

Important Planning & Development Department Information

General Questions 803/329-5587
Janice Miller, Historic Preservation Specialist 803/817-5129
jemiller@cityofrockhill.com

Visit us on the web under the Planning & Development tab at www.cityofrockhill.com



P.O. Box 11706
Rock Hill, SC 29731-1706

0423-001



The latest catch phrase has been “green technology”, especially as it relates to using sustainable materials in order to preserve energy and natural resources. While this technology has been discussed for a number of years, it wasn’t until several years ago with the extreme rise in fuel costs did we see the green movement explode.

Some key elements of green technology include:

Sustainability – Materials that meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

“Cradle to Cradle” Design – Ending the “cradle to grave” cycle of manufactured products by creating products that can be reclaimed and re-used.

Source Reduction – Reducing waste and pollution by changing patterns of production and use.

Innovation – Developing alternatives to technologies that have been proven to damage the environment.

Historic preservation has been at the forefront of “green technology” since the first national preservation conference was held in 1947. How does preservation meet these key “green” elements? Existing materials kept in place on an historic building means that no new materials, energy output, pollution or fuels will be required in the manufacture or delivering of new materials.

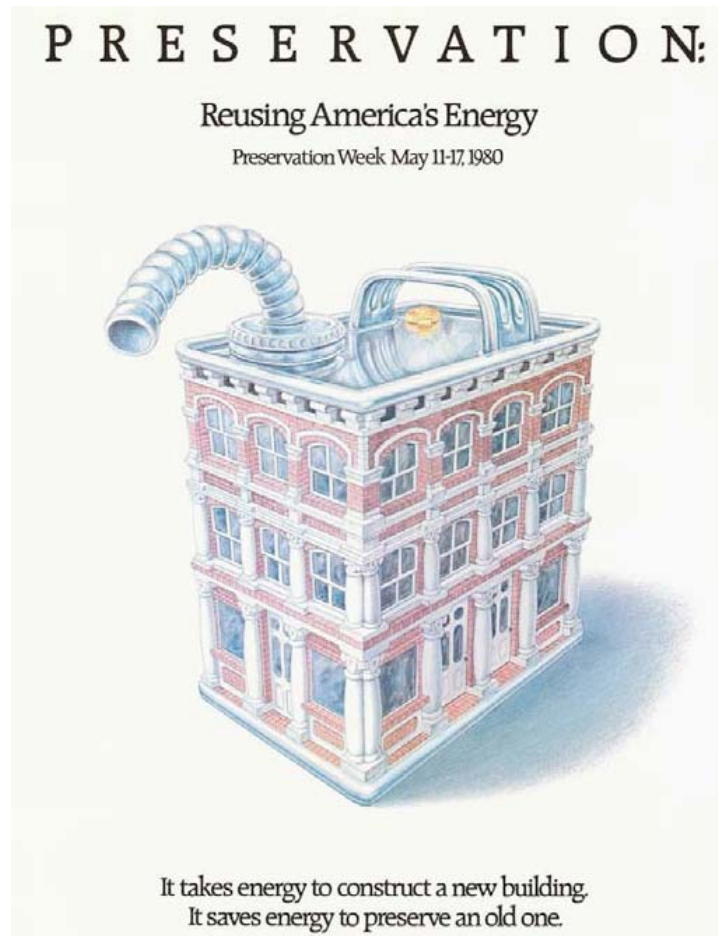
According to the dictionary, the term “preservation” means “to keep alive or in existence”. The term “preservation” after all is simply another way of saying “maintenance”. Those who have maintained an historic building know that maintenance is a never-ending cycle, and those who have restored an historic building know that restoration is much easier on a building that has been maintained. And for those who think that new materials are more maintenance-free than original – think again. Research has shown that the payback on replacing an historic window may not occur for over 200 years – and that you may end up replacing it in 25 years (National Trust for Historic Preservation Tip Sheet, *Historic Wood Windows*).

Yes, maintenance is more labor intensive than replacement, but owners of historic properties need to elevate themselves to the role of steward, for while a person can only own a particular property for a limited amount of time, the property itself can potentially exist forever, provided it is maintained. And the person who maintained the property – rather than replacing it piece by piece – will exist forever in the history of the property.

May is Preservation Month, which originally began in 1973 as Preservation Week. Below is a Preservation Week poster from 1980, thirty years before the term “green technology” was widely used.

If you are looking at some issues with maintenance or have a question regarding a specific issue, please feel free to contact me and I will be more than happy to help. You may also want to take a look at the City of Rock Hill’s Historic Preservation webpage under the Planning & Development tab at www.cityofrockhill.com.

Janice E. Miller
Historic Preservation Specialist
803/817-5129
jemiller@cityofrockhill.com



MY WINDOWS ARE OLD & DRAFTY – WHY SHOULDN’T I BUY NEW ONES?

1. More heat is typically lost through your roof and un-insulated walls than through your windows. Adding just 3 ½” of insulation in your attic can save more energy than replacing your windows.¹
2. Replacement windows are called “replacement” for a reason. Manufacturers often offer lifetime warranties for their windows. What they don’t make clear is that 30% of the time, a replacement window will be replaced within 10 years.¹
3. Replacement windows that contain vinyl or PVC are toxic to produce and create toxic by-products. Installing these in your house is not a “green” approach.²
4. If your wood windows are 60 years old or older, chances are that the wood they are made of is old growth – dense and durable wood that is now scarce. Even high-quality new wood windows, except for mahogany, won’t last as long as historic wood windows.
5. Studies have demonstrated that an historic wood window, properly maintained, weather stripped and fitted with a storm window, can be just as energy efficient as a new window.²
6. According to studies, it can take 240 years to recoup enough money in energy efficiency savings to pay back the cost of installing replacement windows.³
7. Each year, Americans demolish 200,000 buildings. That is 124 million tons of debris, or enough waste to construct a wall 30 feet high and 30 feet thick around the entire United States coastline.⁴ Every window that goes into the dump is adding to this problem.
8. With a little bit of practice, it can be easy – and inexpensive – to repair and maintain your wood windows.⁵
9. Not a DIY-er? There are people near you who can do it for you. Hiring a skilled tradesperson to repair your windows fuels the local economy and provides jobs.¹
10. Historic wood windows are an important part of what gives your older building its character.

¹Rypkema, Donovan D. “Economics, Sustainability, and Historic Preservation.” *Forum Journal* 20, No. 2 (2006): 27-38.

²Sedovic, Walter and Jill H. Gotthelf. “What Replacement Windows Can’t Replace: The Real Cost of Removing Historic Windows.” *APT Bulletin, Journal of Preservation Technology* 36, No. 4 (2005): 25-29.

³e.g. Calculations by Keith Heberern available at <http://restoreomaha.org/resources/WindowEnergyAnalysis.pdf>

⁴Hadley, James. “The Home of the Future?” *Architecture Boston* 10, No. 2 (March/April 2007): 44-47. Also, <http://www.architects.org/documents/publications/ab/marapr2007/HomeOfTheFuture.pdf>

⁵e.g. www.historichomeworks.com

Article reprinted from the National Trust for Historic Preservation article, “Historic Wood Windows: A tip sheet from the National Trust for Historic Preservation”.

HISTORIC ROCK HILL

Historic Rock Hill will celebrate the grand opening of the newly rehabilitated and restored Historic White Home in the fall. The public areas of the home will feature a museum and gift shop and the newly landscaped gardens are a perfect escape. The home and grounds are now available for event rentals including weddings, receptions and dinners. Please contact Lisa Hendrix with Historic Rock Hill at 803/329-1020 for more information.