

GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS

An Enduring City



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DACE



HISTORIC GALA ON PEAKS ISLAND

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SPRING 2018 MAGAZINE - VOL. 43, NO. 2 - FREE

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Future Preservation Leaders Embody Ideals, **Embrace Community, and Energize Summer Projects**

HIS SUMMER, Landmarks will welcome four interns to research five Portland neighborhoods and experience the work of our small and mighty local preservation organization. We are

excited to have them on board, for they have the enthusiasm and the passion for preservation that will energize our office and develop essential information to focus preservation outreach and guide policy development. We will learn a great deal from them, while they apply what they are studying to real life projects.

The interns told us that they want to engage communities, to discover the stories behind places, to become advocates and activists, to embrace social justice and sustainability, and to make preservation rel-



evant to everyone. They are committed to preservation in the broadest sense, which bodes well for the future!

Originally from Oklahoma, Maine, Florida, and Rhode Island, the interns are enrolled in graduate programs at Columbia University in New York City, Boston University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Georgia at Athens. Here are some quick introductions:

From a young age Madeline Berry has been enthusiastic about preservation and the stories buildings tell, as well as photography. She catalogued every historic streetlight in Newport, Rhode Island and helped write a policy to preserve and maintain them. She would like to gain a better understanding of the interface of development, planning, public policy, and preservation.

Sam Shupe has been researching the popularity of cycling at the turn of the 19th to the 20th centuries in Maine from multiple perspectives, including how it changed the way men and women experienced the state's land-

scape. He loves to teach and to research architectural and landscape history as a basis for designing tours and outreach programs to inspire in others a love of history.

Rosa Fry has been a volunteer at Preservation Austin in Texas conducting cultural resource surveys for three neighborhoods and preparing their annual preservation merit awards. She is excited by the potential for preservation as a tool for community engagement open to all, and breaking old stereotypes of preservation as a barrier, or only for a limited few.

Lauren Patterson is involved with potential historic district designation in the Millard Square neighborhood in Athens, Georgia, which is facing development pressure and currently under a moratorium. Local preservationists are reassuring residents that designation is a proven tool to manage change. Sound familiar? She wants to specialize in community advocacy and sustainability.

Guided by Director of Advocacy Julie Larry, the interns will focus on Boulevard Park, Nason's Corner, East Deering, Peaks Island, and Morrill's Corner, "node" areas called out in Portland's new comprehensive plan. With our conference room as a base camp, they will conduct field work, pore over city directories and maps, and enter survey data. They will incorporate information provided by neighborhood residents at outreach sessions this spring, and report their discoveries at the end of the summer.

Time is of the essence to identify historic places, provide basic data to help the City with planning and zoning, and share neighborhood histories with the community, and what better way to nurture the next generation of preservation leaders? They will be the researchers, educators, policy makers, advocates and activists in years to come. We are especially grateful to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and the Horizon Foundation for their generous grants, and to our trustees and members for all their support, from funding to expertise to housing, which have made it possible to conduct the surveys and bring our interns to Portland.



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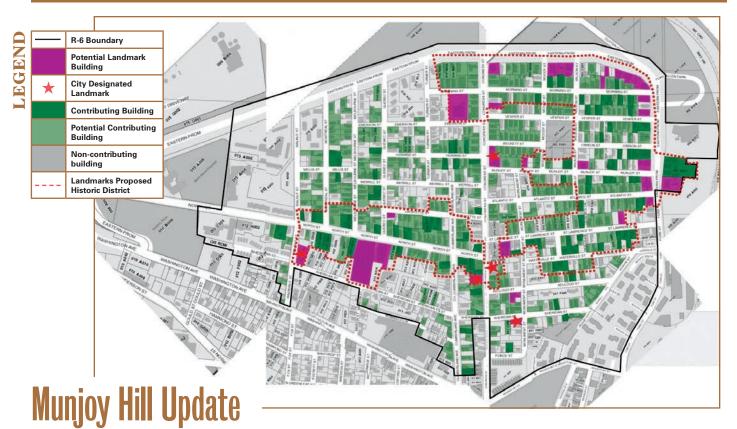
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PRESERVATION UPDATES



N DECEMBER 18, 2017 the Portland City Council voted to approve a six-month moratorium on demolition in the R-6 residential zone on Munjoy Hill. The moratorium was a response to concerns expressed by a number of Munjoy Hill residents that the current zoning was resulting in an undue number of demolitions and infill construction that is out-of-scale and -character with the existing neighborhood. Enacted to provide a temporary halt to development activity, the moratorium allows time for the Department of Planning & Urban Development to develop land use and design regulations to address both of these issues in the R-6 zone on Munjoy Hill.

The moratorium also includes a requirement for the implementation of interim zoning standards to govern development in the R-6 zone for the duration of the moratorium. The new Munjoy Hill Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) standards were approved by the City Council in early February. The overlay district contains temporary standards to guide new construction applications that are received during the remainder of the moratorium period which ends on June 4th.

During the moratorium Landmarks staff updated a 2003 city-sponsored survey of the Munjoy Hill buildings to evaluate whether enough buildings retained sufficient architectural integrity to be contributing buildings in a potential local historic district. In addition, staff and volunteers are researching the history of many of the Hill's houses and their residents. We've hosted educational programs, published blog posts, and offered walking tours to share the results of our research with neighborhood residents and other interested members of the public.



Julie Larry speaks at a gathering of the Munjoy Hill Neighborhood Organization.

We have also met with city leaders, residents, and other interested parties to better understand the issues of concern on Munjoy Hill. Based on these efforts, Landmarks believes that some scope of individual and historic district designation is a reasonable response to achieving the goals of conserving this diverse, pedestrian-friendly, historic neighborhood and managing necessary changes. Portland's Historic Preservation ordinance is a proven tool that can address contextually-appropriate new construction. We believe that through demolition review and the review of alterations to existing buildings the Historic

Preservation ordinance can also address residents' desire to conserve their historic neighborhood's character.

Based on our research and our conversations with neighborhood stakeholders we support the designation of two historic districts with boundaries focused on the Eastern Promenade and North Street. Each potential district contains buildings that retain significant levels of architectural integrity and tell the story of the Munjoy Hill neighborhood's development over a time. In addition, we support a single multiple resource nomination for individual non-contiguous buildings located outside the boundaries of these potential historic districts that would facilitate applications for individual designations by property owners.

In April, as the City begins its public process on their proposed revised land use and design regulations, Landmarks will continue to advocate for protecting historic resources and implementing contextually appropriate design standards that encourage the construction of well-designed new buildings on Munjoy Hill.



Portland's eastern waterfront is undergoing a major transformation, with new hotels, housing and offices under construction along the waterfront near the historic Grand Trunk Office (at left). The City's recent economic vitality has accelerated growth making it more important than ever to participate in the public process about land use decisions.

AN ENDURING CITY Historic Preservation and Portland's New Comprehensive Plan

BY BILL HALL

HAVE BEEN COMING TO MAINE since 1977, and living full time on Peaks Island since 1999. When I started serving on the Portland planning board, I read a textbook about city planning and thought about what I would like to see happen in the city. I made a list of 14 goals and I used it to evaluate the proposals that came before us. On the list were things like "prosperous and economically vital," "sustainable," "attractive," "interesting, with a streetscape you feel good about and other people want to visit," and "exciting, with lots of things

to do especially for young people." As I reviewed the proposals that came before the board, I ranked them against these goals.

I think that *Portland's Plan 2030*, the new comprehensive plan, addresses many of the goals I hope that Portland can achieve. This is a time when it is especially important to have a vision for Portland that makes the most of its attractive "bouquet of assets," including its historic architecture. Based on my experience on the planning board, I offer seven opportunities and seven challenges presented in the plan that will affect historic preservation.

OPPORTUNITIES

Growth

Portland is fortunate in its recent economic vitality, which is creating an environment for current and future growth. This fiscal strength gives us the resources to do things. Indirectly this strengthens historic preservation because there are funds that can be used to rehabilitate and repurpose older buildings. Other cities in the northeast aren't so lucky. They have wonderful historic buildings like Portland does, but lack the economic base that would support their revitalization.

All over Portland you can see the impacts of our recent prosperity: the new WEX headquarters is well underway and there is major new construction along India Street and the waterfront. There are creative partnerships like the Maine College of What is it? What is its quality? Where does it go? Over the long term, there will be a reduced emphasis on the automobile and parking versus buildings. The design and quality of these new buildings will change the face of Portland.

Recognition and Appreciation of Historic Buildings

One of the defining features of Portland has been its historic buildings, neighborhoods, streetscapes and landscapes. More people are appreciating this, whether they are residents, visitors, tourists, or business owners. From a policy perspective, there is an opportunity to create targeted funding and incentives, including tax abatement, to encourage more rehabilitation and preservation projects.

The new comprehensive plan cites a need for greater urban density, as more people are attracted to live in the city known for its walkability, historic architecture, and access to the outdoors.

Art student housing as part of the rehabilitation of the former Schlotterbeck & Foss offices to much-needed rental housing. The University of Southern Maine is looking for ways to better integrate with the city. And entrepreneurs and property owners are undertaking a vast array of preservation and new construction projects.

Density

Today, more people want to live and work in cities and towns. This view is very different from 50 years ago. More density allows more energy efficient development that makes better use of existing infrastructure. It brings vitality with more people on the street. Just look at the India Street area, which is now populated, and hosts a variety of coffee shops, restaurants and businesses. There is an opportunity to reuse the land that has been dedicated to surface parking.

There are a lot of questions to be answered about density.

Quality of Change

Change is a given, but how that change will occur can be influenced by today's policy decisions. As citizens who care about our city and community, it is more important than ever to participate in the public process about land use decisions. We need to think through the technical aspects, such as quality of materials, safety, infrastructure, and visual appearance. The area of design can be challenging – will design standards be viewed as too limiting? Too subjective? Will they produce the architecture that the community desires?

Community Partnerships

Many organizations in Portland have a long tradition of partnering with the City to help achieve community priori-

ties. Greater Portland Landmarks is one of them! A recent example is Landmarks' survey of the architecture in the Munjoy Hill neighborhood to provide baseline data for the City as they assess planning policies for the neighborhood. Another is Landmarks' long-standing partnership with the City to maintain and steward the Portland Observatory. Such partnerships across all sectors of the community, strengthen planning initiatives for the future of our city.

Active Community

Portland is a city of great historic neighborhoods that are walkable and accessible to commercial areas and public parks. There are many opportunities already in place to reduce our dependence on the automobile.

With all these **OPPORTUNITIES** there is also a set of **CHALLENGES** facing our city. *Continued on next page.*

Located in the West End Historic District, architect David Lloyd's design for the new apartment building on Carleton Street is a good example of how new construction can address workforce housing needs and fit seamlessly into the neighborhood through scale, materials, and design element decisions.





Before and after views of the classrooms developer Peter Bass repurposed as affordable housing for artists in the former Sacred Heart School (1914). There are designated studio spaces in the basement. (See front cover for exterior view.)

HOTOS: PETE

RENDERING: DAVID LLOYD

CHALLENGES

Growth

Economic prosperity brings more intensive development, which raises questions about whether to build and replace versus preserve and reuse. It adds pressure that affects the familiar building types that residents associate with this place.

Density

The plans' objective for density can be at odds with historic preservation. The larger height and mass needed to increase density create pressure on historic buildings. There is an incentive to clear away and start new. High land values drive developers to build larger and taller buildings, which can dwarf existing buildings.

Rewriting the Zoning Code

The planning department will be taking on a huge project in rewriting the City's zoning code. This promises to be time- and labor-intensive, and most likely contentious. It will require a careful examination of all the city's neighborhoods, and citizen involvement will be essential.

Parking

So many conversations about development in Portland end up with a debate about parking. It is an insidious, emotional issue. Can we create incentives to minimize parking? When parking occupies the first floor, there is no street-level activity. Other communities are trying new approaches. For example,

in Baltimore's eastern waterfront area, there are buildings that have active retail on the first floor, parking on the second floor, and residential above. A related challenge for Portland is to reduce parking demand by providing improved public transportation.

Waterfront

The waterfront is key to Portland's identity, so the quality of change along the waterfront will always be a challenge. How will the historic buildings along the waterfront stay vital and active? How will the effects of climate change and sea level rise impact the waterfront? These and other questions will require Portland and surrounding communities to develop multi-dimensional, long-term policies.

Mid 20th-century Buildings

There has been a lack of public appreciation for historic structures built in the 1950s and 60s. These buildings are now over 50 years old, and are being rediscovered and reassessed.

Social Equity and Diversity

After reading Max Page's book, Why Preservation Matters, I would add that, as a community, we need to address economic fairness, so that people of all backgrounds can be in the city. That includes providing housing opportunities in new or existing buildings, and good public schools.



Shown as built, Avesta's new building on Carleton Street replaced a former parking lot with 37 units of workforce housing. The project received approval from Portland's Historic Preservation Board.

With the opportunities and challenges facing us, historic preservation will be an essential component in the city's future. Today, Portland's success with preservation is often taken for granted. Portland is totally different than when I first started coming here in the 1970s. Now, the rehabilitated buildings in the Old Port, on Commercial Street and along Congress Street define our city. Older neighborhoods are in high demand. Preservation has provided a background tail wind that has positioned our city as an attractive, prosperous, exciting place. Success breeds success and residents, developers, and visitors have taken notice.

Landmarks trustee Bill Hall was a member of the Portland planning board from 2006-2016, and previously served for 4 years on the zoning board of appeals. He came to Portland after a career in the US Air Force, and is currently the executive director of the World Affairs Council of Maine. Portland's comprehensive plan can be found at www.portlandmaine.gov.

PORTLAND'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: LOCAL GOALS FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES

Adopted by City Council, June 5, 2017

- Identify, document, designate, and preserve
 Portland's historic resources, including individual structures, neighborhoods, parks, cemeteries, and archaeological resources.
- Educate and engage residents and visitors in appreciation of Portland's unique heritage.
- Promote historic preservation as a key economic, sustainability and community development strategy.
- Stabilize and enhance historic areas of the City by ensuring quality investment in existing structures and compatible infill development.
- Ensure an appropriate balance of continuity and change as Portland grows and evolves.





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WHO WE ARE: ARTHUR FINK

How did you get interested in Historic Preservation?

When I first moved to Portland, I bought one of the houses in the Hamlin Block at Danforth and Brackett Streets. The day of the closing there was a protest at a house being torn down. I remember Police Chief Mike Chitwood telling the protesters that if they didn't move they would be arrested. That was the beginning of my connection with Landmarks.

You were on the first historic preservation board after the ordinance passed in 1990. What was it like?

I joined the Historic Preservation Board in its first incarnation. We were just learning, and it felt like a very consequential position. People wanted to come to us and do the right thing, and in many cases we were able to collaborate and help make good choices.

Two cases are memorable. People said that the Tracy Causer Block on Fore Street couldn't be rehabilitated, but we were able to preserve it. It's not a grand structure like the Victoria Mansion, but a piece of vernacular architecture that stands strong as an example of its period. The second case was when Maine DOT wanted to widen a section of Route 302 by the Riverton Trolley Park, which in the late 19th century was a popular weekend destination at the end of the trolley line. A friends group wanted to preserve it as an archaeological site, even though there weren't standing buildings. The Board convinced DOT to rebuild the small entry building to the park and scale back their project. Learning about this and having a role in protecting it was really exciting.

How have historic districts impacted the city?

There are parts of the city that feel deeply livable like the West End where I used to live, and others, like near the Civic Center, where we've lost the genius of early planning and buildings. It's so clear that historic preservation is good for the soul and good for the pocketbook of most people involved, but it's still such a struggle.

I became a strong advocate for historic districts along India Street and at the Portland Company because there was a real threat to losing part of our history. I don't want to be fighting about these things, I want to be standing up for them. I want to be civil; good development is going to be important to keeping our city vibrant.

How do you respond to concerns that historic designation limits creativity?

When I personally went in front of the Historic Preservation Board to put skylights on the front of my building, they asked me to consider an alternative approach. Ultimately, the project was better for it.

As a creative artist, I have constraints all the time and some of them help me. Do we need to be fanciful and creative without constraints on everything we do? I don't think so. Really creative people can work within constraints and produce great things. We can be creative in how structures talk to each other. The question isn't whether we'll do it, but how.

Landmarks recently named the area on Peaks Island known as the amusement district as a Place in Peril. As an islander why it is important to preserve?

As an islander, why it is important to preserve?

Understanding our history and culture is good for the soul. The former Greenwood Gardens is not where a battle was won or treaty was signed, but it shows how people lived their lives. It concerned me that there was no preservation on the island. There are a few buildings that have the dignified look of mansions, while others almost replicate the tent platforms



"I'm glad that on my first day in Portland, I saw a bunch of Landmarks supporters being willing to get arrested."

they replaced. We haven't yet seen the island take the steps they need to preserve those. But it matters a great deal. In order to preserve Peaks Island we first have to understand what there is that we need to preserve.

How would you envision preservation being part of the future of Greater Portland?

For me, livability, racial/ethnic/economic diversity, creativity, and relationship to sea and earth is what I want to preserve, in addition to housing stock and elegant and not elegant buildings.

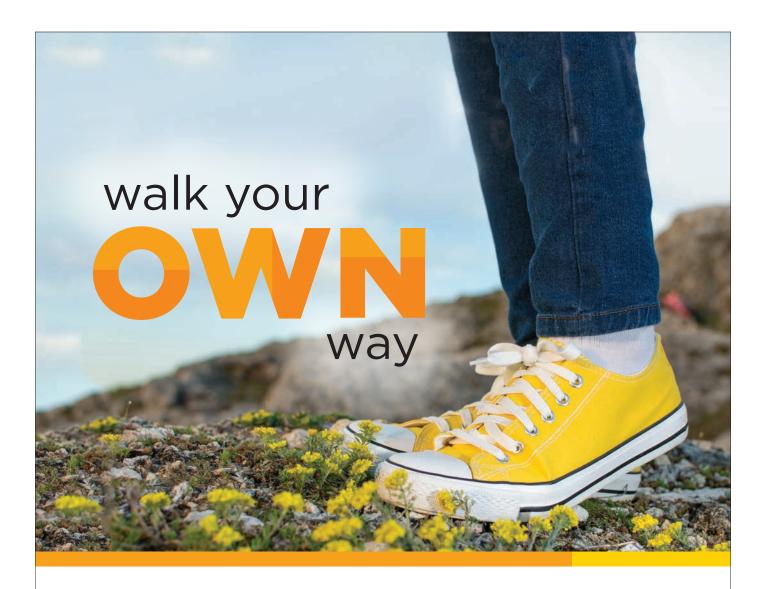
Many think of preservation as a rich person's indulgence, but I don't. We need to overcome that and find that preserving is about preserving the essence of Portland. We should be collaborating with groups that are working on environmental sustainability. Preservation shouldn't be a niche activity. What has me going to so many City Council meetings is a concern about the quality of my life and other people's lives!

You create art and are passionate about social justice. How do these two things inform each other?

They intersect, but they don't start out as one. I'm a very visual person and am deeply affected by my visual environment. These are strands of my life that come together. What unites them is I don't have to take the world as I found it. I don't know why some people are so scared to cry out and say "Help! Something is wrong here and we need to stop this." If you say we need to respect indigenous people, or this building and the social context it harkens back to, it's the same gesture.

I'm glad that on my first day in Portland, I saw a bunch of Landmarks supporters being willing to get arrested.

What redeems us as a society? I think it's coming to grips with our roots and coming to grips with our future. And Landmarks touches deeply both of those.



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OBSERVATORY AT A GLANCE



View of Portland looking down Congress Street from the top of the Observatory.

HE 2018 SEASON BEGINS at the Portland Observatory on Saturday, May 26th and we're looking forward to another great year. Open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. until Monday, October 8th, we hope you'll come for a visit and experience the amazing view and, according to the *New York Times*, "loquacious guides" who make the history come alive. As this visitor from the UK wrote "Climbing 103 steps to the top is not regrettable because once you are at the top you can observe and enjoy the magnificent and extraordinary views of Portland and Casco Bay. This 1807 signal tower is the only remaining wooden maritime signal tower in USA. For a modest admission fee you can get fascinating history information on this Observatory from well trained and friendly staff."

Don't forget, as a Landmarks member, admission to the Observatory is free all season.

We also have some special things happening this year. In June there's the annual Flag Day celebration on June 14th with a variety of fun activities including our sea shanty guy, Dave Peloquin.

In August we're working on an event in partnership with Spirits Alive at the Eastern Cemetery to commemorate the death of Captain Lemuel



Docent Ann O'Hagan at right leads a *Homes of Portland's Golden Age*, in Portland's State and High Street area. Tours will be offered again this summer on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Moody and the 350th anniversary of the Eastern Cemetery. This will include special tours of the Observatory and the Eastern Cemetery. Keep your eyes open for more information on this special event.

In October we'll once again be celebrating Halloween at the Observatory. Fun costumes and lots of candy are the hallmark of this event.

Finally, in December we're expanding our Lantern Tours to three nights so mark your calendars for December 13, 14, & 15. Offered for the first time last year, these evening guided tours of the Observatory with a special holiday theme were a favorite of visitors and docents despite the cold temperatures.

And the Observatory isn't the only thing. Did you know that we also offer guided walking tours and tours of the U.S. Custom House?

Homes of Portland's Golden Age explores the area that, in the early 19th century was considered "the most beautiful neighborhood in Portland." Guided walking tours of the stately homes and churches on High, Spring, State and Pleasant Streets showcase Portland's early prosperity through its architecture. The tour ends with a visit inside the Cumberland Club.



On Mondays this summer, walking tours of the India Street Neighborhood will feature an exclusive opportunity to see the interior of the Abyssinian Meeting House, thanks to a partnership with the Abyssinian Restoration Project.

New this year we're excited to announce that we'll be offering **The India Street Neighborhood: A Crossroads for Workers, Residents, and Travelers Through the Centuries** where we'll walk back in time from the 21st to the 19th century exploring the oldest street in Portland and its newest historic district. The walk will end with an exclusive tour inside the Abyssinian Meeting House, thanks to a partnership with the Abyssinian Restoration Project.

Finally, we also offer guided tours of the **U.S. Custom House**. Constructed soon after the Great Fire of 1866, it opened for business in 1872 becoming a gateway for one of the five largest ports in the country. New Hampshire granite, walnut woodwork, and Italian marble were used in construction to ensure the building would stand for generations as a symbol of stability, wealth and strength.

Advanced registration is required for all of these tours.

Please visit the Landmarks website to find out more and to register.

Landmarks members receive \$2.00 off any of these tours.

Seeking Preservation Award Nominations for Projects Big and Small

OMINATE ANY HISTORIC PROPERTY OR LANDSCAPE that has been restored, rehabilitated, undergone sensitive new construction or adapted to modern use. Consider nominating people or organizations that strive to educate and advocate for preserving the cultural heritage of the Greater Portland Area. For more information and the nomination form visit: www.portlandlandmarks.org/awards. For questions contact Julie Ann Larry, at jlarry@portlandlandmarks.org or 207-774-5561.











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LANDMARKS PEOPLE AND PLACES



Peter Taggart leads a workshop on sustainability in preservation which was eligible for REALTORS to earn 3 CEU credits.





John Calvin Stevens Society and friends gathering at the U.S Custom House. Left: Nate Stevens, Ted Oldham, Hilary Bassett, Sally Oldham, and Lynn Hallet. Right: Sean Murphy and Colleen Katana.



Participants gathered in front of the Observatory before a recent walking tour of Munjoy Hill.

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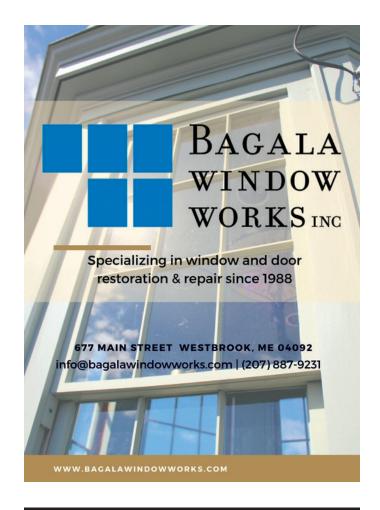
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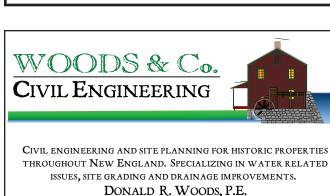
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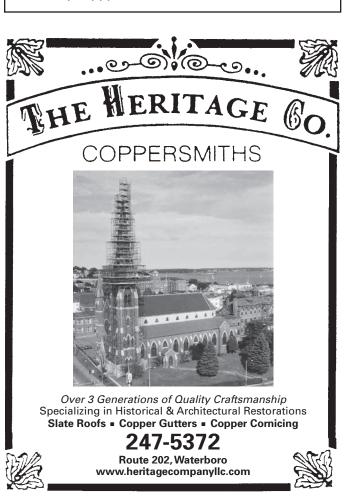


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LANDMARKS CALENDAR

The Portland Observatory Opens for the 211th Season!

Saturday, May 26, 2018 — Monday, October, 8, 2018 10 am — 4:30 pm daily

Breathtaking views and fascinating history at America's last standing maritime signal tower. Since 1807, the Portland Observatory has offered spectacular views of Portland's busy harbor and served as a beloved symbol of the city's rich maritime heritage. *Members get in free every day*

Annual Flag Day Celebration

Thursday, June 14, 2018, 10 am — 6 pm

An annual all day celebration of the maritime history of the Portland Observatory with kids activities and sea shanties. Free admission for all!

WE WILL BE IN A NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR YOU SOON!

Join us for two Neighborhood History Meet-ups in Deering.

Landmarks is bringing in 4 summer interns to conduct historic building surveys in Deering neighborhoods that are targeted by the City for intensive planning efforts in the new comprehensive plan. Before we start we want to hear from you! Join us for two neighborhood events where we will share our research and documentation plans. We also want to hear from you about the history of these neighborhoods and what buildings you value most. Have you done your own research on your house or neighborhood? Do you have some family photos of your neighborhood? Has your family lived in the same spot for generations? Let us know! Or do you just want to learn more about these parts of Portland? Join us!

Nason's Corner: From Capisic Brook to Brighton Avenue Terrace

Tuesday, May 15, 6 pm — 7 pm St. Ansgar's Church

515 Woodford Street, Portland

East Deering's Many Faces: Washington Ave & Veranda Street

Wednesday, May 23, 6 pm -7 pm

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

678 Washington Avenue, Portland



KEYNOTE LECTURE AND RECEPTION



Why Preservation Matters: Shaping a Sustainable and Equitable Future with Max Page

Wednesday, May 9, 6 pm at First Parish, Portland

Preservation is no longer just about old buildings. Today's movement can be a catalyst to address issues of gentrification, environmental sustainability, and understanding difficult pasts. Page's talk will draw on his most recent book, Why Preservation Matters (Yale University Press, 2016), and offer a progressive vision for the future of preservation. Page is a professor of architecture and Director of Historic Preservation at UMASS Amherst.

LECTURE: \$15/\$5 STUDENT; LECTURE AND RECEPTION: \$50

Purchase tickets: www.portlandlandmarks.org or call 207-774-5567

