

Attending allowed me to compare the way Littleton is addressing various issues – particularly preservation of historic buildings and the character of communities – to the ways other cities in Colorado and elsewhere are addressing them.

February 5 Arrived about 8:15 to register and hear introductory remarks

9:30 – 10:45 *New Lessons from an Old School: Exploring Historic Adaptive Re-use* (Kevin Koernig & David Ohlemeyer)
Each speaker used case studies to discuss community outreach that was needed to complete specific projects and discussed lessons that they learned in the process. Mr. Koernig discussed Myrtle Hill, in the Washington Park community of Denver. It took 18 months of negotiation between the developer and the neighborhood to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution to converting an old school and gym into lofts, townhouses, and single-family residences. They preserved, restored, or re-purposed most of the historic elements. Mr. Ohlemeyer discussed the restoration and modification of two historic buildings in downtown St. Louis (including a securities building dating to 1892), restoring portions of them to their original purposes and converting portions to offices and high-price condos, and a furniture store that catered to the high-price clientele. The projects added to the downtown renaissance and demonstrated that “old buildings can be sustainable.” There were many infrastructure, code, construction and budget challenges, but the projects were so successful that the city was able to get funds to fix up the street.

11:05 – 12:20 *Historic Buildings: Greener than Green* (Tom Keohan, Nat Miulio, Julia Puester, Steve Watkins & Jeff Madanich)
Mr. Keohan emphasized several points in introductory remarks:

- Properly maintained buildings will last for centuries.
- U.S. building construction accounts for 48% of all greenhouse gas emissions.
- Rehabilitation is labor intense; new construction is materials intense.
- Roof top vegetation can slash air conditioning costs by 72%, double the life span of a flat roof, reduce run-off and flooding.

For additional general information, see www.thegreenestbuilding.org.

Ms. Puester discussed Breckenridge's green efforts, particularly incorporating solar panels in the historic district. She identified the issue as encouraging renewable energy while preserving historic character, and emphasized that conservation is preservation. She discussed Breckenridge's design standards (see Breckenridge web site). Mr. Watkins and Mr. Madanich discussed an initiative to make Chataqua Park in Boulder the greenest landmark in the country. They described the restoration/conversation of two of the cottages to energy efficient buildings, while also recycling or reusing waste. Mr. Miulio discussed LEED designation for historic buildings (EPA is applying for a designation of its building at 1595 Wynkoop; see also Portland, OR which has received a LEED platinum designation for a historic building: www.pcs.org/the_building).

2:20 – 3:35 *Practicing Minimalistic Preservation and Sustainable Conservation* (Richard Scott, Richard Beardmore, Thomas Tisthammer, Mike Gebo)

Mr. Scott, a mechanical engineer, emphasized the importance of knowing when to replace systems vs. components; he said that it takes 4.5 lbs of materials to produce 1 lb of solid steel, and uses 50,000 BTUs in the process (wasteful!). He gave several illustrations of replacing components in very old mechanical systems, including a coal-fired boiler that was adapted during the replacement to also use propane. Mr. Beardmore emphasized minimalistic engineering. He emphasized:

- “The building is the client.”
- “Least intrusive is the rule.”
- “Preservation Hippocratic oath – Do no harm [to the building]!”

The 3 R's³

- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Rehabilitate, restore, reconstruct
- Repair, refurbish, replace

Use your I's

- Innovation
- Imagination
- Integration
- Iteration
- Improvement

Historical performance is relevant, defensible and rational. Existing structure may surpass current requirements for less than building a new structure.

Mr. Tisthammer emphasized that if the structure cannot be re-used, it will not survive.

- [The type of] Occupancy defines the treatment required.
- Codes define the cost of the treatment.

- Cost defines the scope of work.
- Budget defines economic viability.

Restoration projects require more team collaboration than do new construction projects, and preplanning is more demanding. He also emphasized the importance of “best value” (“value engineering”) bids vs. low bid, prequalified low bid, or negotiated bid. He said that the organization needs to know if the vendor can

- Complete the project on my schedule?
- Finish within my budget?
- Meet the requirements of the Secretary of Interior’s Standards?
- Identify the risks to my project’s success?

He listed the benefits of Careful Vendor Selection:

- Saves time.
- Improves efficiency.
- Improves project quality.
- Promotes Preservation trade skills.

He said that the U.S. economy has been based on consumption, not preservation and conservation. And, apparently taking issue with the implications of the other speakers, he said that “Mechanical retrofits are not as successful as most people imply.” He emphasized the importance of communication throughout the process and requiring that all original invoices be available. (His presentation seemed almost a sales pitch for his company.)

Mr. Beardmore discussed elements of the International Building Code, on behalf of Mr. Gebo. Of particular importance is getting historical buildings designated as such; the designation opens the door to flexibility in the code (he was speaking fast, but I believe he said to see particularly sections 3407 and 3410 and chapter 11, section 306).

February 6

8:00 – 9:15

General Session Breakfast: Joaquin Murrietta, Ph.D., Mexico Program Sonoran Institute, gave an outstanding presentation on the difference between *place* (created by people) and *space* and illustrated each with photographs of historic buildings in Denver (he took the pictures on a walk that morning), Tucson, and elsewhere. Amy Jordan Webb, of the Heritage Tourism Program, discussed issues related to heritage tourism, including whether the site is authentic and accessible (not just ADA requirements, but whether a person needs, e.g., an appointment to visit, 4-wheel drive vehicle, etc.).

9:30 – 10:35

Finding the Fit—More Compatible Neighborhood Development—Less Teardowns (Jim Lindbergh; Michael Buhler, Director of Advocacy, Los Angeles Conservancy; and Kirk Huffacker, Executive Director, Utah Heritage Foundation) Mr. Lindbergh defined *teardown*: “the practice of purchasing an older house, with the intent of demolishing it & replacing it with a larger structure.” The replacement is too tall, too wide, too long, or just [otherwise] out of character. Mr. Buhler gave an outstanding presentation on combating “mansionization” in historic areas of Los Angeles, with excellent photographic illustrations, and provided a copy of the Mansionization Ordinance, which allows for the creation of Historic Preservation Overlay Zones. HPOZs address foot area ratios (FARs), setbacks, etc. Mr. Huffacker gave an equally outstanding presentation on the “monster house” in Salt Lake City that fueled citizen demand for regulations to protect the character of their neighborhoods. (The monster house was built in 2001, but because of the enmity it generated toward the owner, he never occupied it, and it is still on the market.) See www.PreservationNation.org/teardowns and www.UtahHeritageFoundaton.org.

11:05 – 12:20

Building Codes as a Preservation Tool (Cindy Heitzman and Melvyn Green)

Ms. Green discussed and illustrated the importance of “conversation” in dealing with preservation issues. She stressed the need to begin the dialogue as early as possible (even before a person purchases a historic property) and to clarify the meaning of preservation terms (e.g., *historic fabric*, *character defining features*, *integrity*, *Secretary of Interior’s Standards*, and *adaptive re-use*.) She gave several illustrations of how she was able to work with code officers to reach mutually agreeable solutions to problems without negatively affecting the historic character of a building. Mr. Green emphasized the importance of focusing on “what the code is looking for” and thus the ability to consider acceptable alternatives. For example, if keeping a potential fire from spreading through windows in a historic building to other buildings, sprinklers can be installed above the windows. He discussed levels of compliance (e.g., prescriptive, work area, and performance compliance), and also referred to specific sections of the International Existing Building Code which allow code officers to be flexible in addressing the *purpose* of the code.

2:15 – 5:00

Tour of Downtown Littleton. I had taken a tour in 2007, but took advantage of the opportunity to see more of one of the buildings and to hear from the developer about its restoration.

<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$172.00</u>	
Registration	\$165.00	(included free breakfast)
Travel	\$7.00	(I took the Light Rail and 16 th Street Mall bus.)
Other meals	\$00.00	(I packed my lunch each day.)