



The Preservationist

September 2009

Our Sacred Spaces

January 12, 2010

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The Preservationist

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Landmarks Archives



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Icons along City Streets

Every church is a landmark in the streetscape, a place of neighborhood memories where the stained glass windows, carved stone and other decorative features are a testament to the congregations who built them. With this Sacred Spaces project, Landmarks wants to call attention to these historic buildings suggesting a community responsibility to enjoy and maintain them as significant features along our downtown streets. Each church is part of New London's cultural life.

The **Sacred Spaces Forum** to be held at the Second Congregational Church on **Tuesday, January 12, 2010**, will be led by Elizabeth Terry, Educational Director for the national, non-sectarian organization, **Partners for Sacred Places**. Ms. Terry will provide information on programs developed to help religious organizations assess their facilities, establish their most critical maintenance issues and find the expertise to plan and budget for the necessary work.

They also help plan the next essential step: finding the funding to pay for it! This is information that all citizens of New London, government officials, business leaders and residents should find interesting. If there is a church in your neighborhood you can be sure it is providing a range of community services you may not be aware of. There is also a high probability that the historic building, constructed with care and fine craftsmanship, is in need.

Local, State and Federal grant funds are in short supply for the maintenance of any historic structure and limitations on grants for religious structures are high. As David Bahlman, Director of the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office says, "...the preservation of religious structures is the toughest of all preservation issues."

State Street Walk

Saturday, September 26, Meet at 11:00 am in front of Union Station for a new view of State Street as a result of the Parade Plaza reconstruction. Historic buildings are revealed, providing a new perspective on New London's primary business street. Sally Ryan leads the tour reviewing the history as State Street evolved from a residential neighborhood into a busy commercial district. Following the walk, a PowerPoint presentation at Landmarks office expands your view of the street with historic photos of State Street development. Wealthy city businessmen hired nationally recognized architects for the design of many of the most significant buildings. Their pride in the city created a legacy for everyone to enjoy today as a revival of the street takes place.

Suggested donation: \$5.00

Antientest Buriall Ground

Sally Ryan and Lance Mayer will repeat their popular tour of the Antientest Buriall Ground on **Saturday, October 31**, (Rain Date Sun. Nov. 1) Reservations Only: \$20.00

Space is limited for this guided tour of the oldest burial ground in the area. Laid out by city founder John Winthrop on a beautiful hillside overlooking the river, the ancient stones tell many stories of early New London life and the families who laid the foundations for the city we enjoy today.



Sacred Spaces—Historic Churches In Downtown New London

Sacred places are a “natural” resource, central to the life of cities, towns and neighborhoods across this nation. Like other natural resources, they are ubiquitous and essential, nurturing and inspiring, available to all. Like other natural resources, they are also fragile and irreplaceable. Now that we know how vital sacred places are to the shared life of the community, we also know that the larger public shares a stake in their survival.

**** Sacred Places at Risk by Diane Cohen and A. Robert Jaeger**

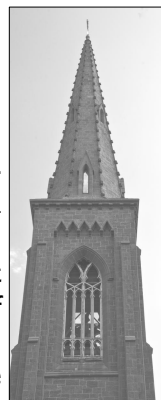
The eight churches in New London’s Downtown National Register District are architectural and spiritual resources to our community. Planned and financed by citizens several generations ago, they are a gift from the past, enriching our community today.

New London Landmarks has developed this program to encourage the whole community to visit each of these churches in December to enjoy their special programs and experience the beauty of their sacred spaces.

New London in 2009 is a very different community than it was one hundred years ago when these beautiful structures were in their prime. From care of the homeless population to extensive programs for children, and as a venue for theater and musical performances, they continue to be active, flexible and highly attuned to the daily life of downtown New London. Responding to these community needs is often at odds with the impact of these programs on tight budgets, overburdened staff and – especially – the wear and tear on the historic structure.

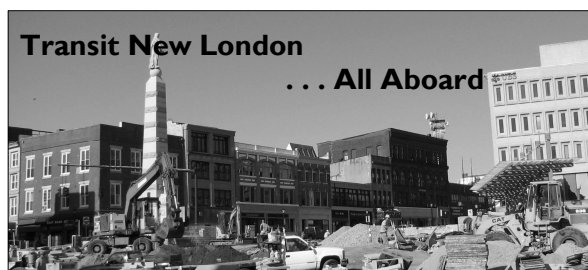
Partners for Sacred Places will lead a Landmarks Forum Tuesday, January 12 to address issues of maintenance for these historic structures. They recommend a new public discourse acknowledging the role of historic buildings in the streetscape and the daily life of an urban community. New partnerships with foundations, businesses and the general public are necessary to create funding sources to maintain these structures in the heart of downtown. The generosity of the past, from families with long ties to the community, whose wealth came from long-gone eras of whaling, shipping and industrialization, no longer supports buildings constructed in the glory days of the late 1800s. In 2009 we need to find new ways to sustain these buildings and Partners for Sacred Places has pioneered this effort in Pennsylvania, spreading their experiences nation-wide.

****Available for \$10. from Partners for Sacred Places, 1616 Walnut Street, Suite 2310, Philadelphia 19103**



Transportation Forum

Date TBA



As construction continues on the Parade Plaza, planning for improvements to New London’s transportation area is gathering momentum. Preliminary meetings with the Steering Committee have taken place and the study report from June 30, 2009 is available on the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments web site. Go to www.seccog.org and click on “read more” under Southeastern Connecticut Regional Transportation Study. It is an extensive document of recommendations

including ferry facilities, Union Station, the parking garage, bus stations, street improvements and the need for safe, convenient public access. The study group is now refining its ideas and will present their completed study soon after the first of the year.

New London Landmarks will hold a public forum soon after the study is complete to open discussion on these recommendations and explore plans for implementing their ideas. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is an exciting concept for economic development around transportation centers. Speakers at the forum will include professionals in the field who can provide insight into a planning process for New London as well as local citizens concerned with economic development in New London. There are many new opportunities for development in and around an active and well-designed transit center.

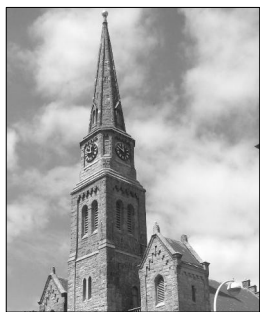
Visit New London's downtown churches in December



Apostolic Cathedral of Hope 1882

In a month-long introduction to the Sacred Spaces Forum, downtown churches are inviting the public to attend their special events . . . performances . . . concerts . . . craft shows . . . model train exhibits . . . Everyone is welcome!

A Calendar of Events will list activities throughout the month of December to encourage all citizens of the region to visit each of these historic structures to experience the beauty of their architecture and enjoy the splendid interior spaces with stained glass windows, vaulting ceilings, pipe organs and a variety of artistic treasures each church has acquired through the years.



1st Congregational 1870

The **Apostolic Cathedral of Hope**, at the corner of Green and Starr Street, was constructed by New London builder John Bishop who also built several homes on Starr Street; the city's famous 19th century resort hotel, the Pequot House; and many other homes throughout the city.

The **First Congregational Church** was designed by Prague-born New York architect, Leopold Eidlitz, who brought a dramatic Gothic Revival style to the otherwise modest homes on State Street. In 1856 it dominated the city with its soaring spire, visible from afar.

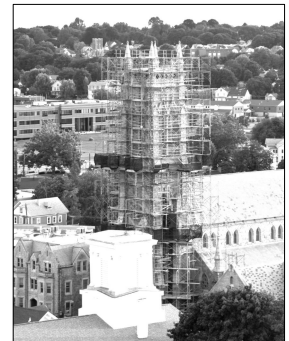


Huntington St. Baptist, 1843

The **Huntington Street Baptist Church** was built by John Bishop for the Universalists. He was inspired by Minard Lafever's handbook, *The Beauties of Modern Architecture*, published in 1835. It is a beautiful example of Greek Revival architecture with the classic proportions typical of the style and elaborate Corinthian columns supporting the portico.

St. Mary Star of the Sea is an elegant Gothic style building. Built of granite, the tower was added in 1911 and today is undergoing extensive repairs.

Landmarks will lead a walking tour to all the churches on Sunday, December 27, 2009 departing St. James church at 2:00. Reservations recommended. \$15.00

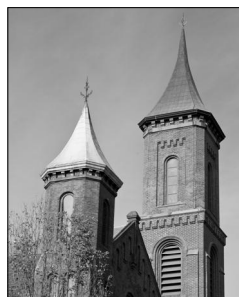


St. Mary Star of the Sea, 1876

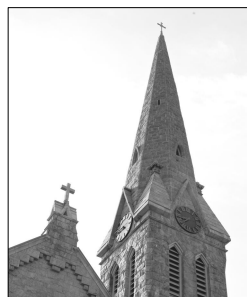
Of the limited Historic Restoration Funds available to the entire state of Connecticut, only 10 to 20% is available to religious structures. Added to these limitations is the fact that the granting process is detailed and rigorous.



Universalist/Unitarian 1910



1st Baptist—1856



2nd Congregational, 1870



St. James Episcopal, 1850

Attend the Sacred Spaces Forum:

Tuesday, January 12, 2010, 2nd Congregational Church, 45 Broad St. New London. 9:00 am—1:00

Reservations: newlondonlandmarks.org or call 860-442-0003. \$25.00 includes lunch.

Directors Report

Sandra Kersten Chalk

Design Review for New London, a project Landmarks has been promoting for many years, may begin to play a role in planning and development in New London. Last winter NLL worked with a committee of citizens under the leadership of City Planner Harry Smith and submitted Design Guidelines to the Planning and Zoning Commission last spring. A public hearing is scheduled for September 17. The Guidelines are intended to be informative about the historic and contemporary architecture in the central business district and provide specific information on recommended principles of design for new or in-fill construction, restoration of existing buildings and the re-design or renovation of storefronts.

While New London does not have an official design review board to work with developers as they begin a project for a new building, the guidelines provide talking points for consideration on how a new building will fit into the streetscape and relate to nearby structures.

One of the elements that creates New London's unique streetscape is the variety of building styles and materials visible on each block. Within this variety, the quality of the architecture, the façade materials, the way the windows are set into the fabric of the building, the many architectural details that adorn our fine buildings have created an interesting city—one that improves with age as buildings are restored. The guidelines are intended to encourage quality architecture for all new building in the downtown commercial district.

Grants supporting NLL projects: The CT Trust for Historic Preservation; the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Charles Evans Hughes Memorial Foundation; and the Frank Loomis Palmer Fund, Bank of America Trustee have provided grants for the two forums. Landmarks has also won the third year of Basic Operational Support funding from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.

Recently enrolled 2009 Members

Membership in New London Landmarks represents a commitment to the City of New London, its history and cultural resources as well as a faith in the future of the city. For over thirty years the organization has worked to encourage appreciation for the fine architecture and the historic homes and neighborhoods in this small city on the New England coast. Thank you for your membership and support for our activities.

Individual

Trix Bodde
Ned Hammond
Carolyn Johnson
Carolyn Leuze
Christine Regan
Gabrielle Schlesinger
Archie Swindell
Elizabeth Whitley

Family

Hiedi Brody
Thomas & Ann Carroll, Jr.
Jo Ann Church
Margaret & Frank Church
Art & Cecile Costa
Adam & Jean Spreccace
James & Sherburne Stidfole
Mr. & Mrs. John C. Wiles

Contributor

Stephen J. Joncus, AIA
Pamela McNulty-Hennessey

Patron

Anna L. Deveau
Heather and Richard Grigsby
Carl Stoner

Corporate

Chelsea Groton Bank

Membership Information

New London Landmarks membership drive begins at our Annual Meeting in February with a membership year April 1st through March 31st. Benefits of membership include receiving copies of *The Preservationist*, postcards and mailings about special events and, most importantly, support for our work to preserve and protect New London's historic urban landscape.

Individual: \$25**Family: \$35****Contributor: \$50 - \$75****Patron: \$100 & above****Corporate: \$200**

Historic Plaque Application

**DAVID BISHOP
HOUSE**



c1796

If your New London home/building is at least 50 years old, it may qualify to receive an historic marker listing its date and original owner. The information gathered in this process aids in neighborhood preservation efforts.

Our volunteer title researchers study land, tax and water records, historic maps, and city directories to establish your building's first owner and date of its construction.

The researchers also welcome any oral history or copies of old documents relating to your building that you may have. Please allow at least 16 - 20 weeks for completion of the research and delivery of the durable, hand-lettered, sealed hardwood plaque.

PLAQUE ADDRESS _____

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

DAY PHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

LEGAL OWNER (IF DIFFERENT) _____

APPROXIMATE DATE PURCHASED BY CURRENT OWNER _____ APPROXIMATE AGE OF PROPERTY _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

MEMBERSHIP STATUS: YES ☐ NO ☐

PRICE OF PLAQUE: \$250.00 Non-member \$235.00 Members

Historic Plaques Completed

**18 Farmington Avenue
William H. Hull
1920**

**11 Plant Street
Miss Kate A. Maxwell
1896**

CT Trust for Historic Preservation — \$45,000 grant to the City of New London

Congratulations to City Planner Harry Smith who won this highly competitive grant from the Ct Trust. Three cities in Connecticut were selected to receive this planning grant with a required focus on the historic and cultural resources of the selected area.

The \$45,000 grant will fund a study of the downtown bounded by Golden St., Washington St., Coit St., Reed St., Bank St., and the Thames River. This wonderfully mixed-use neighborhood includes Starr Street Local Historic District, the Coit Street Historic District, the Hygienic gallery, restaurant and retail business as well as the Custom House Maritime Museum, The Shaw Mansion, the parking lots along Eugene O'Neill Drive and the two new condominium buildings on Bank Street. This is an area with great potential as revitalization continues in New London. Preserving the historic and cultural aspects of the area and planning appropriate new development will be the focus of the study. Public meetings, charettes, and considerable public input will be vital elements of the planning process.

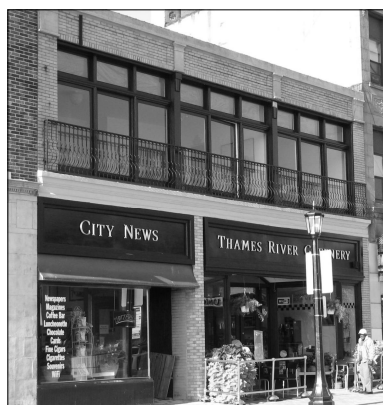
Land Value Tax

Art Costa

New London: Preservation, Development, Rejuvenation

Combined with smart development, and careful implementation, Land Value Taxation (LVT) can encourage infill where it is called for, and re-use and rehabilitation of building stock, particularly in our historical districts.

Today, Connecticut has a property tax which includes improvement and land, blended into a single real estate tax on improvement. The State does not allow a municipality to tax land at a rate higher than improvement.



Attractive rehabilitation of historic State Street buildings encourages business and enhances the streetscape.

The story goes: Improve the structure, and your assessments go up and generally so go your property tax bills. The tax rate on improvement is frequently between 2 to 5 times higher than land.

Taxation on improvements leaves a municipality, particularly a city with social services and infrastructure to attend to, with two major dilemmas: 1) How to produce both revenues while avoiding the loss of the tax base? 2) How to turn-around the conditions of blight when the tax structure penalizes upkeep?

Then there is the desire to maintain our historical heritage and the character and charm of our city with a tax that again penalizes such activity, creating the opposite of what we want to occur.

Realizing the problem cities of all sizes face with decreased populations and loss of businesses, a group known as Re-New London Council, with the support of many city stakeholders such as NL Landmarks, began to study the cause of our predicament. The central issue of a punitive tax structure emerged with an alternative: LVT. All other attempts to preserve and re-invigorate the city have met with varying degrees of success and failure, but none seem to have gotten to the root cause of what keeps a city like New London from realizing its incredible potential given its enormous assets. We think we've discovered an important cause and solution with Land Value Taxes.

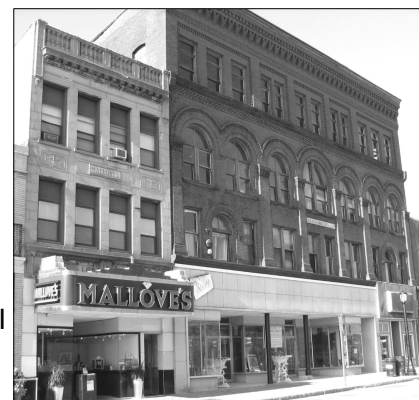


The restored Bacon Building is a fine addition to business on State Street and returns the building to the tax roles; these higher taxes penalize the investor for the expensive renovations. . .

Today, New London, the only municipality in the state, has an opportunity to implement LVT with the signing of Public Act 09-236 Land Value Taxation Pilot. **LVT is NOT another tax, it is property tax reform.**

From a landmarks perspective, shifting taxation away from buildings to land, makes historical preservation much more affordable, and thus creates an incentive to preserve our historic districts.

It has worked in cities throughout the United States and world. New London will be embarking on a series of planning and educational sessions as we move toward reform and rejuvenation. A citizen team has been formed to consider the best use of LVT for New London.



. . . while two other historic buildings languish .

For more information: www.re-newlondoncouncil.org or email artebova@sbcglobal.net

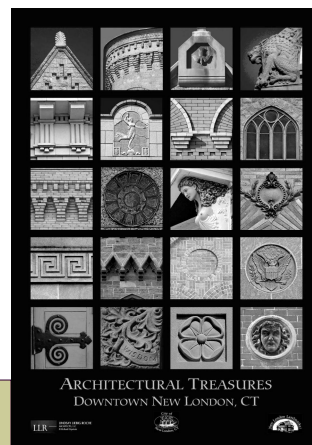
NOTE: NLL Board Member Art Costa is President of Re-New London Council and co-founder of New London Local First, a network supporting New London's locally-owned businesses.

Items of Interest

A great gift idea! Architectural Ornaments Poster

Can you identify these ornamental designs found on New London buildings? The poster, designed by Rick Gipstein of Lindsay Liebig Roche, is for sale at Yah-Ta-Hey Gallery, Studio 33 and the Landmarks office for only \$5.00 - but supplies are running out—get your poster today, we're raising the price on the next printing!

Architectural Ornaments have embellished fine architecture since man first began to construct important buildings. The poster provides great photographs of small architectural details on some of New London's historic buildings. Landmarks encouraged the production of this poster in the hopes it would inspire people to take a longer look at downtown buildings and enjoy the Downtown Waterfront District. We have great architectural treasures here—take a closer look!

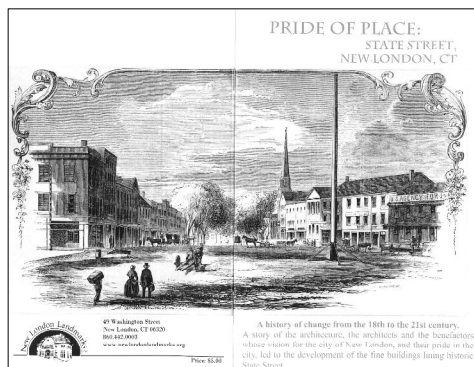


Pride of Place

Pride of Place, State Street, New London, is an illustrated booklet following the development of State Street, introducing the architects and city benefactors who had a grand vision for the city as a commercial center. They built the fine buildings we enjoy today as the restoration process, begun with the Garde Arts Center, has moved down the street to include nearly every historic building.

From the Parade, New London's historic gathering place, to the Courthouse at the top of this hill, State Street has always been the primary street leading to the busy harbor and Thames River.

Written by Landmarks archivist Heather Tichenor the publication was supported by a grant from the Frank Loomis Palmer Fund, Bank of America Trustee. It is available for \$5.00 at the Landmarks office, the Custom House Maritime Museum, the Shaw Mansion and Yah-Ta-Hey Gallery.



Unusual Request from Connecticut College - Can Landmarks members help?

We are looking for home movies on super 8mm, 16mm, or 35mm with images of New London streets, pier, Ocean Beach, other sites to be included in a new art documentary film project being filmed on the streets of New London. The streets can be both bustling and empty, during the day or at night. We are specifically interested in children playing games. The footage should be taken between 1900-1980. The project is a co-production between Connecticut College and Kinodance Company, a Boston-based interdisciplinary artist collective.

(www.kinodance.org)

We will cover film-to-video transfer expenses and provide you with the DVDs of all your footage if we include your material into the film. Please contact Alla Kovgan via phone 617.571.4742 or e-mail akovgan@rcn.com

Sally Ryan: History of New London - lectures return to the New London Public Library

Great news for New London history buffs! If you have never attended one of Sally's series on New London history - or - if you want a refresher - join Sally Ryan for a 6-week series of stories, facts and amazing details of the city from the earliest settlement to the "Little Pink House." There is such a rich history to be told that, while basic facts remain in place, the vast cast of characters and the swashbuckling adventure ranges from the West Indian Trade to the privateers of the Revolutionary War and the devastation of the '38 hurricane - never a dull moment in this city's story.

Six Weeks on Monday: September 14, 21, 28 and October 5, 19 and 26 at the New London Public Library. Two classes Afternoon 2:00—4:00 and Evenings 7:00—9:00 Please call Tara Samul at 447-1411 to register.



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NEW LONDON LANDMARKS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 26: Walking Tour State Street
Led by Sally Ryan, City Historian
11:00 - Meet at Union Station

September 26: PowerPoint Show:
Pride of Place, State Street
At the Landmarks office following the
Walking Tour

October 31: Antientest Buriall Ground Tour
Led by Lance Mayer and Sally Ryan
1:00 pm Reservations only: \$20.
(Rain Date Nov. 1)

December, 2009 — Our Sacred Spaces
A calendar of special events in the eight churches in the
Downtown New London Historic District are planned to
encourage everyone to attend the events and experience
the beauty of these historic buildings.

December 27: Walking Tour - Downtown Churches
Led by New London Landmarks
Depart St. James Church at 2:00
Reservations recommended: \$15.00

Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Sacred Spaces Forum, led by Elizabeth Terry,
Director of Training with Part-
ners for Sacred Places and David
Bahlman, Director of the State
Historic Preservation Office will
address issues of fund raising,
grant writing and new strategies
for sustaining these historic
buildings in New London's down-
town National Register District.



Date TBA: (end January or early February)
Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
in New London

The date will be set in coordination with the
Southeastern Connecticut Council of Govern-
ments when the Transportation Study is com-
plete. Nationally recognized leaders of the TOD
movement are being invited to participate and
representatives from the Study will present their
recommendations.