

*Celebrating 40 Years*



Maine  
Preservation

*Our Heritage, Our Legacy*

ROBERT O'BRIEN

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

# Who We Are



- Maine Preservation is a **statewide, non-profit 501(c)3** historic preservation organization chartered in 1972.
- Maine Preservation promotes and preserves historic places, buildings, downtowns and neighborhoods, strengthening the cultural and economic vitality of Maine communities.
- **We envision a Maine, where vibrant active communities value and sustain their historic character.**

# PRESERVATION: WHAT IT IS

Healy Terrace  
(apartments)  
in the former  
Healy Asylum  
in Lewiston.



**Rehabilitation**  
is construction  
to resuscitate  
a dilapidated  
or  
underutilized  
building for  
modern use.

# PRESERVATION: WHAT IT IS

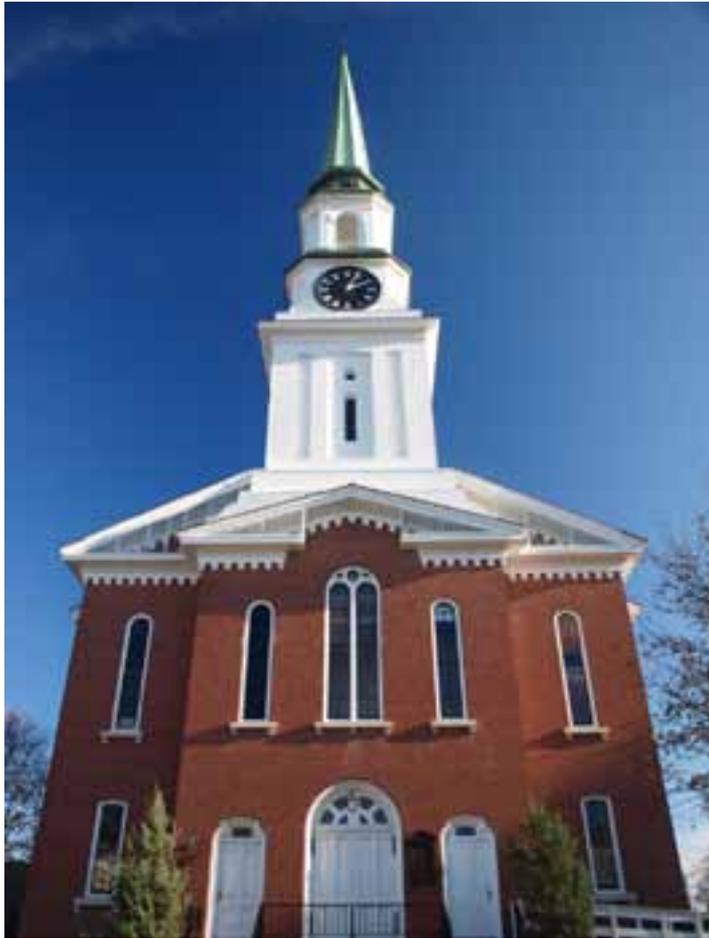
South Berwick Public Library (the former St. Michael's Church)



**Adaptive Use** is converting a building to a new function from its original purpose while keeping its character intact.

# PRESERVATION: WHAT IT IS

Hammond  
Street Church  
in Bangor



**Restoration** is returning a building to its original design by repairing existing materials and using compatible materials.

# Economic Value of Preservation

“[...] It is **more efficient and profitable to preserve** a historic building than to construct a new one. Designating a landmark or district as historical typically maintains if not **boosts the value of the property**, and as an **economic development tool**, historic preservation has proved its worth. Nearly any way the effects are measured, be they direct or indirect, historic preservation tends to yield significant **benefits to the economy.**”

Mason, Randall. Economics and Preservation.  
The Brookings Institution. 2005.

# Economic Value of Historic Districts

In Philadelphia, houses in National Register **historic districts command a premium** of 14.3% over comparable properties not in historic districts. Houses in local historic districts command a premium of 22.5% over comparable properties not in historic districts.

— *The Economic Impact of Historic Preservation in Philadelphia (2010)*

In Louisville, Kentucky, properties in local historic districts were worth between \$59,000 and \$67,000 more than comparable properties not in historic districts. Between 2000 and 2007 houses in local historic districts **appreciated 21% more than the rest of the market.**

— *Historic Preservation's Impact on Job Creation, Property Values, and Environmental Sustainability (2009)*

# Economic Value of Rehabilitation

Since the enactment of the State historic preservation tax credit for rehabilitation in 2008, **over a quarter billion** has been privately invested in 45 development projects across Maine – in the midst of a real estate recession.

Those 45 projects have generated an estimated **3,500 construction jobs** during that same time period while unemployment in that sector exceeded 14%.



# HOW TO USE PRESERVATION

IN TOWNS

# How Preservation Works for Towns



Photo source: DowntownBangor.com

- Instead of focusing on single, large scale development, cultivate the market appreciation of historic districts that spur investment in a community. **Higher valuations = higher revenue.**
- The average rehabilitated project in Maine using historic tax credits had its property tax assessment increase by 177%.

# Smart Growth

- Rehabilitating existing buildings typically means less infrastructure investment by towns, utilities, and developers. It's **maximum return** for a town with **minimum investment**.
- Increasing density in a downtown district boosts economic activity. **More bodies** means **more customers** which means **more jobs**.
- Developing existing districts preserves **open space**.



# Buildings That Last

Photo source: PressHerald.com



**Ocean Avenue Elementary,**  
Portland (2012);  
Architects' projection for  
useful lifespan: 40 years;  
Cost to build: <\$20 Million;  
Building it replaced:  
Baxter Elementary (1957).



**Clipston Primary School,**  
Great Britain (1667)

# Branding



Source: Sun Journal

This is landmark branding for your town.

This is corporate branding.



# Demolition: How We Can Avert It

Discover the Owner's Concerns and Needs. Sometimes a Solution is Possible.

- § Building is vacant
- § Owner frustrated with taxes, insurance, security, maintenance or heating costs
- § Difficult building to adapt for reuse
- § Unrealistic expectations for resale price
- § Grandiose vision of development for vacant lot
- § Sticker shock over price tag for deferred maintenance
- § Owner only interested in lot
- § Dilapidated building is an eyesore
- § Discovery of environmental contamination

# “Erosion of Fabric” is Slow Decline



Balustrade removed

Wooden shutters removed, maybe replaced with plastic shutters

Paint fades, flakes and peels; some bricks exposed. Bricks repointed in sections with different-colored mortar.

Wooden windows replaced with plastic, aluminum or composites

Balcony removed; portico gets rubber roof with stainless steel grommets

Porch columns replaced with generic stock

Front door replaced with composite storm door

Fence replaced with generic stock cedar

# Erosion of Fabric: After



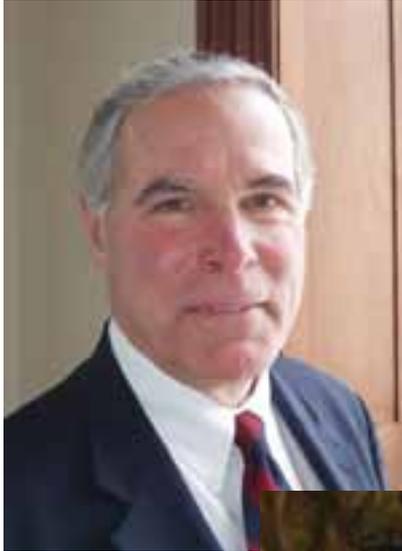
# Consider a Historic District

- ✓ Reap the economic benefits of a district.
- ✓ Protect your community's economic assets.



- ✓ Districts vary in their degree of protection.
- ✓ Already have a district? Consider a review.

# How We Can Help: Field Services



Chris Closs



Rochelle  
Bohm

**Field Services provide unbiased, expert advice on building projects anywhere in the state.**

- ⊗ **Field Services Offer**
  - n Pre-Assessments (first glance)
  - n Project guidance
  - n Referrals

Field Services are grant-funded.  
Their advice right now is free.

# How We Can Help: Tax Credits



Maine Preservation can provide preliminary advice on the feasibility of a potential tax credit project.

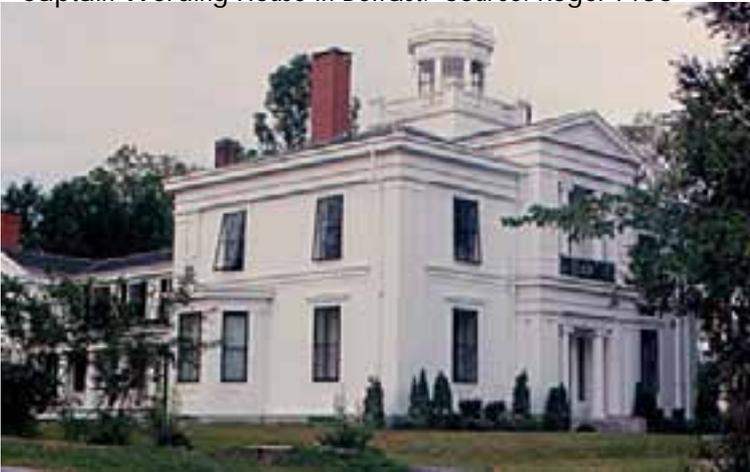
Maine Preservation is a partner on tax credit projects.

# How We Can Help: Easements



Maine Preservation holds an easement on the entire Sabbath Day Lake Shaker Village in New Gloucester.

Captain Wording House in Belfast. Source: Roger4436



Maine Preservation holds permanent preservation easements on historic properties around the state. Each year, we monitor the property and approve any changes to the building in accordance with the easement.

Some towns have used easements in lieu of a historic district to protect their landmark buildings.

# How We Can Help: Revolving Fund

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The Revolving Fund is used to market and **sell historic real estate** to a sympathetic buyer who agrees to rehabilitate the building.

Maine Preservation acquires **an option-to-purchase** from the owner for an agreed amount.

Maine Preservation accepts a permanent preservation **easement** on the property when it sells.

Proceeds from the sale “revolve” back into the Fund.

# Contact Us

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[www.maine Preservation.org](http://www.maine Preservation.org)

(207) 847-3577

[info@maine Preservation.org](mailto:info@maine Preservation.org)

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