

FREDERICK NEWEL POST

HISTORIC PRESERVATION NEWS FOR THE CITY OF FREDERICK

HPC ACTION:

June-December 2013

Total completed cases: 123 (100%)

Total cases approved: 122 (99.2%)

- HPC: 26 (21.3%)
- Administrative: 96 (78.7%)

Cases denied: 1 (0.8%)

To see if your application may be reviewed administratively, consult the Historic Preservation Division page of the Planning Department website or contact a Historic Preservation Planner.

CONTACT STAFF

You can schedule a meeting with Preservation Planning Staff to discuss your proposal even before the application deadline. Getting any questions answered about the Guidelines or HPC process and making sure your application is technically complete will help to facilitate the application process in the long run. Call the Planning Department at 301-600-1499 and ask to speak with a Historic Preservation Planner.

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THE MARYLAND STATE ODD FELLOWS HOME

The 1925 Maryland State Odd Fellows Home is located on the east side of North Market Street just north of the City's downtown core. The complex consists of three stately Colonial Revival style buildings arranged in a U-shape around a circular drive and lawn. The Maryland home was the last of its type built by the fraternal organization who built 59 across the country. The Odd Fellows philosophy of love, friendship, and truth is embodied in these structures where Grand Lodge of Maryland provided for hundreds of its aged members, their widows, and orphans at a time when there was almost nowhere else for them to turn. It represents the significant role fraternal organizations played in early twentieth century society.

Odd Fellow membership grew drastically during the nineteenth century drawing more from working class men than other fraternal organizations to become the largest of the "friendly societies." By the late nineteenth century, all the popular fraternal organizations solicited new members by offering life and health insurance. The benefits offered by these organizations provided much needed social welfare services not covered by

government or organized charities. The most significant source of insurance prior to the 1930s was provided by the Odd Fellows and other fraternal organizations. Another form of Odd Fellows aid included providing homes for aged and indigent members, their widows and orphans. The Odd Fellows homes aimed to provide children "good schooling and proper religious training in a friendly and affectionate atmosphere, created to be nearly home-like as possible" and allowed aged members and widows "to live happily in a place where they are wanted and respected in the twilight years of their lives." (continued page 2)



The Administration Building of the Maryland State Odd Fellows Home. (above)

The three buildings of the Maryland State Odd Fellows complex. (below)



ODD FELLOWS HOME

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Led by Frederick resident Grand Master H. Dorsey Etchinson the Maryland Odd Fellows raised close to a half a million dollars from their membership to build this grand retreat designed by prominent Baltimore architect Joseph Evans Sperry. On August 26, 1923 the cornerstones for the new buildings were laid in a ceremony with an estimated 15,000 Odd Fellows members from Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Pennsylvania in attendance and which was said to be the largest gathering of Odd Fellows ever in the state. Throughout the summer of 1924 it was reported that Odd Fellows from all over the state and adjoining states, including a large number from Washington, DC traveled to Frederick to tour the property, sometime 200 to 300 at a time.



The Aged Building.



The Children's Building.

Just before the dedication, Frederick's Daily News described the buildings in detail. The "Old Folks Cottages" were described as built in two sections with a kitchen and a pantry in the center and dining room adjoining, a spacious living room, sewing room, smoking room and a large porch. Accommodations included

36 single rooms and 12 double rooms with the unfinished third floor able to accommodate 20 more if necessary. The "Children's Building" was described as divided in two sections—boys and girls—with a kitchen and pantry in the center with a separate dining room for each section adjoining. Each section had its own living room, study room, playroom, washroom, and toilets. Each section included ten rooms set up for three children each and a matron's rooms providing accommodations for 62 children. Forty more children could be accommodated if necessary in the unfinished third floor. The administration building included the offices and reception, lobby, auditorium with a stage, dressing rooms, curtain and movable chairs to allow for use as a gymnasium. It also included a physician's examining room, dentist's room and infirmary, apartments for the superintendent, library, music room, and kindergarten room.

Coverage of the dedication dominated headlines the day after event. It was reported that special trains, buses, business and personal automobiles brought 20,000 to 30,000 visitors to the city of Frederick. Ceremonies began in the morning with the raising of the American flag on the pole in the center of the grounds. Despite a fierce electrical storm, the celebration continued with 2,000 to 3,000 persons parading up Market Street from Patrick Street in brightly colored garb.

By the 1970s the home had served over 600 Odd Fellows, Rebekahs, widows and orphans and included a farm and dairy that were operated at a profit. An infirmary continued to be run by registered nurses with frequent visits by a physician. In the *Album of Odd Fellows Homes*, the Maryland home was considered a "great exemplification of the mission of Odd Fellowship." With only 13

residents left in 2003, several buildings had been rented to a private school. The organization then announced the home would be closed by August citing competition with new nursing homes and assisted-living facilities, rising insurance costs and declining membership. In 2010 the Odd Fellows property was subdivided with an approximately seven acre parcel allocated for the home buildings and portioned off from the rest of the property. The buildings are currently used by the Banner School.



The date stone on the Administration Building displays the "Three Links" of the Odd Fellows—love, friendship, and truth.

JOSEPH EVANS SPERRY

One of Baltimore's preeminent architects at the turn of the century, Joseph Evans Sperry was responsible for the design of hundreds of buildings in addition to the Odd Fellows Home which included banks, office buildings, churches, synagogues, temples, hospitals, and schools, as well as industrial and residential projects. Notable buildings designed by Sperry include the 1891 Equitable Building, Baltimore's first skyscraper and a designated Baltimore City landmark, the 1895 Brewers' Exchange, listed on the National Register in 1985, and the 1911 Emerson Bromo-Seltzer Tower, the tallest building in Baltimore at the time and listed on the National Register in 1973.

✱CALL FOR NOMINATIONS ✱

2014
CITY OF FREDERICK
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
AWARDS

All nominations must be for properties located within the City of Frederick. Properties do not have to be within the Frederick Town Historic District or have historic preservation overlay designation to be eligible for these awards but the property must be at least 50 years old or older. Projects must have been completed within the last three years and will be evaluated according to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, as applicable. Award categories include:

- *Bricks and Mortar Rehabilitation*
Awarded for superlative work in the restoration or rehabilitation of a historic property.
- *New Construction*
Awarded for the sensitive design and construction of a new structure, whether an infill project in a historic district or addition to an existing building.
- *Stewardship*
Awarded for exemplary maintenance of an historic property or impeccable workmanship on an historic property.
- *Community Leadership*
Awarded to an individual or organization for extraordinary service to the City of Frederick in the field of historic preservation.

Completed nominations are due March 14, 2014 and will be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Awards Committee. Presentation of the awards will take place in May 2014 with the final date, time and location TBA.

Questions? Call 301-600-1499 or visit www.cityoffrederick.com/preservation and click on "Resources."



STATE & CITY TAX CREDIT WORKSHOP
FEBRUARY 11, 2013 @ 7:00 PM



Come and learn about two tax credits programs that may be available for the rehabilitation of historic properties. Representatives from the Maryland Historical Trust will discuss the State's [Sustainable Communities Income Tax Credit](#) program for single-family, owner-occupied residential properties that are certified historic structures. *The property does not necessarily need to be designated by the City of Frederick to be eligible for this credit.*

City representatives will also be on hand to discuss the [City Historic Preservation Property Tax Credit](#) for properties designated by the City of Frederick, individually or in a district. The credit is equal to 10% of expenditures related to the exterior preservation or restoration of a structure. **Applications for the City tax credit are due on April 1st.**

*Where: Conference Room C, Municipal Office Annex, 140 West Patrick Street
When: February 11, 2013, 7:00 PM*

THIS PLACE MATTERS

As part of National Preservation Month, the City of Frederick is joining the National Trust Historic Preservation in the This Place Matters initiative. This Place Matters is a photo-sharing campaign in which people take photos of themselves in whatever places matter to them. By sharing these photos, you can help spread the word about the places that matter to you with the rest of the City and the nation.

To participate, download a This Place Matters sign from the [historic preservation website](#) or pick one of from the Planning Department at 140 West Patrick Street. Take a digital photograph of yourself holding the sign in whatever place matters most to you in the City of Frederick. Then email the photograph to LMroszczyk@cityoffrederick.com with a brief (1-2 sentences) caption. The photographs will be compiled and displayed on the City's website and Channel 99. The Historic Preservation Awards Committee will select three photographs to be featured at the awards ceremony on May 2014. Creativity is encouraged! The deadline for submitting photographs is April 4, 2014. *Email photos and questions to LMroszczyk@cityoffrederick.com or call 301-600-6278.*



The photograph above was submitted by the Downtown Frederick Partnership in 2013.

CARROLL CREEK & THE HISTORY OF TANNING IN FREDERICK

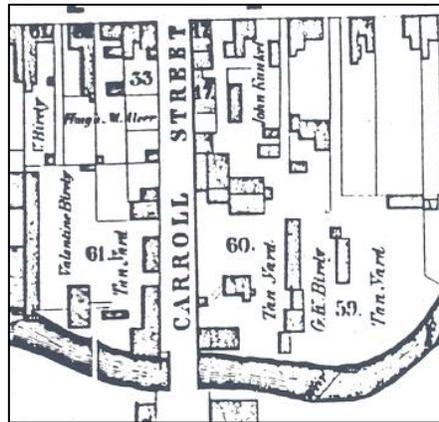
The picturesque urban landscape of the Carroll Creek Parkway is in stark contrast to its gritty, industrial history. Today, residents and visitors enjoy walking along the clean waterway that runs through the heart of the historic downtown. The creek is flanked by a narrow strip of park made up of green space, brick pathways, and sidewalk cafes. A series of thoughtfully designed bridges connect nearby city landmarks such as the C. Burr Artz Library and Delaplaine Art Center with restaurants, stores, and office space. However, during much of Frederick's history the water of Carroll Creek was polluted and the air heavy with unpleasant scents caused by the industrial complexes that lined its banks. Historic maps suggest that tanneries were the predominate type of industry along Carroll Creek.



Carroll Creek today.

Tanning, the process of treating animal skins to produce leather, was a major industry in Maryland during the 18th, 19th, and early 20th century with Frederick being an important center of production. By 1810 there were eight operating tanning complexes within town limits. Nearby natural resources including lime, lumber and the bark of oak, sumac and chestnut trees provided the means to process hides. The area around Carroll Creek was well suited for tanneries because it was downstream and downwind from the majority of town; and allowed easy water access for tanning activities without contaminating the rest of Frederick with the foul odors

and waste products associated with the industry. Tanning was an exceedingly odoriferous process involving the soaking, scraping, and cleaning of raw hides that were then dried, shaped, and oiled. The entire process could take six to nine months and generated large quantities of noxious wastewater, grease, scrap leather and hair.



This excerpt from the 1854 Pittar Map shows the site of the G. K. Birely Tan Yard between East Patrick Street, Carroll Street, and Carroll Creek.

Tanneries were generally large operations, containing a number of structures necessary for the tasks associated with transforming hides into leather. All tan yards in Frederick included large vats used in the first stage of soaking skins to help remove hair and give texture to the leather. Large beamhouses were needed to soak, lime, and remove extraneous tissues from the hide. The complex would also feature structures to store and process the tree bark needed to supply tannic acid, an important element in creating stiff, solid leather. These buildings include a bark mill, shed, and furnace.

In Frederick, the chief manufacturing industry of the mid-nineteenth century was tanning. They were operated by George Wachter, William S. Bantz, Gideon Bantz Jr, John Loats, Valentine Birely, and William Hauer. In 1853, these tanneries consumed nearly seven

thousand tons of bark worth seven dollars a ton. The same year, shipments from Frederick's train station by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad included 102,000 sides of leather. In addition to these tanneries there were seven establishments of skin dressers and glovers that relied on the locally sourced leather.

Starting in the early 20th century, changing technologies brought about a precipitous decline in the tanning industry. As automobiles supplanted horses and horse-drawn vehicles, the need for saddles and harnesses plummeted. Synthetic materials, such as plastics and rubber, replaced leather in numerous manufactured goods. Starting in the second quarter of the 20th century the old tanners that dotted Frederick's industrial landscape were abandoned. Although elements of Frederick's industrial heritage can be found along Carroll Creek, very little remains of the old tanneries. Today, the former Birely Tannery, located on the northern bank of Carroll Creek, next to the old Frederick News Post building, is the last structure from this once important and prosperous Frederick industry. The site is visible from the Carroll Creek Parkway and its history is commemorated by a marker.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Historical Perspective: The Little White Tannery Building. Originally published August 21, 2011 By Frances A. Randall for The Frederick News-Post.

Early American Technology: Making and Doing Things from the Colonial Era to 1850, edited by Judith A. McGaw.

History of Frederick County, Maryland, Volume 1, by Thomas John Chew Williams, Folger McKinsey.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION SURVEY

In December 2011 the Planning Department started inviting all applicants who completed the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) review process to fill out an online survey. The survey link is provided to the applicant in the email that contains their follow up letter—either a Certificate of Approval, Certificate of Administrative Approval, or Notice of Denial. The survey consists of ten questions. Fifty responses were recorded from December 1, 2011 to November 30, 2013. This equates to 10.2% of the total number applications completed during the same period. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of survey respondents received administrative approval. This is comparable to the total number of applications completed during the same period which received administrative approval (70.6%).

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of respondents received a decision on their application within two weeks. Of those 78%, approximately 72% received a decision within one to three days.

The administrative approval process, which was last revised in 2011 by eliminating the public notice requirement, allows applications to be approved very quickly. In fact, 100% of respondents receiving administrative approval were satisfied with the time it took to obtain that approval. Approximately 83% of respondents were satisfied with the time it took to obtain a decision from the Historic Preservation Commission. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of respondents were either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the current HPC process generally.

Twenty percent (20%) of respondents provided comments on the HPC process.

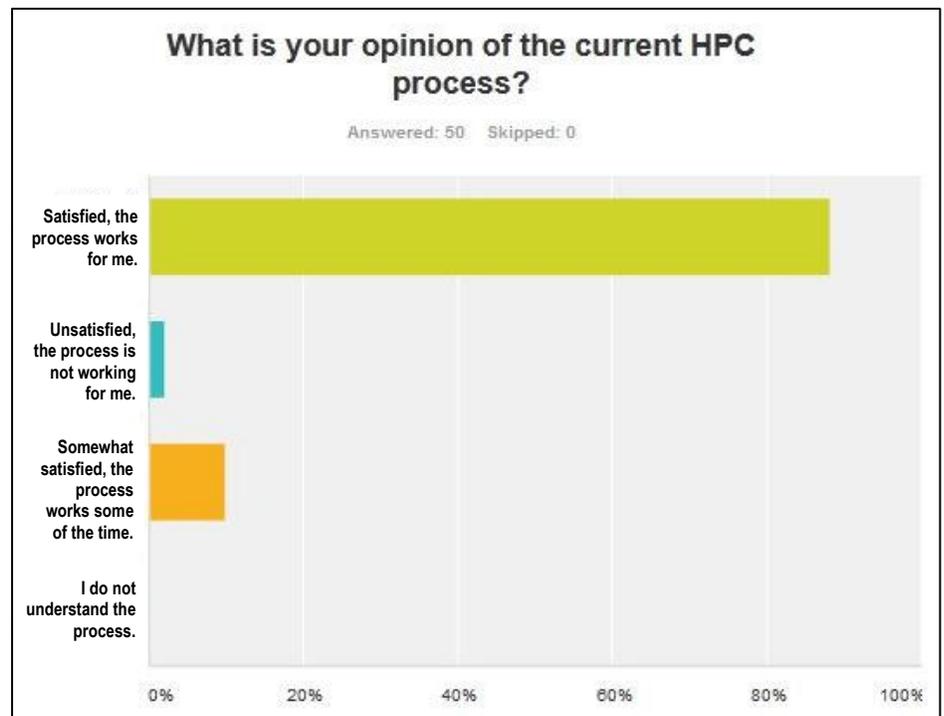
These comments were largely supportive of the administrative approval process. Other comments expressed concern over the strict interpretation of the guidelines and the desire for more flexibility for “energy efficient” and “inexpensive” materials.

“I hear people talk about how you have to deal with the HPC is a bad thing. I like the process and I feel the education and info from the HPC planners are excellent.”

Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents included suggestions on educational topics. The need for more information on tax credits was noted several times. In fact only about half of the total number of respondents were aware of potential tax incentives that may be available to them. Other suggestions included resources on

techniques, materials, and case studies. Based on the results of this survey, the Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Department will be preparing to provide several opportunities to the community to learn more about tax credits, skills for maintaining and rehabilitating historic homes, how historic preservation can be cost effective and energy efficient, and more. Stay tuned for more information or join the [HPC email list](#) to get updates.

Thank you to all those applicants who already responded to the HPC survey. Next time you submit a HPC application please take a minute to respond to the survey so that we can continue to improve the process. Please also feel free to send comments and suggestions directly to the Planning Department. Contact information can be found on the last page of this newsletter or online at www.cityoffrederick.com/preservation.



Of 50 respondents 88% said “Satisfied, the process works for me,” 10% said “Somewhat satisfied, the process works some of the time,” and 2% said “Unsatisfied, the process is not working for me.”



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2014 SCHEDULE	
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION	
<u>Application deadline</u>	<u>Public hearing</u>
January 16	February 13
February 6	February 27
February 20	March 13
March 6	March 27
March 20	April 10
April 3	April 24
April 17	May 8
May 1	May 22
May 15	June 12
June 5	June 26
June 19	July 10
July 3	July 24
July 17	August 14
August 7	August 28
August 21	September 11
September 4	September 25
September 18	October 9
October 2	October 23
October 16	November 13
November 6	December 11