

# IN THE DISTRICTS

*A newsletter published by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission*

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## ■ CASE IN POINT

### Compatible Innovation: The Exploris Example

**C**hange is a constant—even for historic districts. In fact, it's the foundation of the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) process, which acts to ensure changes to individual properties are compatible with historic character.

Occasionally, however, a proposal calls for constructing an entirely new building. And that presents an opportunity for something entirely new for the historic district as well.

A graphic example is the Exploris museum, now taking shape near Moore Square. Comprising almost half a city block, the project includes adaptive use of an existing structure, introduction of new building forms and materials, and extensive landscaping changes.

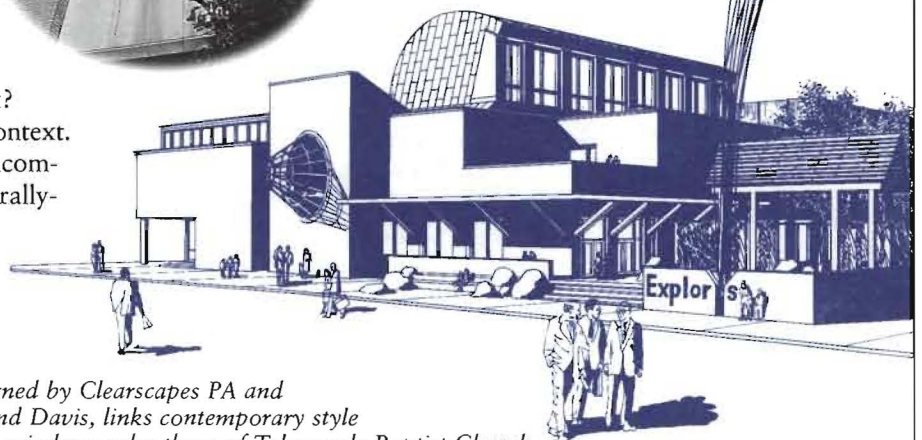
The commission *Guidelines* provide the basis for judging a proposal's sense of "fit." For historic residences and commercial buildings, the design precedents are ample. Yet how to determine the appropriateness of a modern museum complex?

The bottom line was context. The Moore Square area encompasses a bevy of architecturally-unique structures – City Market, the Montague Building, Tabernacle Baptist Church. Just as

each makes a statement for its respective era, so too, the commission determined, the Exploris building exhibits a singular late-20th century style.

At the same time, the building subtly melds with its surroundings. Its height and scale approximate several nearby structures, while brick walls echo the district's predominant building material. A corner entrance mimics that of the

Montague Building diagonally across the street; round windows (con't., p.3)



*The Exploris museum, designed by Clearscapes PA and Esherick, Homsey, Dodge and Davis, links contemporary style with historical cues. Round windows echo those of Tabernacle Baptist Church (upper left); a corner entrance draws from the Montague Building (upper right).*



■ PROFILE

## Cameron Park: Distinctive Appeal

Easy access. Park-like setting. Safety, style, and status. These were the appeals of Cameron Park, Raleigh's most aggressively-marketed early 20th-century suburb.

Begun in 1910, Cameron Park was designed to be different. While Glenwood and Boylan Heights had included working class housing, the new development was aimed exclusively at the upper middle class. Its design amenities—curving streets, rear alleys, paved sidewalks, terraced yards—beckoned those riding the crest of boom times.

Home styles reflected such tastes. Early houses tended to be large Colonial Revival structures, with bungalow forms also



*Cameron Park houses display a variety of architectural styles, some rare for Raleigh.*

well represented. Mission and Tudor Revival designs, house types rare in Raleigh, also made an appearance. Part of the subdivision was held in reserve until 1927; while that section's houses tend to be smaller, they likewise display wide architectural variety.

In recognition of its historical and architectural significance, Cameron Park was named a National Register Historic District in 1982. Raleigh

Historic Landmarks associated with the neighborhood include Broughton High School (1929) and the Caveness House (1916). ■

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## ■ TECH

### CORNER

**Q.** Peeling paint, rotting wood: my porch needs help. Where to start?

**A.** The culprit behind most porch problems is moisture. Its prime targets are the dozens of joints that make up the porch form; the trick is sealing them off. Caulks help bridge the gap, but be sure you don't just treat the symptoms. There may be a structural need to deflect more water (such as installing a metal drip

edge on fiberglass-shingled roofs).

Where wood rot is minimal, epoxy fillers offer excellent results (after removing the source of the problem, and the deteriorated wood). If rot has firmly taken hold, the best option is usually replacement.



It's important to match or emulate original materials and dimensions in visible locations. (Also, note that like-for-like replacement does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness, while changes must be approved.)

## ■ WITHIN THE COMMISSION

### Raleigh to Host Preservation Conference

For two days this spring, Raleigh will become North Carolina's preservation mecca.

The occasion will be the 1998 annual training conference, a working forum for members and staff of historic preservation commissions from across the state. The conference, which will feature nationally-known speakers, workshops, and informal information exchange, is set for April 17 and 18.

Presentations will place particular emphasis on the benefits and successes of local preservation. Sessions will range from successful rehab contracting and using tax credits, to applying the Internet to preservation purposes. A special workshop will cover preservation basics for newcomers.

The training conference is held in a different North Carolina city each spring. This year's event is being co-sponsored by the RHDC, Wake County Historic Preservation Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office, Preservation North Carolina and Capitol Area Preservation. Registration information is available at (919) 733-6545.

For replacement of wooden components, pressure-treated lumber is often the material of choice. One warning, however—fresh lumber will shrink. Be sure to allow adequate air-drying before installation. Also note that hollow columns should either be ventilated top and bottom, or sealed up tightly to block out moisture.

Choices in roofing materials depend on the pitch. Fiberglass shingles are restricted to slopes of 2:12 or greater. Flat-seam metal is traditional for shallower pitches; EPDM (rubber membrane) roofing is also an option if it cannot be seen from ground level.

Beyond repair, focus on prevention. A sound roof and well-ventilated foundation provide a solid defense. Otherwise, it's a matter of making sure surfaces remain intact and waterproof. ■



## ■ CITY GOVERNMENT

### New Plans for Glenwood South

The future of a fast-changing Raleigh neighborhood just gained new guidance. City Council recently approved a small-area plan for Glenwood South, the section of downtown between St. Mary's School, Peace Street, and the Norfolk & Southern tracks.

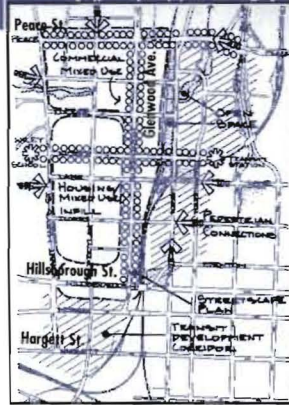
Adaptive use and neighborhood conservation figure prominently in the plan. Streetscape improvements (including tree plantings, sidewalk repair, and "day-lighting" part of Pigeon House Creek, now channeled through a culvert), expanded transportation options, and new residential construction are also strongly encouraged.

The RHDC was

involved in the planning process on several fronts.

It advised the plan's citizen task force regarding preserving area character, and recently recommended that several historic properties in the vicinity (Pine State Creamery building, CP&L Car Barn, and Raleigh Electric Co. Power House) be named to the National Register of Historic Places.

Copies of the area plan are available from the city Planning Department (890-3125). ■



**The plan promotes both adaptive use and redevelopment.**

## ■ UPDATE

### COAs Set New Record in '97

The past year was a busy one in Raleigh's historic districts—the busiest, in fact, on record.

The year's-end tally revealed that a total of 213 Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications were received by the commission. Of those, roughly three-quarters were Minor Work proposals reviewed by staff, while the remaining one-fourth were reviewed by the COA committee in public hearings.

Statistics maintained by the North

Carolina Historic Preservation Office note that Raleigh consistently leads the state in the number of COAs processed each year, relative to the total number of properties in the city's historic districts. Over the past decade, the annual number of historic district projects has increased almost every year. ■

*(continued from p.1)* windows suggest those of the adjacent Tabernacle Baptist Church. The building's multi-form roof line is as distinct today as that of City Market was in its day. The result is a structure which, while acknowledging its historic environs, introduces a new chapter in the district's architectural evolution.

Change in the city's historic districts, as elsewhere, is inevitable. The strength of the Certificate of Appropriateness process and the commission *Guidelines* is their ability to embrace innovation, as well as assure compatibility. ■

## ■ GUIDE LINES

### Walking the Walk

Consider the sidewalk. Strictly utilitarian, it often gets noticed only when it begins to spall or crack. Yet just as landscape plantings can have a profound impact on a historic property's appearance, sidewalks too can enhance or undermine district character.

The commission Guidelines call for sidewalk materials to be consistent with their historic context. Raleigh's earliest paved sidewalks were of brick. Examples in the Blount Street area are glazed and feature a distinctive paired bulls-eye pattern. Brick sidewalks around the Executive Mansion, formed and fired using convict labor, include pavers signed by makers. Because of these historical associations, bricks remain a prime option for walks of the city's late-nineteenth century residences.

During the 1910s, concrete became the dominant walk material. Concrete walkways are one of the hallmarks of the Boylan Heights neighborhood; the Capitol and Moore Square areas almost exclusively feature concrete walks. Oakwood too contains numerous examples of concrete sidewalks, sometimes inscribed with the contractor's name.

It's also important for walks to be placed and scaled compatibly with the building. Walks are often narrower than a house's front steps, flaring out near the steps' base to match their width. Their path is typically straight and formal.

Pathways are a different matter. Natural stone is frequently used for garden and other secondary walks; alternatively, brick pavers or gravel might be installed. Such pathways often meander and turn to complement landscaping.

Contemplating a new walkway? The commission staff can provide guidance; phone 832-7238.



*Blount Street sidewalk pavers.*



## RHDC Meeting

All meetings at Avery C. Upchurch Gov't. Complex

**RHDC Business meetings:** 2/17; 3/17; 4/21; 5/19; 6/16; 7/21. 7:30 AM, Rm. 305

**Certificate of Appropriateness Comm.:** (Application deadline & meeting date) 2/16 for 3/2; 3/23 for 4/6; 4/20 for 5/4; 5/15 for 6/1; 6/19 for 7/6. 4:00 PM, Rm. 305

**Public Relations/Education Comm.:** 2/4, 3/4, 4/1, 5/6, 6/3, 7/1. 8:00 AM, Rm. 317

**Research Committee:** 2/5; 3/5; 4/2; 5/7; 6/4; 7/2. 12:00 Noon; Rm. 317

## Contacts

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Dan Becker	890-3678
Doug Hill	890-3666
Historic Oakwood:	
Jean Earp, President	834-0887
Boylan Heights Association:	
David Brown, President	832-7272
Downtown Raleigh Alliance:	
Errol Frailey, President	832-1231

## Commission Members

David Maurer (Chair), Jimmy Thiem (Vice-Chair), Janet Wellman (Sec'y./Treas.), Frank Branan, Allen Burris, Ella Clarke, Betsy Coble, Daniel Figgins, Holmes Harden, Bernard Harrell, Bruce Markey

## IN THE NEWS

### Five Raleigh Properties Named to National Register

An office building and four industrial structures are the latest Raleigh properties to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Named to the Register in October were the 1925 CP&L Car Barn and Automobile Garage (116 N. West St.) and 1910 Raleigh Electric Company Power House (513-515 W. Jones St.).

In December, the 1928 Pine State Creamery Building (414 Glenwood Ave.), 1923/24 Odd Fellows Building (19 W. Hargett St.) and 1941 Royal Baking Company complex (3801 Hillsborough St.) also were listed.

All five nominations were initially reviewed and recommended for fed-



An Art-Deco style tower defines the former Pine State Creamery building.

eral approval by the RHDC. National Register listing allows the owners of the properties to apply for rehabilitation tax credits available from the state and federal government. Approved rehabilitation projects follow federal preservation standards. ■

## A B R O A D E R

### V I E W

Historic preservation is gathering growing recognition as an economic development tool. Recent studies in several states, including North Carolina, demonstrate that preservation is simply good business.

The heart of any economic

expansion is job creation. By nature historic rehabilitation is more labor-intensive than new construction, with the work pool and building materials usually coming from the local community.

Preservation also fosters local entrepreneurial ventures. The spaces created are typically tailor-made for small business, the chief growth sector of the economy.

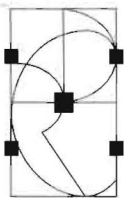
Preservation has become integrally linked with inner city revitalization strategies. Historic district status provides developers with tax credits to reduce rehab costs; renovated space translates into an improved local tax base.

The net effect is that preservation has become an effective means of turning "problem" areas into community assets.

## COA Tally

Major work (comm. review):	Sept. 97	Oct. 97	Nov. 97	Dec. 97
Approved as submitted		1		
Approved w/conditions	4	4	5	4
Deferred				1
Minor work (staff apprvd.):	13	14	10	9

Staff support for the RHDC is provided by the City of Raleigh Planning Department.



## RALEIGH HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION

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The mission of the RHDC is to serve as City Council's official historic preservation advisory body to identify, preserve, protect and educate the public about Raleigh's historic resources.