

2011 NOMINATION FORM

Ida Lee Willis Memorial Foundation Historic Preservation Awards Program

NOMINATIONS must be postmarked or received in the Kentucky Heritage Council office by Monday, April 11. Entries may also be submitted via email to kyheritage@ky.gov or by fax at 502-564-5820. For each entry, submit a completed nomination form, narrative description and supporting documentation to:

Kentucky Heritage Council / State Historic Preservation Office
300 Washington Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
ATTN: Ida Lee Willis Awards

1. Nominee

Name Donna Horn-Taylor

Title / Organization _____

Address PO Box 423

City Corbin State Ky Zip 40702

Phone 606 528 6890 Email horntaylor@bellsouth.net

2. Award

(check one)

Memorial Award

Preservation Project Award

Service to Preservation Award

3. Description

Include a brief narrative description of the project(s) the nominee has accomplished. Relate this description to the criteria for the appropriate award.

4. Supporting Documentation

Attach or enclose any photographs, articles, publications or letters of support for the nominee that would assist in the determining the impact of his/her contribution. Before and after photographs should be included for a Preservation Project Award. When submitting by mail, materials may also be submitted on a CD/DVD attached to the nomination form. When submitting via email, please submit all files in one email in PDF format; do not send multiple files. For questions, contact Diane Comer at 502-564-7005, ext. 120, or diane.comer@ky.gov.

5. Submitter of Nomination

Name _____

Title / Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

**Ida Lee Willis Memorial Foundation
Service to Preservation Award
Nomination**

Donna Horn-Taylor, a resident of Laurel County, Kentucky, valiantly led a crusade to save from demolition the old Pennington House in London, Kentucky, in the closing months of 2010. The old Pennington House, as we knew it, was a late Italianate structure, said to have been built originally in 1847, according to family data. Numerous additions and renovations had been made, beginning in 1867, until it became a *grande dame* with Victorian, Italianate work work, sitting only a block away from Main Street.

When the statewide project came along to place new judicial centers in Kentucky counties, the new center for Laurel County was placed on Main Street, directly across from the old Pennington House on Broad Street. Although a new \$5 million parking structure had recently been completed only two blocks away and was rarely full, it was deemed that additional parking was needed. This additional parking called for the demolition of the old Pennington House. An architectural plan was apparently completed before it was opened to public discussion.

Donna Horn-Taylor became aware of this situation through reporting by the local newspaper, the *Sentinel-Echo*. Noting protests from local citizens in letters to the editor, she became the de facto leader of a protest rally by local citizens as well as preservationists from Kentucky and from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Southern Regional Office.

Mrs. Horn-Taylor's leadership was built on a foundation laid years ago. Her first interest in historic preservation had been sparked when, as a pre-teen, she visited Madison, Indiana, where an original Main Street program was in progress. A visit to the Lanier House there made an impression. Later, at Eastern Kentucky University she completed a design degree with an interdisciplinary major in art, interiors, and architecture. Her interest was further stimulated when she attended a major, historic preservation conference in Lexington, where the old Opera House had recently been restored, and the architect for that project was on hand.

All this carried over to her crusade in 1980 to save Corbin's 1908 Hippodrome Theatre when it was demolished and replaced with a brick-box bank. Mrs. Horn-Taylor saw that the essential structure of the old building, found to be sound, could have been saved and used by the bank.

Soon thereafter she and her husband saved from demolition a 1900 romantic revival style house in Laurel County. The house had never been remodeled and was one of the oldest surviving residences in Corbin's original 1895 incorporated city lots around the L&N Railroad. The house was in the way of road improvements, so the couple had it moved and have made it their home.

As a volunteer she worked with Camp Wildcat issues at that Civil War site in Laurel County. She was involved there with the Kentucky Heritage Council on archaeology and stabilizing an early 1900s barn.

When, in late 2010 the Pennington House controversy developed, Mrs. Horn-Taylor was a natural advocate. Her effort was crucial in making the demolition a matter of public debate. Although the battle was lost between Christmas and New Year's Day, 2010, her crusade was invaluable in a community in which so many historic structures have already been lost. When a property goes back to some of the county's earliest settlers, when it has been included in a 1996 federal survey, and when it qualifies for the National Register, people care. Political maneuvering, often behind closed doors, is not acceptable.

Some of our cultural history is lost every day. Very often efforts to prevent this are made by people at the local level, people who work selflessly, without seeking personal gain or credit. They only seek to protect their community and its heritage.

Such a person is Donna Horn-Taylor of Laurel County, Kentucky.

March 30, 2011

Dear Committee,

I whole heartedly support the nomination of Donna Horn-Taylor for an Ida Lee Willis Service to Preservation Award.

Her work cannot be construed as "in vain" as she raised the level of consciousness of preserving our history and built environment and she brought attention to issues so often times thought of as hopeless and not important. I commend her valiant attempt to save the Pennington House and I do know she has worked tirelessly over many years on behalf of preservation.

Thank you for any consideration for this award.

Sincerely,

Barbara P. Hulette

Carl Keith Greene

Laurel County Historian Laureate

(Mailing Address)

C/O Times Tribune
201 North Kentucky Avenue
Corbin, Kentucky 40701
Telephone 606-528-2464 Ext. 21

March 17, 2011

Saint Patrick's Holy Day

(Home Address)

184 Moore Street
London, Kentucky 40741
Telephone 606-224-2845

Attention: Ida Lee Willis Awards
Kentucky Heritage Council
300 Washington Street
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed an honor to nominate Donna Horn-Taylor for the Ida Lee Willis Preservation Award.

In my position as Laurel County Historian Laureate I work to record the history of London and Laurel County in writing. Often I use my newspaper column, "From My Window," at the Times Tribune and formerly at London's Sentinel-Echo, to note historical incidents in Laurel County and London.

I have "preserved" in photographs from London and Laurel County the homes, businesses, schools and people here that no longer exist. Two of my books have been published by Arcadia, *Images of America: London* and *Images of America: Laurel County*.

Donna Horn-Taylor, when it came time for truly preserving the history of London, particularly the Faris/Baugh/Pennington home, took on the county leadership and though she did not prevail she taught Londonians the importance of preservation.

She and those who joined her, reminded the people of London and Laurel County of the many historical business buildings, church buildings, homes and even places in Laurel County along the Wilderness/Boone Trace that still exist, such as the Raccoon Springs, where the very first explorers camped, south of town.

Her work has, I think, brought the maintenance and continual use of the historical architecture in the city and county to the minds of people here.

I recommend that she bring the award back to London and Laurel in a way that will encourage historical preservation here.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Carl Keith Greene

Tara Kaprowy
3509 Woodhaven Drive
Somerset KY 42503

March 21, 2011

Kentucky Heritage Council
300 Washington St.
Frankfort KY 40601
Re: Ida Lee Willis Service to Presentation award

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Donna Horn-Taylor to receive the above-noted award.

When an historic home in London, Ky., was slated for destruction in order to make way for a parking lot, Ms. Horn-Taylor stepped in as the community leader to help save it. The home, indeed, was well worth rescuing.

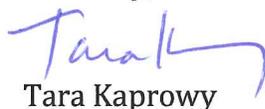
The beautiful circa-1875 structure once belonged to Dr. Henry Vincent Pennington, who founded what became London's first and only hospital. More than its history, it was known county-wide for its beauty, with its unusual Victorian architecture making it an imposing, lovely figure on West Fifth Street.

When Horn-Taylor learned it would be sacrificed to make way for something as demeaning as a parking lot, she immediately got to work, contacting government officials, rallying together community members, researching ordinances, holding meetings and negotiating with public officials.

Alas, her efforts were not able to save the structure. In all truth, its fate was sealed the day its purchase was made by the Fiscal Court. But Horn-Taylor's effort, and the resulting attention the issue received, has changed people's views in London regarding the importance of historic preservation. The downtown revitalization committee is in the process of drawing boundaries downtown inside of which buildings cannot be torn down without city approval. And the America in Bloom committee has launched an effort called Living Treasures, in which elderly London residents will record their life stories and, thus, preserve them.

I hope you will give the nomination of Donna Horn-Taylor strong consideration when choosing this year's award winner.

Sincerely,


Tara Kaprowy

Subject: Three buildings will be converted to downtown parking lot » Sentinel-Echo.com

From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 2011 11:21:08 -0500

Sentinel-Echo.com

September 28, 2010

Three buildings will be converted to downtown parking lot

By Nita Johnson

Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — Two businesses and a residence between Broad and Long streets will be the next demolition projects to make more parking spaces in downtown London.

A Victorian house used as the office for attorney Tom Weatherly, the white home that now houses New York Life, and the residence of Eulene Martin were the latest acquisitions of the Laurel County Public Properties Corporation.

In a special-called joint meeting of the Laurel County Fiscal Court and Laurel County Public Properties Corporation Tuesday, members voted to finalize the purchase of three properties located behind the new Laurel County Judicial Center. The property will be used as a parking lot for employees of the judicial center.

Roger Schott, Laurel circuit clerk and member of the judicial center's project development board, said the property will be paid for through "left-over" money from the judicial center construction.

Tom Handy, also a member of the development board, urged magistrates — who are also the members of the public properties board — to accept the bids.

"Parking is a problem in downtown London. This is part of the plan for the judicial center project and I urge you to accept the bids," Handy said.

The three properties were purchased at below appraisal prices, Laurel County Judge-Executive Lawrence Kuhl said. The Weatherly property was purchased at \$397,750. The New York Life property, owned by Mike and Janet Fawbush, was purchased for \$308,000 and the brick home owned by Eulene Martin was purchased for \$230,375.

Currently, judicial center employees are parking in the lot behind First National Bank's Financial Center lot on Broad Street so that visitors to the judicial center can use the small parking lot between Main and Broad streets.

"But as businesses move into that building (the empty First National Bank Financial Center), we'll be faced with no parking places again," Kuhl said.

Three buildings will be converted to downtown parking lot » Sentinel...

Money left over from the judicial center project — in which a parking area was initially planned — was used to pay for the property. As part of the purchase agreement, owners have about 60 days to remove all trees and buildings from their land and that removal must be done at their own expense.

Originally, the judicial center site was planned between First and Second streets facing Broad Street. The area where the judicial center now sits was originally planned as a multi-level parking lot that could be used for both the judicial center and federal courthouse visitors and employees.

However, obtaining the properties along Main Street — which included an attorney's office and a gas station — was a quicker legal process and thus became the site for the new justice building.

Kuhl said acquiring these properties will provide "some relief" to the continuing parking issues in downtown and hopes the parking area will be available for use later this fall.

"The owners have to remove all trees and buildings at their own expense, which means they will have to level the area," he said. "We may have to remove some of the top soil to gravel it."

Though Kuhl said there are no plans to construct a multi-level parking facility at this time, he did say the area would possibly be paved "in the future."

Attempts to contact property owners by press time were unsuccessful.

Staff writer Nita Johnson can be reached by e-mail at njohnson@sentinel-echo.com.

Preservationists to present plan by Monday » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.2.1.2

Part 1.2.1.3

Three buildings will be converted to downtown parking lot » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.3.1.3

Subject: 'They paved paradise and put up a parking lot' » Sentinel-Echo.com

From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"

Date: Fri, 15 Oct 2010 10:12:08 -0400

Sentinel-Echo.com

October 4, 2010

'They paved paradise and put up a parking lot'

By Tara Kaprony

Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — How lucky am I that nearly every morning I get to drive to work, pull onto the parking garage and be welcomed by a sea of empty spots? Usually, I head to the exact same space, which is always free, next to a gray four-door whose driver seems equally concerned about avoiding dents and scratches.

Of course, given this blessing, imagine my surprise when I heard three downtown buildings would be torn down to make way for a huge gravel parking lot on South Broad Street.

Yes, the Laurel County Fiscal Court has decided to buy — so they can tear down — the rambling Victorian house used as the office for attorney Tom Weatherly, the white home that houses New York Life, and the home of Eulene Martin. The goal is to make more parking space available for workers of and visitors to the Laurel County Judicial Center.

Purchase price for the pack of plots? A cool \$930,000.

Worth it, n'est-ce pas?

The decision was made — and, yes, the sale is a done deal — in a special-called meeting last week.

Concerning the details of the transaction, I especially love the fact the lot will be gravel. What a nice, swift kick in the pants to London Downtown, whose members have worked tirelessly for the past six years to make downtown a place of which to be proud. With flowers adorning every available surface, stone pillars and strategic landscaping hiding parking lots, and pretty lamp posts lighting the way, it is. Throwing a huge gravel pit in the center of things runs entirely counter to those efforts.

In fact, shouldn't that move be worthy of the clamps of the city's nuisance ordinance?

It's also a nice touch that these buildings, unlike so many downtown, are actually occupied.

What frustrates me most, though, is there is a \$5 million parking structure just three small blocks away that more than suits the needs of downtown's parking. I say "more than suits" because if parking were really an issue, every available spot would be taken every morning. I can tell you from daily experience, that's just not

the case. Moreover, the new judicial center is not attracting more traffic to downtown, it's just moving it down the street.

While doing research for this column, it quickly became clear I'm not the only one bothered by this move. It's the fact that the old Victorian is being torn down that seems to be the most upsetting part of the equation.

It is true London's downtown is already woefully short on old, architecturally interesting homes. And this one might be one of the oldest ones left.

Property valuation administrator records show it was built in 1890 and has a storied past. In 1919, Henry Vincent Pennington bought the home from R.L. Pigg. Pennington founded Pennington General Hospital, which was later renamed Marymount Hospital.

A newspaper article in The Sentinel-Echo on July 4, 1963, speaks of "The Pennington House" as a London landmark. At the time, it was being renovated to give it "modern convenience."

"The house is fast becoming a model of comfort, with its efficient and attractive arrangement, providing present-day convenience in an atmosphere of yester-year," the article reads.

Granted, some say the home is now in a state of disrepair, but others say, if it were listed on the National Historic Register, there are funds available to help renovate the structure. Imagine what its potential might be. A beautiful old home for a family? A bed and breakfast? An artist cooperative? A museum?

Instead it's being reduced to something as demeaning as a gravel parking lot.

There's just got to be a better solution.

True, it may come down to actually walking three blocks to get to the judicial center. True, it may involve installing directional parking signs indicating where people can (easily) find spots.

But spending \$930,000 in order to prevent people from walking a short distance, and sacrificing London's history in the meantime, isn't money well spent to me.

As Margaret Zoellers, chairwoman of London Downtown's Design Committee, said: "No one ever came back to a city because they had great parking."

Staff writer Tara Kaprowy can be reached by e-mail at tkaprowy@sentinel-echo.com.

They paved paradise and put up a parking lot' » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.2.1.3

Subject: Federal funds sought for parking area » Sentinel-Echo.com

From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"

Date: Fri, 15 Oct 2010 10:17:01 -0400

Sentinel-Echo.com

October 4, 2010

Federal funds sought for parking area

Community members weigh in on demolition of Victorian home

By Nita Johnson

Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — Though immediate plans are to build a gravel parking lot on land that currently occupies an historic Victorian home and two others, local officials hope to obtain federal funding to build a parking structure in its place.

The parking area will serve both federal courthouse and Laurel County Judicial Center employees and visitors.

The Laurel County Fiscal Court and Laurel County Public Properties Corporation voted last week to accept bids on the three properties, with a price tag of nearly \$1 million. The money being used to purchase the property is left over from funds designated to build the judicial center. The property owners — Eulene Martin, New York Life Insurance owners Mike and Janet Fawbush and local attorney Tom Weatherly — are responsible for removing all buildings and trees as part of the agreement.

Once the property is cleared, the county will place gravel on the land for immediate use. However, Tom Handy, member of the judicial center project development board, said board members are seeking federal funding to build a two-story parking complex.

Handy said the property — which now houses a private residence and two businesses — was “always considered as an option” for purchase once the Laurel County Judicial Center project began in 2003.

“The policy was always to put the justice center on Main Street but we looked at that property (on Broad and Second) as an option,” Handy said.

To begin the process of creating a parking area, Handy said the project development board advertised for bids for properties along Broad Street between First and Third streets.

“We looked at property between First and Third streets but some of those on Third Street came in too high and we couldn’t afford them,” Handy said.

The board members then concentrated on properties between First and Second streets facing Broad Street,

and advertised for bids on those properties, Handy said. That advertisement ran as a legal ad in the Sept. 1 edition of The Sentinel-Echo with a deadline of Sept. 13 for submitting bids. The issue was then addressed in a special-called meeting on Sept. 21.

Handy said the project development board will seek funding for a facility with two entrances, one from Broad Street and one from Second Street.

“Right now we’re having a graveled parking lot because we don’t want to put down concrete or pavement and then the federal officials come in and we have to tear it all up,” Handy said. “So we’re trying to get funding for a facility that both courthouses can share.”

Though the deal is complete, the destruction of a historic home in downtown London has disappointed some community members, including those working with the London Downtown revitalization program. Property valuation administrator records show the house was built in 1890 and in 1919, Henry Vincent Pennington bought the home from R.L. Pigg. Pennington founded Pennington General Hospital, which was later renamed Marymount Hospital.

Chris Robinson, London Downtown executive director, said he finds the demolition of the Victorian style home “disturbing.”

“There has been grant money available to preserve that home,” Robinson said, referring to Weatherly’s property. “Mr. Weatherly spoke to us in the spring about grants to preserve that home and that house would have qualified. Money for preservation of historic homes is available.”

Robinson said he is primarily concerned about future development in downtown London.

“It’s the future of that property that concerns me,” Robinson said. “We don’t have many old houses left and we need to protect what’s left.”

Anglee Smith, president of the Laurel County Historical Society, agrees.

“Being one of the few historic homes left in London, we feel it should be preserved and not torn down as a part of our history. I think preservation would make better use of the land. Parking could be found in other sections,” she said.

London attorney Warren Scoville, also a member of the project development board, said he believes making way for progress and future development is necessary.

“I think what should happen now is that a really good videographer should come in and video the inside and outside of this beautiful house and put it in our archives We can’t just sit around like a bunch of old fogies and relish the past ... We need to think of the future ... Yes, we need to mourn the loss of an old building, we need to take pictures of it and put it in our history and we need to move on. I love old buildings, I love architecture, I love history. I just think it’s awesome, but we’ve got to move on sometimes.”

While Handy agrees the Victorian style home is “beautiful” and is one of few left in the county, he did say he was not aware of any opposition to the county acquiring the property.

“It was never brought up or discussed,” Handy said. “It was advertised in The Sentinel-Echo and no one objected. I don’t know if anyone has approached Tom (Weatherly) about buying the property before this. But the bottom line is, it’s his property and he can sell it to whoever meets his price.”

Weatherly did not return a message for comment by presstime.

Staff writer Nita Johnson can be reached by e-mail at njohnson@sentinel-echo.com.

Home on the Block » TheTimesTribune_com, Corbin, KY.mht

Part 1.2.1.2

Part 1.2.1.3

Federal funds sought for parking area » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.3.1.3

Subject: Home on the Block » TheTimesTribune.com, Corbin, KY

From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"

Date: Fri, 15 Oct 2010 12:43:23 -0400

TheTimesTribune.com, Corbin, KY

October 15, 2010

Home on the Block

Historical London house may face wrecking ball

The Times-Tribune

CORBIN — By Carl Keith Greene / Staff Writer

The perhaps oldest home standing in London, about 135 years old, may soon be gone.

In a called meeting, the Laurel Fiscal Court agreed to buy that property and adjoining lots to build a gravel parking lot for the new judicial center.

The home on the corner of Broad and Second streets is thought to have been built by either John Faris or J.R. Baugh maybe as early as 1875.

Faris owned a large mercantile business.

Baugh may have been in the lumber business.

The home's Italianate style is seen in its hip roof with its overhanging cornice brackets and a pair of two-story bays.

The windows are two-over-two, with double-hung wood sashes, decorative hoods and surrounds.

The front door has a decorative frame, side lights and transom.

The porch posts, brackets and spindle work keep with the Queen Anne style.

In 1920, Dr. H.V. Pennington, who had opened an infirmary on the west side of North Main at its corner with Ninth Street bought the home.

Eventually he built Pennington General Hospital in 1926 that became Marymount Hospital and St. Joseph-London, which remained on the site atop Ninth Street until a couple of months ago.

His family retained occupancy until 1986 when lawyer Tom Weatherly took it over and maintained his

practice there.

The county court agreed to buy that property and property across Second Street for just under a million dollars.

At a presentation at the London Downtown meeting Thursday Donna Horn-Taylor explained the importance of retaining the home.

She noted that the home is listed on the Kentucky Historical Resources survey, but not on a national historical survey, though it was noted in the 1996 cultural resource survey when the new federal courthouse in London was proposed.

She said the home qualifies for the National Register of Historical Places, explaining that owners of those places may do to them what they wish unless they are using grant money from one of the national programs.

For more information from Horn-Taylor call 606-528-6890.

Home on the Block » TheTimesTribune.com, Corbin, KY.mht

Part 1.2.1.3

Federal funds sought for parking area » Sentinel-Echo.com.mht

Part 1.3.1.2

Part 1.3.1.3

Subject: Resident rallies to save historic home » Sentinel-Echo.com

From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"

Date: Thu, 21 Oct 2010 17:40:53 -0400

Sentinel-Echo.com

October 18, 2010

Resident rallies to save historic home

By Tara Kaprowy

Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — Concerned resident Donna Horn-Taylor is hoping to save the old Pennington home on Broad Street, which is set to be demolished. Horn-Taylor addressed attendees at London Downtown's Members on Main meeting Thursday, asking for support.

"There are still possibilities for compromise and negotiation," she said. "Talk face to face with your government representative ... There's real possibility for working around this ... But it's not going to happen unless a lot of people stand up and say we care."

The home, along with two other adjacent structures, is scheduled to be torn down in order to make way for a parking lot. The Laurel County Fiscal Court purchased the property in a special-called meeting last month on the condition that the property owners be responsible for demolition. The goal is to make more parking available for workers of and visitors to the Laurel County Judicial Center.

Horn-Taylor asked people to call her if they are concerned about saving the house at (606) 528-6890. She also asked that people take photos of themselves in front of the home holding up a piece of paper saying, "This Place Matters." The photos can be e-mailed to thisplacematters@nthp.org.

"By doing so, you're saying this place matters to me," she said.

The effort, organized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has a goal of starting conversations about preserving historic places.

Horn-Taylor said it's possible that the home could be moved. She said she spoke to owner Tom Weatherly, who seemed open to the option, if there were funds to do so.

She also suggested the parking lot could be built around the structure.

The home has a long history. It was built in 1875 in Italianate style with Queen Anne-style detailing on the front porch, the Cultural Resource Survey for the Proposed New Federal Courthouse states.

In 1919, Henry Vincent Pennington bought the home from R.L. Figg. Pennington founded Pennington General Hospital, which was later renamed Marymount Hospital.

It is listed on the Kentucky Historical Resources Survey and is eligible for the National Register of Historical Places.

Staff writer Tara Kaprony can be reached by e-mail at tkaprony@sentinel-echo.com.

Looking for a miracle on Broad Street » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.2.1.2

Part 1.2.1.3

Resident rallies to save historic home » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.3.1.3

Subject: Emailing: Future of Pennington House still up in air » Sentinel-Echo_com, 14 days to save Pennington House » Sentinel-Echo_com
From: "Horn-Taylor" <horntaylor@bellsouth.net>
Date: Fri, 11 Mar 2011 09:10:17 -0500
To: "Ann Pennington" <apenny412@bellsouth.net>

Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

Future of Pennington House still up in air » Sentinel-Echo_com
14 days to save Pennington House » Sentinel-Echo_com

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.

Subject: Future of Pennington House still up in air » Sentinel-Echo.com
From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"
Date: Mon, 1 Nov 2010 08:45:18 -0400

Sentinel-Echo.com

October 29, 2010

Future of Pennington House still up in air

Federal funds to build parking structure might not be obtained

By Tara Kaprowy
Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — The future of the Pennington House continues to be hotly debated, with more discussion expected at the Laurel County fiscal court meeting Thursday (tomorrow). In the meantime, The Sentinel-Echo has learned it may not be possible to obtain federal funding in order to build a parking structure where the South Broad Street home now sits.

Officials with the Kentucky Heritage Council indicate, due to its age, architectural detail and historic significance, the house is eligible for inclusion on the National Historic Register.

But any federal agency that has jurisdiction over a proposed federally-funded project must take into account the projects' effects on any buildings that are included or are eligible for inclusion in the National Register, states Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

"If federal funds are going to be used for the project, it will be coming through our office for review," said Craig Potts, site protection program manager with the Kentucky Heritage Council. "Any actions that have taken place in anticipation of that federal funding will be considered in our review, meaning that it will play

a part in our recommendation regarding the impacts to historical resources and compliance with federal law.”

In other words, federal dollars are rarely committed to a project whose construction is dependent on the demolition of an historically significant building — even if the demolition takes place before the application for or receipt of those funds.

“A federal agency is very leery about providing money to an applicant ... that has created a situation where they’re out of compliance with federal law,” Potts said. “Removing the things you might see as an environmental encumbrance before you start using the federal money is viewed as non-compliant. If you do, a case could be very easily made that federal money should not go to a project where an environmental encumbrance is unnecessarily destroyed.”

While the Kentucky Heritage Council — or any agency — cannot prevent the home’s demolition, council officials can make clear its ramifications.

“In a situation like this, we make the applicant well aware of the potential problem they’re creating for themselves,” Potts said. “That’s as far as we go. We can’t keep them from doing what they want to do.”

The circa-1875 home once belonged to Dr. Henry Vincent Pennington, who founded what became Marymount Hospital. The structure is set to be demolished to make way for a parking lot that will service workers at and visitors to the new Laurel County Judicial Center. The Laurel County Fiscal Court purchased the property, along with two other parcels, last month for about \$1 million, funds that were left over from the state-funded construction of the judicial center.

Members of the Judicial Center Project Development Board have indicated their hope is to seek federal funding to build a two-story parking complex on the site.

“Right now we’re having a graveled parking lot because we don’t want to put down concrete or pavement and then the federal officials come in and we have to tear it all up,” Tom Handy said previously. “So we’re trying to get funding for a facility that both courthouses can share.”

While Section 106 applies for projects that are funded using federal dollars, there are no historic preservation laws in place for projects using state funds.

“There are no regulations when it comes to state funding at all,” Potts said. “If they are able to buy the property with (state) money, pay for the demolition or pay someone else for the demolition and build their parking lot, we have no role to play.”

At Thursday’s (tomorrow’s) fiscal court meeting, representatives of London Downtown and the Cumberland Valley Board of Realtors plan to ask for an extension of the demolition.

“We hope to move the home, with the cooperation of Mr. (Tom) Weatherly (the property owner) and the Laurel County Fiscal Court,” London Downtown Executive Director Chris Robinson said. “We hope there is more time to get the building moved.”

The meeting starts at 9 a.m. in the community room of the Laurel County Courthouse.

November 1, 2010

Pennington House may have options

By Nita Johnson

Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — The fate of the Pennington House may have several options, as addressed to the Laurel County Fiscal Court.

Several dozen citizens opposing the demolition of the historic home were present for Thursday's meeting to make suggestions and offer alternatives for the home.

Discussion between Laurel County Judge-Executive Lawrence Kuhl and several citizens opposed to the destruction of the home agreed to meet and discuss those options in the next week.

A history of the home and possible options include moving the home from its present location to an area not slated for parking lot construction. Heritage Hills, owned by the London-Laurel County Tourism Commission is one area where the house could be relocated, thus preserving a historic relic on property dedicated to Laurel County's heritage with a genealogy center and museum.

Another option came when property owner Bruce Yandell said that he would "trade" properties to keep the Pennington House where it is. Yandell owns the property along First Street between Broad and Long streets that adjoins the former New York Life Insurance Company owned by Mike and Janet Fawbush. Should that occur, the parking lot for judicial center employees would be between Broad and Long streets

between First and Second streets, leaving the Pennington House standing between that parking lot and the parking area currently used by the Laurel County Sheriff's office.

Chris Robinson, executive director of London Downtown, told the court he realized the importance of progress but keeping some of London's history intact is vital to the city and county.

"This, when we are celebrating the history of the county with its 185th anniversary why not have 120 years of the Pennington House?" Robinson said. "Any community can have a gravel parking lot. Only London can have the Pennington House."

Robinson told magistrates London Down-town had teamed with the Cumberland Valley Board of Realtors and asked for an extension of the 60-day provision for the home owners to clear the property.

"We're asking for six months to study the feasibility to move the house," Robinson said. "We have talked with a company that moves structures and they say it can be done."

Jim Hays, who works with the Kentucky Heritage Council but attended Thursday as a concerned citizen, gave a brief overview of the Pennington House.

"The Pennington House is a survivor," Hays said "It survived three great fires in 1891, 1892, and 1893. It survived two major fires, one in 1909 and the other in 1910 just a few blocks from the old courthouse that burned. As a matter of fact, that fire occurred 100 years ago this very month. In 1974, it missed a tornado by just 100 feet."

Donna Horn-Taylor told the fiscal court she had received letters from Pennington descendants who indicated the home was actually older than first thought — being built in 1847. Horn-Taylor said that "creative solutions" could be examined for the future of the home rather than ultimate destruction. She also mentioned that federal funding could be halted if the properties involved were slated for destruction of historical buildings.

Laurel County Judge Executive Lawrence Kuhl explained the process that brought the properties to its currently debated state. Kuhl said a parking lot for the judicial center had always been an option for those properties near the judicial center construction and the process had actually begun in the late 1990s. When construction began on the new judicial center between Main and Broad streets, the focus shifted to a parking facility between Broad and Long streets.

Kuhl said that the fate of the home was ultimately up to the owner, Tom Weatherly, who was not present for Thursday's meeting and who has not returned calls from The Sentinel-Echo concerning the house. But Sharon Benge, city council member and local business woman, said that she had personally spoken with Weatherly concerning the home.

"Tom is thrilled with working with the Board of Realtors," she said.

Kuhl said Weatherly wanted to sell the house and has tried to sell it for several years but was unsuccessful. He also said when news of the house's potential destruction became public, only Horn-Taylor had confronted him about it. Kuhl said he would "be glad to meet with" a few representatives of the board of realtors and proponents for preserving the house.

“We’re interested in the property for a parking lot,” Kuhl said. “We have 52 employees and we have trials and hearings and we need that space for the employees and the jurors. Tom Weatherly submitted a bid like the other two property owners and the (Administrative Office of the Courts) accepted it.”

Kuhl also explained that acceptance of the deed was dependent upon the Project Development Board and that the property is not considered Fiscal Court property until the landowners have met their end of the agreement, which is to clear the property of buildings and trees.

However, those 60 days for the property owners to do that is drawing near.

Staff writer Nita Johnson can be reached by e-mail at njohnson@sentinel-echo.com.

Staff writer Tara Kaprowy can be reached by e-mail at tkaprowy@sentinel-echo.com.

Subject: 14 days to save Pennington House » Sentinel-Echo.com
From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"
Date: Mon, 3 Jan 2011 11:10:05 -0500

Sentinel-Echo.com

November 26, 2010

14 days to save Pennington House

By Nita Johnson
Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — Advocates to save The Pennington House have just 14 days to fundraise and devise a plan for the 120-year-old Victorian style house.

The Project Development Board granted the 14-day extension during Monday night's meeting, but the unanimous vote came only after some heated discussion between board members and preservation advocates.

Donna Horn-Taylor who had previously submitted a request for a six-month extension to the board spoke about possible uses for the home. Horn-Taylor said she could not disclose some of the "nice proposals that have been hinted at" as "the wish of citizens who continue to come forward" but that various agencies could assist with grants to preserve the home.

Board member Tom Handy explained the project was drawing to an end and the board could face a lawsuit if they did not close out the property purchase as specified in the bidding process. That process involves the Pennington House, currently owned by London attorney Tom Weatherly. The bids, which were advertised in early September, outlined that properties purchased had to be cleared of all buildings, trees and shrubbery at the owner's expense. The former New York Life office, owned by Mike and Janet Fawbush, was demolished last week, and Laurel County Judge-Executive Lawrence Kuhl said demolition on the Martin property, directly behind the Fawbush property was scheduled for next week.

"We're asking for time," Horn-Taylor said.

Roderick Messer, retired Laurel Circuit judge and board member, said the project had been underway for several years and no opposition to the demolition of the home had ever been expressed until the past

months.

“We started this four years ago, we explored this and there was no objection,” Messer said. “We’ve got a federal building with no parking. The Judicial Center has seen a 10 to 15 percent increase in usage. We’ve got the jail that needs expanding and will continue to need expansion because of overcrowding. We need parking.”

Horn-Taylor responded that she faithfully read local newspapers but she had not seen “anything about that house” until the property purchase bids were accepted in September.

Attorney and board member Warren Scoville said while he favored preservation, there are many myths and erroneous information surrounding the Victorian style home.

“I care about historical sites, but that is a worn-out house,” Scoville said. “I’m concerned about all the myths going around and in the newspaper. It said we’re buying the property with left-over money from the Judicial Center and there is no left-over money. This money was for a specific purpose (Judicial Center and parking facility) and we don’t have enough parking.”

Scoville cited a survey conducted by the Chambers of Commerce oriented toward the revitalization of downtown areas.

“The Chamber of Commerce survey said the demise of downtown was because of parking,” he said. “That’s why we have strip malls across town. I was there (Judicial Center) at 8 o’clock and there was no parking. I was there at 9 o’clock and there was no parking. I was there at 11 o’clock and there was no parking. When federal court and Laurel Circuit Court is in session, there’s no parking.”

A parking facility was part of the original plan for the Judicial Center project. However, Scoville said the Project Development Board originally wished to purchase the properties between Broad and Long Streets and bordering First Street, owned by Mike Fawbush, Eula Martin, and Bruce Yandell. Scoville said the Weatherly property was not under consideration. But when the bids came in, the Yandell property was too high and Weatherly’s bid was within range.

“We can only pay what the appraisal is and that property (Yandell’s) is not worth what the owner asked for,” Scoville said. “Tom (Weatherly) submitted a bid and we accepted it.”

“This money is for a designated purpose,” added Handy, “It came through AOC (Administrative Office of the Courts). If we don’t use it for a parking lot, we’d be in violation of the AOC. We’d be breaking the law.”

“Was it specifically for the Weatherly house?” Horn-Taylor asked, to which Handy answered no.

“But it is not a myth of whether we ‘may get’ federal funding for a parking facility, we’ll get it,” Handy said. “I’m not against trading that property for the Yandell property if you can buy that property. Then we’ll have the parking and you’ll have the building (Pennington House).”

Again, Horn-Taylor asked for time to fund-raise to purchase the home and London Downtown Executive Director Chris Robinson said he had a letter of intent from London City Mayor Troy Rudder that the City would take responsibility for the home if the board granted a time extension.

Scoville then said the deal had to be closed by Dec. 31.

“The contract said the property has to be purchased a few months after the Judicial Center was finished,” Messer said. “It opened in May. We have our building, now we want our parking lot.”

London Downtown board member Rocky Binder asked if the AOC contract had a specific time line regarding when Weatherly had to be paid for the home.

Laurel County Judge- Executive Lawrence Kuhl said the deal needed to be closed by the end of the year.

“As you can see, one property has already been cleared and Mrs. Martin’s property will start being cleared next week. We want the real estate, the land itself.”

Kuhl then explained that any dealings with the Weatherly property had to be conducted through Weatherly, who could make any proposals to the Project Development Board, then through the Laurel County Fiscal Court, and then through the properties corporation.

“We’re willing to negotiate,” Handy said.

Tom Weatherly spoke about the need to seal the deal before the end of the year, which Scoville said allowed a tax break for Weatherly. However, Weatherly said he was willing to negotiate with all parties concerned in the situation. Weatherly told advocates last week that he had \$22,000 to donate if the house can be moved from the property. But if the building stays, that money would not be available.

“If the building comes down, we will keep some of the architectural pieces,” Weatherly said.

Citizens interested in preserving the house have until Dec. 6 to devise a plan and secure money to purchase the properties before the next meeting of the Project Development Board.

Future of Pennington House still up in air » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht **Content-Type:** message/rfc822
Content-Encoding: 7bit

Part 1.2.1.3 **Content-Type:** application/octet-stream
Content-Encoding: quoted-printable

14 days to save Pennington House » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht **Content-Type:** message/rfc822
Content-Encoding: 7bit

Part 1.3.1.3 **Content-Type:** application/octet-stream
Content-Encoding: quoted-printable

Subject: Preservationists to present plan by Monday » Sentinel-Echo.com

From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"

Date: Mon, 3 Jan 2011 11:00:46 -0500

Sentinel-Echo.com

December 7, 2010

Preservationists to present plan by Monday

\$750,000 needed to purchase property

By Nita Johnson

Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — Today will determine the fate of the Pennington House, a 120-year-old home sitting on a knoll at the corner of Second and South Broad streets.

If preservationists can present a plan—or better yet, \$750,000—to purchase properties bordering First Street between Broad and Long streets, the historic home can remain overlooking downtown London with preservationists seeking monies to utilize the building.

If the money cannot be raised, the house is slated for demolition.

Officials with the Kentucky Heritage Council visited the property Friday to do an assessment. Scot Walters, Site Development Program Manager, said his assessment revealed no structural problems with the home which has been described as “in bad condition.”

“Overall, the basic problems are heating and cooling, new wiring, and new plumbing,” Walters said. “Structurally, there’s not any major issues.”

Walters and Becky Gorman, Kentucky Main Street Coordinator for the Heritage Council, came to do an assessment at the request of citizens favoring preservation of the home. But preservationists were given only 14 days to have money in hand to purchase Bruce Yandell’s properties on First and Broad Streets and exchange that property with The Pennington House owner, Tom Weatherly. The Laurel County Fiscal Court accepted the deeds for Weatherly’s property in September, along with properties adjoining Yandell’s between First and Broad Streets.

Walters said the home was not so much in a state of disrepair as it was located in the midst of ongoing downtown construction.

“It’s more so a case of being in the wrong location for development taking place in town,” Walters said.

Referring to the members of the Project Development Board who described the home as being “worn out,” Walters said that is not entirely the issue. Three of the board members are local attorneys who fear a

lawsuit if the specifications of the contract to purchase property are not followed.

“There are rules against me practicing law and there are rules against them practicing architecture,” Walters said.

However, the agreement with the Administrative Office of the Courts specifies that a parking facility would be part of the Judicial Center project—an issue that members of the Project Development Board say is not only a specification but a dire need in close vicinity of the new judicial center.

“I really hope they can raise the money,” said Laurel County Judge Executive Lawrence Kuhl last week. “I’d like to see the house stay but we purchased the property because Tom’s (Weatherly) bid was what we could pay for it and the other property (Yandell’s) wasn’t. That’s why we agreed if they could raise the money, we would swap properties with them and we’d have the parking lot and they’d have the house.”

Though Horn-Taylor and London Downtown Executive Director Chris Robinson spearheaded the effort to save the house, both said on Friday that little chance remains to preserve it. Robinson said raising \$750,000 in two weeks was not impossible but was a challenging feat.

“When you’re trying to raise that kind of money with some hope, it’s one thing,” Robinson said. “But it’s completely different when you’re trying to raise it from desperation.”

Preservationists to present plan by Monday » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.2.1.3

Three buildings will be converted to downtown parking lot » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.3.1.2

Part 1.3.1.3

Subject: Looking for a miracle on Broad Street » Sentinel-Echo.com
From: "Saved by Windows Internet Explorer 7"
Date: Tue, 1 Feb 2011 11:23:12 -0500

Sentinel-Echo.com

December 8, 2010

Looking for a miracle on Broad Street

CNHI

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — Dear Editor,

If you, Citizens of Laurel County, haven't attended a meeting about the impending demolition of the Pennington House, then you don't know the complicated situation.

If you, Citizen, haven't talked to your magistrate or city council member and let them know you want the house to remain, then you shouldn't be surprised when it is gone.

Although the Project Development Board is responsible for making the property purchases, the city and county governments can get involved in developing a solution if they know how many of the people of London and Laurel County want to keep this building in the community.

Many people, city and county residents, want to find a solution. If you want to see progress and preservation go hand in hand in downtown revitalization, SPEAK UP. Get involved. Each day we either clear another hurdle or meet a new challenge. Action now, before your next edition of the newspaper arrives can make a difference.

Over a hundred people have attended a meeting, signed the petition, called me or another person active in this negotiation. Thank you to the Laurel County Historical Society for hosting the Nov. 18 meeting. Do you want more information? First express your desire to see the house saved, then call your local government representatives.

Stop by the London Downtown/Community Center offices and sign a petition for saving the house if you haven't already done so. Please consider a donation in the near future to the Pennington House Trust which is being set up as a non-profit organization.

This structure still has a useful life. The property also has the advantage of already qualifying for National Trust for Historic Preservation funding and tax credits for qualifying work on the house. Many towns and cities make multi-purpose facilities of such "historic" buildings, adding to the tourism appeal of their downtowns. We will study those projects, looking for the most cost efficient and best use of the Pennington House, if it is not demolished.

“We” are citizens working with London Downtown toward a compromise that MAY lead to a future for the Pennington House and A Miracle on Broad Street.

Donna Horn-Taylor

Looking for a miracle on Broad Street » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.2.1.3

Resident rallies to save historic home » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

Part 1.3.1.2

Part 1.3.1.3

December 28, 2010

My point Is...And the walls come tumbling down

By *Nita Johnson*
Staff Writer

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. — I walk out the front door of The Sentinel-Echo and among the buildings facing me is a stately home two blocks away, one whose presence has been a part of London's history for over a century.

When I return to work on Monday, that spot of land will become another parking lot.

Preservationists made a strong stance to preserve the house but their efforts were thwarted by the signs of progress — and the inability to raise the needed amount of money in the allotted amount of time to save the home.

Architects and historians excelled in their research and analysis of the history of the home, its relevance to the city, and the need to intertwine the past with the present. Preservationists pleaded their case publicly and received the full-fledged blessing of property owner Tom Weatherly to proceed with their 11 o'clock campaign to save the home either by trading properties or moving the home to another location. Time was ticking and preservationists were a bit late in learning of the sale of the home for convenient parking. So were many more of us who only heard of the potential demolition through a fiscal court meeting. The townspeople as a whole were totally unaware that the historic home was one of the properties desired for yet another downtown parking lot.

3 of 5

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So as I leave the office this Thursday afternoon, I will take one final look at the historic Pennington House and remember its role in the history of my hometown and add it to the memories of other such buildings. When I arrive at work next week, I will look at the spot where the beautiful Victorian-style home once sat and remember, probably with a tear or two, the people who were housed there and the hole in history that its destruction leaves.

Preservationists may focus on what's left of London's history but I will join with them in their stance that progress is never defined by parking lots.

Pennington House may have options » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

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Weatherly was cooperative with the last-ditch efforts to save the home, but the legalities with the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Project Development Board members put a block on extending more time to save it.

The Pennington House has the same ending as many of the relics of London's history. Progress has blind-sighted preservation in our fair town, with 'progress' a subtitle for parking lots.

I remember growing up in a town where the Reda Theater was always a landmark my mother mentioned. She stayed with the Reda family as a high school student, working for them to earn money for tuition to attend London High School.

Now those memories are just that — memories, because the site that once held special meaning for my mother and many others is, guess what, a parking lot.

I remember the old mansion that sat on South Main Street where Carnaby Square is now. Another relic of London's history done away with in the name of progress — and a parking lot.

Main Street is now bordered with modern buildings that once hosted memories for us 40-plus natives —Dyche Drug and Begley Drug are in the memory books where large financial establishments and courthouses now reside — most of them taking the history of London and becoming, guess what, another parking lot.

Though their efforts were stagnated for saving the Pennington House, there is at least one more avenue of preservation that should be considered now before progress overrides preservation. The Boering Mansion on East Fifth Street features far more original Victorian-style relics than the Pennington House and though not located in the mainstream of the city, it could still be preserved if those interested will act now. A "For Sale" sign sits in the yard and is prime pickings for those interested in preservation. The move for the Pennington House came too late, but by designating the areas and buildings that can still be saved, the remaining historic sites and buildings in London may still have a chance.

So as I leave the office this Thursday afternoon, I will take one final look at the historic Pennington House and remember its role in the history of my hometown and add it to the memories of other such buildings. When I arrive at work next week, I will look at the spot where the beautiful Victorian-style home once sat and remember, probably with a tear or two, the people who were housed there and the hole in history that its destruction leaves.

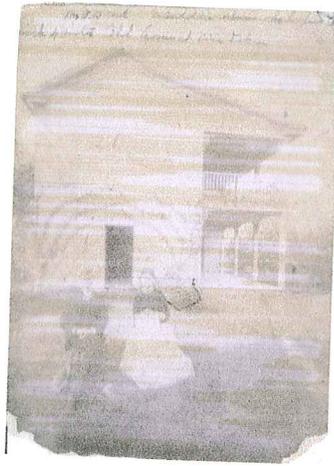
Preservationists may focus on what's left of London's history but I will join with them in their stance that progress is never defined by parking lots.

Pennington House may have options » Sentinel-Echo_com.mht

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Reduced photo of
old house, back &
side

written on back of photo by two
of Dr. H. V. Pennington's children. This family
data indicates it was originally built in
1847.

Property of Mrs. H. V. Pennington
London, Ky.

Former property of Mrs. B. M. Harris
when built by ^{addition} Baugh's children & never then here
rebuilt, later by her

As the house looked in 1847.

In 1863, it was added to

and the front made as it
now stands. ⁽¹⁹⁴⁹⁾ Twice in my
life time parts of the back

were torn away, once about
1916 (4 back rooms which formed
an "L" and row parallel to side-
walk were ^{torn} away and about

1930(?) the back end was torn
away (4 rooms, back stair way
^{down to} screened-in porch and attic & part
(Stellar)