



Diamond Hill News

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VCU Study Finds Historic Preservation Contributes Upward of \$3.9B to VA Economy

In a recent report, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) examined the impact of historic preservation on Virginia's economy, and to no surprise to DHHS members, VCU determined it had a profound positive impact. Below is an excerpt from that report.

February 5, 2014 RICHMOND – The rehabilitation, re-use and preservation of Virginia's historic residential and commercial buildings is good for the commonwealth's economy according to a study conducted by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The benefits of bringing old buildings back to life ripples across the economy and through local communities to contribute an estimated \$3.9 billion to the state's economic health. Those rehabilitation expenses and their domino effect have also created more than 31,000 full and part-time jobs during a 17-year period and generated an estimated \$133 million in state and local tax revenues.

These are among the findings of an economic impact study commissioned by Preservation Virginia, with support from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and a grant from Mead Westvaco. The study uses data from 1997 to 2013 provided by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, which administers the state and federal tax credit programs in Virginia.

During the 17-year period, nearly \$1 billion in tax credits leveraged almost \$3 billion in private investment, resulting in the rehabilitation of 2,375 buildings—ranging from warehouses, hotels, theaters and even part of a prison complex to private residences. Expenses of \$3.97 billion for these rehabilitation projects serves as a catalyst on sectors of the economy to stimulate an additional estimated \$3.9 billion in activity, adding to the state's overall economic well being, according to the study.

“The cultural benefits of preservation and passing forward our historic legacies are well known,” said Elizabeth Kostelny, executive director of Preservation Virginia. “VCU's study confirms that historic preservation also provides profound economic benefits, and it begins with the incentives provided by state and federal tax credits. Significantly, most of the rehabilitation projects completed during the years covered by the study would never have been undertaken without the incentives offered to developers and property owners through the state and federal tax credits, according to study authors John Accordino, Ph.D. and Fabrizio Fasulo, Ph.D.,

continued inside



Demolition Looms for the Threadgill – Clay House

By now all residents of Diamond Hill have received the letter from the Lynchburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (LRHA) regarding the duplex at 611/613 Washington St. As those in attendance at the March DHHS meeting are aware, the LRHA is looking for possible solutions for disposition of the house rather than demolition. The LRHA agreed to allow DHHS 60 days to provide an alternate solution but apparently no proposal, joint or individual, has been submitted thus far. In the letter dated April 10th, LRHA asked Diamond Hill residents to decide whether we are for or against demolition of the house and to advise them as to our decision. The letter also indicated LRHA will be presenting a request for demolition to the Historical Preservation Commission (HPC) at the May 20th HPC meeting. The DHHS has sent a letter saying we are not in favor of the destruction of this property, but unless someone, or a group of someones, steps forward to save it, we may have no choice.



Spring projects? Don't forget you may need a Certificate of Appropriateness!

Whenever a building is in a designated district such as Diamond Hill and the owner wants to make changes to the exterior of the property, the owner must submit in advance of any work, an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to the Secretary of the HPC in the city's Planning Department. Obtaining an approved COA is required for actions and alterations as follows:

- Any construction, alteration, demolition, or removal of a building that requires a building or demolition permit.
- Any construction, alteration, demolition, or removal of exterior features which affect the exterior architectural appearance even if a building permit is not required.
- Exterior maintenance, such as painting, porch repair, window/door repair, masonry repair of building components such as walls, chimneys, foundations, etc. Note: Repairs-in-kind or even repainting a structure with previously approved colors still requires a COA.
- The construction, reconstruction, restoration, or alteration of signs, fences, patios, decks, or walls.
- A COA is NOT required for interior work or landscape work that does not substantially alter the contour of a site or its historical character.

While minor routine maintenance actions generally do not require review by the HPC, they still require a COA application for administrative review and approval. A properly completed application and supporting documents for repairs-in-kind or routine maintenance items submitted to the Secretary of the HPC can often be turned around very quickly and an approved COA provided within a couple of days.

Applications submitted after the applicant has completed the work/project) are subject to the same review and determination of appropriateness by the HPC and, as such, are subject to disapproval if not in compliance with the Design Review guidelines.

Jeff Schneider currently serves as the Diamond Hill advocate and can assist you with the COA application process. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Jeff (846-9139) or Kevin Henry, HPC Secretary, (455-3894).

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P.O. Box 803, Lynchburg, VA 24505
Website: www.diamondhill.org
Email: dhhscontact@yahoo.com
Newsletter articles:
diamondhill_news@yahoo.com

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Committee Chairpersons

<i>Neighborhood Beautification:</i>	Louis Kibby
<i>June Social:</i>	Fran Briley Julianna K. Neighbors
<i>Tours/Dinners:</i>	J. Ray Pulliam
<i>Website:</i>	Mari Smallshaw
<i>Newsletter:</i>	Kathryn Becker Jeff Schneider
<i>Neighborhood Watch:</i>	L. Robert Halpin
<i>Children's Activities:</i>	Mari Smallshaw
<i>Auditor:</i>	Todd Leap Jeff Schneider
<i>Endowment Fund:</i>	Fran Briley
<i>Remembrance Committee:</i>	J. Ray Pulliam
<i>Parliamentarian:</i>	Pat Gatti

Any updates to the above committee's chairpersons will be published in further releases.

Meetings

Business meetings are usually held at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of January, March, May, September and November. Owners of properties in the Diamond Hill Historic District and others interested in supporting historic preservation are welcome to attend.

Membership


Annual dues for Active Members are \$10.00 per person and the initiation fee is \$5.00 (first year). Active Membership is limited to adult members of households owning Diamond Hill property. All members receive this newsletter at no charge.

Publisher's Statement

The Diamond Hill Historical Society (DHHS) is a nonprofit historic preservation organization approved under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. Its purpose is to preserve and encourage—through the fostering of education, research and restoration—the historical and architectural integrity of the Diamond Hill Historic District. DHHS was incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia February 22, 1979.

Views expressed in the Diamond Hill News do not necessarily reflect the position of DHHS or its officers and directors.

Diamond Hill on Facebook

The Diamond Hill Historic District has a facebook page dedicated to things going on in the District.  [We invite you to “Like” the page.](#) Search for “Diamond Hill Historic District.”

Historic Preservation Contributes, continued

from the Center of Urban and Regional Development in VCU’s L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs.

The study also found that during what it calls the “Great Recession” from 2007 to 2009, the state’s historic rehabilitation tax credit—which allows a 25 percent credit on eligible expenses in a rehab project—reliably attracted private investment in rehabilitation projects that kept many carpenters, electricians, and other skilled trades people working, when very little new construction was under way. During those years, there was only “a moderate decline in historic rehabilitation activity,” according to the VCU report.

“In sum,” the VCU economists write, “the Virginia Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program and the Federal Historic Tax Credit Program, by reducing taxes for those who invest in historic rehabilitation, have made major contributions to the revitalization of Virginia’s cities and towns and to the Virginia economy overall.”

The 51-page study is available as a downloadable PDF document: <http://preservationvirginia.org/serve/economic-impact>.

LHF Poses Questions to City Council Candidates

The Lynchburg Historical Foundation opted this year to forgo a candidate Q & A forum and instead, ask the candidates to respond in writing to a series of questions regarding the historic districts and downtown revitalization. By sharing the candidates’ responses via the LHF website, it was hoped that a larger portion of the citizenry would have the benefit of hearing/reading the responses and thus, be better informed of the perspectives and positions of the candidates regarding preservation and revitalization. The responses can be found on the LF website, <http://lynchburghistoricalfoundation.org>. The questions to which the candidates were asked to respond were:

- Why should the residents of downtown and the seven historic districts support your candidacy?
- What do you believe are the strengths and the weaknesses of the city’s Comprehensive Plan (CP)?
- What do you feel are the most significant achievements of the current City Council?
- What city ordinances would you introduce or change to support historic preservation in the city?
- How would you propose using historic preservation to benefit our city and its citizens (assessments, jobs, tourism, business, civic pride, etc.)?
- Do you support continuing the incredible progress being made in the historic downtown and riverfront? Why or why not?
- Do you believe the city should pursue owners who fail to maintain their property—particularly those of historic significance? Why or why not?
- Will you support the recommendations of the council’s appointed Historic Preservation Commission to enforce Lynchburg’s Historic District Ordinance? Why or why not?
- Do you support such neighborhood development projects as the Fifth Street roundabout? Why or why not?

The candidate responses are available at the LHF website. To review what each candidate had to say before you go to the polls on May 6th you can follow these links:

- [Keith Anderson](#)
- [Hunsdon “H” Cary, III](#)
- [Joan F. Foster](#)
- [J. Randolph “Randy” Nelson](#)
- [Rhonnie Smith](#)
- [Trenay Tweedy](#)



*Lynchburg City Council candidates in the 2014 election:
TOP (Left to Right): Keith Anderson, H. Cary, Joan Foster.
BOTTOM (left to right): Randy Nelson, Rhonnie Smith, and Trenay Tweedy.*

Events Around Town

Jones Memorial Library

Jones Memorial Library Lecture - Artist Brookie Abbot
May 21, 5 p.m.

James Calloway Langhorne will give a lecture which coincides with the release of his book, "Scaisbrooke Langhorne Abbot: Lynchburg Painter."

City Cemetery

www.gravegarden.org

19th Annual Antique Rose Festival
May 10, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
Enjoy the Cemetery's acclaimed antique rose collection near its peak of bloom.

Summer in the Cemetery

10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Casual guided walking tours highlight history and horticulture on the grounds every Saturday morning June, July, and August.

Civil War Day

June 21, 2014 (10:00 AM-4:00 PM)
The cemetery will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Lynchburg. Visit the graves of soldiers who died in the battle and talk to archaeologists as they excavate "Yankee Square."

Other Downtown Events

www.downtownlynchburg.com

First Fridays

5:00 - 8:00 pm
Several downtown Galleries stay open on the First Friday of the month

Friday Cheers

5:30 - 9:00 pm
Friday Cheers returns to the Community Market (12th and Main) with an abbreviated season. Concerts will be held May 30, June 6, 13, 20, 27. And an Independence Day Cheers will be held on July 3rd at the foot of Monument Terrace.

Upcoming DHHS Meeting Tue., May 6th 7:30 pm.

at the Lewis-Clark Duplex
(prior to 1885),
416/418 Washington St.

Hosts:
Rad and Fran Briley

June Social Saturday, June 14th 6:00 pm

at the Stabler-Bocock-Watts
House (1852)
602 Washington Street

Hosts:
Vernon and Julie
Neighbors

Regular membership meetings are held the first Tuesday of odd numbered months, July excepted, at 7:30 p.m.

If you have other resident news to share, including relevant events and announcements, we'd be happy to publish it here and on the web. Please send an email to diamondhill_news@yahoo.com.

