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Surveys Benefit 55 Localities

What's a survey? Many clients ask that question. Some have seen VDOT field workers "surveying" a road in anticipation of new construction. A telephone "survey" asks questions about everything from political preferences to what kind of pop music you like. But for the Department of Historic Resources (DHR), "survey" is at the heart of all its programs and work. A DHR survey is a systematic evaluation of cultural resources. A survey examines both standing buildings and below-ground resources. Maps are produced showing exact locations. Site plans are drawn to show how buildings relate to one another. Photographs are taken to record a visual image. Data is collected to explain the history of the property. An historic context, or an overview of the history of the locality, is compiled to explain the evolution of local and regional structures and sites.

How are surveys produced, and more importantly, how do both the state and local governments use them? Eight years ago, the Department developed a method to gather information on historic buildings and sites in a unique partnership

with Virginia's local governments. Each February, DHR issues a Request For Proposal to all local governments — county, city, and town — asking for proposals to conduct survey and planning activities that each locality sees as important to its comprehensive planning efforts. The proposal includes an outline of what survey and planning work is most needed and how much money the locality is willing to commit to the project. Following an intensive evaluation process, the Department selects those communities where the need is greatest—in other words where the information on historic properties is most limited and where the proposed project best addresses DHR survey priorities. The Department enters into a contract with the locality under which the local government agrees to send one-half of the project cost to DHR; DHR agrees to pay for the other half, and most significantly, assumes the entire administrative burden of overseeing the project. The Department hires the consultant to do the work, pays the bills, and monitors the work, thus relieving often overworked local planning offices of those chores.

The products produced, such as survey forms, maps, photographs, comprehensive illustrated reports, scripted slide shows, and electronic data on all properties examined during the project, are duplicated so that local governments get invaluable information for their planning purposes. DHR, responding to its mission to survey historic architectural and archeological properties in the Commonwealth, enlarges its valuable statewide database.

Other significant benefits for local governments that come from conducting a comprehensive survey:

- Properties found potentially eligible for nomination to the Virginia and national registers may be able to take advantage of the new generous preservation tax credits.
- Localities can develop well-grounded heritage tourism programs based on information gathered during survey projects.
- Through well-publicized surveys, local citizens gain a greater appreciation for their community's history. The materials assembled in survey projects can be used in educational efforts for young and old alike.
- Knowledge of what the historic resources in a community are, coupled with which ones are

the most significant and where they are located, can assist local officials as they pursue new development.

Recent joint projects in Virginia include a survey of country stores in Gloucester County that led to a driving tour brochure on the important historical role of country stores in a Tidewater county; a survey of historic buildings in three districts in Norfolk that resulted in their nomination to the Virginia and national registers, making property owners eligible for rehabilitation tax credits; and in the small town of Lawrenceville, celebrating its 125th anniversary this year, a survey of over 450 structures including a rare 1932 baseball park, that will see nearly the entire town listed as a Virginia landmark.

As a large and geographically diverse state with a rich collection of historic properties, Virginia presents a challenge to develop an accurate and accessible database of cultural resource information. Since 1990, 56 local governments have partnered with DHR in accomplishing that goal. Twenty-three communities in 1999 have proposed projects for the coming 1999-2000 cycle. With increased funding made possible by the 1999 General Assembly, more localities will have the opportunity to take stock of what they have, and put their resources to work. ♦

Harcum Store and Post Office, Lawrenceville, was one of 450 buildings surveyed in the town. All of Lawrenceville is now being considered for listing as a Virginia landmark.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Governor Jim Gilmore issued a proclamation officially recognizing Virginia Historic Preservation Week, May 9-15, 1999. The proclamation, a first for Virginia, declares in part that "historic buildings and places enrich the beauty, culture, and economy of communities across Virginia by enhancing education, tourism, and economic development." Tying in with National Historic Preservation Week, the Commonwealth's proclamation joined in co-sponsoring the theme of "Protecting the Irreplaceable."

Responding to the Governor's call for participation, 24 localities around the state issued proclamations in support of local preservation efforts. Toolbox leaders in the Community Awareness Campaign were instrumental in encouraging local leaders to call on their city councils and boards of supervisors to issue the proclamations. Towns, cities, and counties from Albemarle and Rappahannock to Roanoke and Grayson recognized the benefits of putting their history to work. This is another first for Virginia preservation.

On another note, rehabilitation of the oldest continuously occupied Governor's Mansion is well underway in Richmond, as the Governor, his family, and Executive Mansion staff relocated to quarters in the near West End. DHR staff is closely involved in rehabilitation planning efforts, led by First Lady of Virginia Roxane Gilmore. Staff also aided in the excavation of an archaeological site near the mansion. The site identified last winter consisted of a brick foundation with an abundance of artifacts. The artifacts date the site to the mid- to late- 1800s. DHR curation staff conserved artifacts recovered from the site, which will be mounted in an exhibition following the restoration of the mansion. The collection includes hundreds of items, including porcelain, stoneware, and even soda bottles from a local grocer dating to the late



First Lady Roxane Gilmore (left) and Cara Metz, DHR senior architect (right), examine surprising findings at recently excavated site near the Executive Mansion.

1850s. The restoration is being extensively documented, and the resulting materials will be archived at the Library of Virginia. In ensuing months, the restoration will be filmed for the "Bob Vila's Home Again" program. Thirteen segments will feature historic restorations around the country, to be aired in 2000. The restoration is slated for completion in November.

A few notes on recent community actions: as you will see in an article on pages 1-2, more localities are taking stock of their historic resources through our Cost Share program which Governor Gilmore and the General Assembly nearly doubled in size last session. Richmond's Monument Avenue celebrates becoming the first street in the nation to be designated a National Historic Landmark, while the Boulevard moves toward completion of a vision for the future through a partnership among the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Museums on the Boulevard (with DHR in the lead), and other neighborhood stakeholders. The "Vision for the Boulevard" (see page 4), encompassing the six-mile stretch from the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens to Maymont and connecting with the Riverfront Canal Walk, should help create a beautiful, vital neighborhood that welcomes all Virginians to some of the Commonwealth's outstanding cultural institutions. ♦

Vision for the Boulevard Coming Into Focus

The Virginia Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) is working with the Department of Historic Resources and six institutions, known as Museums on the Boulevard, to create a unified "Vision for the Boulevard." The vision encompasses a six-mile historic and cultural corridor between the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, Henrico County, and Maymont Park, City of Richmond. The project is part of the ASLA's "100 Parks, 100 Years" program — a national effort to create or revitalize 100 parks.

Vaughn Rinner, Virginia Chapter ASLA coordinator for program, said, "The Boulevard is one of the crown jewels of the 100 Parks program." The vision will guide master planning for long-range preservation and enhancement of the cultural, environmental, aesthetic, and economic values within the corridor.

Museums on the Boulevard emphasizes advancing three goals: to increase the institutions' visitation, to increase Virginia's tourism visibility, and to contribute to the preservation and improvement of surrounding neighborhoods. Thus the museums welcome ASLA's gift as an opportunity for the museums and for the community as a whole.

Besides DHR, Museums on the Boulevard includes the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Children's Museum of Richmond, the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Maymont, the Science Museum of Virginia, and the Virginia Historical Society. Bob Carter, DHR's director of community services, coordinates the vision project, and Jack Zehmer, DHR's chief architectural historian for the Capital Region, serves on the project team.

To maximize the benefits of the project, ASLA and the Museums on the Boulevard designed a process for public interaction. It began with a meeting on March 17 at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts attended by more than 50 community leaders. Throughout the spring, teams of architects

and consultants assessed existing opportunities and constraints within the corridor, considering pedestrian and vehicular traffic, parking, land use, visual character, vegetation, urban design, and historic preservation. The team also obtained input from residents and merchants.

The public participation process culminated in a Vision Workshop on May 15 at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, attended by more than 65 community leaders. The workshop allowed participants to review the collected information and to exchange ideas. Highlighting the workshop were the resources that ASLA contributed, the design team's presentation, the high level of community leader participation and commitment, and the broad consensus that emerged. Private organizations represented at the workshop included the Henrico County Historical Society, the Virginia Historical Society, the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, and 12 civic associations.

ASLA members are now preparing graphic summaries from the workshop. The vision that grows out of the interaction will be consolidated in an illustrative booklet to communicate the process and results for marketing, fundraising, grant applications, and public education. It will be completed in the fall of 1999.

For more information about ASLA and the 100 Parks program visit the ASLA national web site at www.asla.org and the Virginia Chapter web site at VA-ASLA@vt.edu. ♦

ATTENTION LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: **Local Historical Marker Program Available**

Local governments that wish to establish their own historical marker programs should visit the DHR web site for information. According to the *Code of Virginia*, historical markers to be placed on public property must either be part of the state system (on topics of state or national significance), or part of a local marker system (on

subjects of local significance) approved by the Board of Historic Resources. Several counties have created local marker programs with DHR's assistance. Visit our web site for details:

www.dhr.state.va.us ♦

Sculpture Grants Available for Public Works

Nearly \$140,000 was granted in the first of four phases as applications keep coming in to the national program Save Our Sculptures! A joint project of Heritage Preservation and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art, SOS! is dedicated to helping American



"Today's Miner," Buchanan County. (Photo by David A. Edwards)

communities save their public outdoor sculpture for the new millennium. The Assessment and Conservation Treatment award series is funded by Target Stores and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Applicants are required to be nonfederal government entities or private, nonprofit organizations. The next round of applications is due by November 30, 1999. SOS! also offers the SOS! Achievement Awards (deadline July 15, 1999). Contact SOS! for applications at: 1-800-SOS-SCULPTURE or (202) 634-1422, or write Save Outdoor Sculpture!, SOS! Awards, Heritage Preservation, 1730 K Street NW, Suite 566, Washington, D.C. 20006. ♦

YOUR IDEAS WELCOME

DHR seeks your thoughts for developing next year's work plan (October '99 - September 2000) and for revising the 1997 Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan – looking forward over the next biennium and beyond to the year 2007. Your insight on issues facing Virginia's historic resources, solutions, and opportunities for the Department, the state, and for your communities are a vital part of DHR planning.

To send suggestions for the annual work plan or to be included on a mailing list for the comprehensive state plan, contact your regional office director. Please be sure to include your name, address, phone number (optional) and email address (if available). Regional offices will hold public meetings on the annual plan in September. Keep your eye on the DHR web site (www.dhr.state.va.us) for more information on both plans! ♦

Calendar of Events

September 15 Historic Resources and State Review Board Meeting (Richmond). Quarterly meeting to consider nomination of historic properties to the national and state registers. Location TBA. Contact June Ellis at (804) 367-2323, X 116.

October 9 Kickoff for Virginia Archaeology Month. (Alexandria). 1st Annual Urban Archaeology Festival, with the theme: "Held in Trust, Community Archaeology in Virginia." Details TBA.

Roanoke Office Celebrates 10 Years of Service

The Roanoke Regional Preservation Office (RRPO) celebrated its 10th anniversary in grand fashion on May 18, 1999, at the Buena Vista House, the regional office headquarters. The festivities were highlighted by "Reflections on 10 Years of Historic Preservation," a series of presentations by nine charter members of the RRPO Advisory Committee. Committee members Evelyn Bethel, Cliff Boyd, Betty Gereau, Gary Grant, Kathleen Ingoldsby, George Kegley, Evie Lander, Patrick Miller, and Joey Moldenhauer expressed their appreciation for the excitement and enthusiasm generated by work of RRPO staff on the survey and recordation, contextual research, and preservation of significant prehistoric and historic resources.

Success of the RRPO work over the last 10 years was evident in DHR staff presentations of previous projects. Anne Stuart Beckett gave a well-received slide show on historic buildings throughout the area, and Tom Klatka commented on past prehistoric and historic site surveys. He also expressed thanks for assistance received from professional archaeologists and from Archeological Society of Virginia volunteers.

Roanoke City Mayor David Bowers saluted the work of the office. He pointed to staff efforts to support Roanoke's pride in its heritage and underscored the remarkable economic development revenue generated by the revitalization of Hotel Roanoke (designated by RRPO), a project which he termed "the number one economic development and public works project for this city. It was also the number one historic preservation success of this century in our city." He expressed support for Beckett's intent to prepare a nomination report to

designate the Roanoke City Star.

DHR Director H. Alexander Wise, Jr. brought greetings from the Governor and First Lady and applauded the field office's accomplishments. He explained that it has served as the model for the creation of three additional DHR regional offices to provide hands-on preservation services for people throughout Virginia.

After the presentations, attendees enjoyed a reception and participated in a U.S. Postal Service RRPO 10th anniversary commemorative stamp cancellation featuring a logo designed by Beckett.

Among the 80 people attending the celebration were former Congressman M. Caldwell Butler and wife June, a charter member of the RRPO Advisory Committee; Virginia Senator John Edwards; Debbie Lawson, Senator Charles Robb's regional representative; Peter Larkin, Congressman Bob Goodlatte's district director; and Brian Shepard, Delegate Vic Thomas' legislative aide. Thanks to all, RRPO had a great 10th anniversary birthday party. ♦

Joining in the Roanoke office celebration are (from left to right) Debbie Roddenberry, Mary Ruffin Viles, Kathleen Ingoldsby, June Butler, Reggie Williams, and Gary Grant. (Photo by David Hazzard)



Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation Conference

More than 100 preservationists, planners, neighborhood leaders, contractors, builders, housing and development professionals, bankers, and tax attorneys learned ways to secure profitable investment for the rehabilitation of affordable housing in historic neighborhoods at a conference May 17, 1999 in Roanoke.

The conference opened with a presentation by Charlene Vaughn of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Vaughn explained that a Council Policy Statement adopted in 1995 is intended to promote a new and flexible approach to affordable housing and historic preservation. Preserving historic buildings for affordable housing correlated to other initiatives outlined by the next speakers, William Stoken, Virginia office of Housing and Urban Development, and John Wells, DHR. They presented the federal and state programs that affect such rehabilitation. A presentation on preservation tax incentives by Aleca Sullivan of the National Park Service ended the morning. She explained the application of tax incentives to rehabilitation of affordable housing.

The afternoon conference sessions continued at full speed starting with a presentation on private sector investment in historic and affordable housing by Claudia Robinson of Bank of America. Attorney Fiona Tower then introduced legal tools for public financing of historic affordable housing. Tower highlighted the benefits of syndication of federal and state rehabilitation tax credits and federal low-income housing tax credits. Presentation of various national, Virginia, and Roanoke case studies followed. The conference ended with a bus tour of the Roanoke sites – Northwest Neighborhood Environmental Organizational projects, Campbell Avenue buildings, and Historic Gainsboro Neighborhood housing rehabs. The conference was co-sponsored by the Roanoke regional office,

Roanoke City, and the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority. For more information, call John Kern, director, Roanoke Regional Preservation Office, at (540) 857-7585. ♦

AGREED!

Working with DHR and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) recently became easier. Cooperation between DHR and VDOT took another big step forward when the two agencies signed a new programmatic agreement in January. The agreement demonstrates VDOT's increased sensitivity to and acknowledgement of the value and importance of historic preservation.

The new agreement replaces a 1990 one that had become obsolete. Developing a new one was seen an opportunity to increase the efficiency of both agencies and to improve customer service. The new agreement represents several years of negotiating, culminating in the following changes:

- Projects that do not have an effect on historic resources will no longer be reviewed by DHR, allowing both agencies to focus on those projects that are likely to have an effect.
- DHR will work with VDOT to publish some of the best of the cultural resource reports. This means that the public will have a chance to learn more about the wealth of information VDOT collects from the historic structures, buildings, districts, and archaeological sites that are investigated as part of many highway projects. Also, VDOT will fund preservation projects agreed upon by a joint committee of the two agencies. ♦

Elect Electronic Receipt of Newsletter For Fast Delivery

Beginning with the March issue, "Preservation in Progress" is now available on the DHR web site. A few simple clicks will take you to www.dhr.state.va.us and on to the newsletter publication date and article of your choosing.

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