

PRESERVATION

Alabama Historical Commission

REPORT

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AHC JOINS COALITION TO FULLY FUND HPF 2010 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The AHC has joined four other SHPOs as a member of The Coalition for Full Funding. The coalition is pushing for the federal Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to be permanently funded at \$150 million

annually. Formed in October 2009, this is a grassroots effort organized by the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers. The group includes 11 national organizations, one regionally based National Heritage Area, and SHPOs in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Maine, and Maryland.

Administered by the National Park Service (NPS) since 1970, the HPF provides program funds that are dispersed as grants-in-aid to SHPOs and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs). At least 10 percent of each State's allocation must be sub granted to Certified Local Governments (CLGs), those local governments whose preservation programs have been endorsed by the State and NPS as meeting certain criteria. Congress appropriated \$46.5 million to the HPF in FY 2010, an increase from \$39.3 million in FY 2008.

In addition to the move to increase the HPF, there are two other efforts relating to tax credits for historic property owners. Missouri Rep. Russ Carnahan (D) has introduced the *Historic Homeowners Revitalization*

Act of 2009, H.R. 3670. This bill amends the IRS Code by expanding incentives for the rehabilitation of historic homes and buildings. The bill creates a 20% federal tax credit for homeowners for "qualified rehabilitation expenditures made by taxpayer with respect to a qualified historic home." The measure limits the tax credit to \$60,000, and increases the credit available for buildings in high cost or economically distressed areas. The proposal allows for tax credits to be transferred or assigned.

Senators Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME), along with Representatives Allyson Schwartz (D-PA) and Pat Tiberi (R-OH), have reintroduced the *Community Restoration and Revitalization Act, H.R. 3715 and S. 1743*. This bill would change the federal rehabilitation tax credit program to further encourage the reuse of historic buildings and to promote energy efficiency.

Some of the main components of the measure include: increasing credit for "small" projects of \$5 million or less; providing a credit for rehabilitating older, non-historic downtown buildings for residential use; defines older buildings as 50 years or more; transferability of credit for smaller projects.

To learn more about the rehabilitation tax credit contact Chloe Mercer, AHC tax credit coordinator, at 334.230.2669, or cmercerc@preserveala.org.



A rehabilitation tax credit project, the Hampton Inn and Suites in downtown Montgomery opened in May, 2009.

CAN HISTORIC WINDOWS BE GREEN?

"Should I replace my historic wooden windows with modern ones?" That's the question many homeowners are asking. And most are having a difficult time finding facts to help them make that decision.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has a whole segment on the pros and cons of window replacement on their web site, preservationnation.org.

The site provides a refreshing antidote to all of the ads promoting window replacement. It states that the average pay-back for new window installation is 40 years. And that many modern windows fail after 20 years and need to be replaced.

The Trust also warns buyers to read the fine print about claims of "guaranteed savings"

and "lifetime warranties."

Adrian Fine, Director of State and Local Policy for the Trust, said "We wanted to help clear up a lot of misinformation and set the record straight. The facts don't demonstrate that you will get the kind of results these ads promise.

"Most homeowners would be surprised in what savings they could obtain by retaining their own windows," Fine says.

The site offers sensible, cost effective tips for achieving energy efficiency comparable to that of replacement windows. "If you are looking at both energy and cost savings, in most cases you are better off keeping your windows," Fine said.

Additionally, the site points out that historic windows have

"embodied energy." This is the energy it took to make them, transport them and install them—energy that gets thrown out if windows are replaced.

In short, the Trust makes the case that historic wood windows can be energy efficient, cost efficient, and environmentally responsible.



AHC held a windows restoration workshop recently in Tuskegee. To learn more, visit: www.preservationnation.org/issues/weatherization/windows

AHC 2010 FEDERAL WORK PLAN

The federal work plan activities are designed to assist the state in meeting goals and objectives for historic preservation. To comment on the plan contact:

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334.230.2691 / mary.shell@preserveala.org

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Make presentations to the public on the environmental review program and Section 106 requirements. Attend meetings with project contacts to assist with review and compliance issues. Make site visits to assess National Register eligibility, consult on mitigation measures and to address rehabilitation issues. Review Phase I archaeology reports, Phase II archaeology reports, and Phase III reports. Review development projects for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. Respond to inquiries on environmental review projects by mail, phone and email. Conduct bi weekly Section 106 meetings to coordinate review and maintenance of projects. Provide Section 106 and disaster planning workshop for consultants and communities. Prepare Memorandum of Agreement and Programmatic Agreements. Maintain database to track projects.

PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY EDUCATION PROJECT

Provide presentations to public and public officials on general significance of archaeological sites. Respond to requests for information on archaeological projects.

NATIONAL REGISTER PROGRAM

Provide National Register information at workshops. Enter data into NR Database. Submit nominations to state review board and forward to National Park Service. Prepare public notices and NR certificates. Respond to inquiries on the NR program. Hold three NR review board meetings. Review NR nominations. Review Preliminary Information Forms on historic properties. Review draft and final Alabama Register nominations. Make site visits to assess eligibility. Present nominations to staff review board and prepare certificates.

PRESERVATION TAX CREDITS

Respond to requests for general information on tax incentives program. Make public presentations on program and distribute information. Communicate with active tax credit project contacts and make site visits to review potential and active projects. Review applications and forward to National Park Service.

MAIN STREET

Assist with the creation and launch of a statewide non-profit organization to be Alabama's Main Street Coordinating Program, including seeking start up funding, recruiting board members, securing 501(c)(3) status, and assisting with executive director search. Continue to provide assistance and information to existing and potential communities and provide 4 points training for quarterly manager meetings until director is hired.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND STRUCTURE SURVEYS

Make site visits in response to public concerns and provide consultation on archaeological resources and survey efforts from state and contracted projects. Respond to requests for information on the architectural survey program. Make site visits to assess architectural survey issues. Seek opportunities to digitize architectural survey data and provide in a public and web-accessible format. Monitor architectural survey grants and perform in house structure surveys. Provide for public involvement with architectural survey projects. Maintain paper files in accessible and useful format. Make site visits to assess cemetery preservation issues and/or conduct cemetery surveys. Hold workshops on cemetery preservation, maintenance, and legal issues. Maintain cemetery register program. Process cemetery survey forms and cemetery historical marker applications completed by public. Respond to requests for information.

EASEMENT PROGRAM

Provide information on historic preservation easements to the public. Assist property owners with developing preservation easements. Review development proposals on properties with easements. Develop local partnerships to assist with easement promotion and monitoring.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Make site visits to provide technical assistance, training and grant assistance to participating CLG programs. Provide information on CLG program and grants to interested communities through phone, e-mail and packets. Make site visits to interested communities committed to the process. Review CLG applications from communities applying to the program. Review annual reports from CLGs and recommend re-certification or decertification. Conduct annual CLG training workshop. Develop certification requirements for local historic preservation commissioners and distribute for comments. Manage CLG grant program to insure projects are in accordance with federal program standards. Provide regular e-news to CLG contacts. Attend state planning workshops.

PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

Assist the public with technical preservation and design issues for historic properties. Respond to requests for information. Make site visits to provide assistance.

PRESERVATION TRUST FUND MANAGEMENT

Monitor active trust fund grant projects. Review and approve.

ARCHAEOLOGY SUPERVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES

Review contract reports on resources at AHC sites. Participate in master planning and field archaeology at AHC sites. Coordinate maritime council activities.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNING

Distribute approved plan to statewide constituents and by request. Provide plan on agency web site. Make presentations at regional meetings to planning and community development groups to reach new audiences and educate constituents on the statewide goals and objectives.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMPONENT IN MAJOR STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

Participate with Alabama Communities of Excellence community assessments and programs to coordinate preservation objectives with statewide community development initiatives. Participate in regular state Scenic Byways Council meetings and assessment of proposed state byways to adequately address cultural resources. Participate with Your Town Alabama workshop and organizational meetings to educate local citizens on preservation tools and programs.

PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

Maintain and update web site content; produce and distribute monthly Preservation Report newsletter and the Advocate. Develop and promote preservation awareness in general and specialized media through workshops, publications, presentations, events, audience development, heritage area development, and historic markers. Assist preservation partners in development of annual 2010 statewide preservation conference, collaborative statewide funding plan, and Black Heritage Council Forum. Continue delivering leadership and board training to local non-profit boards. Assist with technical assistance through workshops, publications, and web-based information, including a sustainability initiative in cooperation with the statewide nonprofit.

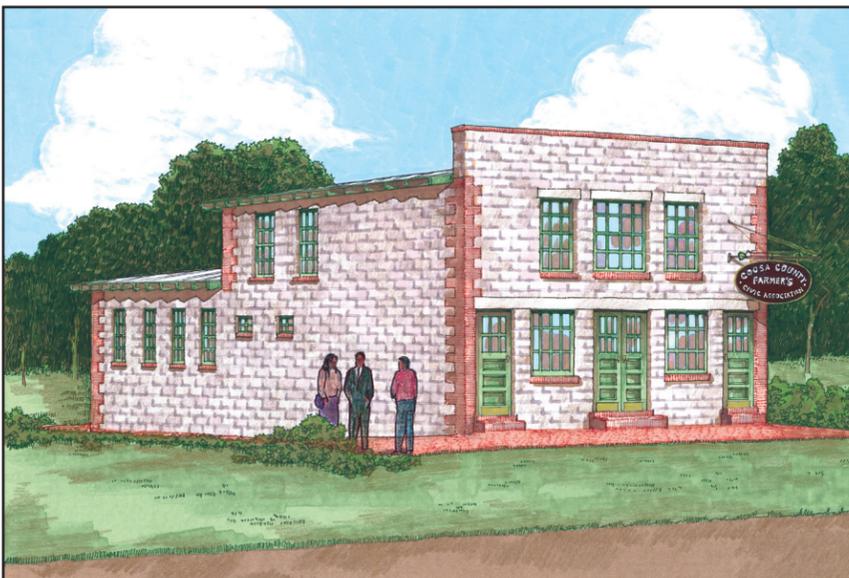
ENFORCE STATE LAWS

Provide consultations on cemetery preservation and relocation requests and issue cemetery permits. Provide archaeological consultation on burial bill issues.

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



Period musicians entertain and educate crowds as part of the annual Frontier Days at Fort Toulouse/ Fort Jackson. More than 11,000 people attended this event in 2009.



The Black Heritage Council of the AHC recently created the Historic Building Architectural Rendering program. Above is the Coosa County Farmer's and Civic Association Building in Rockford.



People enjoy looking at antique cars and shopping at local stores during a *First Friday* event hosted by Downtown Gadsden, Inc., one of Alabama's Main Street communities.

Helping people protect, preserve, use, and interpret our historic buildings, towns and archaeological sites.

In FY 2009, the Alabama Historical Commission:

Attracted **88,553** visitors to our Web site.

Welcomed **301,473** visitors to our historic sites to learn and experience our history at the very places it was made.

Responded to **12,081** requests for information and assistance in understanding, protecting, and interpreting Alabama's historic and pre-historic treasures.

Reached **5,100** people with Preservation Report bi-monthly newsletter.

Garnered **675** media stories on AHC programs, events, historic sites, and staff members.

Organized, sponsored, co-sponsored or presented at lectures, conferences, workshops, public presentations, hearings, or special programs at our own historic sites, reaching **63,951** people with information, learning opportunities, or celebratory events.

Responded to **110** requests about endangered properties and monitored 241 properties on the Preservation Watch List.

Increased the total number of properties protected by easements to **86**.

Secured **\$380,000** in national funding for AHC-owned historic sites.

Added **1,545** historic buildings, sites, and structures to the Alabama Inventory.

Listed **11** entries in the **National Register of Historic Places**, a nationwide listing of America's places worth preserving.

Assisted owners of **7** properties qualify for federal rehabilitation tax credits, resulting in over **\$18.5 million** in private investment in Alabama's historic places.

Provided guidance and assistance to **24** cities with historic preservation ordinances protecting over **12,765** historic houses, schools, community buildings, commercial buildings and places of worship.

Reviewed **3** permits for actions that affect cemeteries.

Reviewed **1,279** federally funded, licensed, or permitted projects for impacts on historic resources, clearing 786 of the projects on first review.

Engaged **1,112** volunteers in **13,729** hours of assistance at AHC historic sites.

Worked with **313** people throughout the state in the development of a statewide Main Street small town economic development program.

STATEWIDE REPORT

Alabama Register program now receiving nominations

As of December 1, the AHC has reactivated the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage program and is now reviewing nominations. The AHC now has the necessary staff to manage the program, and will be meeting in the near future to approve nominations.

Nominations can be submitted for properties that are at least 40 years old. Nominated properties must be associated with events of state or local significance, and/or associated

with people of state or local significance, and/or representative of a style or period of architecture, and/or associated with Alabama's history or prehistory.

The Alabama Register designation is honorary and carries no property restrictions or financial incentives. For more information about the Alabama Register program, please contact AHC program manager Lee Anne Wofford at 334. 230.2659, or e-mail her at lwofford@preserveala.org.

New employee joins AHC

The AHC welcomes administrative assistant Nicole Woods to the staff. Mrs. Woods began serving at the AHC on December 1 and will be primarily working with the National Register and Alabama Register programs. She has worked for the state for eleven years and previously served in the Departments of Senior Services and Public Safety.

Originally from Pike Road, Alabama, Woods is currently pursuing a business administration degree at Troy University. She will enroll in the M.B.A. program at Troy in August.

"I have enjoyed my first month at the commission, and I am looking forward to assisting with the National Register and Alabama Register programs. My role gives me a great opportunity to learn more about Alabama," said Woods.



Nicole Woods



2010 YEAR OF SMALL TOWNS & DOWNTOWNS

Celebrate and support Alabama's Main Street communities.

www.alabama.travel/homecoming

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