

Preserving Historic Religious Properties

A TOOLKIT FOR CONGREGATIONS & COMMUNITY LEADERS

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The National Trust for Historic Preservation*

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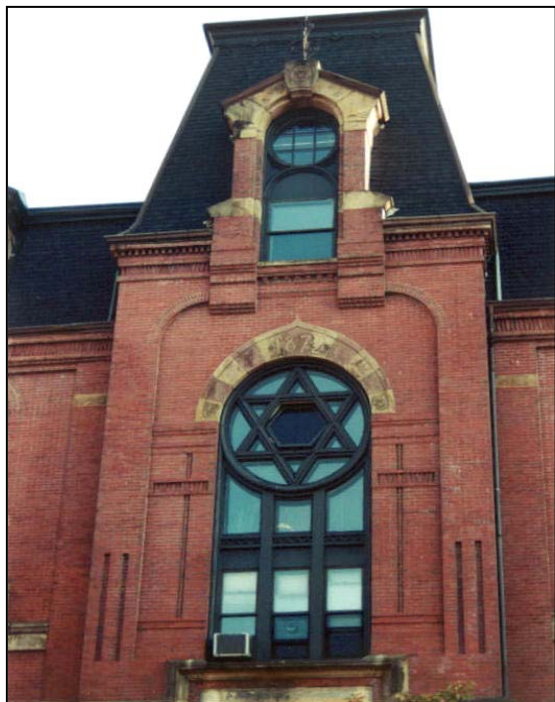
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1. Introduction



Boston, MA

Religious buildings play a fundamental role in their communities: they define our local history, are an important source of our artistic patrimony and provide vital space for many local social services, in addition to their religious impacts. Yet these historic buildings are increasingly vulnerable to deterioration and loss. The continuing shift of people and wealth to the suburbs, the shortage of clergy, and decades of deferred maintenance of buildings are all factors that may adversely affect historic urban houses of worship.

For those religious properties that remain open, pressures continue to be placed on strained budgets to address the maintenance and upkeep of the older, historic buildings. For those properties that must be closed, viable opportunities exist to reuse the historic church buildings in a manner that will promote economic development, provide housing and strengthen community ties. To assist in these tasks, we have compiled a toolkit to help religious organizations – and their affected communities – effectively respond to their upcoming challenges.

Church buildings are special buildings, but their restoration and reuse call for many of the techniques and processes applicable to all historically and architecturally significant structures. This toolkit addresses those needs, providing solutions and answers for issues such as:

- How do we determine the historic and architectural significance of our properties, and what do we do with this information?
- How do we assess the physical condition of our buildings, and how do we prioritize the needs?
- What financial help is available to us to encourage appropriate renovation and repair?
- Who are the specialists – architects, engineers, craftsmen – that can help us in our restoration?

If the properties are to be sold,

- What are the regulatory barriers to sale and disposition – local zoning, historic property review, state and federally-mandated consultation processes?
- How should we prepare a “Request for Proposals” that will maximize the preservation of our historic buildings?
- What are the financial incentives available to assist us in the reuse project?
- How do we engage the community in the project – and win their support?
- What are existing examples of successful adaptive use of historic religious properties?

We hope this toolkit will provide answers and a framework for sensitive restoration and disposition. We invite you to call on any of the contributing organizations if we can help you in any way through this difficult and challenging process.

* * *

The National Trust for Historic Preservation

The Massachusetts Historical Commission

PreservatiON MASS

The Boston Preservation Alliance

Historic Boston, Incorporated

The Boston Landmarks Commission

The Cambridge Historical Commission

Historic Salem, Inc.

Essex National Heritage Commission

The Lowell Historic Board

2. Preservation 101: Where Do We Start?



Newark, NJ

The first task in any preservation project, prior to consideration of alternatives for rehabilitation or reuse, is to effectively identify the historic resource, evaluate its physical condition, and prioritize its structural needs. Fiscal condition, too, is critical: project managers must determine what, if any, financial resources are already available for construction and rehabilitation, and what other sources of funding may be available for the project. Appropriate personnel can then be identified – qualified architects, engineers, craftsmen – to define and guide the project through physical restoration. If the resource is to be adaptively reused, the project manager must then assess its market opportunities based on location, regulatory environment, demographics, and local demand.

In the sections that follow, we have provided excerpts from government publications, articles, relevant statutes, listings of professionals, helpful examples from successful projects, helpful websites and materials for additional reading. A good overview of the process can be found in “A Guide to Preserving Historic Unitarian Universalist Churches,” on the Internet at <http://www.uua.org/info/index.html#preserving>. We encourage you to embrace your project with the same enthusiasm and dedication that we all share when we have successfully preserved an historic building for ourselves and for the generations that follow us.

First things first: Determine what you have. The National Park Service has prepared a “Checklist for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings” to get you started; it’s on the web at

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/cheklist.htm>. You might consider listing your historic religious property on the National Register of Historic Places, and perhaps a state register as well: an article entitled “All About the State and National Registers of Historic Places” from **Common Bond**, a publication of the New York Landmarks Conservancy Sacred Sites Program, will explain the process (<http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/nationalregister.pdf>). Other helpful information for religious property preservation and restoration from this publication can be found at <http://www.e-guana.net/organizations.php3?action=printContentItem&orgid=79&typeID=651&templateID=1541&sortField=alpha> . But note that your building does *not* have to be “certified” as historic or listed on a state or national register of historic places to be significant. These materials are for owners of all “local landmarks” who treasure their buildings and want to safeguard them for future generations.

3. Identification of “Character-defining Features”: Why Are Our Houses of Worship Special?



Dayton, OH

You know that your buildings are architecturally significant, but you don't know how to express this. This section will help you identify the special features of your religious properties that set them apart from the ordinary, and justify their special treatment. Start with “Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character”, a National Park Service “Preservation Brief” found at <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/brief17.htm>. This publication is one of a larger series of booklets covering a variety of topics pertinent to the repair and reconstruction of historic structures, accessible on the Internet at <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>.

You will also want to effectively assess the condition of your historic religious properties, to help you prioritize your maintenance and improvement program. “Special Report: Building Conditions Surveys,” from *Common Bond* (<http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/CondSurv14-1.pdf>), will show you how.

4. Understanding Our Assets:

How to document the physical condition of our religious buildings and plan for their maintenance and how to preserve our important religious property records



Northeast PA

A condition survey is a critical step in any rehabilitation project, and one that may require a specialist experienced in preservation matters and religious structures. The following pages are from *Common Bond* that we hope will be helpful: "From Survey to Scope," <http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/SurveyScope17-1.pdf>.

We've also included articles about maintenance planning (<http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/MaintPlan16-1.pdf>) and resources for creating an archive of your congregation's most important documentation (<http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/171.pdf>, at page 13).

5. Preservation Specialists: Who Can Help?



Portland, ME

Special buildings require special care. We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated and qualified professionals who can assist in bringing a project from conception to conclusion. In the pages that follow, we have included “Who Does What: A Guide to Design Professionals in Preservation” (<http://www.e-quana.net/organizations/org/WhoDoes16-3.pdf>) to help you navigate the maze of preservation specialists. We have also attached, for your own evaluation, lists of professionals who have worked on preservation projects, from “Ecclesiastical Specialists” in **Traditional Building Magazine**, at <http://www.traditional-building.com/cgi-bin/fndtbkey.pl?Choises=Church%20and%20Religious%20Specialties>. As with any project, you should always check references before hiring any type of consultant.

6. Funding Sources: Can We Obtain Financial Help for Our Project?



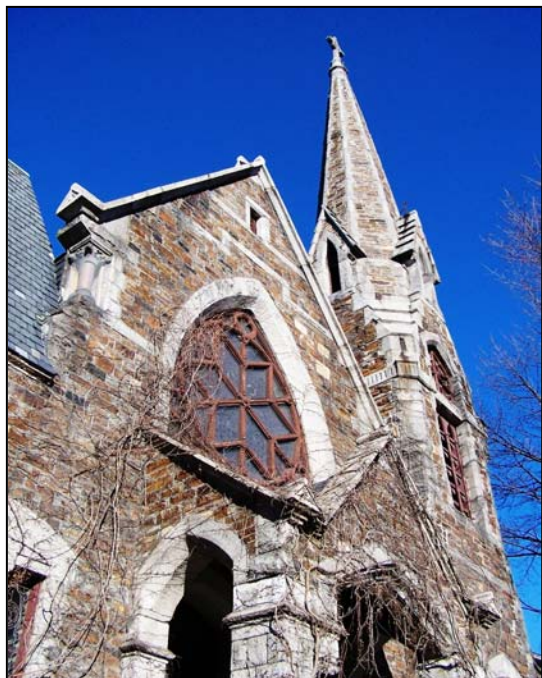
Bedford, IN

There *are* sources of funding out there, and they can be found with perseverance and imagination. First is the federal government, through its **Save America's Treasures** program; program guidelines and the application form are at <http://saveameericastreasures.org/funding.htm>. **The National Trust for Historic Preservation**, the national private non-profit historic preservation organization, has limited funding for planning and assessment; these programs are described at <http://www.nationaltrust.org/help/funding.html>. **Partners for Sacred Places**, the Philadelphia-based national, non-sectarian, nonprofit organization devoted to helping congregations and their communities sustain and actively use older and historic sacred places (<http://www.sacredplaces.org/>), provides technical and financial assistance to active congregations. Occasionally denominations have funding programs for their own religious properties – don't forget to check with your organization's administrative body. Helpful information on "Financing your Spiritual Home" is provided by the Unitarian Universalist Association at <http://uua.org/cde/fundraising/financing.html>. And finally, private foundation grants may be available, too: congregations should explore the many resources available from national and local foundations. The Chronicle of Philanthropy might be a good place to start your search (<http://philanthropy.com/>).

To help you in the fundraising process, we've also included an article from ***Common Bond***, "Fundraising Consultants" (<http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/FundCons16-3.pdf>), that describes the advantages that advocates may find in using outside professional assistance.

7. Regulatory Issues:

Zoning, Local Historic Districts, Permitting, Demolition Delay



Brattleboro, VT

What can we build, and where? What kinds of constraints are placed on projects involving historic properties? There are many federal, state and municipal rules and regulations that govern how we develop property. These processes offer the public the opportunity to comment on the changes that affect their communities. Many of them are included in this section.

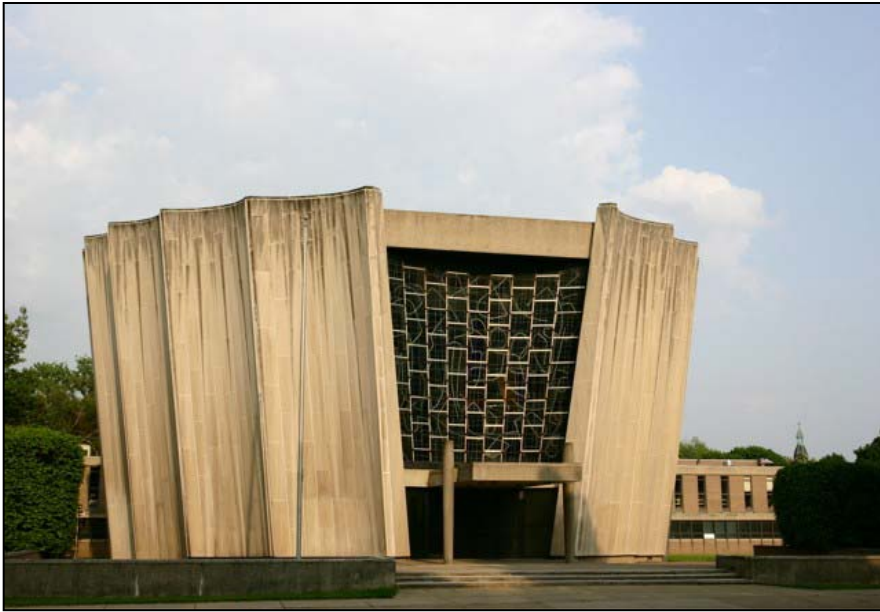
At the **Federal** level, the National Historic Preservation Act imposes a mandatory consultation process if a project using Federal funding or permitting would affect a historic property that is listed or eligible for listing on the **National Register of Historic Places** – the so-called “Section 106 Process”. Through consultation, the parties seek to avoid, minimize or mitigate the adverse effects of their projects. Adverse effects can be direct, such as destruction or demolition, damage from blasting or construction, incompatible alteration, neglect and deterioration, or physically moving historic structures to a new location. Or they can be indirect, such as visual intrusions, noise, decreased access, increased traffic or loss of setting or context. Types of events that would trigger this requirement include use of HUD funds for a housing project; transportation funds in infrastructure development; Army Corps of Engineers permits for wetlands impacts; Federal Communications Commission permits

for telecommunications facilities; etc. An in-depth description of the Section 106 process, including a helpful flow chart, can be found at <http://www.achp.gov/106summary.html>.

Many states have a similar process, usually directed by the State Office of Historic Preservation for properties listed on state registers of historic places affected by projects using state funding or permits. Check with your SHPO to see if your state has such a law— you can find the phone number from the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (<http://www.ncshpo.org/>). If there are environmental consequences from the project, your state’s environmental protection agency may require a separate review of effects. Most regulatory control, however, will take place at the **municipal** level. Most cities and towns have **zoning laws** that will determine what can be built, where, and the types of approvals required. The local **planning board** usually administers these regulations; a **zoning board of appeals** may impose special permits for special uses and grant variances from the local codes in cases of undue hardship. A **design advisory committee** may have the authority to opine on the building design, lighting, parking and signage of the project. The **building department** will require a construction permit, signed off by the local **fire department, engineering department, and other regulatory agencies**. If the property is located in a local historic district or is a designated local landmark, the project may be subject to review and approval by a **local historic district or preservation commission**. Even if the property is not locally designated, the city or town may have a community-wide **demolition delay law** that precludes demolition of historic resources without public comment. We’ve included an information sheet on demolition delay should explain the scope and purpose of these bylaws.

Each municipality will have its own scheme, and we urge you to consult with your local officials before you begin the process.

8. Preparing a Request For Proposals to Sell Our Religious Properties



Buffalo, NY

If religious properties must be sold, opportunities still remain to ensure that these treasured local landmarks continue their role in creating community pride and association. But the right buyers, and the right projects, must be identified. To assist in this challenge, we have included a guide to preparing a “Request for Proposals” – the real estate community’s preferred document to market their most important properties.

SAMPLE: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

Church of the Alpha and Omega
1-15 Main Street, Anytown, Anystate

The XYZ Organization seeks proposals for architectural services in connection with the Church of the Alpha and Omega property (hereinafter "the property") at 1-15 Main Street, Anytown, Anystate. The property consists of the main church building, rectory, and school.

The objectives of the services are to undertake a conditions survey of the property and to examine the feasibility of various alternatives to preserve and rehabilitate it for adaptive reuse. Of primary importance in any reuse scenario is the preservation of the artistic and architectural character embodied by the property. Potential uses should be evaluated in terms of their sensitivity to the needs and strengths of the surrounding community as well as their impact on the physical fabric of the interiors and exteriors of the buildings.

Tasks and Work Products

- I. Survey and describe existing conditions:
 1. Prepare measured drawings of the structures on the site, in sufficient detail to serve as the basis for further planning studies.
 2. Determine sources of water penetration and inspect masonry, carpentry, roofing systems, and (in consultation with a structural engineer) structural systems for failures in order to specify and prioritize needed repairs for the building envelope of each structure.
 3. Identify interior and exterior features which should be preserved, may be preserved, or may be removed or modified in order to retain the salient characteristics of the property, to retain the option of meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for purposes of utilizing the Federal and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Historic Preservation Tax Incentives.

Work Products:

- a. Measured drawings including plans, sections, and elevations.
- b. Narrative description (with illustrations as necessary) of priority repair needs.
- c. Descriptions of features to be preserved or sacrificed in formats suitable for review by the XYZ Organization.
- d. Meeting with XYZ Organization and other interested parties to review analysis.

- II. Inventory reuse alternatives:
 1. Based upon existing conditions, market potential, and known needs, identify reuse alternatives and evaluate compatibility with preservation priorities for the property.

Work Products:

- a. Description of reuse alternatives with supporting analysis.
- b. Meeting with XYZ Organization and other interested parties to review.

- III. Development planning

1. Prepare schematic drawings illustrating at least one but not more than three reuse options.
2. Obtain cost estimates for a rehabilitation and reuse program based upon schematic reuse plans and existing conditions for at least one but not more than three options.
3. Identify and describe code compliance issues.
4. Analyze appropriate funding sources for construction and permanent financing.
5. Prepare a pro forma projecting operating income, operating expenses, development costs, construction financing, and permanent financing.

Work Products:

- a. Schematic drawings.
- b. Code analysis.
- c. Funding source analysis.
- d. Cost estimates and pro forma for reuse options.
- e. Meeting with XYZ Organization and other interested parties to review.

Proposal Submission Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Proposals should be for a fixed fee, including expenses.

Proposals should be submitted to the XYZ Organization by **<date>**.

Proposals should be in an 8 1/2" x 11" format.

Firms planning to submit proposals are urged to tour the property on **<date>**, at **<time>**.

Please call _____ at _____ to confirm if you plan to attend and indicate how many people will be with you.

The XYZ Organization intends to seek the best professional services at the most cost effective price. In addition to reviewing professional qualifications, the church will look for evidence that the consultants will be sympathetic to the needs of the property and the surrounding community, are able to undertake the work program between **<date>** and **<date>**, take a personal interest in the project, and charge competitive fees.

While not encouraging deviation from proposed Scope of Services, we will consider suggested modifications or clarifications.

The XYZ Organization reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted. No contract will be awarded until after two or more firms have been interviewed. The final contract may be for all or part of the total Scope of Services. More than one consultant firm submitting proposals may be hired for different phases of work. No firm will be engaged that has not submitted a proposal responding to this Request for Proposals.

While additional firms may receive copies of the Request for Proposals upon request, the following firms receiving this proposal at this time include:

We anticipate selecting an architect by **<date>** and may spend up to \$XXXX for this study.

9. Financial Incentives for Developing Historic Buildings



Denver, CO

Recognizing the special financial challenges of financing the restoration and rehabilitation of historic buildings, the Federal government and many states provide tax incentives for sensitive historic preservation projects. The National Park Service manages the Federal program, and we urge you to visit their website for helpful program guidelines and forms: <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/>. For information about state programs, visit our website at <http://www.nationaltrust.org/help/taxincentives.pdf> to see if your state has such a tax credit program, and take advantage of the contacts listed there.

In many cases the historic preservation tax credit may be combined with Federal affordable housing tax credits, which are generally allocated by your state housing department. You should also check with your local planning and community development departments to see if there are other locally-administered funding programs for your project.

10. The Role of the Community in Reuse of Religious Properties



Pittsburgh, PA

Religious buildings are important *community* resources, beyond the affiliated congregation. Community members will want to have a voice in the disposition of the property, and we urge you to listen. Attached is an excerpt from Preservation Pennsylvania’s *Crisis Handbook: A Guide to Community Action*, as well as PreservatiON MASS’s “Steps to Successful Advocacy,” to help you find ways to engage your community. We’ve also included pages from the National Trust Publication *How to Organize a Preservation Development Charrette*; the complete brochure can be found at <http://www.preservationbooks.org/>



Steps to Successful Advocacy

The following article was adapted from the original published in the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation November/December 2001 Newsletter. This document is designed to help people who are trying to save a historic building or landscape from inappropriate destruction. It is intended for use as a guide for preservation advocacy by outlining possible courses of action. We suggest that anyone involved in preservation advocacy should contact us for more specific information. We also hope that those not directly involved in preserving a threatened historic resource will save this guide or pass it on to someone who is working on an advocacy issue.

I. Discover whatever you can about the building or site that you are trying to preserve:

- What makes the building or place significant?
 - Is the architecture unusual or special?
 - Did a famous architect design the place?
 - Did a famous person live there?
 - Did an important event take place there?
- Is it on the National or State Registers of Historic Places? If not, try to place it on a register.
 - A register listing usually doesn't protect a building but it shows how significant the structure is.
- Is it part of a local historic district? This can be verified at the Town Clerk's office.
 - Usually structures and landscapes in historic districts are protected by district regulations.
 - If the site is not part of an existing local historic district, consider as a long-range plan, working to incorporate it into one or establishing a new local historic district.
- Is it listed in a local historic resource survey? Information is available from the Massachusetts Historical Commission showing what parts of the state have been surveyed.
- Does it have any other type of important designation or status in the community?
- Remember, not every building can be saved and you cannot afford to save every building.

II. Determine what is the exact nature of the threat to the building/landscape:

- Is it owner neglect?
 - If so, then local health and zoning laws usually require that buildings should be maintained. Check to see if the local codes can reverse the situation.
- Is it threatened with demolition or with alteration beyond recognition?
 - Check to see if your community has a demolition delay ordinance that will halt the demolition.

III. Can you offer the owner any prudent and feasible alternatives to destruction?

- Have any efforts been made to examine adaptive re-use of this property?

- Consider adaptive reuse via private ownership. Old/historic buildings can be successfully converted to office, residential or retail use.

IV. Determine what your goal (or that of your organization) is.

- Do you want to save and stabilize a building or are you considering long-term plans for the building/landscape?
- Long-term plans require a great deal more funding, planning and energy than just short-term stabilization. Make sure that you have a solid plan (which includes funding sources) before you embark on any large projects.

V. Determine who else is trying to save the building (local historical societies, preservation organizations, government agencies) and join forces with them.

- Along with this, make friends throughout the community. Often a variety of people (environmentalists, business leaders, local officials) not just preservationists will join you if they believe in your cause.
- A group is more effective than a lone protestor.

VI. Educate the community about the threatened site. Show people why it is important to save the site.

- One way to illustrate this is to show an image of the site with and without the historic building/landscape.
- When you present reasonable/feasible alternatives to demolition, you provide the community with more reasons to oppose demolition of the building or site. Often there are good reasons for demolition, you should be able to provide reasonable/feasible alternatives.
- Contact the media and keep the issue in the public eye.
- Contact your elected officials and inform them about the threat to the building/landscape. State your concerns about the destruction of the building/site and why it's important to save it. Present your plan for alternatives to demolition
- Work with PreservatiON MASS to help preserve the historic building/landscape. PreservatiON MASS can help you with these keys to successful advocacy, and can also provide information on funding, on restoration contractors, engineers, architects and researchers. The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the State's historic preservation office and can assist with National Register nominations, Local Historic District study committees and information on restoration grants.

VII. Always maintain a professional and business-like demeanor.

- Listen to the opposition (as you would have them listen to you) and learn from them.
- When you are called to make presentations, you should be clear and succinct.
- Emotional outbursts are counterproductive and will alienate potential allies.

VIII. Once successful in your efforts, work with the PreservatiON MASS and the Massachusetts Historical Commission to determine the best ways to protect the site.

- A good first step is to get a Demolition Delay in local regulations.
- Another approach is to place a preservation easement on the property. A preservation easement is a legal agreement that grants a limited right to a qualified nonprofit

organization to protect the property from changes which are not in keeping with its historic, architectural or natural character. It provides the knowledge that the property will be protected for generations to come.

- Or, consider other historic designations such as the National, or State Registers of Historic Places, historic districts, and local landmarks status.

How to Organize a Preservation Development Charrette

By Jennifer Goodman

Historic preservation leaders across the country are adapting a traditional architectural design exercise, the charrette, for a fundamental historic preservation objective: finding reuse solutions for threatened historic properties. They have embraced the charrette's central objective, intensive problem solving, and revised its format to address the combined concerns of architecture, real estate development, planning, marketing, and community issues.

This publication will provide a "how-to" kit for planning and implementing a preservation development charrette. Using examples from actual charrettes held in Boston, Philadelphia, and Providence, it draws on what those charrette organizers learned and answers questions asked frequently by preservation leaders who are planning their first charrettes or who are adapting design workshops to address broader development concerns.

Although the types of buildings that are the subjects of successful charrettes vary greatly, the principles and design for a productive program are universal. In every successful preservation development charrette, experts gather to evaluate constraints to development and offer recommendations for the reuse or revitalization of threatened buildings.

After outlining the development of a charrette and the strengths and weaknesses of this planning and marketing tool, this publication describes the three fundamental components of a charrette project: planning, conducting the charrette itself, and then securing reuse solutions following the event. The charrette planning section describes how to attract sponsors, funding, community participation, and support as well as getting data and experts to analyze the buildings reuse potential.

In the examples described in this publication, charrette organizers needed to gain political and financial support from key constituent groups and local government to prevent the demolition of a threatened landmark, in addition to proposing redevelopment solutions. This is often the case with threatened, long-languishing "white elephant" properties.

* * *

What Can a Charrette Do?

Above all, a preservation development charrette can identify feasible reuse solutions for an endangered property which may then result in its reuse or revitalization. By bringing together architectural, real estate, planning, political, and community leaders, the charrette can generate new ideas that are both practical and visionary. The charrette and its results can attract new owners, developers, and investors to the building.

The program can create hope and optimism for a positive preservation outcome, change how key decision-makers think about a threatened property, and building public and political support for investment and change.

A charrette can also boost the visibility and strength of the sponsoring organization and the local preservation movement. A charrette will expand contacts for organizers, build the membership or constituent base, and generate publicity for the resource, the organizers, and historic preservation generally. This type of initiative emphasizes preservationists as "do-ers" instead of "stop-ers".

The full text of this Information Booklet is available at www.preservationbooks.org

11. Case Studies in Reuse of Religious Properties



San Diego, CA

Houses of worship *have* been successfully reused. **Partners for Sacred Places**, a non-profit organization in Philadelphia, and **The National Trust for Historic Preservation** have developed a national database of successful religious property conversions which will provide the inspiration for new projects in your community. *Common Bond* has published an issue on Adaptive Reuse, with articles included here; see <http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/CBVol17No2.pdf> and <http://www.e-guana.net/organizations/org/SharedSpace17-1.pdf>.

CHURCH REUSE PROJECTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

MHC REVIEW PROJECTS

LYNN, Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Convent, 8 South Common Street/32 City Hall Square

- Built 1917, NR Listed (MHC Inventory # LYN.751)
- Converted into 32 units of elderly housing and now called "St. Theresa's House." Small additions constructed on the Convent as part of the project.
- No Adverse Effect

LYNN, Saint Mary's Rectory & Church Rehabilitation- proposed rehabilitation. MHC requested

- Information but no follow up as yet.

LAWRENCE, Former Pentacostal Church and Point After Club, 44 Park Street, not in MHC's inventory

- Built turn of the 20th century
- Converted into 9 one-bedroom housing units by Mental Health Resource Plus for adults with chronic mental illness. Project involved conversion of the gymnasium (Point After Club) into 2 floors of housing, repointing of masonry, construction of a new vestibule on the side of the building, and replacement of windows.
- No Adverse Effect

BOSTON, South Boston, Church of Saints Peter, Paul & Augustine, 45 W. Broadway

- Built 1844, NRELG (MHC Inventory# BOS.7113)
- Converted into condominiums. Project involved construction of four new floors within the church. Existing columns and arches incorporated into the design of the units. The granite masonry was cleaned and repointed and the steeple clock and dome were repaired. Existing historic doors were retained and refurbished but historic windows were returned to the Archdiocese and replaced with casement windows.
- No Adverse Effect

SPRINGFIELD, Blessed Sacrament Church, 1772 Dwight Street

- Built 1920, NRELG (MHC Inventory # SPR.3626)
- Converted into a youth center with gymnasium/basketball court by the YMCA of Greater Springfield.
- Project involved removal of windows. Court is located in the former sanctuary.
- No Adverse Effect

OTHER CHURCH REUSE, ALL PRIVATE FINANCING (no MHC review)

FALL RIVER, First Congregational Church, 100 Rock Street

- Built 1875, NR Listed (MHC Inventory #FLR.489)
- Converted into a restaurant and training facility by the International Institute of Culinary Arts. The website has fabulous photographs of the school and dining room, both of which appear to have been sensitively programmed into the spaces. www.iicaculinary.com

HAVERHILL, St. Rita Catholic Church, Reed Street

- Built 1915, (MHC Inventory #HVR.318)
- Converted by the Veteran's Northeast Outreach Center into a Veteran's Center. The church was closed by the Archdiocese in 1998.

MANSFIELD, Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church, 22 Church Street

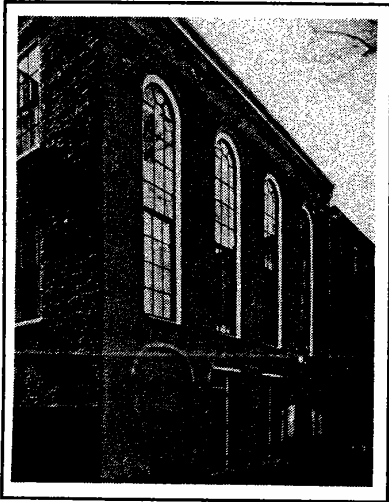
- Built 1914, (MHC Inventory #MNF.161)
- Converted to the Al-Noor Academy, an institution affiliated with the Northeast Islamic Center in Quincy.

SANDWICH, Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church- Former Rectory, 8 Jarves Street

- Built 1879, NR Listed, (MHC Inventory #SDW.180)

Adaptive Use of Properties

When changes in the religious landscape cause religious organizations to relocate, church and synagogue buildings are left behind. Frequently, other religious organizations will acquire such properties for continued religious use. However, religious properties can continue to play an important role in the community even if they are adapted for new uses, as the following properties are.



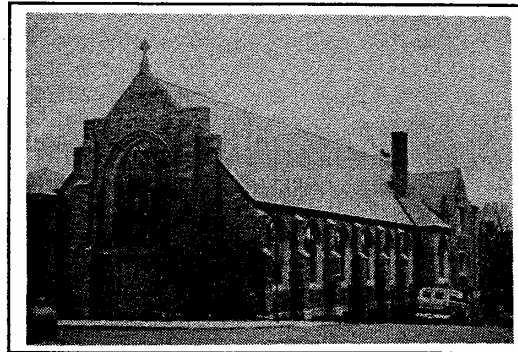
(Courtesy of Anne Prescott)

African Meeting House 8 Smith Court, Beacon Hill

Built in 1806, this building served as a church, school, and community center for the African Baptist Church Society, the first African American church in Boston. The church was built for an African American community that occupied the North Slope of Beacon Hill throughout the nineteenth century. William Lloyd Garrison established the New England Anti-Slavery Society here in 1832. From 1904 to 1972 the building served as a synagogue for the Orthodox congregation Anshe Lebowitz. In the 1970s the Museum of Afro-American History purchased the building. The building was restored through a federal appropriation of \$1,000,000 administered by the National Park Service. The National Park Service has supported activities in the building since 1981, including the restoration of the building for use as a museum and cultural center. This space can be rented for worship, meetings, weddings, and other events.

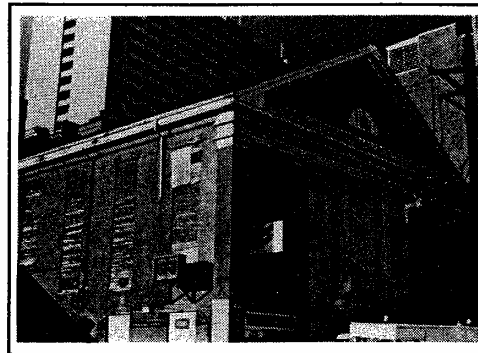
Boston School of Modern Language
10 Robert Street, Roslindale

When the Episcopalians constructed this building in 1925, the parish had 300 people. In 1982, when the Boston School of Modern Language bought the building, the number of active members had diminished to about thirty. Those remaining members joined Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The exterior of the Modern Language School still looks like the Episcopal Church of Our Savior, although the interior has been redesigned for use as classrooms for the school.

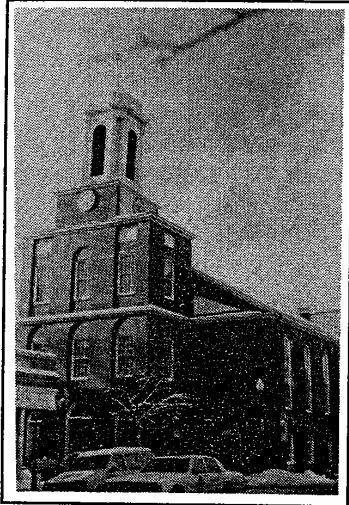


Charles Playhouse
76 Warrenton Street, South Cove

Architects Murray and Sugrue recycled this church building from 1957 to 1966 as the Charles Playhouse. Built from 1839 to 1843, this property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Asher Benjamin designed the building with shops on the first floor, the rent of which would provide income for the parish. Three denominations inhabited the property before its conversion to a theater: the Fifth Universalist Church, Temple Ohabei Shalom, and finally the Scotch Presbyterian Church. At present, the building is in poor physical condition.

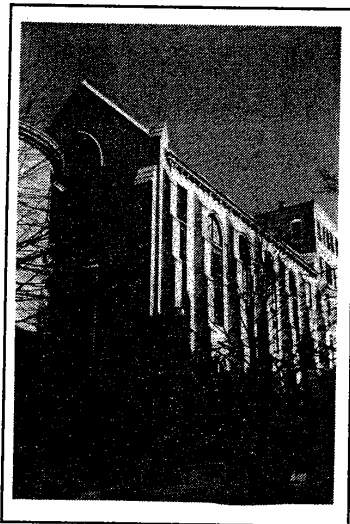


Adaptive Use of Properties



Charles Street Meeting House
70 Charles Street, Beacon Hill

Workers completed the renovation of this structure into office, residential, and commercial space in 1982. The building, attributed to Asher Benjamin and erected in 1804, has a complex history of users. The Third Baptist Church built the church and sold the property to the First African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1876. The Methodists conveyed the church to the Charles Street Meeting House Society in 1939. In 1947, the Charles Street Meeting House Society granted the building to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities with the understanding that the Society would convey the building to the Massachusetts Universalist Convention and keep restrictions on the building's exterior. The Universalists owned the church until 1980, when it was sold to a private owner. At that time, the Society negotiated a more specific preservation easement with the owner.

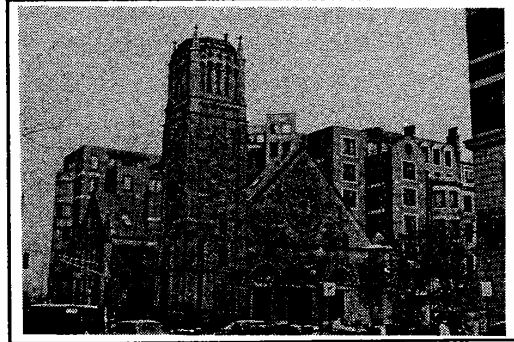


Chestnut Street Condominiums
27 Chestnut Street, Beacon Hill

Bullerjahn Associates converted this theological school building and chapel into condominium units from 1965-1970. Built from 1917 to 1918, architects Bellows, Aldrich, and J. A. Holt designed this structure to serve as Boston University's School of Theology and house the Robinson Chapel. Many of the stained glass windows that were removed from the chapel are now a part of the design of Marsh Chapel and the School of Theology on the Charles River Campus of Boston University.

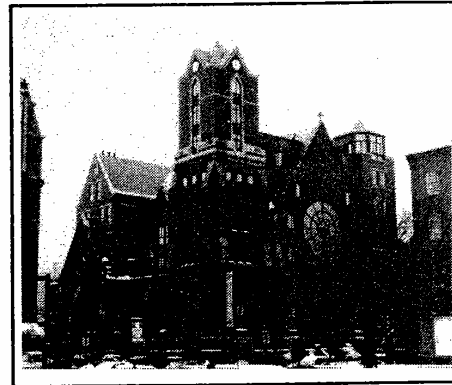
Church Court Condominiums
Massachusetts Avenue and Beacon Street,
Back Bay

A fire in 1978 devastated the Mount Vernon Church, and in 1983 Graham Gund Associates designed this residential development while preserving the original church tower and two side walls. Visible behind the church facade are some of the forty-two condominium units that now form two sides of the development. The space that once housed the sanctuary now serves as a courtyard. Architects Walker and Kimball originally designed the church in 1891.

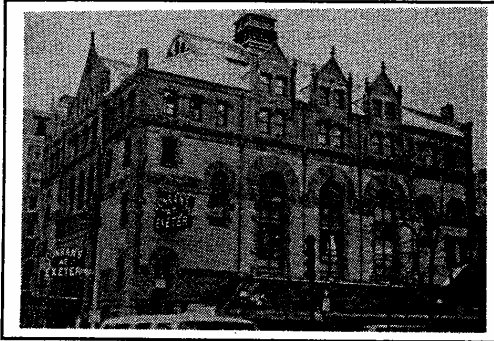


Clarendon Court Condominiums
2 Clarendon Street, South End

Built from 1868 to 1869, Samuel J. F. Thayer designed this building for the Clarendon Street Baptist Church, which was the first Baptist church in the South End. In July 1982 the church burned down, leaving little more than the street facade. Restoration architects Notter Finegold + Alexander rebuilt the structure for condominiums and offices.

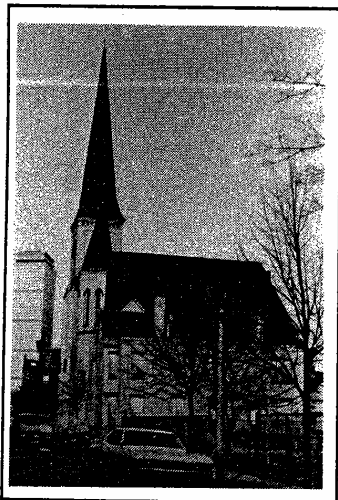


Adaptive Use of Properties



Exeter Street Theater
26 Exeter Street, Back Bay

In 1974 and 1975 major renovations by architects Childs, Bertman, Tseckares Associates converted this property to theater and restaurant use, although as early as 1914 the upper auditorium of the building housed a theater. In 1984 Conran's, a British specialty and housewares retailer, fashioned the building into four floors of retail space. As of May 1991 Conran's planned to close the store and Waterstone's of Britain planned to open a large bookstore in the space. The Working Union of Progressive Spiritualists built this church, designed by architects Hartwell and Richardson, in 1891. Later the First Spiritualist Temple moved into space on the lower level.



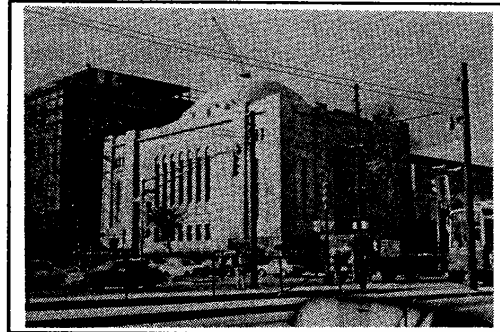
Jorge Hernandez Cultural Center
85 West Newton Street, South End

Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción, a community development organization in the South End, opened this church as a cultural center in 1986. This building is now used by community groups and others for concerts, performances, dances, receptions, business functions, meetings, and weddings. There is a bar and a kitchen on the premises, and the building is accessible to the handicapped. The structure, completed in 1899, was originally the All Saints Lutheran Church.

Morse Auditorium

602 Commonwealth Avenue, Fenway

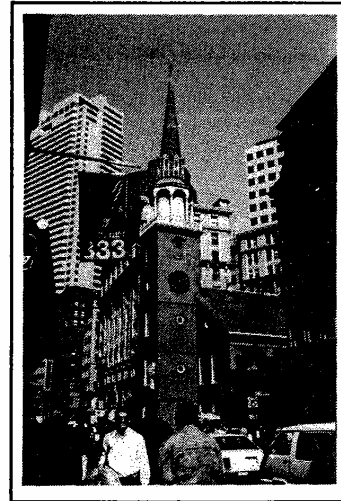
Boston University uses this building for classrooms and rents space to off campus organizations for meetings. The Photographic Resource Center leases space in the lower level from Boston University. In 1902 the Jewish Reform Congregation, Adath Israel, purchased the site and built Temple Israel, designed by Clarence H. Blackall. At the time of construction, the congregation expected elegant residential development in the area, yet this type of growth never happened. In 1974 the congregation moved to another building on Plymouth Street and Longwood Avenue in Boston.



Old South Meeting House

Washington and Milk Streets, Central Business District

The Old South Meeting House now serves as a museum and meeting hall. In 1729 Joshua Blanchard and Nathaniel Emmes built this church, which was used as the gathering place for the Boston Tea Party, as stables for British horses during the Revolution. When the congregation built the new Old South Church at Copley Square in the 1870s, debate over the future of the Old South sparked an enormous municipal preservation battle that resulted in the formation of the Old South Association. The Association purchased the church and began operating it as a museum of American history, in conjunction with the 1876 Centennial.



Other Examples of Adaptive Use: Boston Churches

Theodore Parker Memorial Hall

55 Berkeley Street, South End



Constructed in 1872-1873 for the twenty-eighth Congregational Society of Boston, this building has undergone many transformations in use including schools, a Jewish community center, the Magna film company, and, in the 1960s, the resident venue for the rock group, The Velvet Underground. The current use is 33 residential units, created in 1974-1975 by the Boston Architectural Team.

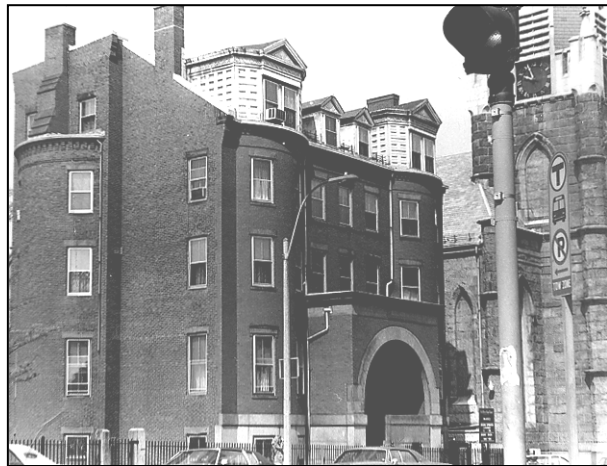
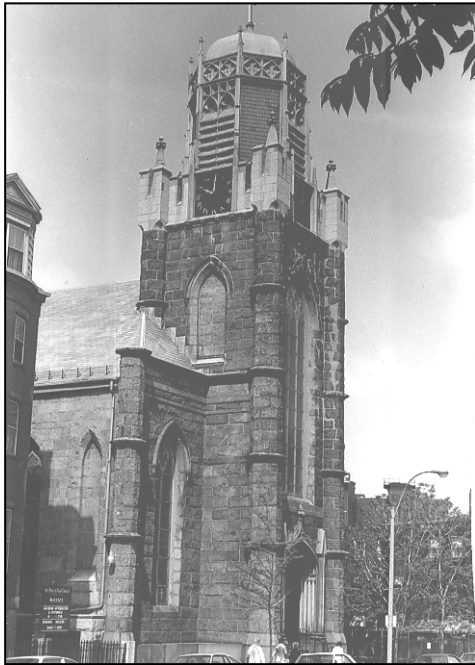
Shawmut Congregational Church

640 Tremont Street, South End



Severely damaged by fire in 1978, the burned remains of this church including the 100-foot tower and first floor walls were incorporated into a new structure recalling the church in massing and form. The 27 residential units above two commercial units and 21 underground parking spaces, called Taino Tower, was undertaken by developer Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion and architect, Communitas in 1989-1990.

Saints Peter and Paul Church 45 West Broadway, South Boston



The Archdiocese of Boston sold this imposing granite church and adjacent red brick rectory to developer Boston Built in 2000. The first phase of construction rehabilitated eight existing residential units in the rectory. The church was converted to 34 condominiums, mostly market rate. Interior adaptation, such as inserting four floors, has not compromised the exterior of the church, which continues to be a neighborhood landmark. The church was built in 1844 as the work of architect Gridley Bryant, and was rebuilt in 1853 following a fire. The rectory dates to c. 1868.

Cambridge Churches

Second Congregational Church

101 Third Street, East Cambridge

This brick, Greek Revival church, built in 1827, was designated a city landmark in 1999 and adaptively reused as four market-rate condominiums in 2001. The developers were Guy Asaph of Cambridge and Don Sisson of Watertown; the architect for the conversion was Boyes-Watson & Winny Architects of Cambridge. The reuse of the structure, which was reviewed and approved by the Cambridge Historical Commission, included construction of a basement-level parking garage and retention of the original bell and belfry in one of the units.

St. Paul's Rectory

34 Mount Auburn Street, Harvard Square

The brick, two-story rectory of St. Paul's Church was constructed in 1924 in a Renaissance Revival design that was the work of Boston architect, Edward T. P. Graham, whose commissions for the Catholic church in the Boston region are among the finest buildings in the archdiocese. (The Romanesque Revival St. Paul's Church, regarded as one of Graham's best designs, stands opposite and was constructed between 1916 and 1924.)

In 1989, a new parish center and rectory were constructed on the church site. To fund that construction, St. Paul's Rectory was sold to Harvard University, which collaborated with the Cambridge Housing Authority to convert the rectory to 10 units of affordable housing while adding a total of 80 units of Harvard-affiliated rental housing in two new six-story buildings constructed on the former rectory parking lot. The architect for the rectory conversion was HMFH Architects of Cambridge; the new structures were designed by Goody, Clancy Architects of Boston.

St. Patrick's Church Complex

39 Berkshire Street, East Cambridge

St. Patrick's Church, including the 1909 stucco Mission Revival church and its rectory and parish hall buildings on York Street, was sold by the Archdiocese in 1989 for use as affordable housing. A total of 32 mixed-income rental units were developed in the complex by Just-A-Start Corporation, a Cambridge non-profit housing developer; four units were developed for market-rate rental, while the remaining 28 units were for rental to individuals making 60-80% below median income for the area.

The project created 16 units in the church building by adding two new floors inside the shell of the building. The project was completed in 1992. Architects for the conversion included Hammer, Kiefer, Todd (now HKT Architects) of Somerville and Howard Van Vleck of Cambridge.

Somerville, MA Churches

Prospect Hill Congregational Church

17 Bow Street, Somerville, MA



Forward thinking developers rehabilitated this *circa* 1887 Romanesque Revival church structure into eighteen small apartment units. The developers replaced many of the stained glass windows with clear glass more appropriate to residential use. They also inserted several skylights into the slate roof to provide additional lighting to units occupying the upper floor of what was the original church sanctuary.

First United Methodist Church

1 Summer Street, Somerville, MA



Developers are in the process of rehabilitating this 1874 Gothic Revival church structure, the former headquarters for the Somerville Community Corporation, into seven condominiums. The developers plan to retain the lancet arched stained and leaded glass windows from the spring point of the arch upward, but the lower portion of the windows will contain double and triple-hung sash with a decorative sill. The developers also plan to insert skylights into the roof to provide additional lighting to units occupying the upper floor of what was the original church sanctuary. Parking for the 15 cars required under the zoning ordinance will be provided by excavating the basement and providing access to the underground parking garage via a large door constructed to match the appearance of the existing historic front doors.

12. Suggestions for Further Reading



Philadelphia, PA

There are many resources to help you on your way to church restoration and reuse; we've mentioned many of them in the preceding pages. This section consolidates the many organizations, periodicals, and sources for your project. Please use them – they are there to help you be successful.

Toolkit – Reference Sheet

Specific to Religious Properties

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3. Cohen, Diane and A. Robert Jaeger. *Strategies for the Stewardship and Active Use of Older and Historic Religious Properties*. Washington, D.C.: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1996.
4. Cohen, Diane, Holly Harrison Fiala, A. Robert Jaeger, and Anne Wenzel. *Conservation of Urban Religious Properties*. Washington, D.C.: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1989.
5. Detroit, City of. "Impact on Detroit's Neighborhoods of the Closing of Various Catholic Parishes in the City" (transcript of public hearing before the Detroit City Council). March 9, 1989.
6. Duggan, Thomas J. and John A. Wybraniec. "Churches and Neighborhoods: A Changing Image for City Churches." Detroit, 1992.
7. Goldberg, Shari. *Managing Repair & Restoration Projects: A Congregation's How-To Guide*. New York: New York Landmarks Conservancy, Inc., 2002.
8. Goulet, Catherine. "Planning for Shared Space: Managing Older Religious Buildings for Community Use," *Inspired*, Vol. VI, No. 4 and Vol. VII, No.1. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation, 1992.
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17. Stiles, Elaine B. "A Guide to Preserving Historic Unitarian Universalist Churches." Development Department of the Unitarian Universalist Association. <http://www.uua.org/info/preserving.pdf> (26 Apr. 2004).
18. Warren, Jackqueline T. *Open the Doors, See All the People: A Guide to Serving Families in Sacred Places*. Philadelphia: Partners for Sacred Places, 2001.
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Specific to Fund-Raising

21. Breiteneicher, Joe, and Bob Hohler. *Quest for Funds Revisited: A Fund-Raising Starter Kit*. Washington, D.C.: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1993.
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23. Dean, Peggy Powell and Susanna A. Jones. *The Complete Guide to Capital Campaigns for Historic Churches and Synagogues*. Philadelphia: Partners for Sacred Places, 1991.
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Specific to Preservation Threats and Emergencies

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Useful Links -- National

National Trust for Historic Preservation

<http://www.nationaltrust.org/>

Partners for Sacred Places

<http://www.sacredplaces.org/>

National Register of Historic Places

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/>

National Park Service – Preservation Briefs

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

National Park Service – Technical Preservation Services for Historic Buildings

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/index.htm>

National Park Service – Heritage Preservation Services

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/>

Common Bond – Technical Assistance Journal

<http://www.nylandmarks.org/publications/commonbond.html>

Useful Links -- Massachusetts

PreservatiON MASS

<http://www.preservationmass.org/>

The Boston Preservation Alliance

<http://www.bostonpreservation.org/>

Historic Boston, Inc.

<http://www.historicboston.org/>

The Massachusetts Historical Commission

<http://www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc/mhcidx.htm>

The Boston Landmarks Commission

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/landmarks.asp>

The Cambridge Historical Commission

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/~Historic/>

Historic Salem, Inc.

<http://www.historicsalem.org/>

Essex National Heritage Commission

<http://www.essexheritage.org/>

The Lowell Historic Board

<http://www.historiclowell.net>