason to return to the website frequently. Other items to include in a website or as stand-alone publications are brochures, newsletters, and articles.

## For More Information

For an example of how an organization partnered with an existing agency visit the Jacksonville Community Commission, Inc. (JCC) website at [www.midlandvalleyarea.com/sweetpotatofestival.html](http://www.midlandvalleyarea.com/sweetpotatofestival.html). It advertises their Sweet Potato Festival and the JCC's historic headquarters, the Jacksonville School.

For an example of how an organization developed its own website and uses it to inform the community about the project's progress and to cultivate donors visit the Renaissance Foundation's website at [www.renaissancefoundationsc.org/](http://www.renaissancefoundationsc.org/). The Foundation is working to rehabilitate Bethel AME Church in Columbia.

The Myrtle Beach Colored School is a great example of the result of a community, local government, and private partnership. Visit <http://myrtlebeachcoloredschool.video2edit.com/> to learn how a preservation project blossomed into much more and how the website is used to promote The Myrtle Beach Colored School Museum and Education Center's mission and services.

## Positive Personal Interactions

The responses elicited from media involvement are good for generating a mailing list, but more personal interactions are just as effective and more crucial to the project's success. It is important to get on the agendas of city and county meetings where the spokesperson can persuasively inform the community about the organization's efforts and encourage participation. Other ways members can help generate support and aid in the development of a mailing list are to announce the organization's efforts to their church congregations, other civic groups and at neighborhood meetings.

Do not be shy about engaging the public. Plan door-to-door visits in the community where the building is located. Organize community meetings to update people

on the progress of the project. Have case studies of successful projects to help people envision the potential for the building. Provide a day for tours of the building in which organization volunteers explain the historic charm and significance of the building in a more intimate and emotional setting. Many times a visit to a historic place does far more in shaping a person's opinion than viewing pictures.

## Effective Ways to Engage the Public

Editorial letters, press releases, a website, and personal announcements and visits are easy ways to inform the public about the project.

## For More Information

Fritz, Joanne. "Top 10 Tips for Local Media Relations." See Appendix F; also available online at <http://nonprofit.about.com/od/nonprofitpromotion/tp/localmedia.htm>.

*Building Support through Public Relations: A Guide for Nonprofit Preservation Organizations.* National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1992. The cost for this 28-page booklet is \$6.00. You can order a copy on the National Trust's website at [www.preservationbooks.org](http://www.preservationbooks.org) or by calling 202-588-6296.

National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Historic Schools: A Roadmap For Saving Your School.* It contains two sections entitled "Make a Case for Renovation" and "Develop a Communications Campaign" that walk you through the process of building community interest and support. Available online at [www.nationaltrust.org/issues/downloads/school\\_study\\_roadmap.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/issues/downloads/school_study_roadmap.pdf).



**Willa Lanham of the Bettis Academy Heritage Corridor Team speaks to a group about the historic Bettis Academy and Junior College in Edgefield County while in front of the Biddle Hall Museum.**

## *Create a Work Plan*

With a set of goals, you can develop a work plan that provides everyone with a clear set of priorities for completion of the rehabilitation. It describes the work that needs to be done, the phases needed to complete the work, the number of volunteers and staff needed for each phase, what phases will require a professional, and an estimate of how much each phase will cost. Basically, the work plan prioritizes rehabilitation activities (with the input of the project professional) so that the work done in Phase I leads logically and seamlessly into Phase II, etc.

One necessary document that should be included in the work plan is a conditions assessment of the building. Professionals or qualified and interested graduate students can produce this document. It contains a description of the building and its current conditions, details any deficiencies, and may provide recommendations for repair or at least refer to the appropriate professional for the specific repair recommended.

## **For More Information**

While the Master Plan outlined by the Texas Historical Commission pertains to efforts to preserve county courthouses, the outline is a good example of what to include in and how to structure and prepare a work plan. It is available online at [www.thc.state.tx.us/courthouses/chthcppmp.html](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/courthouses/chthcppmp.html).

The Renaissance Foundation's website is a good example of how an overview of a work plan can be used as both an informational and promotional tool. It contains information about their purposes and progress to date. Visit [www.renaissancefoundationsc.org/CenterInitiative.html](http://www.renaissancefoundationsc.org/CenterInitiative.html).

The South Carolina Department of Archives and History published a document entitled *South Carolina's Historic Cemeteries: A Preservation Handbook*. It is no longer in print but can be accessed at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/hstcm.pdf](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hstcm.pdf). Beginning on page 13 is the section "Developing a Master Plan" that can be adapted to any preservation project.

## *Hire a Preservation Professional*

Before hiring anyone to plan or begin repairs on the building, it is critical to educate yourself about sound rehabilitation practices for historic buildings. This will give you a frame of reference for interviewing architects, contractors, carpenters, brick masons, and others.

Hiring experienced preservation professionals (contractors, architects, engineers, etc.) can help preserve the historic integrity and character of your historic building. Often, those without preservation experience will want to throw away much of the historic material in favor of new and often synthetic materials. But what they do not understand is that in many cases the historic materials are

salvageable and are of better quality than materials produced today.

### **A Word of Advice**

Even if there are people within the organization who are willing to donate their services and physical labor, it is still important to have a professional oversee the project.

Before hiring a professional, check references. Ask about prior experience with historic buildings and request client contact information in order to get the client's opinion of the job that was done for them. The following steps are adapted from Hallmark Homes, Inc.'s suggestions for finding a professional contractor. These steps may also apply to hiring other professionals:

- ◆ **Choose a contractor through personal recommendations.**
- ◆ **If you can't find a personal reference, ask local building supply dealers to recommend reputable contractors.** If there are completed historic rehabilitation projects in your area, contact the related organizations for referrals.
- ◆ **Ask each contractor for a list of successful historic building projects.** Also request the names and phone numbers of clients associated with those projects. If possible, visit these sites to gauge the results for yourself.
- ◆ **Choose at least three (3) contractors for a formal bid request. Give each one the same plans and specifications.** This is a particularly important step if the organization plans to seek grants. Many government and private granting agencies may require that project professionals be chosen through a competitive selection process.

- ◆ **Chemistry with your contractor is critical — this person may be in your midst for several months, and you may haggle over difficult issues.**
- ◆ **Ask whether the contractor will be working only on your job or managing multiple projects at the same time.** You want to try to ensure that there will not be any unnecessary delays due to scheduling conflicts with other projects. Consider adding construction supervision to the historic architect's scope of work unless someone within your organization has this expertise and experience.
- ◆ **Find out whether the contractor will supervise your job on-site or appoint a foreman to oversee the job.** If so, is the foreman qualified to make decisions sensitive to a historic building. Ask for this person's credentials as well.
- ◆ **When you've made a selection, ask to see the contractor's license and double-check insurance coverage.** If these cannot be produced for you, continue your search.

Once the physical rehabilitation process begins, be involved. Routinely visit the site to make sure that they are doing the job according to the specifications laid out in the contract and rehabilitation plan. While the historic architecture consultants at the State Historic Preservation Office cannot serve as architects on a project, they can provide information and advice.

## For More Information

To learn more about sound preservation practices refer to “Internet Resources for Rehabilitation Projects,” a list of practical resources, found in Appendix G.

The State Historic Preservation Office can also provide information and advice. Visit the Archives and History website at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/hptechassist.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hptechassist.htm) or call 803-896-6174 or 803-896-6199.

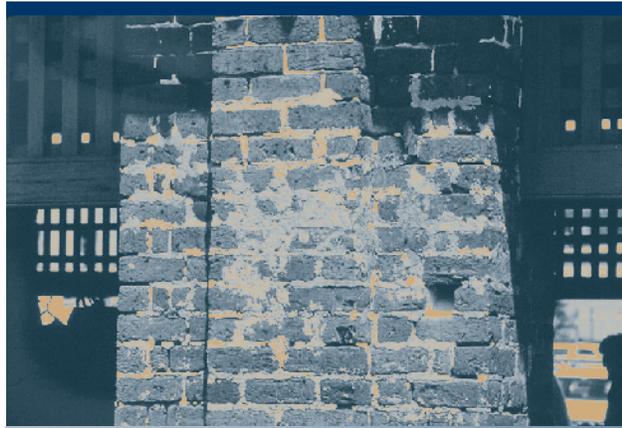
South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. “List of Project Professionals — Historic Architects.” Available online at [www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpconsultants.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpconsultants.htm) or by calling 803-896-6178.

The website of the National Park Service includes guidance on rehabilitating historic buildings including:

- ◆ Electronic Rehab: An Interactive Web Class on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/e-rehab/index.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/e-rehab/index.htm)
- ◆ A Checklist for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/cheklist.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/cheklist.htm)
- ◆ Preservation Briefs [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm)  
Note: A list of the Preservation Briefs is included in Appendix G.

National Trust for Historic Preservation. “Information Sheet #32: Working with Contractors and Architects: Finding Supplies and Furnishings; Interior Design and Decorating.” It provides tips on choosing an architect or contractor along with advice on how to obtain historic hardware and products. It is available online at [www.nationaltrust.org/help/downloads/Contractors\\_Architects\\_Supplies\\_Interiors.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/help/downloads/Contractors_Architects_Supplies_Interiors.pdf).

See Appendix G for examples of general questions to ask contractors, architects, and other professionals along with a list of internet resources with sample questions.



**Top** Several poorly made and laid mortar patches result in damage to the brick and a sloppy appearance. **Above** Note that poor work may occur over time. In this case, the lack of maintenance has caused the loss of significant features (an upper and storefront cornice). Active work resulted in the loss of the historic windows and the closure of other openings. The historic storefront has also been replaced by a modern storefront not in character with the historic architecture of the building.

## Secure Funds

The work you have done to this point will be invaluable in helping you obtain funds to help with rehabilitation costs. For example, the following will be critical to your success:

- ◆ A compelling statement of the historical significance of the building within the community
- ◆ A strong organization that is committed to the project
- ◆ A clear description of how the building will be used and how it will meet community needs
- ◆ Evidence of community support for the project, and
- ◆ A work plan outlining the phases of the project with cost estimates for each phase.

You will undoubtedly need to seek funding from a variety of sources to obtain the funds necessary for your project. These sources will generally include fundraising events and products; support from foundations, businesses, and individuals; and grants.

### *Fundraising Events and Products*

Many groups sponsor special events and sell creative products to raise funds. These activities will not bring in most of the funds you will need, but they can be invaluable in building community awareness and support. Special events can include banquets, parties, receptions, festivals, tours, auctions, and shows. Products can range from T-shirts to Christmas ornaments to note cards to renderings of your restored building.



**Mabel Dickey proudly displays a fundraising t-shirt that debuted at the 2006 Mt. Zion Rosenwald School Reunion Banquet in Florence.**

### **A Few Words of Advice**

- ◆ Brainstorm ideas for events and products. Consult organizations in other communities for ideas and lessons learned.
- ◆ Be realistic; select activities that are feasible for your organization to plan and implement given your funds and number of volunteers.
- ◆ Begin planning at least 6 months before the event; allow more time for a larger event.
- ◆ Keep the expenses low. Try to get needed items donated so that the money raised goes to the project.
- ◆ After an event, evaluate its success, including attendance, members recruited, and funds raised.

## For More Information

Rubman, Kerri. *Successful Fund-Raising Activities for Preservation Organizations*. National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1993. The cost for this 28-page booklet is \$6.00. You can order a copy on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's website at [www.preservationbooks.org](http://www.preservationbooks.org) or by calling 202-588-6296.

## Support from Foundations, Businesses, and Individuals

The National Trust publication, *Quest for Funds Revisited: A Fund-Raising Starter Kit*, outlines 6 basic tenants for fund-raising:

- ◆ **Do your homework; learn the interests of each potential donor.** You will need to make a connection between the donor's close personal interests and your project.
- ◆ **Offer your project as a philanthropic investment opportunity.** Promote your project as an opportunity to invest in and build a healthy community — not as charity.
- ◆ **Treat donors as partners.** Keep your donors informed about your progress and involve them in your activities.
- ◆ **Use donors to reach other donors.** Ask satisfied donors to make personal appeals to potential donors within their business or social network.
- ◆ **Be accountable and ethical.** Donors must be assured that your organization can successfully manage its resources.
- ◆ **Never give up.** A "no" response to a request for funds does not have to be final. Perseverance and progress on a well-managed project can often overcome initial donor reluctance.

## People give to people.

*"The best fund raisers we know do not think of themselves as fund raisers. They spend very little of their time actually talking about or asking for money. They pour their creative energy into recruiting friends and supporters, especially those capable of making a leading gift."*

— Joe Breitenicher

*Quest for Funds Revisited: A Fund-Raising Starter Kit*

## For More Information

Breitenicher, Joe. *Quest for Funds Revisited: A Fund-Raising Starter Kit*. National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1983, revised 1998. The cost for this 20-page booklet is \$6.00. You can order a copy on the National Trust's website at [www.preservationbooks.org](http://www.preservationbooks.org) or by calling 202-588-6296.

The Foundation Center serves to link nonprofits to grantmakers. Visit the Center's website at <http://foundationcenter.org/> to learn about its services and regional locations. You may also contact the Center at 212-620-4230 or 800-424-0836.

## Grants

The first step in applying for grants is to research different programs to identify grants that might meet your needs. For each grant program determine

- ◆ Types of organizations that are eligible for the funding
- ◆ Types of projects that are funded
- ◆ Size of the grant awards and match required, and
- ◆ Timelines for applications, awards, and project completion

There are several grant programs for historic preservation projects, but the funds are very limited. You should also search for grant programs that relate to the new use you plan for the building. For example, a neighborhood center may be eligible for a federal Community Development Block Grant.

## A Few Words of Advice

You will generally need to pursue other fund-raising strategies before applying for grants because most grants require your organization to match the grant with other funds. For example, a grant for a \$20,000 roof replacement project that requires a 50/50 match would require your organization to provide \$10,000 to match a grant of \$10,000. (Note: Some programs will allow you to use donated services for the match.) Many grants are reimbursable. With these grants, you must pay the architect or contractor and get reimbursed from the granting agency.

After you have identified a grant program that seems to be a good fit for your project and have a copy of the application, contact the granting agency to discuss your project with the staff. They can answer questions and may be able to provide advice that will strengthen your application. To get a clearer idea of what the granting agency is looking for in an application, ask if they will share a successful grant application with you. Some organizations may agree to review draft applications. Do NOT wait until a few days before the grant application deadline to call; this could reflect poorly on your planning and management abilities.

Carefully read the instructions for the application and complete each section, but be concise. It is critical that your completed application make a clear case for how your project meets the criteria or goals for the grant program. Typically the granting agency will use these criteria or goals to rank the applications and decide which should be funded.

Get someone to review and proof the application before you mail it. Mathematical errors in the budget or failure to answer questions reflects negatively on your application. Plan ahead to ensure your application is received by the deadline. Remember that the granting agency will judge

your ability to manage a grant by your success in meeting the application requirements.

## For More Information

S.C. Department of Archives and History. "Grant Programs for Historic Preservation Projects." See Appendix H.

The State Historic Preservation Office has created *A Financial Incentives Guide for South Carolina's Historic Resources*, which includes sources of financial assistance for historic preservation projects. The guide is available online at

[www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpfinancialincent.pdf](http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/hpfinancialincent.pdf) or you can contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 803-896-6178 to request a paper copy.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has created an online guide to financial incentives for historic preservation projects. *Sources of Financial Assistance for Historic Preservation Projects* emphasizes federal funding, but also touches upon state, tribal, local, and nonprofit funding opportunities. The guide is available at [www.achp.gov/funding.html](http://www.achp.gov/funding.html).

The South Carolina State Library has developed a list of *Grant and Funding Sources on the Web*, a general guide to a variety of grants and other sources of funding, including a directory of foundations. The information is available at [www.statelibrary.sc.gov/grants](http://www.statelibrary.sc.gov/grants) or you can call 803-734-8026.

See Appendix H for "South Carolina Archives and History's Top Ten Tips for Getting Money."

## A Few Words of Advice

Many novice grant applicants successfully write grants, but if after reviewing the above information the task still feels challenging, you may want to hire a professional grant writer. To learn more about how to hire a grant writer visit [www.grantexperts.com/services/service\\_questions.htm](http://www.grantexperts.com/services/service_questions.htm) for a list of tips.



**The McGrath-Scheper House (constructed in the 1850s) in Beaufort sat abandoned for 28 years before Historic Beaufort Foundation secured a long-term lease and grant funds from South Carolina Department of Archives and History and Beaufort County, allowing them to stabilize the building and make much-needed repairs. The Foundation plans to open the house for tours in 2008.**

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does.* — Margaret Mead

### *One Final Note*

The rehabilitation of any historic structure is a long process requiring the coordination of a number of different entities. Be prepared for the long haul. There will be periods of rapid progress followed by periods of relative inactivity. These times can feel frustrating, but press on. There will be those who neither understand nor support the efforts of the organization. Anticipate their arguments and be prepared to respond with a well-researched and thoughtful answer.

Most importantly, leave personal feelings and personalities out of the argument. The presentations should include factual and persuasive statements to counter the opposition. While not wanting to appear fanatical or hysterical about saving your historic resource, do not be bullied by the opposition. Remain flexible, but present a clear stand on the issues when faced by opposition.

Understand that organizational leaders and volunteers will come and go as they “burn out” and this is a normal process. Creating a positive and productive environment is the key to both their retention and eventual replacement. Establish recognition programs to reward excellent service to the organization. Rotating responsibilities among the board members and volunteers is another successful strategy to help avoid burn out. Inviting members from a successful project to speak to and encourage the organization’s members and volunteers to keep going can be another source of inspiration. Another option is for the members and volunteers to visit a successful rehabilitation to learn what worked for that group and the lessons they learned during the process.

Regularly evaluate your progress as outlined in your work plan. Celebrate your successes and learn from your mistakes. Remember, despite the inevitable obstacles, success is always within reach.