



PA Update

Winter 2003

“Greater Owensboro” Values Historic Buildings

Review of Past Year



Old Daviess County Jail

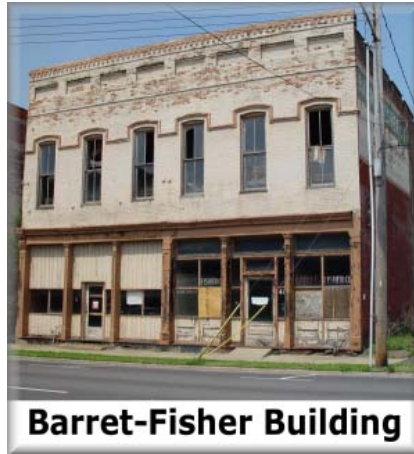
On April 18, 2002, Daviess Fiscal Court opened sealed bids for the purchase of the old Daviess County Jail, but to date has not formally accepted any of the three submitted bids.

Fiscal Court has stated its interest in preserving the historic part of the old jail. In support, Preservation Alliance and Downtown Owensboro Inc. commissioned an architectural and structural review of the Old Jail complex -- report, floor plans available online at www.iompc.org/OldJail.

It has been argued the 1886 Second Empire front of building could be incorporated into expanded exhibition facilities at the Executive Inn.

However, Big E expansion plans are on hold as John Bays reportedly awaits action by the Kentucky General Assembly to authorize expanded gaming in the state. Bays proposes a casino as an integral part of his plan for a major entertainment complex.

The City of Owensboro's Waterfront Master Plan incorporates the Old Jail as a key design element, with the potential for new street-front commercial space adjoining the Old Jail.



Barret-Fisher Building

In March 2002 the PA Board added the Barret-Fisher Building (409-411 E 2nd St) to its Endangered Buildings List.

PA Update in spring 2002 reported that the building, built in 1900 according to PVA records, features an iron and pressed-metal storefront by City Foundry and Machine Works of Owensboro. Although in need of repair, it has survived intact for over a century, representing Main Street's heyday of commerce.

Currently, owner Terry Woodward is considering rehabilitation for an as yet unspecified use.

The Barret-Fisher building and the former Mischel Monuments building across East 2nd Street, which is undergoing renovation as an art gallery, have potential for inclusion in an eastward expansion of the National Register Main Street Historic District.

In October 2002 the PA board discussed Ms. Susie Tyler's interest in expanding the National Register Main Street Historic District to include properties along the east side of St Ann St between 2nd and 3rd streets.

Owners of historic buildings located within National Register districts can receive federal investment tax credits for qualifying rehabilitation projects.

Regional Preservation Coordinator Stewart Sebree believes that even though particular buildings likely would not qualify for the National Register by themselves, they might be considered "contributing" to an expanded NR district.

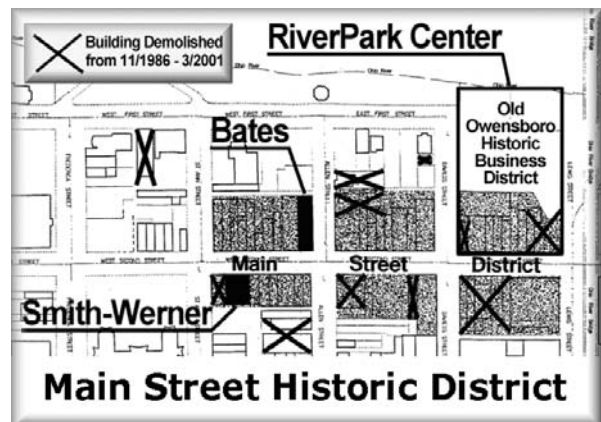
But, there is a general requirement that the buildings that make up a historic district not be separated by intrusions, such as non-historic buildings, parking lots, and other gaps that diminish the integrity of the district.

Cost of preparing the nomination to expand the downtown district could be several thousand dollars, and must be conducted by a qualified individual approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer (Kentucky Heritage Council).

In November 2002 PA sent a letter in support of expanding the district to the Owensboro Historic Preservation Board, believing the OHPB should take the lead.

Recently, however, PA has learned that the KHC may require a proposal for expansion of the district to be overseen by Downtown Owensboro Inc., the KHC-supported "Main Street" agency.

The PA board believes that the city should fund the effort and is willing to contribute financially if necessary.





5th & Frederica Street

In April 2002 PA sent a letter to Terry Dukes, owner of the former Stacy Chrysler buildings, congratulating him on removing the blue aluminum screen, and referring him to John Froehlich (DOI) and Stewart Sebree (KHC) for information about rehab programs and proper techniques to maintain historic quality.

In August 2002 PA learned that Dukes was considering applying an exterior insulation coating to the buildings that, if applied, likely would mask the interesting brick and stone work of the facades.

PA believes the interesting architectural features of the buildings should be enhanced not hidden again behind an artificial surface.

Mr. Dukes reportedly plans ultimately to use the renovated buildings as a "master pawn shop."



Theatre Workshop of Owensboro

In May 2002 John Bryenton, Director of Theatre Workshop of Owensboro, contacted PA seeking its recommendations for repairing or replacing the Old Trinity Centre's slate roof. PA supplied Bryenton with relevant information and contacts.

In August 2002 PA learned that Regional Preservation Coordinator Stewart Sebree encouraged TWO to seek KHC grant for renovation of the slate roof. PA board member and architect Mike Wells suggested that the roof contractor who worked on Third Baptist Church's roof should be contacted.

The PA board has voted to grant \$3,000 to TWO for the roof project with the stipulation that the building be registered

as a local historic landmark under the review authority of the Owensboro Historic Preservation Board.

PA is sending a letter to John Breyenton, Director of TWO, formally documenting the grant offer.



PA Motor Coach Trips

In 2002 the PA Board was unsuccessful in generating adequate interest in its two proposed Motor Coach Trips, with potential attendees citing conflicts with the proposed dates for the trips.

St. Louis was the destination of a planned 3-day, 2-night trip for October 24-26, 2002. The itinerary included the Gateway Arch, Laclede's Landing, Italian dining and shopping in The Hill historic neighborhood, and an Anheuser-Busch tour.

In March 2002 the PA board canceled a proposed trip to Columbia, TN, with a stop en route at Bellemeade Plantation in Nashville. Located just south of the Saturn auto plant, Columbia has a refurbished downtown. Maury County touts itself as "Antebellum Homes Capital of Tennessee." For folks interested in making their own trip, see the Middle Tennessee Visitor's Bureau at www.antebellum.com.



Wesley Acton at Spring Meeting

Mr. Wesley Acton, a retired teacher who grew up in Pleasant Ridge, KY, in southeastern Daviess County, made a presentation inside the Rosenwald Schoolhouse in the Pioneer Village at Yellow Creek Park.



Pioneer Village at Yellow Creek Park

The occasion was the annual Spring Meeting of Preservation Alliance on May 17, 2002. The schoolhouse had been moved from Pleasant Ridge in 1992 with PA's assistance.

Acton led the Greenwood Cemetery cleanup from 1976-1996. The following are notes from Mr. Acton's speech:

Julius Rosenwald, with Sears, Roebuck for 35 years, established the Rosenwald School Fund for southern states (1917-1948). Booker T. Washington was one of Rosenwald's chief advisors, and founded Tuskegee Institute, which was a Rosenwald School.

There were Rosenwald Schools in Daviess, Logan, and Muhlenberg (in Greenville) counties. Logan County High School in Russellville rededicated a Rosenwald School. The first school for Pleasant Ridge was built near Masonville. Kids had a long distance to walk – several miles – through other people's land.

The Pleasant Ridge Rosenwald School was used as a home, then a stripping room for tobacco. Former attendee Theodora Jackson Smith recently died.

Acton attended Carver School, which was located at the current site of the St. Vincent DePaul store on West 7th St. in Owensboro. Carver was grades 1 – 8, while Owensboro Western High School was grades 9 – 12.

Oral histories on African-American one-room schools are located at Western Kentucky University.

Other Endangered Buildings



BATES BUILDING
 ▪ 1880s ▪ 101 W 2nd St
 The upper floors have been considered for conversion to residential use. Impressive façades on 2nd and Allen streets make this building a cornerstone of downtown's Historic Main Street district.



SMITH-WERNER
 ▪ 1880s (Struct. 1860s?)
 ▪ 118-124 W 2nd St
 Daviess County Fiscal Court has owned this building since October 2000 and should preserve the historic Italianate façade -- one of downtown's last remaining and most extensive example of 19th-century pressed-metal technology.



SUTHERLAND SCHOOL
 ▪ 1930 ▪ 7625 US 431
 Currently for sale, this former county elementary school has sparked the interest of a group of

Apollo High School students who are researching its history.