

Tips on Green Preservation

1. *Demolition to “Green” vs. Historically “Green” Rehabilitation*
“The greenest building is the one already built,” -- Carl Elefante of Quinn Evans/Architects. Demolishing a building not only wastes energy but also requires more energy and raw materials to construct a new building.



2. *Inherent Sustainability*
Existing buildings were constructed with a goal of durability. Quality materials, such as Buckingham slate for roofing, native stone for foundations, heartwood for structural framing and interior finishes, are irreplaceable today and were used for their lasting qualities, in addition to their ability to be repaired. For example, when a portion of a wood window fails, new wood can be spliced in, broken glass can be replaced, weights and pulleys can be repaired.

When planning for upgrades, be sure to think about how the building is already maximizing its efficiency through its existing design. Is the building really underperforming in terms of energy-efficiency? Were durable materials used in its construction and can they be repaired? How would the alteration of its building systems, water, or HVAC affect its ability to function in the event of a power outage?



Interior door transoms allowed natural air flow.



Many windows allowed for natural light.

3. *Integrated Design*

With multiple requirements in building design—ADA, UBC, Standards, and now LEED—there can be tension between the varied goals. One code should not dominate or overrule the other, and the most successful solution comes from an integrated approach that balances the many points of view, requirements, and goals. It is important to determine the goals of the intended use of the building, which requirements are absolute, which requirements can be negotiated, and which requirements can serve a dual purpose. Many codes offer reprieves or compromises if the requirement adversely effects another requirement.

More and more historic buildings are being rehabilitated with green building practices and every year many more are being successfully awarded LEED certifications. While LEED gold or platinum is desirable, it is not always necessary or reasonably achievable when historic buildings are involved. LEED silver or even bronze are just as

commendable as the highest ratings, because in the larger scheme of conservation, sustainable practices are being used, furthering us toward a greener, more lasting future.



Many codes offer reprieves or compromises if one of the requirements hurts another. See the example above for fire suppression.



LEED Platinum is achievable under the *Standards*.