



Preserving Historic Identity
in the United States:

Theoretical and Practical Lessons
for Maintaining Historic Character
in Small Virginia Towns

Anna Cox

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Anna Cox

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Joseph L. Scarpaci, Jr., Chair
Anna Fariello
John Levy

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(ABSTRACT)

This paper explores the preservation and presentation of small town historic identity. The current discussions and dialogue of scholars, theorists and critics of preservation efforts uncover preservation's presence and effect on today and tomorrow's world.

Contemporary development patterns have led to an increasing amount of cities and towns across the United States to adopt preservation policies to maintain their historical identity and character. The preservation movement's acceptance and its increase in scope have also facilitated the integration of its values in planning policies. The successful history of the preservation movement in America is reviewed, along with its present-day use as a cultural and economic revitalization tool. Government and non-profit agencies at the national and state level have facilitated the widespread use of preservation policies with small towns in Virginia.

Preservation policy objectives may include: heritage tourism, community revitalization, preservation and heritage education, economic development, and affordable housing. A diverse set of motivations is found in the psychological benefits of maintaining history. Preserving historic structures may contribute to one's sense of place, nostalgia, collective memory and historical identity.

The preservation of old buildings and environments is used to serve a variety of town agendas. These motives, other than historical, are the focus of the critical literature on preservation efforts. Power, representation, consumerism, and authenticity are common criticisms of historic preservation practice that threaten the historic integrity of the town. These issues form a framework to analyze local preservation practice of small Virginia towns and provide towns with a means to evaluate their preservation policies or programs. This paper provides small towns with information to maintain their historic identity without threatening future vitality and authenticity of the built environment.

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Chapter I. Introduction

Personal Interest

My attention has been drawn to the placelessness characteristic of many contemporary small towns and the historic preservation efforts used to rectify this situation. My interest in historic preservation lies with the art of the everyday life, and the buildings that reflect the style and resources of their time. Likewise, I am concerned that the architecture of today reflects contemporary aesthetic and cultural trends.

I am supportive of the dramatic increase, within the past few decades, of designating historic properties and districts to recognize their historic significance. While I do not dispute the virtue of preserving reminders of our past, I do question how the acceptance of, and desire for, historic identity is affecting the development of cities and towns. I have cast a critical eye on the measures taken by towns, beyond that of preserving the actual historic buildings and sites, to maintain their historic identity. Some actions taken to preserve the historic identity actually involve mimicry, invention, and simplification of a present image of the past. I argue that we need to preserve and integrate the past with the present, while abstaining from creating our present using past imagery and solutions.

Virginia's rich history makes it an interesting place to witness how preservation planning interacts with contemporary development. A significant part of the nation's history is illustrated in Virginia's historic resources. Among Eastern Virginia's colonial towns are Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Jamestown. Northern Virginia holds the patriotic sites of Mount Vernon, Monticello, and Civil War battlefields. As I discuss in Chapter V, Disney unsuccessfully proposed "Disney's America," a Civil War theme park, in the midst of the battlefields of Manassas. Southwest Virginia has many areas showing the small town life of its Appalachian communities; one of particular interest is the Town of Fincastle.

The Fincastle Project

During my graduate studies in Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Tech, I was given the opportunity to work for a small historic town in Southwest Virginia. I developed a planning and

preservation program for the Town of Fincastle under the supervision of Dr. Diane Zahm, of Virginia Tech's Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. Fincastle's Mayor Bob Gengo asked for assistance with maintaining the historic district and with forming design guidelines and an architectural review board.

When the Town of Fincastle was founded in 1772, it served as the governmental seat of a county covering a substantial portion of the present day states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia and the entire state of Kentucky (Historic Fincastle, Inc.). Fincastle is currently a bedroom community of 250 residents, for people who work in the City of Roanoke, Virginia. Today, much of Fincastle's historic infrastructure remains, and the town has yet to experience significant development pressures. The town's identity is dependent upon maintaining its historic environment in the face of possible future sprawl because of its proximity to an interstate and national highway. Figure 1 illustrates some of the elements that contribute to the distinctive character of Fincastle. Town leaders, local residents and others have been, and are, interested in preserving its substantial inventory of historically and architecturally significant buildings as well as its historic character.

To provide this historic town with a preservation plan, I researched consistent approaches of preservation policies used by small communities in Virginia. Mayor Gengo's initial interest in establishing design guidelines and a review board proved to be the prominent policy measures that small Virginia towns are adopting for the maintenance of historic character. This current framework of preservation policy will be reviewed in this paper to relate the wealth of preservation literature to contemporary practice.

Contemporary Situation of Small Towns

Small towns embody the historical image of America. There exists a common nostalgia for the pre-World War II town that represents an environment with community cohesion (Kunstler 1996, 37). Many Americans also desire the values of closeness, local identity, and smaller town scale associated with past communities (Rybczynski 1995, 231).



A brick-paved walkway and landscaped patio creates a pleasant path beside a church.



White picket and iron fences line many of the yards within the historic district.



The presence of telephone poles and unpainted facades impact the streetscape.



A stone sidewalk lines a side street within the historic district.

Figure 1. Streetscapes and Alleyways in Fincastle, Virginia

The historical identity of the small town may be threatened by common trends. Historical centers are often threatened by incompatible architecture that appears along the periphery, eroding and replacing the town's uniqueness. Urban sprawl threatens the identity of small towns throughout the country, and towns in Virginia are no exception. In addition to Fincastle, many small towns in Virginia have a wealth of historical resources and character that are threatened by contemporary development. Preservation measures are often implemented for the continuation of the historical character. Ideally, these measures will allow the town to grow and reflect its present-day character with integrity consistent with the town's past.

In addition to threats from outside development, a town also may be encouraged to implement preservation efforts for economic revitalization. Many small towns are currently struggling economically. The historic downtown center can become a valuable existing resource, and serve as a symbol of community stability. A revived historic center also may attract heritage tourists. Tourism dollars are often necessary to sustain the town's preservation efforts and supplement economic development.

Local revitalization efforts usually include a combination of 1) preserving existing structures and 2) designing new construction with historic imagery. Representing the historic built environment may satisfy citizens' and tourists' nostalgia and collective memory. The use of historic imagery to maintain the historic identity of a place has led to correlating the preservation movement with make-believe (Campbell 1999, 10). Historic representations may display history as a spectacle (Boyer 1994, Barthel 1996) and consume the vibrant identity of the past rather than contributing to the vitality of the present.

Overview

This paper is written to articulate and explore the preservation and presentation of small town historic centers in contemporary society. This paper intends to trace the history of the preservation movement in America and its present-day use as a cultural and economic revitalization tool. Localities may use preservation to address a variety of town issues. This use of preservation, for reasons other than historic, has led to criticisms of the current practice.

Criticisms of the preservation practice are used to analyze local preservation practice of small Virginia towns. This paper aims to provide towns with information to maintain their historic identity without threatening future vitality and authenticity of the built environment. The current discussions and dialogue of scholars, theorists and critics of this field will uncover the preservation movement's presence and effect on today and tomorrow's world.

Chapter II reviews the history of the preservation movement in the United States and the federal government's involvement in preservation planning. The federal government's involvement has undulated over the past century, while preservation's alliance with city planning and policy has increasingly grown. The movement evolved from saving individual structures to the preservation of an entire historic district's character. This evolution is not only a transition in scope, but also a transition from the physical buildings to the more abstract, historical identity of the town. The evolution of preservation in Virginia is also reviewed because its abundance of historic resources. While Virginia has been the site of significant efforts shaping the development of the preservation movement, it is questionable whether its contemporary preservation measures are successfully retaining the historic town fabric.

Chapter III investigates contemporary preservation practice. I review national and state organizations and programs because of their impact to the local level. Two basic preservation-planning approaches are implemented to maintain the historic identity of a town. One common approach is to maintain the historic district with a preservation ordinance, which usually includes a design review board to administer the adherence to design guidelines. Another preservation approach is to revitalize the historic downtown or Main Street to encourage the continued use and maintenance of historic structures.

Virginia localities' preservation plans are structured by Virginia's enabling legislation, and relevant sections of the legislation are reviewed. Three small communities in Virginia provide examples of preservation policy. I will present the recommendations for the Town of Fincastle's planning program to illustrate preservation policy as it is commonly conducted for a small historic town desirous of maintaining its character.

Chapter IV discusses the policy and identity motives for the prevalent use of historic preservation. The policy objectives illustrate the practical objectives of the town. The success of the preservation movement coincides with its applicability to heritage tourism, affordable housing, heritage education, economic development and civic pride. The combination of historic preservation and heritage tourism is commonly used to maintain the historic identity of small towns. Identity issues exemplify the social virtues placed on the historic built environment and encourage preservation efforts. Historic identity, collective memory, nostalgia, and a sense of a place are often attributed to the values of aesthetics, culture, and stability.

Chapter V reviews the critical literature of contemporary historic preservation practice. Criticisms of historic preservation often address the more complex issues of historic representation that coincide with preservation's partnership with heritage tourism. The selected literature examines the manipulation of historic built environments and cultures. Two highly criticized outcomes of promoting historical identity are 1) the preservation of historic districts as relics and 2) the creation of new development with simplified, historic elements. These town environments conflict with preserving diversity and continuity of time.

Within the critical literature of historic preservation, I have identified three main components: power, consumerism, and authenticity. The maintenance of historic identity has led to criticisms of places that are nonrepresentational of time and social class, and maintain the authority of the dominant social class. Consumerism can manipulate the public's psychological need for historical identity with overly contrived environments that pander to a consumer society, thus jeopardizing preservation efforts. The literature review warns that compromising its image to the tourists can threaten the very authenticity of the historical identity that makes the towns appealing.

Chapter VI addresses the lessons that the critical literature might provide to historic Virginia localities. The issues of power, representation, consumerism and authenticity are used to analyze the current preservation policy and practice. Design guidelines are most susceptible to these criticisms, because the criteria and the design review process are often the critical elements of defining the historic character of towns. There has yet to be evaluative literature on the

effectiveness of design review for small towns in Virginia (A. Andrus, personal communication, 2000), likely due to their recent adoption. The effectiveness of the design guidelines and the effect they have on the historic character is beyond the scope of this paper. However, as many Virginia towns adopt design guidelines to maintain historic districts, these criticisms may contain essential lessons for maintaining historic identity.

Chapter II. The Evolution of Preservation Practice in the United States

The Evolution of Issues and Expansion of Scope in the Preservation Movement

The preservation movement has changed, during its life, from an ethic of preserving individual monuments (Mount Vernon, Old South Meeting House) to one of saving or re-creating districts (Williamsburg) to one, as James Fitch puts it, of curating the entire built environment (Campbell 1999, 11).

These three phases, presented by Robert Campbell at a symposium held in 1999 for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, will be used as a framework to discuss the evolution of historic preservation in the United States and in Virginia. The movement originated from local citizen action, first to save individual structures and then significant districts. The development of a national preservation organization and governmental involvement and regulations has dramatically infused preservation efforts and historic imagery into contemporary development of cities.

James Fitch coins the integration of preservation into the development and maintenance of today's built world as curating the built environment, and this serves as the underlying theme in his book, *Historic Preservation: Curatorial Management of the Built World*. While preservation values have not overpowered the larger development forces of today, preservation efforts and regulations can have a profound effect in the designated historic districts. This chapter reviews the history of the preservation movement's development and the federal government's involvement in preservation planning. This transition is reviewed in general for the nation and the state of Virginia.

Phase one: An ethic of preserving individual monuments.

On the national front

When the historic preservation movement was in its infancy, its elitist desires were evident. In an age of patriotism and nationalism, the preservation of historic artifacts was greatly supported

by the affluent amateurs who held a general devotion to a respected and status-supporting past. Preservation efforts in the 18th and 19th centuries developed from societies organized in the interest of genealogy and archival materials. The cultural values of this time were based in patriotic ideals and nationalism. These private interests were the sole focus of the preservation movement until the end of the nineteenth century.

In Virginia

Virginia's wealth of colonial and Revolutionary and Civil War artifacts contributed to its early prominent position in preservation. Both Mount Vernon and Monticello are well-known heritage sites within Virginia, exemplifying patriotic sentiment. Ann Pamela Cunningham's preservation of Mount Vernon is one of the preservation movement's earliest successes. The effort began in 1853, with a purpose to "inspire in future generations the patriotism and notable characters of the Founding Fathers" (Barthel 1996, 20). The citizen organization mobilized to preserve Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, was successful in obtaining the property title in 1923 (Fitch 1990, 97). Later preservation efforts would be accomplished with government assistance.

Phase two: An ethic of saving or re-creating districts.

On the national front

With the turn of the century, architectural values (Cullingworth 1997) and aesthetic concern for the historic built environment increased (Murtagh 1988). These values are evident in the first historic districts preserved. The restoration of Colonial Williamsburg began in 1928 with the private support of John D. Rockefeller (Handler and Gable 1997, 32). In 1931 Charleston, South Carolina, the first American city to initiate a historic preservation element into its zoning ordinance, was soon followed by New Orleans in 1936 (Cullingworth 1997, 58-9). The exceptional architecture and attractiveness of these early districts distinguish them from present criteria for historic districts (Hamer 1998, vii).

In Virginia

Colonial Williamsburg was a re-creation effort of an era that focused on the entire district, rather than individual sites. In the private sector at the time of the New Deal, Colonial Williamsburg was the most active preservation effort. An industrialist, John D. Rockefeller, made possible the

restoration of Colonial Williamsburg (Barthel 1996, 20). Colonial Williamsburg “had become the most concentrated pool of preservation expertise in the country, frequently consulted by other private groups and the Park Service itself” (Murtagh 1988, 57).

Phase three: An ethic of curating the entire built environment.

On the national front

Although the preservation of districts began in the 1930s, urban historian David Hamer states that widespread change occurred in the 1970s and 1980s (Hamer 1998). A 1954 court decision of the case *Berman v. Parker* legitimized the historic preservation movement by upholding the important aesthetic value. This later increase of preserved districts was likely due to the establishment of the National Register in 1966 for the designation of historic districts and the federal tax incentives available for these properties beginning in 1976 (Murtagh 1988; Said 1987). In addition, Judith Blau states that there was a cultural boom in the 1970s, as evidenced by a dramatic increase in money spent on the arts, through both personal and public sources (1989, 36). In 1992 it was reported that “more than 1,800 historic preservation commissions and architectural review boards” are found within the country (Morris 1992,1).

In Virginia

Localities within Virginia have adopted historic preservation practices as a tool for local land-use control, fusing historic preservation, planning, and economic development objectives. Preservation ordinances are a popular means to regulate the maintenance of historic properties. In addition, the regulations may control the impacts of sprawl by setting design standards for new construction within the historic district. Assistance is provided to localities through state and non-profit preservation agencies.

The maintenance of the historic footprint of the city allows for incremental growth without abandoning the historic identity (Fitch 1990). Heritage tourism can be an effective way to economically sustain a town’s efforts to preserve its identity. Many towns desire to economically revitalize the town through preservation measures to increase downtown retail and attract tourism. The Main Street program is currently implemented in eighteen towns in Virginia and is credited with facilitating the economic success of these small towns. In 1996, it was

reported that the program instigated the investment of “\$54 million of private funds... in the rehabilitation of over 1600 buildings” (Rypkema 1996, 1).

Conclusion.

As the preservation of historic districts greatly increased the scope and number of preserved structures, the movement's impact on communities has grown. Presently, the use of historic ordinances to regulate the preservation of historic districts has been increasingly implemented and has validated the movement's issues and enhanced its image (Hamer 1998). A shared psychology that venerates the past allows this prevalent use of historic preservation.

The preservation movement's influence on the built environment is evident in federal and state legislation and programs, and local planning policy. At the national level, preservation has achieved funding, a broad support base, and resources to facilitate many efforts that benefit the preservation of the historic built environment. Many of these efforts are planning related, such as land use control, economic development and tourism. In addition to inclusion within planning policy, preservation has also forged alliances with other academic and practitioner fields that impact the entire built environment.

As a cultural movement, historic preservation has profoundly affected the academicians and practitioners of the architectural, urban design, and urban sociology fields. These disciplines have given support to local, grassroots preservation movements (Murtagh 1988) and have accentuated the relevance and the complexities of the built environment on the individual and society. In addition to the design and social fields, the preservation movement has recently made alliances with the realtors and developers (Campbell 1999), which has increased the impact of preservation and historical imagery on the entire built environment.

Appreciation has grown for vernacular structures (Fitch 1990); thus efforts are made to preserve a variety of buildings that represent both “high” and “low” culture. The branch of social history in the 1970s developed as a new way of describing American history. While American history had previously focused on celebratory events and prominent figures, there is now more emphasis

on the history of the majority of the people (Handler and Gable 1997, 4). The recent cultural shift recognizes that all styles of architecture are of value, not just the styles of the elite.

The preservationists favor social and contextual concerns (in comparison to patriotism, status or aesthetic) through the broader representation of buildings preserved. The contextual concerns include the broadening of accepted styles and age of buildings and a more comprehensive and inclusive concept of the environment. Although preservationists affirm that preservation is currently representative of people and time (Campbell 1999), this assertion may be reflective of theory, but has yet to manifest fully in practice.

The focus on the conservation of the entire built environment has broadened from the original historical impetus. Historic preservation has become a planning approach for cultural, land use and aesthetic interests (Cullingworth 1997, 113-14). James Fitch's (1990, 39) suggestions for accurate descriptions of the movement's tactics were the "retrieval and recycling of the historic environment" or "the curatorial management of the built world." Historic preservation now encompasses such a variety of fields "that the term is now of vintage stock" (Cullingworth 1997, 114). The broadened scope of historic preservation today renders the term 'historic preservation' a misnomer.

Fitch states that the only reason why the term 'historic preservation' will continue to be used to describe this comprehensive effort is because the established organizations, academic programs, and supporting legislation already bear the name (Fitch 1990). The integration of "historic preservation" within these many fields indicates its success as a movement, but does not ensure that preservation of history and historical identity is always the main objective. Marketing and promotion efforts sometimes co-opt the historic imagery of the preservation movement's efforts. The breadth of the movement allows criticisms of tangent aspects to negatively stigmatize the whole field.

The Evolution of Federal Involvement: Legislation and Judicial

Just as the scope of preservation has changed throughout the years, so has the assistance provided by the federal government. Early preservation efforts originated, almost exclusively,

within citizen groups. Churches, universities, and cities were also engaged in building restoration through the organized efforts of citizens (Murtagh 1988). The leaders of these crusades were often ministers, women, teachers and artists (Barthel 1996, 21).

The value of protecting the nation's historic buildings and monuments for the public's benefit first evidenced in federal legislation in the early 20th century (Table 1). The Antiquities Act of 1906 was the earliest legislation for preservation, created in response to vandalism and destruction of prehistoric artifacts in the Southwest. The Act preserved American antiquities located on lands owned or controlled by the United States government. The National Park Service was created in 1916 and placed under the Department of the Interior. The responsibilities included the conservation of historic objects and promotion and regulation of the use of monuments (Murtagh 1988, 53).

During the Great Depression in the United States, the nation became fascinated with its past in order to find promise and to rekindle hope for the future (Stuart 1983, 11). Measures taken by the New Deal proved positive for a national preservation agenda. Recognizing the need for architectural documentation of historic buildings, along with a surplus of architects and technical drafters without work due to the Depression, facilitated the approval of the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1933 (Hosmer 1981, 550). The archive created by this agency facilitated academic and practical endeavors, established professional standards in recording techniques, and recognized often ignored nonresidential buildings (Murtagh 1988, 55).

A national policy of preserving historic buildings and significant sites originated with the Historic Sites and Buildings Act of 1935 (Murtagh 1988, 58). This important act of legislation encouraged the continued surveying and identification of historic buildings and sites to be conducted every ten years (Barthel 1996, 22) and contained enabling legislation facilitating preservation within planning policies (Murtagh 1988, 58). The 1935 Historic Sites and Buildings Act provided the foundation for the future formation of the National Register of Historic Places (Cullingworth 1997, 114).

Table 1: Federal Historic Preservation Legislation

<i>The Antiquities Act of 1906</i>	Promoted the preservation of American antiquities
<i>The National Park System Organic Act of 1916</i>	Created the National Park Service
<i>The Historic Sites and Buildings Act of 1935</i>	Established a national policy of preserving historic buildings and sites of national significance
<i>Charter of the National Trust for Historic Preservation: 1949</i>	Facilitated the goal of citizen participation in the Historic Sites and Buildings Act
<i>National Preservation Act of 1966</i>	Authorized the National Register of Historic Places and provided federal funds to the Trust. Established the National Register of Historic Places and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
<i>Transportation Act of 1966</i>	Protected historic sites from new transportation projects
1971 Executive Order by Richard Nixon.	Delegated responsibilities to the Federal Government, Federal agencies, and the Secretary of the Interior for the protection and enhancement of the cultural environment.
<i>Tax Reform Act of 1976</i>	Established federal tax incentives for registered properties
<i>Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981</i>	Provided economic incentives for rehabilitation – 25% investment tax credit

Source: Murtagh (1988)

During this time of recognizing these significant districts, the federal government played less of a role as the activists began affecting local policy and creating a national organization.

America's involvement in World War II created an abrupt lack of governmental support for preservation activities (Barthel 1996, 22). In addition, non-contextual and ahistorical Modernist architecture dominated the scene. The impact of these new economic and stylistic influences on

the shape of the cities created an increased and urgent interest in preservation (Cullingworth 1997).

This federal neglect created alarm with preservationists (Barthel 1996, 22) and frustrated the National Park Service (Murtagh 1988, 40), whose responsibility now lay with historic resources. The federal government's incapability to prioritize preservation efforts over other development strategies incited interest for a national organization to respond to preservation independent of the government (Barthel 1996, 22; Murtagh 1988, 40). In 1947, the National Trust for Historic Preservation was conceptualized based on the organizational structure of the British National Trust and the San Antonio Conservation Society, and was chartered by Congress in 1949. The organizational meetings for the National Trust's construction provided many local preservationists with their first exposure to similar efforts across the country. The government's charter of this organization exemplifies the acceptance and relevance of the preservation movement to the country (Murtagh 1988).

Aesthetic regulation became legal following the 1954 Supreme Court case of *Berman v. Parker* (Costonis 1989, 23). Justice Douglas stated,

The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive... The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, aesthetic as well as monetary. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy, spacious as well as clean, well balanced as well as carefully patrolled (Cullingworth 1997, 103).

This case upheld urban renewal for its aesthetic value, but was soon used to support preservation regulation as well (Costonis 1989, 23; "Preservation Law," 2000). In 1978, the first major preservation case came before the Supreme Court. The decision in the *Penn Central Transportation Co. vs. city of New York* case was in favor of local public action for historic preservation (Said 1987, 6; Murtagh 1988, 212.) The company had desired to construct an addition above Grand Central Station, a designated historic landmark. The court upheld the city's denial of approval, and has since been used to legitimize historic ordinances ("Preservation Law," 2000).

Federal preservation legislation in the 1960s and 1970s sought to rectify the government-initiated, post WWII programs of urban renewal and highway projects that destroyed much of the historic fabric of many communities. The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act established the National Register of Historic Places, which lists individually designated buildings and districts (Cullingworth 1997, 116). Properties registered on the National Register became eligible for federal tax incentives established through the 1976 Tax Reform Act. In 1981, the Economic Recovery Tax Act provided a 25% tax incentive for rehabilitation (Murtagh 1988, 212). However, the Tax Reform Act of 1986 reduced the incentives because of abuse of the credits by large-scale developers (Said 1987, 5). The rehabilitation tax credits were continued because of their positive impact on communities (Boyle, Ginsberg, and Oldham 1994, 1), but were decreased from 25% to 20% (Said 1987, 5). By 1994, certified rehabilitation projects and project investment dropped 80 percent, due to the decrease in tax incentives (Boyle, Ginsberg, and Oldham 1994, 2). This is further evidence of the federal government's shifting support, as well as the necessity of economic incentives for continued widespread preservation.

Chapter III. Contemporary Preservation Practice

Contemporary preservation practice occurs at the local level, yet is dependent upon the incentives and organizations of the national and state levels. This chapter will review the main organizations and programs, and will then address general preservation policy in Virginia localities. Examples of preservation policy are provided for three small communities in Virginia.

National Organizations and Programs

The prevalent use of preservation may be owed to the incentives provided by the government, notably the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit for the rehabilitation of properties designated on the National Register (Hamer 1998, vii). This incentive has benefited preservation efforts in Virginia specifically. A 1996 report stated that in the previous 15 years, \$350 million was invested to rehabilitate around 900 “income-producing buildings” in Virginia. The investment instigated through tax incentive is reported to have “provided Virginia with 12,697 jobs and an increase in household income of nearly \$275 million” (Rypkema 1996, 1). The National Park Service, a division of the U.S. Department of the Interior, has continued its role as the federal agency accountable for the preservation of the nation’s historic resources (“National Park,” 2000) and maintains the National Register (Hamer 1998, 20). The National Trust for Historic Preservation is the main organization that has facilitated localities with heritage tourism and historic preservation programs.

The National Trust.

The National Trust is organized at the national and regional levels to facilitate local preservation efforts. By encouraging preservation at the local level, the National Trust addresses the community concerns of housing and economic development (Collins 1991). Revitalizing communities through education and advocacy to mobilize citizens form part of the National Trust's mission statement (“National Trust,” 2000). Architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable views the National Trust’s role as being “an important hold operation and consciousness raiser. It gave a grassroots movement a national identity and official status...” (Campbell 1999, 10). The mission of the National Trust for Historic Preservation is to protect the irreplaceable through saving historic buildings, districts, and landscapes (“National Trust,” 1999).

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a forum to represent and mobilize the public. The membership in the National Trust for Historic Preservation grew from 185,000 members in 1986 to over 250,000 in the early 1990s (Hamer 1998). Historic preservation can empower the public, and public support is evidenced in participation in organizations. “The feelings for which the [National] Trust has long been the focus - that old buildings provide ennobling attributes one can actually or vicariously acquire - have driven a great many Americans along a very old route to empowerment” (Campbell 1999, 10). A recent estimation states that 600,000 people in the U. S. belong to some type of historic preservation organization (Hamer 1998).

The National Trust for Historic Preservation also currently promotes heritage tourism as a means to fund the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic resources (Dickinson 1996). The National Trust, in alliance with the National Endowment for the Arts, founded the Heritage Tourism Initiative in 1989 (Wells 1996). The National Trust has also formed alliances with corporations, notably American Express, to fund the effort of promoting heritage tourism as a means for communities to preserve their historic and cultural sites (Dickinson 1996).

The Main Street Program.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the Main Street Program in 1977, inspired by the Civic Trust in England. This project was created to “assist smaller towns with the revitalization of their older commercial areas through preservation and renewal strategies” (Murtagh 1988, 211). To disseminate information of the lessons learned from early pilot projects, the National Main Street Center was begun in 1980. The Main Street program conducts seminars for the local business owners. With all of the Main Street’s resources and its promotional efforts have made the Main Street program “perhaps the widest known response to downtown renewal in small town and rural America” (Murtagh 1988, 145). The Main Street program is used in 800 communities throughout America, claiming to have created \$2.5 billion in reinvestment, 17,000 new businesses, and 60,000 new jobs (Barthel 1996, 130). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development stated that the Main Street Program “is one of the most successful economic development strategies in the United States” (Dane 1997, 9).

Instead of using regulations to preserve historic identity, the Main Street Program's approach usually involves the collaborative efforts of downtown business owners to promote the continued use of the historic environment (Dane 1997). This cooperation is achieved by bringing together the local organizations and businesses that have a vested interest in the success of the commercial area. A mixture of uses is encouraged for the economic stability of the area, including use of the second floors for office and housing. The aesthetics and promotion are also important for the success of the Main Street Program. Signs, street furniture, and window displays are important aesthetic elements, and the commercial area is promoted as a shopping center (Murtagh 1988).

State Organizations, Programs, and Policies: The Virginia Case

Virginia's organizations and programs

A plethora of resources are available for communities in Virginia interested in historic preservation efforts. Access to information networks allows all communities with knowledge to address their particular issues. The Preservation Alliance of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources assist preservation groups, historic property owners, other interested individuals, local governments, and businesses ("Preservation Alliance," 2000). The Virginia Department of Historic Resources is now decentralized into Regional Offices of Petersburg, Portsmouth, Roanoke, and Winchester to better assist the surrounding localities.

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources encourages the continued development of heritage tourism. The DHR provides heritage tourism development support as well as sponsors workshops for development. The building and developing of local, regional, and out-of-state alliances is highly stressed as an important factor of heritage tourism success, because the success will be guided by the vision and strategy developed and shared by these players ("Virginia Department," 2000). The webpage defines heritage tourism as "travel directed towards experiencing the heritage, arts, and special character of a place in an exciting, informative way" ("Virginia Department," 2000).

The Preservation Alliance of Virginia is an advocacy group with a network of grassroots information (Rypkema 1996) to assist communities interested in historic preservation. “The Preservation Alliance helps groups and individuals find the information and professional services they need for specific preservation problems and issues. Workshops, publications, tours, and educational programs encourage problem solving and the exchange of ideas...” (“Preservation Alliance,” 2000).

The Certified Local Government Program is a preservation effort facilitated through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The Certified Local Government Program is a federal initiative to protect historic resources, which facilitates a partnership between the locality, state historic preservation office, and U.S. Department of the Interior. As of June 1999, 24 communities in Virginia have requested and received designation as Certified Local Governments (A. Andrus, personal communication, 1999). The town’s participation within this program receives technical assistance and eligibility for particular grants for local preservation projects. For a town to qualify, it must develop a comprehensive local preservation program and insure that the members of the historic review board have proper experience and are trained annually.

Virginia’s preservation policy.

Virginia statute requires that communities prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan to address future land use and development issues. Section 15.2-2223 of the Virginia Code encourages towns to show in the comprehensive plan long-range recommendations for the designation of historical areas. Section 15.2-2224 states that either surveys and studies of historic areas are to be conducted for the preparation and implementation of the comprehensive plan, or a list included in the comprehensive plan of the historic areas recognized by the Department of Historic Resources. Most communities’ comprehensive plans include a historic preservation element, which address the historic resources of the town and its current and proposed preservation programs.

Section 15.2-2283 of the Virginia Code enables localities to address preservation by stating that one of the purposes of the zoning ordinance is to “protect against destruction of or encroachment

upon historic areas.” Section 15.2-2306, entitled *Preservation of historical sites and architectural areas*, is a key section for the localities’ preservation powers. This section allows localities to adopt an ordinance that identifies any of the landmarks, buildings and structures that the town deems important or of interest. The town may also create a district of structures deemed significant.

Design review has become a popular addition to the planning controls set by zoning ordinances. This preservation ordinance may create an overlay of the identified properties or district(s) to impose an additional set of regulations to these identified properties or district(s). The locality may also have a review board to administer this preservation ordinance. The review board may be given the power to review any proposed changes to, or demolitions of, the identified buildings or buildings within districts. The guidelines usually recommend adherence to the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* as a supplement to the town’s standards. Demolition proposals of historic structures may be required for submittal to the review board as well.

Design guidelines may be developed by the review board for proposed construction of buildings within the historic district. Verbal descriptions and illustrations define the preferences of the review board, which usually encourage compatibility of the new design with the existing characteristics of the surrounding buildings. Criteria are given for 1) the structural placement and form of the buildings, 2) the architectural details, and 3) the landscaping and streetspace (Zahm and Cox, 1999).

The complete array of tools (i.e., the comprehensive plan, the zoning ordinance, and design guidelines) assures the town’s goals are articulated and maximizes opportunities to achieve these preservation goals. These preservation tools also legitimizes design review and improves the legal defensibility of decisions, by establishing a connection between the important issue of preservation, the town’s vision for its future, and the means it has adopted to achieve this vision.

Selected Virginia examples of preservation policy.

This section discusses the ways three communities in Virginia – the Towns of Middleburg and Leesburg, and Clarke County – have addressed the issue of preservation. Locations were selected based on a recommendation from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for my study for the Town of Fincastle.

The Town of Middleburg (population 673)

Middleburg's historic preservation program is first identified in its comprehensive plan, which declared the Town's intent to retain its identity and status as a "small, independent rural village with well-defined characteristics. The town is at a point where restoration and preservation, rather than growth from new development, are primary goals for the future" (Middleburg 1999). In addition to this vision, the comprehensive plan includes a Historic Resources section that chronicles the Town's history and identifies important architectural and historic resources.

To achieve its goals and objectives, the Town has created specific preservation regulations for the historic district (established in 1975) using an historic overlay zone. The zoning ordinance establishes the purpose and boundaries of the district, and defines criteria and procedures for applications, reviews and appeals for development proposals in that district. A Historic Review Committee considers and approves applications for Certificates of Appropriateness. Their deliberations are aided by the Historic District Guidelines, which establish criteria based on the architectural details and other characteristics of existing resources. Both the Committee and the Guidelines are incorporated into the zoning ordinance by reference.

Town of Leesburg (population 25,000)

Leesburg's Town Plan (1997) establishes its vision for maintaining its identity as a separate and unique place. Historic preservation is an important issue for Leesburg because the Town is experiencing significant development pressures which immediately threatens its historic character. Thus, its most important goal is to protect the historic district from adverse change, by ensuring that new construction is compatible with the Town's historic character. The Town Plan includes a Historic Preservation and Urban Design element, which further elaborates on its preservation goals.

Two types of districts are established in the Town's zoning ordinance for preservation aims. The first, the Historic Overlay District, is designed to protect the grid layout of streets, historic architecture, and public spaces. The second, a Historic Corridor Overlay District, attempts to address problems created by rapid development in the region. The zoning ordinance also creates a Board of Architectural Review to assist in the development approval process. In 1994 the Town adopted design guidelines to complement its zoning regulations for these two districts. These cover rehabilitation of existing structures as well as new construction in the historic overlay districts. A third district, the Neighborhood Conservation District, is proposed by the comprehensive plan, but not yet officially created by ordinance. Conservation districts would be designed to retain the general character of certain neighborhoods, even if these are not necessarily "historic." Town officials continue to be concerned about historic resources located outside the boundaries of the districts. They are hoping to inventory these resources and create a special program to address historic preservation for scattered sites and individual properties.

Clarke County (population 15,000)

Clarke County's preservation objective in its comprehensive plan is to conserve the County's historic character and its historic resources and sites for their social, aesthetic, and educational benefits (Clarke County 1990). In addition to this objective, the comprehensive plan includes a Historic Resources element, which discusses the importance of the abundance of historical buildings and structures in the County. The County has received financial and technical assistance from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources related to its surveys of historical properties and the promotion of its historic preservation program (using a video and brochure). Many of these historic resources are listed on the Virginia Landmarks register and the National Register of Historic Places. Like the other communities, the County has created a historic overlay district in its zoning ordinance, which also includes design guidelines. A Historic Preservation Commission reviews and approves applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The Town of Fincastle (population 240)

Based on the Town's desire to maintain its historic character, and the programs in place in other communities, Dr. Zahm and I recommended the following:

- I. Fincastle should undertake a review and update of its comprehensive plan, and the new plan should include a historic preservation element. This element should specifically identify historic preservation and historic character as important issues, and community-wide goals for the future. Plan update will likely require a series of background studies, including reconnaissance surveys of historic buildings and structures, an existing land use survey, demographic projections, and evaluations of housing and economic conditions.
- II. A new zoning ordinance should be developed that includes language related to historic preservation and historic character. The zoning ordinance should establish one or more types of overlay zones to deal with the various development issues the Town now faces.
- III. The Town should work to develop a series of design guidelines that consider existing resources, materials, architectural details, massing, etc. These guidelines will be used to determine the compatibility of new development or redevelopment inside the overlay zone(s).
- IV. Review and approval of proposals in the overlay zone(s) should be handled by an Architectural Review Board. Members of the board would be appointed based on their knowledge of architecture, construction/rehabilitation, preservation, or other issues related to the preservation effort (Zahm and Cox, 1999).

Preservation efforts at the national and state levels have been powerful tools to not only to facilitate the retention of historic resources, but also to revitalize areas and spur new development (Fitch 1990). Localities are preserving their historic identity either through economic revitalization programs or regulations in preservation policy. Integrating preservation objectives into town planning has accentuated the importance of the historic built environment and increased the use of historic imagery to shape new development.

Chapter IV. Motives of Historic Preservation - Practice and Theory

Within this chapter, motives for historic preservation are separated into the practical objectives of the town, and the social psychological aspects that prompt people's acceptance of the preserved buildings and towns. The historic identity of a place comprises the values of aesthetics, culture, and stability. "In most American cities, the 'historic' has become the only complicit official urban value" (Sorkin 1992, *xiv*).

Preservation Policy Objectives

The goal of preservation policy is often to preserve and maintain the distinct identity and character of the town. Preservation of the historic environment aims to enhance the quality of life of the residents of the town. However, more than just the local citizens benefit, because the local history contributes to the identity of the state and nation. Paradoxically, history is only a minor consideration for integrating preservation into land use policy. When David Hamer would present to preservationists and other historians his focus on historic districts for his book, *History in Urban Places*, the common response from other historians was: "But history has had very little to do with it!" (1998, *ix*). Motivations other than history are revealed in the preservation policy objectives for designated historic districts.

Various benefits of preservation are acknowledged in the policies and plans of localities, and within the missions of preservation agencies. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources encourages the use of historic resources because of the advantages of "heritage tourism, community revitalization, heritage education, economic development, and affordable housing" ("Virginia Department," 2000). These objectives typify the preservation policies of localities, and will be used as a framework for the following discussion.

Heritage tourism objectives.

Economic development is the reason that towns incorporate heritage tourism into policy. Tourism is thought to be a quick fix for economic development because it is possible to introduce to the existing environment with minimal impact to the community (Gunn 1994, 4). The economic benefits of tourism have often stimulated preservation efforts. Reciprocally, the

rise of historic property designations on the National Register has benefited tourism promotions (Wells 1996).

Heritage tourism directly benefits Virginia's economy, and sustains the town's identity.

"Historic preservation visitors stay longer, visit twice as many places, and spend, on average, over two-and-a-half times more money in Virginia than do other visitors. The economic impact of Colonial Williamsburg alone on Virginia's economy is over half a billion dollars a year" (Rypkema 1996, 1). Heritage tourism has been an important segment of Virginia's tourism industry, and this trend will likely continue into the future.

Heritage tourism is appropriate for Virginia because "[t]o many people, Virginia is America's history land, forming an unparalleled "permanent collection" of historic resources that tells the story of the nation's heritage" ("Virginia Department," 2000). The Virginia Department of Historic Resources encourages heritage tourism and addresses the care that needs to be taken with this complex issue. "[M]uch remains to be done through creative local and regional product development. We must recognize that developing the heritage tourism product begins with taking care of our authentic historic buildings and sites..." ("Virginia Department," 2000).

Community revitalization objectives.

Retaining the historic built environment provides a visual link to the community's history (Escherich, Farneth, and Judd 1996) and fosters civic pride among the residents (Said 1987). Historical identity and civic pride objectives complement community revitalization. Through preservation, interested citizens are mobilized to respond to their local situations. Preservation of historic structures in a town has become attractive to a broad array of people because preservation efforts shape the environment to embody the identity or collective memory of its people. Increasing individual property values is another reason to revitalize the neighborhood. Successful revitalization through preservation requires cooperation between public and private organizations and individuals ("Preservation Alliance," 2000).

Preservation and heritage education objectives.

Local residents need to be informed about the history of their community as well as the preservation plan adopted by the town. Educating local residents about historic preservation is necessary in a town whose residents are skeptical of the financial strain preservation policy may place on the residents. Hosting workshops and conferences is effective; yet creating a “preservation demonstration project” can persuade locals about preservation benefits, although it requires time and money (Wagner 1991, 4).

One purpose of historic preservation is to educate the contemporary public about their heritage, and to preserve significant buildings of the recent past to educate the future public about our time (Said 1987). Heritage education and heritage tourism serve similar roles of selecting and interpreting the key elements of the town (Fitch 1990). Tourists often visit such sites to be educated about the past, and reciprocally, the cost of financing the educational interpretations is augmented by the tourism dollars. Heritage tourism may emphasize the educational relevance of Virginia’s historic resources to children. The Virginia Time Travelers program encourages the attendance of children to museums and historic sites throughout Virginia (“Time Travelers,” 2000).

Economic development objectives.

Historic preservation is often used for economic development because values associated with preservation create capital. The historic properties, embedded with a part of the town’s identity, can serve as a vital resource for economic development (Said 1987). Historic preservation is a cultural strategy of economic development (Zukin 1995) that “is a key component within Virginia’s economy” (Rypkema 1996, 1). Rehabilitation of properties may spur the revitalization of other structures and new uses of areas within the community (Escherich, Farneth, and Judd 1996). Landmark and historic district regulations can revitalize economic development and increase real estate values (Wells 1996). Revitalized town-centers, created jobs, heritage tourism, and property value increases are some of the measures used to communicate how preservation has stimulated the economic development of Virginia towns (Rypkema 1996).

Affordable housing objectives.

Rehabilitating historic buildings for affordable housing may benefit property owners, tenants and the locality. This may be achieved by combining the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit with the Low Income Housing Tax Credit. Combining these two credits greatly benefits the owners or developers of the property by providing equity for the rehabilitation. Rehabilitating a historic property for affordable housing may benefit the property owner because communities will more likely support renovations over new developments (Escherich, Farneth, and Judd 1996).

Affordable housing in preserved buildings has many benefits over new affordable housing projects. Living in historic properties may have greater appeal to the tenants than a new project. It is also noted that there is a lower turnover rate in historic buildings. Another benefit to the tenants is that the buildings are already a part of the community fabric, reducing the tendency towards isolation that new projects may incur (Escherich, Farneth, and Judd 1996).

Historic buildings are an abundant and important resource in Virginia. Homes built before WWII “make up over 15 percent of the building stock” in Virginia (Rypkema 1996, 8). Historic buildings are currently housing many low-income people in Virginia. “There are more than 100,000 Virginia households whose income is less than \$20,000 per year living in houses built more than fifty years ago” (Rypkema 1996, 8).

Identity Motives in Preservation and Heritage Tourism Theory

A town’s identity is based on civic pride, place, status, tradition, and culture. The built environment is often the most permanent reflection of these values. Historic buildings are an embodiment of the past, reflecting our individual past as well as the past of our country (Escherich, Farneth, and Judd 1996). A sense of identity and stability are often the impetus for preservation strategies (Costonis 1989). Towns that have adopted preservation goals to maintain historic identity should consider the social-psychological ties to the built environment, because these connections need to be satisfied, rather than manipulated. Allowing an authentic sense of place, collective memory, and historical identity, will likely satisfy nostalgic and romantic longings.

Despite the public's desire for historic identity, currently there is little social action and dialogue about the design of cities. Thus, "any architectural production simply contributes to the maintenance of a monolithic yet fragmented public domain" (Pouler 1994, 178). As a society, we have neglected the public places that can define our identity (Rybczynski 1995, 27).

Architecture does not just belong to the owner or the inhabitants of the building; its presence contributes to the public space (Kunstler 1996, 39). Instead of being responsible to the common good, we have become consumers, without responsibility for the shared environment (Kunstler 1996, 38). Another hurdle of accountability of place by citizens is caused by the current transient nature of our society.

Sense of place.

For the last half-century, preservation efforts have served as a panacea to undesirable trends of urban form. The commonly faulted development patterns are generic building, strip development, franchises and shopping malls. Preservation reacts against placelessness, a contemporary condition caused by the development trends of suburbization and decentralization of urban centers.

Retail centers, reflective of our consumer society, have attempted to satisfy the collective and individual need for a sense of place. The privately controlled spaces of shopping malls have become the new 'public space,' despite the fact that malls are "artificial environments which, unlike the main street, have no prior reason for existence and no historic rootedness in place" (Goss 1992, 166). The sense of place may be deceptive, considering that these retail environments actual mask time and reality by limiting windows, clocks and temperature variations (Goss 1992, 167).

Preservation values were originally based on history, association, inspiration and culture, but later developed to include values of architectural and aesthetic significance (Cullingworth 1997, 114). Main streets and downtowns are foci of preservation efforts because they hold the historical artifacts that portray grandeur of the town's past. Architecture is often the most long lasting public art, comprising both the aesthetic and function of when it was constructed. Buildings of the past were often built of quality, to serve as permanent fixtures within the

community. If present-day building were of equal quality to the past, maybe preservation would not be as prevalent as it is today (Campbell 1999). The preservation of the historic fabric is a means to retain an identity that is tied to a place's character (Holcomb and Beauregard 1981). A loss of built icons is not merely an attack on one's historical reverence, but is also a more emotional and immediate threat to a person's sense of place (Costonis 1989).

Urban renewal is infamous for its demolition of entire neighborhoods. The Housing Act of 1949 provided funds for razing slum areas and the Urban Renewal Act of 1954 encouraged new development within the cleared areas (Hamer 1998, 12). Whether because the destructive nature of urban renewal of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s or the haphazard sprawl of the 1980s and 1990s, returning to the previous physical fabric offers stability and comfort in our present, transitory society. Historic contexts and structures are often preferred over current architecture styles and development trends (Holcomb and Beauregard 1981). The built pattern of the older environment is often used as an exemplary model to critique contemporary development. In addition, traditional elements have guided the design of new projects. New Urbanist towns use historic approaches to physical planning and market the historic imagery used in the building design (Krieger 1991, 13).

Nostalgia.

As a movement, preservation is not based in nostalgia, although individual motives may be (Campbell 1999). Nostalgia is a longing for the past, a search for home or identity, and may find virtue in the quality of design and construction of older buildings in comparison to the present. It seems to be part of our mythology that it is possible to return to the past and the values that history holds in our collective memory. Nostalgic tendencies disclose one's perception of history, whether one believes culture is continuously improving or deteriorating (Barthel 1996).

The distance of time is enchanting to people (Zukin 1982, 75). It is common to disregard the buildings of one's own time, and instead admire the remaining architecture of a previous era. "Historic preservationists call this attitude 'the grandfather clause': only objects built outside living memory – before 'our grandfather's time' – take on a 'historic' aura." Around the 1930s and 1940s, "a new appreciation of the 'historic' value of old industrial buildings developed along

with the perception of their aesthetic quality” (Zukin 1982, 75) as both artists and historic preservationists began to appreciate the value of, and reuse of, industrial buildings. Industrial buildings are still a current source of inspiration of “aesthetic and philosophical content” (Barthel 1996, 58).

Collective memory and historical identity.

The predominant motive universally accepted for preservation efforts is a basic respect for historic resources and a desire to not lose them forever (Fitch 1990). Historic preservation efforts usually aim to maintain the historic identity of a historic town, as often stated in the objectives of preservation ordinances. The historic buildings are part of the community’s cultural landscape, providing the community with strong associations of its past identity (Holcomb and Beauregard 1981). Buildings communicate the meanings and symbols of the narrative of the town. Through both observation and intellect, the built environment provides a story of the past for its inhabitants (Fitch 1990). Buildings need to be selected that reinforce memory (Lynch 1972).

Preservation of the built environment can embody the identity or collective memory of its people. However, “collective memory is not uniform across the population ... and it does not emerge simply, naturally, from history” (Barthel 1996, 152). Our memory of the past may be greatly impacted by the media, providing us with attachment to a history not personally experienced. “Those recollections to which we give most credence have been recorded apart from us ... Our culture of the copy externalizes memory” (Schwartz 1996, 374). Just as memory consists of interpreting our recollections, it involves forgetting as well (Abramson 1999, 78), and necessarily so, since it is impossible to preserve all of the past (Lynch 1972, 36). Therefore, our interpretations of the past are selective memories. Memory can encourage representations that exclude or hide the actual past (Abramson 1999, 81).

For the goal of maintaining a town’s historic character and identity of its people, design and aesthetic objectives are found within local policy objectives in Virginia towns. Preservation and maintenance of historical city patterns and buildings are increasingly supplemented by design control for new growth. As observed in the design guidelines that supplement the preservation

ordinances, design control and review often dictate continued use of historic forms for future development to maintain the historic character.

Discussion of motives in the Town of Fincastle.

The Town of Fincastle is unique in that it is not currently interested in tourism, and indeed, it is not propelled by any of the preservation policy objectives presented. Instead, the social-psychological need for identity, through the maintenance of the town's historic character, was the sole issue presented by the Mayor. Collective memory and historical identity, in the face of the future possibility of sprawling development, seem to be the sole driving forces for the preservation plan for the town.

Nostalgia was not observed when the members of the Presbyterian Church in Fincastle presented to me the demolition proposal for their recreational building within the historic district. It was stated that the building was of no significant architectural or historical significance. Although the church members acknowledged their fond memories and use of the building since their youth, they were willing to let it go. These members desired to meet the current needs of their church by replacing this structure with a new center. In this particular case, with these selected individuals, nostalgia was not present and their sense of place was not threatened.

**Chapter V. The Manipulation and Misuse of History:
Criticisms of Historic Preservation Practice.**

Common criticisms of historic districts have been that they convey sanitized versions of the past and are dominated by considerations such as real estate values, the urgent need for the rehabilitation of run-down inner-city areas, or the impulse to ‘gentrify’ that have little to do with the history they purport to preserve (Hamer 1998, viii).

The critical literature of historic preservation presented here addresses the manipulation and misuse of historical imagery to satisfy non-historical motives. First, I review the major works drawn upon for this chapter. Then, I recapitulate these criticisms of the manipulation of historic built environments and cultures. Within the critical literature of historic preservation, I have identified three main criticisms: power, consumerism, and authenticity. If one views that the proper use of preservation is only to preserve the historic buildings and sites, then historic preservation has been improperly used by these other motives (Costonis 1989). A body of literature articulates my interest of the use of historic imagery within our contemporary cities. I wish to provide a brief review of the critical literature that forms the basis of my argument. These authors address the societal influence of the historical interpretation in the contemporary world.

Literature Review

Robert Hewison addresses the dangers of living in a nostalgic present in *The Heritage Industry*. Hewison (1987, 9) observes that the proliferation of museums in Britain indicates that the culture is “obsessed with its past, and unable to face its future.” The preserved elements of history “affect our perception of what is judged to be history or art” (1987, 9). Hewison (1987, 47) offers the best synthesis of my argument: “The question then is not whether or not we should preserve the past, but what kind of past we have chosen to preserve, and what that has done to our present.”

M. Christine Boyer demonstrates in *The City of Collective Memory* the translation of historical imagery into the contemporary city’s reality. Boyer critiques the “economic and social practices

that have captured these displays and used them for more commercial and political purposes” (1994, x). Boyer reviews the professions of architecture, city planning, and historic preservation for their use of historical imagery within the present context (Boyer 1994, 1). The use of these past representations in our present society detaches us from the rationale for their existence, because our contemporary condition is acutely different from situations that governed past models.

Diane Barthel’s *Historic Preservation: Collective Memory and Historical Identity*, criticizes the practice of historic preservation directly, whereas other authors examine the heritage industry and cultural changes at large. Preservation selection and the beneficiary parties are analyzed in both the United States and Britain. Barthel views that while American preservation practice has broadened its scope of representation, it has also commercialized historic built environments.

Sharon Zukin, in *The Culture of Cities*, reviews how marketing forces manipulate the visual environment in urban public culture for economic benefit. Historic preservation is considered to be one method for manipulating symbolic resources for market gain.

Power Issues

The power of money.

A main criticism within the literature is the use of historic preservation to package a version of the past for the public's consumption. To maintain the historic identity through the visual attractiveness of a town, efforts may be shifted from preserving history to producing a selective picture of the past. “[C]ommercial revitalization, historic preservation, tourism, and the art of simulation do not mix easily. Efforts at historic preservation often take a back seat as development forces gain strength” (Boyer 1992, 198). To make the downtowns viable through marketing, downtowns may resort to a certain ‘brand’ or style of historic preservation.

The powerful organizing forces of preservation are the government, local citizen groups, the National Trust for Historic Preservation organization, and heritage tourism corporations (Zukin 1995). Barthel uses the term ‘heritage machines’ to describe the coordinated impetus of

professionals within a town to promote an aspect of its heritage. Heritage machines are coordinated by diverse professionals such as preservationists, developers, academics, and politicians while the heritage symbolism is framed by corporations, business districts, and tourism entities (Barthel 1996, 121; Zukin 1995). Critics and theorists have claimed that replication of an imagined history is the result of marketing to a consumer society.

Culture is used as "both a democratic public good and an elite resource," as the debates of historic preservation attest (Zukin 1995). Preservation is sometimes used as a territorial response to establish who were there first (Campbell 1999) and other times to reclaim territory. Most of the people that have participated in preservation have been the elite who could afford such efforts with time and resources. Therefore, what has been preserved represents a distinct bias (Fitch 1990).

Multi-cultural representation.

Multi-cultural representation in preservation efforts is increasingly important in the United States (Barthel 1996,125). Preservationists are encouraging pluralism and grassroots activism for greater representation. Celebrating diversity is preferred to merely being politically correct, or equally representative, of local culture. A recent example of celebrating diversity is the monument to the famous tennis player Arthur Ashe in Monument Avenue in Richmond, an area previously exclusive to celebrating Confederate heroes ("Ashe Statue," 2000). The decision to include a contemporary hero among those of a distant past created some controversy. Multi-cultural preservation efforts continue to face institutional barriers as the practice, connected to planning policy and state and federal programs, "is becoming more professionalized and bureaucratized" (Barthel 1996, 153).

Questionable aspects of heritage tourism and historic preservation include the distribution of benefits, decisions of the preserved characteristics, and the authenticity of the preservation (Wells 1996). Controversies often occur regarding which environments need to be revitalized by historic preservation. Sometimes, very active, alive, low-income communities are revitalized to make them serve the needs of the middle and upper classes desires. This was especially true of the post-World War II urban renewal projects that demolished entire neighborhoods.

The success of historic preservation may not benefit all classes of people equally. The profitability of this practice can come from the ‘exploitation’ and ‘invention’ of local heritage and culture (Barthel 1996, 121). The authenticity and associations the inhabitants have with their environment may be lost as they are manipulated for the public's consumption (Fitch 1990). Tourism and gentrification have been the most criticized effects of preservation on the town's inhabitants (Cullingworth 1997). The residents of a town may have little say of the preservation decision.

It has also been noted that tourism can “raise the level of prejudice, cause pollution, encourage prostitution and economic exploitation, and lead to a ‘wholesale disregard for indigenous lifestyles” (Barthel 1996, 146, citing the Archbishop of Canterbury). Proper planning is necessary to prevent the negative impacts of tourism (Gunn 1994, 3). Historic preservation has such a great impact on neighborhoods because contemporary preservation efforts usually cover the entire district.

Gentrification: The effect on the poor and minorities.

Another criticism of the preservation movement has been that historic preservation efforts have been the culprit in gentrification. Neighborhoods of low-income people in downtowns that were abandoned by the upper-income people during the “white flight” have been displaced because historic cities' downtowns have been the target for preservation efforts. Gentrification is the displacement of the original residents and business owners because of an increase in rents and land values. The benefits may not be shared equally for all social classes. It should not be assumed that economic success should transcend the importance of cultural issues.

Both the public and private sector are involved with the preservation of buildings and may contribute to the displacement of people. The public sector preservationists will often be planners, whereas the private sector preservationists are often the realtors, tourism promoters, and property owners. John D. Rockefeller's reconstruction of an ideal image of Williamsburg destroyed the Williamsburg of his time by displacing the residents who were “a sizable

proportion of whom were black and poor white” (Barthel 1996, 38). The history between Williamsburg’s founding and Rockefeller’s creation of Colonial Williamsburg were destroyed.

Lower income people, living in the non-maintained, older buildings that serve as substandard housing often occupy the historic districts. An influx of new, wealthier neighbors will improve their properties, thus raising the property value. Realtors and developers then take advantage of the new market and accelerate the values (Fitch 1990). Gentrification sometimes encourages, or is encouraged by, the middle and upper class return to central cities (Ellin 1996). Various trends in aesthetics may entice a wealthier population to a poorer area, such as trendy lofts created in warehouse districts because of an aesthetic change that has favors residing in formerly industrial areas (Zukin 1982). Adapting areas for new residences and businesses can increase tensions between social classes (Ellin 1996).

Gentrification is usually attributed to the actions of the private sector, although governmental funding for revitalization and designating historic properties may also contribute to this process (Holcomb and Beauregard 1981). The revitalization efforts of planners may make the poor suffer while the elite takes advantage of higher returns on property investments (Ellin 1996).

Is gentrification an inevitable result of historic preservation? The gentrification of particular areas has been well documented, but is not necessarily a common phenomenon. Some revitalization efforts never do increase the property values (Holcomb and Beauregard 1981). Historic designations may even decrease the value of a building because of limits to its use and requirements for maintenance (Costonis 1989).

Consumerism Issues

Zukin (1995) claims that preservation efforts produce a visual image that turns culture into a commercial good. Usually these visual representations use historic imagery to emphasize a certain perception of the city, as may be seen in Williamsburg. Representing culture through visual representations is used as an economic base by cities. The preserved image may be for tourist consumption, economic development, and the status benefit of a community or individual

property owners. Criticisms have been directed towards localities that use preservation to attract tourists.

The use of selective and inventive historical imagery has proven to be successful for local revitalization efforts.

These curious mixtures of reconstituted styles-of-life and fashionable environments have proved effective tourist attractions, and economic-development experts now turn every small-town thoroughfare into Main Street. Vintage villages, regardless of their lack of authenticity, are designed to resurrect local economies. City after city discovers that its abandoned industrial waterfront or outmoded city center contains enormous tourist potential and refurbishes it as a leisure-time spectacles and sightseeing promenade (Boyer 1992, 189).

Because preservation may be used to entice consumption, it will be helpful to look at why historic imagery is such a powerful influence on the public. This section will discuss the social needs and the public's demands that preservation satisfies. The psychology of modern individuals is analyzed to determine whether residents or tourists are able to distinguish authenticity, and whether authenticity is even an issue for them. In modern society, the distinction between a resident and a tourist is diminishing, as we are all tourists. The tourist also may represent "a metaphor for deeper aspects of the modern experience of reality" (Redfoot 1984, 303). The following discussion about tourists suggests how the general public perceives their hometown surroundings, as well as neighboring areas that they are not 'touring,' per se.

Public demand: authentic, yet convenient.

The contemporary public is said to suffer from nostalgia and a yearning for something real, something authentic. This is in reaction to the common mass-produced things around us, produced by our contemporary culture. People also yearn for tradition, community, and roots. However, our contemporary culture is a consumer culture, and tries to satisfy its desires through consuming what is presented by the heritage and tourism industries (Goss 1992, 169-170). The consumption patterns of the contemporary person "show an obsessive desire for authenticity in an increasingly rootless culture" (Goss 1992, 169-170). Therefore, they will settle for an illusion of authenticity. "Illusion fuels the theme parks and historic preservation that cater to the tourism

that has become a major part of the national economy” (Huxtable 1997, 3). Meanwhile, our marketing culture mocks our desire for the real and the authentic (Schwartz 1996, 290). Some critics blame the public for driving the market for the staged, historical environments.

Architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable recently stated at a National Trust symposium " the public's values have become increasingly false and misdirected" (Campbell 1999, 16). Huxtable (1997) states that the society's misdirectedness of favoring invented environments is evident through the mass attendance to non-authentic historic tourism sites.

Heritage tourism may satisfy a variety of popular desires. Fitch (1990, 80) contends that mass tourism “is proof of the great hunger of modern people for first-hand contact with the physical evidence of their history.” Gunn (1994, 3) states that the attraction of tourism to the masses is “to seek personal rewards from their experience.” Tourism has often been attributed with encouraging the appreciation of cultural diversity and as a means to enrich the lives of the tourists who visit the historical area (Barthel 1996, 146; Gunn 1994, 4). Popular literature and films augment public interest in historic sites (Gunn 1994, 48).

The quest for authenticity is a particularly modern value due to the lack of the modern world providing us with images of a stable reality. This turns into a search for something real, where the person becomes critical of society, and authenticity becomes the value used to define what is real (Cohen 1988). “The quest for authenticity...is rooted in the peculiarly modern anxiety over the “reality” of life’s meaning”(Redfoot 1984, 304).

Barthel (1996, 7) states that the public is incapable of determining authenticity: “The public implicitly accepts that what it sees is the real thing.” Tourists are accused of being passively content with experiencing inauthentic environments. In much of the literature, tourists are viewed as incapable of having authentic experiences (Cohen 1988, 371). Concepts of authenticity depend on the tourist’s expectations, and what they desire from the place. Cohen states that the public has been unjustly blamed to explain the success of invented environments. Cohen argues that social analysts’ criticisms have been based on assumptions of the tourist’s desire for authenticity. However, tourist perceptions are likely to be different than that of professionals, because their judgment of authenticity is often weighed with their travels as play,

which allows for make-believe (Cohen 1988). The majority of the work has used the tourist as a symbol of one who appreciates the inauthentic, whereas more recent works have explored the complexities of the authenticity issue that allows the modern touristic experience some validity (DeLyser 1999, 604).

Marketers supply: a simplified or inventive past.

The marketing of the historic towns may affect the preservation of the historic buildings and context. The authenticity of the historic structures is often compromised by contemporary tastes. Historic towns have been known to resist using the bright colors of paint that were originally used on the buildings to appeal to the current aesthetic. Barthel (1996, 148) states that some of the heritage tourists have expectations of “faded gentility or pure classical monumentality.” Thus, “the world is increasingly being redecorated for tourist visitors” (Barthel 1996, 148).

Heritage tourism presents a narrative of the history of the culture for the visitor. “Although narrative offers transcendence, it lacks authenticity, for its experience is *other*” (Stewart 1984, 22, original emphasis). As soon as you interpret the original, you break from the original’s authenticity, because authenticity needs the original context (Stewart 1984, 19). Authenticity may be considered as a quality of pre-modern life (Cohen 1988, 375). “Tourism typically involves some encounter with the ‘Other’” (Cohen 1988, 376). Maybe for historic preservation, the Other is the past culture of the town, whereas for heritage tourism, the Other represents the past culture of other societies.

Historic preservation is often viewed as an aesthetic means for economic development, as the town’s historic images or historic stereotypes are associated with commodities (Barthel 1996). This imagery serves the social desires for permanence, nostalgia, self-identity, and myths (Costonis 1989). “Historical artifacts are ‘museumized’, while the contemporary other is ransacked for signs of tradition and community. (Goss 1992, 169-170).” The trend to go towards generic architectural style for the tourist benefit has been seen in the Santa Fe Style and a Caribbean-style (Barthel 1996).

Historic preservations and retro urban designs are literal representations of the past. They too are designed for inattentive viewers, for the tourist or city traveler who browses through these real-life stage-sets scarcely aware of how the relics of the past have been indexed, framed, and scaled. These curious mixtures of reconstituted styles-of-life and fashionable environments... (Boyer 1992, 189).

“Disneyfication” is another common criticism of the marketing of historic sites. Disneyland and Disneyworld have had tremendous success. They are recreations of historic ideals at locations that are not relevant to the presentation. However, extreme cynicism and controversy have arisen from Disney proposed expansions to new locations to exploit the local history. In the early 1990s, Disney had planned a theme park near an authentic historic Virginian town of Manassas, site of a Civil War battlefield. Disney had proposed that the theme park would depict the Indian and war culture of this town’s history. Despite the financial prospects forecasted as promising for this project, with the “concerted opposition of historians and preservationists, Disney finally withdrew the proposal” (Barthel 1996, 147).

If the public prefers invented environments, what is the harm? Huxtable states that the public’s approval of fantasy and invented historic theme environments reveal a change in how our society perceives historical settings (Huxtable 1997, 6). These settings may also claim to be accurate renditions of the past.

Every choice made in interpreting a building ... is a function not of some absolute reality ... but of *the present, not of the past*. ... The dream of authenticity is a present-day myth. We cannot recreate, reconstruct, or recapture the past. ... Given that argument, it is inexcusable for Colonial Williamsburg and museums like it to continue to confuse the public by claiming authority based on the institutional possession of historical reality (Handler and Gable 1997, 223).

Confusion of perceiving authentic architecture may be compounded because the prevalence of mass-produced, replicated objects in our society (Fitch 1990). Industrialization was the agent of change for duplicating and distributing for common consumption. Duplication has become part of our contemporary society, which has translated into our built environment as well. Many new malls are being created as historic presentations of villages (Barthel 1996). In the ‘post-modern retail environment,’ “[t]he details may be so accurate that authenticity is displaced and the stylized copy appears more real than the original” (Goss 1992, 172). “The more adroit we are at

carbon copies, the more confused we are about the unique, the original, the Real McCoy” (Schwartz 1996, 11). Non-authentic “historic” environments threaten and trivialize architecture (Huxtable 1997, 6) and replications may threaten people’s sense of identity, place and value. “We use copies to certify originals, originals to certify copies, then we stand bewildered” (Schwartz 1996, 212).

Authenticity Issues.

Criticisms about authenticity in historical representations have been directed mainly to the historic preservationists and the historic towns. The professional preservationists’ are criticized for either the authenticity of the preservation methods used or the selection of structures preserved. Historic towns are critiqued for trying to freeze the past. Fault is found in the restorations, guidelines for new construction, and interpretations.

Authenticity issues also arise in towns that control future development through design review. One criticism aimed at local preservation policy and practice is the authenticity of design review. Brenda Case Scheer states a common criticism:

Design review encourages mimicry and the dilution of the authenticity of place. ... Outside of special historic enclaves..., places where extreme control is exerted have a kinship to theme park perfection or urban fantasy and embody an idea that life lived here is not real life fraught with pain and crisis and emotion, but an artificial one, cleaned up, predictable, and safe. ... Sadly, this approach also dilutes the meaning of real space it imitates or preserves under glass. The camouflage of new “old” buildings resulting from misguided design review makes the authentic old buildings disappear and lose their importance and distinction (Scheer 1994, 8).

Many towns have adopted design guidelines for the historic districts, enforcing that all new construction conform to the identified historic characteristics. This practice seeks to perpetuate a selected historical identity. Authenticity of the town may be threatened by new development patterns, which might erase the old structures or urban forms of the past.

Some think that authenticity cannot be universally achieved because it is a social perception, based on human actions and recreations. Therefore, “determining absolute authenticity becomes a more metaphysical than practical exercise” (Barthel 1996, 10). Then again, authenticity is

considered helpful to value a historic representation (Barthel 1996, 8) in both fields of heritage tourism and historic preservation. The historic representation may be judged for its accuracy to the original or its accuracy to time (either in terms of continuity of time, or stop-time). The historic representation may be judged for authenticity on the basis of the original physical attributes of the building(s), and its context, such as if it is on its original site (Barthel 1996).

The authenticity of a historic building or a district of historic buildings may be perceived differently by residents and tourists. The resident might perceive buildings that have been a stable presence within the community to be authentic. Reassurance of one's local identity and sense of place can be verified in the structures seen around them. Cohen points out that it is not addressed in the literature what these tourists perceive to be authentic in their own environment (Cohen 1988, 374).

Historic preservationists and authenticity.

Criticisms of historic preservations are often aimed at the choice of whether to preserve, restore, or rehabilitate a structure. However, the practical issues of the property owner, town policies, financial feasibility and structural stability usually set these objectives. For many preservationists, maintenance of historic resources is the key to preservation, which is extremely different from creating a visual image of an imagined history or culture. James Fitch states:

Whatever the errors the preservationists may have made in the past, the deliberate fabrication of facsimiles and reproductions of historic artifacts has never been part of the program. To the contrary, their battle has always been to save the original, the authentic, the prototypical so that future generations would be able to see what the past was *really like* (Fitch 1990, x, original emphasis).

Attempts at universal guidelines or philosophies for historic preservation, which do not consider the particular circumstances of each building, tend to be dangerous. Within the variety of philosophies of historic preservation, each has valid arguments (Pappas 1985, 43). "All is dependent on the philosophy established for a particular project and that person's judgment in interpreting it... If the building and its history are examined carefully, with a sensitive and open mind, it might soon reveal what *it* wants to be" (Pappas 1985, 44, original emphasis).

As historic towns rely on the past for their design, buildings do not reflect our present (Sorkin 1992, *xiv*). Preservation scholars now emphatically insist that preservation should recognize and encourage a mixing of ages of architecture. Preservation is about allowing a building a continued existence rather than what the public desires it to have been. Mixing allows the past to remain authentic while respecting contemporary architecture. A mixture of time periods within a built environment reveals a continuity of time, possibly adding to a better representation of our past than the homogenous, fixed-time approach. Architectural historian, Ada Louise Huxtable, remarked at a symposium for the 50th anniversary for the National Trust for Historic Preservation that:

Only the deepest understanding of and respect for the uniqueness of the art of every period, including the present, produces the kind of preservation that evokes that layered, revealing account of art and history that adds so much to our lives (Campbell 1999, 18).

Authenticity issues in Williamsburg.

A common historic preservation objective is to educate the public through the preservation of the resources. This usually requires the interpretation of the structures so that the information will be available to the masses. Issues of authenticity arise whenever the past is interpreted. The issue of authenticity may depend on the claims of the historic environment. Authenticity is the stated mission of Colonial Williamsburg. Two “juxtaposed paradigms” are presented in analyzing Williamsburg. The “celebratory history” is the traditional Williamsburg that upheld a homogenous perspective (Handler and Gable 1997, 7). The post-1970s paradigm, “critical history,” is desirous for authenticity.

Authenticity may also be based on accuracy of the historic site if the site claims to be accurate. Authenticity in Williamsburg relates to the accuracy of the clothing, architecture, and details of the Colonial Williamsburg. Its credibility is based on being perceived as authentic to colonial times (Handler and Gable 1997, 45). Many tourists are very critical of the accuracy of the elements. Employees may experience anxiety to not be ‘caught’ with inaccurate details (Handler and Gable 1997, 75). Similar issues abound outside of Williamsburg. Virtually any museum

that interprets and demonstrates folk life must address these issues of authenticity (Loomis 1985).

Physical threats: Mass tourism threatens the authentic original building.

Heritage tourism is often viewed as threatening the authenticity of the historic environment and buildings. Mass tourism has had both beneficial and detrimental impacts on historic sites. Fitch presents this irony: the money produced by tourists facilitates the continued preservation of buildings, yet the impact of their presence (in mass) can threaten the delicate environment (Fitch 1990). The sheer number of visitors account for the impact on the environment. Mass tourism may cause congestion and encourage unsightly services to appear (Gunn 1994, 3). Impacts range from the transportation and pollution in the streets, to the wear on the floors in historic structures. Examples of the physical impact of tourists are often given in Europe, where the historic attractions are much older than in America and have received greater attendance. Barthel notes that:

The stampede of tourists has worn down the steps of Canterbury Cathedral and the Tower of London. Stratford-upon-Avon has become a virtual Shakespearean theme park, with new parking garages, pedestrianized ways, and shops catering to about 2.5 million visitors annually to this small Cotswold town... The sheer production of human heat and humidity is threatening the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel and the paintings in galleries throughout Italy... And in Paris, fumes from tour buses are damaging the stonework of Notre Dame Cathedral, which is being worn down by some 10.8 million visitors each year (Barthel 1996, 145).

An argument is made that authentic representation of time and social classes within historic preservation may be threatened by consumerism and power imbalances. The next chapter considers whether these criticisms apply to the efforts of small Virginia towns.

Chapter VI. Applying Critical Literature to Local Virginia Practice

The literature presented in the previous chapter is a critique of how the present society's need for a sense of place, nostalgia, collective memory and historical identity are universally shaping and simplifying the built environment of our cities. This chapter aims to determine to what extent this body of literature contributes to our understanding of contemporary preservation efforts in small historic towns in Virginia. This chapter addresses power, representation, consumerism and authenticity to analyze the current preservation policy and practice in historic Virginia localities. The first example is the Town of Middleburg, a small town located in northern Virginia. Many consider that Middleburg has a successful preservation program. The Town of Fincastle is hoping to adopt a preservation program. Lastly, two small towns, Franklin and Lexington, have used the Main Street Program's approach.

Two basic preservation-planning approaches have been identified in this paper to maintain the historic identity of the town. One approach is to revitalize the historic district of the town economically. This is the approach adopted by the Main Street Program, which encourages business owners to rehabilitate their properties. As the downtown becomes more economically successful, more opportunities are provided to reuse the existing buildings.

Another approach to maintain the historic district is the creation of the preservation ordinance. The preservation ordinance provides for the protection of historic resources through the administration of a design review board and the creation of design guidelines. The current preservation policy used by historic localities in Virginia is provided in the preservation ordinance, which is an element of the town's zoning ordinance. The preservation ordinance imposes additional requirements or restrictions on these properties in the district to ensure the preservation of historically and architecturally significant structures and to retain the historic quality of the district as a whole. The additional set of regulations includes the established design criteria for new construction and the maintenance of existing properties. The criteria are presented for compatibility to the history and architectural styles of the past. Both building details and urban design elements are covered. With this background, we turn to power and its role in understanding preservation policy and practice in Virginia.

Power

Those involved with the creation of the preservation ordinance and design guidelines and serve as members of the review board contribute greatly to the image conveyed. They have a great influence upon 1) what is preserved, 2) guidelines for new construction, and 3) interpreting the history of the town's architecture. One of the duties of the review board is to approve/disapprove demolition proposals. Either hired consultants or the planners present the history of the town's architecture in the design criteria handbook.

The preservation efforts and new construction within the historic district will likely reflect the aesthetic values of the review board members. Preservation ordinances usually require that about seven people serve on the review board. In small towns, those who serve as review board members are often the town council members and other citizens who are already actively involved in the community. The small town of Fincastle, with a population of 250 residents, has expressed interest in creating an architectural review board. Unless efforts are made otherwise, the design review board will likely be the same small group of people that serve as the planning commission and town council. Historic preservation greatly impacts the image of the neighborhoods because preservation efforts usually cover the entire district. While some towns' preservation efforts focus on multi-cultural representation, the decision-makers are still usually a small number of professionals (Barthel 1996, 153). The social status of the preservationists rarely represents that of the general population.

The only study found within the literature that explored the social characteristics of the preservation leaders in Virginia is a 1975 study entitled *Virginia Historic Districts Study: Profile of Preservation Group Leadership*. The profile was developed from a questionnaire given to the thirteen preservation groups in Virginia at that time. General observations from this profile of the leadership were that the preservationists were all white, mostly of upper income, and between the ages of 40 - 60 with graduate degrees. White-collar professionals, housewives, and retirees made up the general categories of the leaders (Williams, Kellogg, and Gilbert 1983, 46). Follow-up studies have not been conducted to determine whether these demographics have changed in the past twenty-five years.

Another issue addresses those groups that remain powerless due to preservation regulations and property tax increases. The preservation policies and maintenance standards affect those living within the historic district, and may put an economic strain on those living in dilapidated historic properties. Historic preservation efforts have been the culprit of displacing the original residents and business owners because of an increase in rents and land values. Policies should ensure that the original inhabitants would not be displaced due to the preservation efforts (Lynch 1972, 42). Although displacement has been noted in Colonial Williamsburg and Alexandria's "Old Town," no information has been found within the literature whether the policies or programs within have displaced the original residents of non-tourist oriented small towns in Virginia.

Representation

Although the critical literature states that historic towns usually encourage a homogenous image, it appears that towns are conscious of these issues and have attempted to address them within their policies. For example, Middleburg acknowledges the necessity for representing the continuity of its past when its Historic District Guidelines states that: "The town has a diversified mixture of architectural styles reflecting the taste of each generation" (Middleburg 1994). Lexington, Virginia appears to appreciate its variety of buildings. The non-profit organizations worked to preserve even the "plain-and-simple" buildings along its Main Street (Dane 1997, 89). The Town also seems to respect the buildings of the recent past. A vacant car dealership and department store downtown were adapted to administrative offices and public library (Dane 1997, 89).

The designation process influences which properties are preserved. The historic properties within a town may be preserved because they are on the local, state, or national register. To encourage equal opportunity for properties to be designated, towns usually provide information explaining how to nominate a property for designation.

A diverse period of time is represented in the historic architecture in Middleburg. As seen in Middleburg's Historic District Guidelines, the town's architectural styles illustrated are Federal, Jeffersonian Revival, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Colonial Revival, Bungalows and International Style. However, in Middleburg's case, the diversity of new construction might still

be limited to the historic imagery of the pre-20th century. New construction must be compatible with the style of the identified historic architecture. Historical details are essential in new construction. Although new construction is not required to conform to a particular style, Middleburg's guidelines for roof pitches, for example, do not allow for design of the International Style, which is found in the historic district.

Consumerism

Revitalization is an economic necessity for the continued existence of many small towns. Preservation success is often tied to economic recovery (Dane 1997, 89). Since downtowns cannot currently compete with the price of common products found in most shopping malls, the goods provided by downtowns usually reflect specialty or niche-marketing, or else low-end goods. Advertising and recruiting businesses are vital for downtown success. Building design incentives, in the form of loans and grants, enhance building improvements in downtown Franklin, Virginia, a town using the Main Street approach (Dane 1997, 77). This city program originated from loans funded by Community Development Block Grants.

Towns use public and non-profit organizations as well as preservation policies to preserve their historic downtowns. In Lexington, Virginia, one of the towns in Virginia that has used the Main Street Program for revitalization, successful downtown retail currently consists of "small specialized shops that appeal to tourists and the academic community" (Dane 1997, 90). To revitalize downtowns, sometimes the towns try to market a particular style to try to "sell" an image of the past. It may become detrimental to the actual identity of the town when the image becomes more important than preservation of the actual history (Boyer 1992, 198). The history of the town might then be lost in a distorted memory.

Barthel (1996), Zukin (1995), Hewison (1987), Boyer (1994) and Costonis (1989) warn about the use of historic imagery in the built environment to appease the contemporary condition. Despite any possible tourist's preference for simplified settings, it is the town's responsibility to provide an authentic setting. The marketing of the historic towns may affect the preservation of the historic buildings and context. The lesson is that we continue to incorporate the past with the present, rather than create the present on the past.

The selected literature applies to towns that have inventively recreated historic village settings, thus distorting the town's historic identity. These claims do not seem to apply to the many towns that use its historic image for tourism without attempting to alter perceptions. Towns that integrate historic buildings into contemporary use do not seem to fall within the criticisms presented within the literature.

Authenticity

The literature likens some preservation efforts to the superficiality found in theme parks and other new development that uses historical imagery. Similar arguments are often presented about inherent authenticity problems of design review and design guidelines of historic districts. The criticisms mainly lie with towns that try to recreate the past for the town's present vitality. Towns trying to meet tourist expectations are warned that the historic structures and the history of the town should not be compromised for the contemporary aesthetic. Such action threatens and trivializes architecture (Huxtable 1997, 6). As historic towns rely on the past for their design, buildings do not reflect our present (Sorkin 1992, xiv). Literal interpretations of historic imagery for contemporary design are inauthentic (Sorkin 1992, Huxtable 1997, Campbell 1999, Handler and Gable 1997, Zukin 1995). Another harm results if we try to fool ourselves that historic environments are accurate renditions of the past.

The literature was particularly faultfinding of towns that would present a selective picture of the past (Barthel 1996; Zukin 1995; Hewison 1987; Boyer 1994; Costonis 1989). Colonial Williamsburg is a unique example of this situation, due to the private support that sponsored this vision. However, it does not appear that the general small town in Virginia is following this route to preserve its historic identity. The reason could be that either the public does not support such an anachronistic plan, or the lack of financial investment to create a city-scale museum. Although some towns have used historic preservation to package a version of the past for the public's consumption, it appears that most small towns in Virginia attempt to retain the built environment without presenting an invented past.

The threat of mass tourism destroying the authenticity of historic structures does not seem to apply to the case of the small town. The small towns that this paper addresses usually do not hold specific sites of national significance that would attract throngs of people.

Chapter VII. Conclusion

Summary

This paper has demonstrated how preservation is integrated in the planning process. It reviewed how historic preservation is supported through national, state and local policy for the public's use and benefit. Preservation planning attempts to address the contemporary development trends that threaten the economic vitality of small towns. Historic preservation will likely continue to be a widespread method to retain towns' historic centers.

Small towns in Virginia use various means to maintain its historic identity. Federal, state, and local efforts facilitate the preservation of historic resources. Revitalization efforts such as the Main Street Program, which make rehabilitation of historic downtown properties economically feasible, aim to retain the historic identity. Preservation policies form another approach to give the town control of the maintenance of the existing constructions and the design of the new construction.

Towns that desire to preserve their history have many options available through town policy and organized citizen action. The towns of Middleburg and Leesburg and Clarke County used their comprehensive plans to document the vision developed by the community with the objectives, policies, and goals that are needed to obtain it. As well, the criteria and the design review process are the critical elements of defining the historic character of towns.

Preserving the historic elements of the built environment satisfies objectives of the town as well as social psychological needs. Identity of contemporary society is reaffirmed by the historic representation found in preserved buildings as people seek proof of their historical roots. To complement this social need, the literature reviewed suggests that an environment authentically represents the past memory and future vision of the town's people. Maintaining historic identity demands interactions with the town's people, especially those who have a vested interest and desire to be a part of the community. It appears that despite who is blamed for the non-continuity of the town's history, it is the responsibility of the citizens to determine their identity. The

literature warns that community members must think for themselves and to properly address their unique concerns, to prevent being caught up in universal, and possibly fleeting trends.

This paper has addressed towns that desire heritage tourism and those that do not. Four conclusions follow. First, for towns such as Fincastle, that do not express interest in tourism, the important lesson is to resist the urge to selectively preserve buildings from only one time period, such as in Williamsburg. Second, representing the diversity of social classes is of equal importance of maintaining historic identity. Third, if design guidelines are adopted, then it is of great importance that the guidelines are generated from within the town, instead of adopting the common criteria established in nearby towns. Fourth, towns that desire heritage tourism, such as Middleburg, Franklin, and Lexington, Virginia, have an even greater challenge: not bow to misrepresenting and simplifying their past to appease tourist tastes. Lessons that may be taken from the critical literature lie with proper representation and identity. A danger lurks when towns are tempted to attain all their revenues through tourism.

Concluding Remarks

Once we accept that our cities will not be like cities of the past, it will become possible to see what they might become. Combining lessons from the past with the present will not produce a unified city, but a combination of disparate elements, old and new, dense and diffuse, private and public...it's chaotic, ideological impurity may be a more truthful accommodation to the way we live today (Rybczynski 1995, 233).

One of the conclusions of this paper is that while preservation of historical identity is a noble effort, it should not substitute proactive planning. Historians have stated that a rise in collective memory indicates angst over future direction and denial of the responsibility to change the present. Conflict over collective memory through community discourse can lead to more accurate representations of past environments, and can avoid the creation of illusions or myths (Abramson 1999, 82). Such a dialogue within a community will allow residents to express their preferences about preserved properties.

Therefore, I propose that towns must generate their vision from within to avoid adopting a mythical historical representation that is easily consumed. To properly proceed with shaping our built environment, towns must know and anticipate the dangers of representing the past (Rybczynski 1995, 12). Efforts need to be made to maintain an eclectic environment, representative of the place, time and citizens of the town. Boyer (1994) encourages that each individual needs to present his or her value and image of the past. The citizen dialogue would express the various memories of individuals needed for the complexity of the past to remain. Since all cultural values are relative to the time in which they were manifested, buildings representing various times need to be preserved. All ranges of culture have the possibility of being valued in the future. The preservation of a variety of structures from the diversity of cultures will give the future audience a realistic representation of history. Diversity within the built environment should be more rewarding than an interpreted, clichéd image (Campbell 1999).

Continued citizen participation is important to the historic preservation movement. The literature shows that the missing element in successful historic preservation is citizen involvement. James Fitch recently argues “The greatest gift one can give the built environment is an enlightened and participatory public” (Campbell 1999, 22). At the same time, it is imperative to have leaders who specialize in one place, and who have a vested interest in the continued tradition and improvement of a town (Bullard 1991, 73). Not only is citizen participation important to preservation, but also the process is also beneficial to the people. Fincastle’s historic societies have greatly served their town by preserving individual properties. Historic preservation provides a tool for ordinary citizens to create a sense of place for themselves, to shape their world and identity. Long before the Town of Fincastle considered implementing preservation policy, the concerned citizens had been organized to designate historic properties and to write maintenance conditions into individual property titles.

The future of historic preservation makes one reflect upon what should be preserved today to accurately represent the complexity of contemporary society. The future direction of the preservation movement may preserve the commercialism of contemporary culture and icon buildings of the recent past (Barthel 1996), thus lessening the current focus on preserving buildings of notable quality. Lynch (1972, 49) suggests that due to the unpredictability of future

values, a “characteristic evidence of every major period” needs to be saved. Because we have personal ties with the recent past, we should preserve those structures that have been vital to our experience, so that in the future, the most significant structures of the time will be recognized (Lynch 1972, 61). Whatever becomes an expression of our era will surely have future relevance.

Future research should continue to examine how small American towns define their collective memory so that we may engage with history, without manipulating its imagery. More case studies and policy evaluations will benefit future practice. Armed with what we know now, we take the responsibility of forging our present identity while learning from the past. I am excited to see the next turn of the tide and resulting change in development patterns. The reaction to temporary strip development and the recognition of redeeming features of our present may derive significant lessons from our contemporary chaos.

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Vita

Anna Cox

With the submission of this paper, I am nearing the completion of my Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning, an A.I.C.P. accredited program, within the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning at Virginia Tech. During my course of graduate studies, I have served as a graduate and teaching assistant for Dr. Diane Zahm and Dr. Patricia Edwards. I also worked with Dr. Diane Zahm as a preservation researcher and consultant for the Town of Fincastle, Virginia.

Previous to my graduate studies, my studies and work experience was in the field of interior design. I graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1998 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design, a F.I.D.E.R. accredited program, from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

During my undergraduate studies, I worked for two diverse design firms in Charlotte, North Carolina. The summer of 1996 I interned with 2H Design Services, an architectural and interior design firm. My main duties were preparing ADA reports for businesses and meeting with product representatives. From 1997 to 1998 I was a draftsman and designer for the interior design firm, Bistany Design. I measured on-site existing spaces to be renovated, space-planned renovations according to client's program, drafted final plans and elevation details, and contacted suppliers and sub-contractors during project construction.

Equipped with education and work experience in both of these fields, I wish to improve the design of our communities' built environment to complement the economic and social-psychological needs of the town and its citizens. My passion lies in seeking the art of the everyday experience, and my firm belief that the dynamics of the spaces we live within greatly contribute to our society's quality of life.